



Arts Council of Northern

**ART FORM AND SPECIALIST
AREA POLICY 2013-2018**

ARTS & HEALTH



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Awarding funds from
 **The National Lottery**

www.artscouncil-ni.org

Preamble

The Arts & Health 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 Arts & Health Policy

Arts & Health is the generic term that embraces a range of arts practices occurring primarily in healthcare settings and bringing together the skills of artists and healthcare professionals. Arts & Health aims to promote health and well-being by improving quality of life and cultural access and can include participation in arts activities across all artforms, presentation of arts productions and enhancement of the arts environment.

The Arts & Health sector provides new access and participation opportunities involving not only healthcare service users but also healthcare staff, carers and visitors. However, in addition to funding work that directly connects with people within healthcare settings, our funds are applied on a preventative health basis – by enhancing the physical and emotional well-being of audience members and project participants. As such, Arts & Health practice can take place in hospitals, residential units, day-care-centres, community settings, educational establishments and arts venues.

The Arts Council recognises that Arts & Health is distinct from related practices such as Art Therapy, and whilst acknowledging and respecting the value of the work carried out, the Arts Council's priority is Arts & Health, not Art Therapy. A key goal for Arts & Health is the experience and production of art, whereas the primary goal for Art Therapy is clinical, using the creative process of making art to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages.

Arts & Health has been a growing area of arts practice in the past twenty years and has involved a diverse range of stakeholders, with their own aims, objectives, priorities and approaches.

At a regional level, the Arts Council supports a number of initiatives.

ArtsCare is the main delivery agent for Arts & Health within healthcare settings in Northern Ireland. Created in 1991 by the Department of Health and supported by the Arts Council, ArtsCare has engaged individual artists to work alongside service users, healthcare staff, family members and carers to develop a wide range of arts programmes including artists' residencies and the Clown Doctor initiative. In addition, ArtsCare continues to provide evidence-based research, advocating for the benefits of Arts & Health practice at a national, regional and international level.

The Arts Council's Arts & Older People Programme, established in 2010 and primarily funded by the Arts Council and Public Health Agency, aims to support the health and well-being of older people through arts activities, as well as training and support for healthcare staff and artists in Arts & Health practice.

The Arts Council's Young People & Well-being Programme, currently in development with the Public Health Agency, aims to focus on empowering, building resilience and providing support that promotes positive mental health and emotional well-being for young people through arts activities.

At a local level, the Arts Council supports a number of Arts & Health initiatives through its Small Grants, Public Art and Project Lottery programmes, working with a range of stakeholders in a variety of settings.

Funding Objectives

- Promote health and well-being through cultural access, including arts participation, arts production and presentation, and enhancement of the arts environment;
- increase access and participation opportunities within healthcare settings, including service users, healthcare staff, carers and visitors;
- support arts activities developed on a preventative health basis and delivered in a variety of settings, including schools, community centres and arts venues;
- increase arts activities focusing on promoting positive mental health and emotional well-being and targeting vulnerable older people and young people at risk;

- support activities which advocate for best practice within the Arts & Health sector and place Northern Ireland at the forefront of international Arts & Health practice;
- support the development of research-based projects that examine the impact of Arts & Health practice;
- increase opportunities for artists and arts organisations to work in Arts & Health practice;
- support projects that promote and strengthen partnership working between the arts and health sectors and the development of shared understandings, resources and responsibilities;
- support best practice through training, support, advice and dissemination of information.

Additional Information

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

www.artscouncil-ni.org/about-us/strategy

Art Form and Specialist Area Policies, 2013-2018

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



**Alternative formats of this publication
may be available on request.**

For further information please contact:

**Arts Council of Northern Ireland,
MacNeice House, 77 Malone Road, Belfast BT9 6AQ.
T. 028 9038 5200 F. 028 9066 1715
E. info@artscouncil-ni.org
W. www.artscouncil-ni.org**