



Arts Council of Northern

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

PUBLIC ART



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Awarding funds from
 The National Lottery®

www.artscouncil-ni.org

Preamble

The Public Art 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 Public Art

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland considers public art to be works of art in any media created for and in the context of the civic realm, be it the built or natural environment. Essentially, it is site-specific art outside the gallery setting.

Though the commissioning of public art in Northern Ireland was relatively slow to mature, there has been considerable development since the 1990s, thanks in no small part to National Lottery funding since 1995. Many works in the public realm – from single objects to sculpture trails and from integrated art projects to community- and process-based projects – are documented in the Arts Council's *Public Art Handbook for Northern Ireland*.

The integration of commissioned artworks in new public buildings has now become markedly prevalent, especially in healthcare settings, where the creative vision, quality and sensitivity of much of the work have been notable. The benefits of both process and object were recognized in Health Estates' formal adoption of a *Percent for Art* policy for new capital projects. The governmental *Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland Policy* (2006) also embraces the integration of new artwork in capital building and landscape projects and makes it an objective for government departments to provide for greater collaboration with artists from the outset of projects.

The Council similarly promotes the inclusion of public art in urban and rural spaces, and in regeneration projects and new build and refurbishment capital schemes. It welcomes and encourages collaboration between artists and architects/design professionals, and advocates the development of public art strategies.

The Council embraces a wide range of media and art forms as public art – painting, sculpture, photography, installation, video and emergent media, temporary works, crafts and applied arts.

The Council can advise on all aspects of the commissioning process from planning the commission, developing the brief, selecting artists, and drawing up contracts; for a clear articulation see the *Public Art Handbook*. When planning a commissioned artwork, the commissioning body should contact the Arts Council before any work is undertaken if it is hoping to apply for funding.

Although there are different approaches to commissioning artists – such as limited competitions or direct commissions – it is Arts Council policy to prioritise projects which are decided through an openly advertised application process.

Funding Objectives

- give new employment/commissioning opportunities to artists;
- contribute to creative urban and rural regeneration and enhance the public realm and built and natural environment;
- foster and promote our artistic heritage;
- encourage and nurture community participation and civic pride;
- make the arts widely accessible;
- encourage the development and transfer of artistic skills;
- encourage greater critical debate and dialogue and promote best practice.

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



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