



visual arts

funding policy



Darren Murray, 'Pays du Mont Blanc'
Front cover - Peter Richards, 'Tinkerbelle'

Further Information

Full details of all Council funding are available from:

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Strategic Priorities

The Arts Council will give a priority to artists, arts organisations, arts initiatives and partnerships which:

- A increase opportunities for creative participation in the arts;
- B develop new audiences for the arts and build on existing ones;
- C extend opportunities for artists to develop their work and practice;
- D strengthen the capacity of arts organisations to deliver quality experiences of the arts.

Strategic Objectives

The Arts Council is committed to:

- 1 increase opportunities for artists working to the highest standards and in innovative ways;
- 2 strengthen the arts infrastructure;
- 3 engage with community arts to increase opportunities for creative participation, to develop new audiences and to expand the range of contexts in which artists work;
- 4 engage with voluntary arts to increase opportunities for creative participation, to develop new audiences and expand the range of contexts in which artists work;
- 5 increase the quality of access for disabled people to the arts;
- 6 enhance children and young people's access to creative expression through the arts, in contexts of their own choosing, and increase opportunities for participation as they grow and develop;
- 7 increase audiences for the arts.

The arts: inspiring the imagination, building the future

Visual Arts Funding Policy

Introduction

The Arts Council wishes to see Northern Ireland develop as a centre of excellence for the production, presentation and critical analysis of contemporary visual arts. It encourages quality, innovation and experimentation to develop a culture in which visual art is respected and valued.

Definitions

The contemporary visual arts are notable for their breadth, encompassing a range of media, content, approaches and modes of presentation. They are as much concerned with the communication and contextualisation of ideas as with the production of objects of aesthetic value. Accordingly, the Council's funding policy embraces drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, photography, experimental film and video, live and performance art, new media and emerging technologies.

The Council values the visual arts infrastructure – the galleries, studio groups, artists' collectives, journals and networking organisations and is committed to supporting and assisting their central role in sectoral development. It is through such infrastructure and associated excellence and diversity in programming that the audience for visual arts continues to expand.

The Council is concerned primarily with supporting the work of living artists and encouraging excellence in the production and presentation of work. The visual arts are acknowledged as a key driver for the creative industries and an essential expression of the human condition. The Council builds partnerships

with those agencies and organisations whose interests include the development of the creative industries, particularly Invest Northern Ireland.

The Council is committed to partnerships with organisations such as Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland to ensure an integrated approach which recognises the importance of historical work. Similarly, whilst the education of visual artists is not a prime focus, the Council works closely with Education and Library Boards, the University of Ulster and Colleges of Higher and Further Education. It is clear that only such partnerships can lead to sustainable development of the sector.

Funding

Visual Arts are funded under a number of programmes:

- Support for the Individual Artist (to assist artists in the development of their practice. The British School at Rome is specific to visual arts)
- Annual Support for Organisations (for organisations with year round programmes)
- New Work (support towards the commissioning and presentation of new work. While it supports the production of catalogues and monographs, it prioritises those featuring Northern Ireland's visual artists and which demonstrate effective and wide distribution and a high level of critical analysis)
- Access to the Arts (initiatives to address the needs of communities in areas of social and economic deprivation, which support the involvement of children and young people)
- Awards for All (for projects under £5,000. Applicants should consult www.awardsforall.com. Tel. 0845 600204).

Funding Objectives

A concerted focus of attention on Visual Arts enables the Council to realise its four Priorities and meet its seven Strategic Objectives.

Funding objectives are to:

- support and develop the core infrastructure for the production and presentation of visual arts in Northern Ireland (1, 2, 7)
- encourage and support emerging and established visual artists in Northern Ireland to create work of the highest standard (1)
- foster and develop critical debate, analysis and documentation of visual arts practice in Northern Ireland (1, 7)
- ensure adequate support resources for visual artists, including suitable studio provision, access to equipment and technical support, effective information exchange and the opportunity for professional representation (1, 2)
- develop and enhance the opportunities for audiences in Northern Ireland to have a high quality experience of visual arts across a range of media and genres (2, 7)
- promote the work of Northern Ireland's visual artists to a wide audience, both at home and abroad (1)