



Arts Council of Northern

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

YOUTH ARTS



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Awarding funds from
 **The National Lottery**®

www.artscouncil-ni.org

Preamble

The Youth Arts 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 Youth Arts Policy

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland recognises the excellent and challenging work undertaken by artists, arts organisations and others in the development of Youth Arts activity for children and young people aged 0-25 years.

Children and young people participate in the arts across all art forms and in contexts ranging from arts venues, festivals, schools, colleges and universities, and including libraries, health care settings, museums, youth clubs and community and voluntary groups. Their engagement sometimes takes place alongside adults but it occurs primarily through organisations, programmes and initiatives dedicated to them.

Council funding contributes to increasing the participation of young people in the arts as audiences, performers and creators, and to promoting the development of skills, training and development initiatives.

Council's support and resourcing of Youth Arts is based on the knowledge that the arts are a means to improving quality of life, enabling self-expression, enhancing learning and employability and furthering the exploration of personal and social identity for children and young people as they grow and develop.

The Council recognises that the arts are central to future policy for children and young people in educational, social and economic development.

The Youth Arts sector in Northern Ireland has developed significantly in the past ten years, enhancing the appetite of young people for opportunities to experience the arts. Engaging in the arts enriches children and young people's lives, enhances social cohesion and opens up personal and collective dialogue while providing the opportunity to learn skills which are increasingly important to our economy.

The Council recognises that the arts are every young person's entitlement and wants every young person to have the opportunity to experience them. Early exposure, particularly through the education system, plays an important role in the development of our young people; working with our partners, we will maximise opportunities for early arts engagement.

The arts have the capacity to support and enhance social equity, interdependence and empowerment. The Council supports young people in deploying the arts for social change and asserting themselves as artists and active culture makers within their own communities.

The Council is committed to furthering young people's participation in quality arts practice, in a respectful, safe and enabling environment. It also recognises that the way young people are engaging with the arts is changing and appreciates the need to develop means of supporting engagement through emergent creative platforms, including digital media.

Funding Objectives

- support organisations and projects that are focused on establishing the highest standards in Youth Arts practice across all sectors;
- initiate and resource partnerships between arts organisations and other interested agencies and organisations to support Youth Arts;
- extend support across the broad spectrum of Youth Arts activity, acknowledging the increasing cultural diversity of our society and the role of the arts in exploring, expressing and celebrating diversity;
- develop quality arts-based programmes for both mainstream and special education with a focus on disadvantage;
- develop arts organisations' capacities to include young people in the planning, implementation and evaluation of artistic projects;
- enhance opportunities for young people to engage directly with the arts as active participants, audience members, advocates and decision makers at a strategic and operational level;
- support programmes of arts activity that broaden the range of opportunities aimed at increasing participation and quality Youth Arts experiences for marginalised and vulnerable young people;

- encourage applications which address the professional development and information needs of emerging artists, career artists, arts organisations and other interested organisations that support Youth Arts practice.

Additional Information

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

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

Arts Council of Northern Ireland Youth Arts Strategy 2013 2017

http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/images/uploads/publications/documents/Youth_Arts_Strategy_2013_2017.pdf

Art Form and Specialist Area Policies, 2013-2018

www.artscouncil-ni.org/the-arts

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