



Arts Council of Northern

# ART FORM AND SPECIALIST AREA POLICY 2013-2018

## ACQUISITIONS



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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The National Lottery®

[www.artscouncil-ni.org](http://www.artscouncil-ni.org)

## Preamble

The Acquisitions Policy has been developed in line with *Ambitions for the Arts*, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's five-year Strategic Plan for the Arts, 2013-18. The overarching priorities of the Plan – champion the arts, promote access, build a sustainable sector – are reflected across the set of the Council's Art Form and Specialist Area policies, 2013-18.

## Introduction to Acquisitions Policy

Between 1945 and 1999, the Arts Council purchased contemporary art, primarily from artists living in Northern Ireland. Following a fundamental review of its collecting policy in 1999, it decided (due to increasing costs, conservation and storage issues) to gift the collection – some 1,119 works – to registered museums in Northern Ireland.

Following an open application process gifts were made to the following Museums:

- National Museums Northern Ireland (1033 works)
- Harbour Museum Derry (20 works)
- Naughton Gallery at Queen's (22 works)
- F.E. McWilliam Gallery (14 works)
- Fermanagh County Museum (7 works)
- Mid-Antrim Museum (4 works)
- Down County Museum (6 works)
- Coleraine Museum (13 works).

Although the Arts Council no longer maintains a large public collection, it still recognises the importance of purchasing contemporary work as a means of supporting artists. It is committed to searching across Northern Ireland for the best contemporary work to add to its public collection.

Artists must have been living in Northern Ireland for 12 months before date of purchase of work and have made a contribution to artistic activities in Northern Ireland. Artists from Northern Ireland who are living elsewhere will also be considered. Artists not from Northern Ireland whose work is of particular relevance to Northern Ireland will be considered in exceptional circumstances. Priority is given to artists whose work is both challenging and innovative. Emerging as well as established artists are eligible. Works in all

media are considered, including painting, sculpture, crafts, prints, photography, video and emergent art forms.

The Council will consider accepting gifts to the collection. Such work will be assessed against the same criteria as for purchase.

## The Acquisitions Panel

Works are considered against the following criteria:

- quality, innovation and challenging nature of the work;
- evidence of artistic achievement;
- the artist's contribution to visual arts in Northern Ireland;
- relevance of purchase to furtherance both of the artist's career and to the Council's funding objectives.

Works are brought to the attention of the Arts Council in a number of ways. Acquisitions Panel members may make recommendations against the stated criteria following studio visits, review of slides and catalogues of work, and gallery exhibitions. Artists themselves may apply to the acquisitions scheme for their work to be purchased. The Acquisitions Panel may also commission work and it meets regularly to make decisions about purchases. Current panel members are listed on the website.

The Council will consider the continuation of a gifting scheme to institutions throughout Northern Ireland, through an open application procedure. Artists will be informed of the outcome of the gifting of their work.

The Arts Council's acquisitions will be fully documented on its website at [www.artscouncil-ni.org](http://www.artscouncil-ni.org). The aim is to showcase the works purchased by exhibiting them in shows around Northern Ireland where they will tour to a wide variety of venues and communities, and also to create opportunities to show the work nationally and internationally. Other measures to promote and showcase the works will also be explored.

The Arts Council has not been allocated a capital resource for 2014/15 and consequently does not have an acquisitions budget for this year. It hopes this situation will be resolved, but in the interim it is unable to purchase works.

## Funding Objectives:

- assist individual artists;
- contribute to the development of visual arts practice in Northern Ireland;
- educate our young people about their visual arts heritage;
- develop a culture in which visual art is respected and appreciated;
- foster knowledge and research;
- ensure that contemporary visual arts are showcased;
- stimulate the art market in Northern Ireland;
- build a coherent collection of art from Northern Ireland for future generations.

## Additional Information

### **'Ambitions for the Arts' Five Year Arts Strategy, 2013-2018**

[www.artscouncil-ni.org/about-us/strategy](http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/about-us/strategy)

### **Art Form and Specialist Area Policies, 2013-2018**

[www.artscouncil-ni.org/the-arts](http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/the-arts)

Acquisitions	Drama
Arts & Disability	Film & TV
Arts & Health	Intercultural Arts
Arts & Older People	International
Architecture	Language Arts
Building Peace through the Arts	Literature
Carnival Arts	Music & Opera
Circus Arts	Public Art
Commissioning	Traditional Arts
Community Arts	Visual Arts
Crafts & Applied Arts	Voluntary Arts
Dance	Youth Arts



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