



Arts Council of Northern

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

**LITERATURE**



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## Preamble

The Literature 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 Literature Policy

Writing, story-telling and reading are activities at the core of a society's creative life.

The art form itself is not fixed, confined between covers. It is in evolution. Graphic novels, e-literature, hypertext, performance literature – and other variations – help grow the art into new expressive media to stand with novels, stories and poems.

Skill in the written and the spoken word fosters self-confidence in individuals and groups, bolsters cultural self-esteem, broadcasts self-expression, binds communities.

Literary publishers promote excellence, guiding authors at the highest level of public exposure. Magazines and journals, appearing regularly, encourage new talent, helping to develop a sense of value and pushing those engaged in writing to stretch their limits.

In this most public art form of literature, people are attracted as an audience to literary events and performances, and as a readership in more intimate environments.

Whether as audiences or as readers, people with an investment in literature help create an economy within which writers flourish. These two constituencies are there to be enticed, seduced and secured by a vibrant and innovative literary culture.

Reading is an integral part of the writing process – writers are also readers and are also an audience for other writers.

Writers from Northern Ireland have laid down an enviable legacy of excellence. The development of new generations of writers is a vital way of building on that practice. Being alert to the qualities and themes of that excellence can also provide valuable source material for contemporary Northern Ireland writing.

In common with the writing profession throughout the world, the writer in Northern Ireland can be an artist, an entertainer, a recorder, a performer, a conscience. Writers within Northern Ireland seek to be respected as such. Though most writing occurs in a non-professional capacity, writers can earn the respect of peers, the acknowledgement of society, and enjoy the creative benefits of living the life of a writer.

In continuing to refine our understanding of the art form, the Arts Council with its clients, stakeholders and partners, is currently reviewing the sector and its needs with a view to developing a new art form strategy to inform Council in the remainder of this decade.

## Funding Objectives

- maintain and increase quality book-publishing opportunities for writers and writers' groups;
- increase the occasions and opportunities for writers to develop a track-record of published work and build a career as a writer through supporting magazines and journals;
- boost marketing and promotional capacities in the sector;
- promote partnerships by supporting joint projects across the sector;
- improve communication and cohesion by aiding regular sectoral forums;
- foster increased professionalism among literary practitioners by supporting individuals such as writers and editors;
- support the creation and development of new work by writers;

- promote the establishment of reading support networks, databases, resources and training;
- ensure that the work of writers from Northern Ireland is showcased by assisting, and promoting, literary festivals and innovative programmes, tours and events;
- raise the profile of Northern Ireland writing and literary production by assisting initiatives aimed at presenting the best, both at home and abroad.

## 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)

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Community Arts	Visual Arts
Crafts & Applied Arts	Voluntary Arts
Dance	Youth Arts



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