ARTS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN IRELAND

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME
GUIDANCE NOTES

THIS PROGRAMME IS OPEN FOR PROJECTS COMMENCING
1ST OCTOBER 2016 ONWARDS

Application must be made on-line at www.artscouncil-ni.org/funding

Please Note: Due to the current demand for Small Grants funding, the maximum grant is unlikely to exceed £5,000.
ABOUT THE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

The Arts Council has designed this programme to encourage you to develop and deliver your ideas, linked to your artistic needs and to your future plans.

The aim of this programme is to assist organisations to deliver arts projects which contribute to the growth of arts in the community for new and existing audiences and which reflect the diversity of Northern Ireland’s society and culture.

We want to support activities which benefit the people of Northern Ireland or that help arts organisations in Northern Ireland carry out their work.

All applications should fit within the objectives stated in the Council’s five year plan and within its artform policies. Both the five year plan and the artform policies are available on the website www.artscouncil-ni.org and you should read these before completing the application form.

Note: It is the case that the Council’s programmes, priorities and criteria can change. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are using the most up to date guidance notes and application forms. If you are thinking of making an application please check the Council’s website to make sure that you are using the current guidance notes.

WHO CAN APPLY?

We welcome applications from the widest possible range of organisations. You will be required to provide proof that you have a legal constitution.

- Registered charities and other organisations which cannot distribute profits
- Groups of organisations working together to deliver specific projects
- Organisations currently in receipt of an Arts Council Annual funding Programme award may apply for:
  - new commissions
  - equipment
  - projects of an exceptional nature which were not anticipated at the time of their AFP application
- formally constituted parent-teacher associations

WHO CANNOT APPLY?

- Individuals or Sole traders
- Commercial trading companies
- Companies that exist to distribute a profit
- Statutory authorities or organisations governed by statutory authorities i.e. ELB schools.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

You can apply for an award between £500 and £10,000 for a project.
WHAT YOU CAN APPLY FOR

- Costs of artists and tutors (including fees, accommodation, subsistence, travel). You must supply the CVs/biography/history of artistic practice
- Materials
- Travel expenses within Northern Ireland
- Equipment hire
- Volunteer expenses
- Venue hire for workshops, training, rehearsals and performance
- Publicity and marketing costs
- Evaluation costs
- Vehicles for arts organisations
- Participation, education and outreach work in film and media and film festivals.
- New Work commissions
- Equipment purchase

WHAT YOU CANNOT APPLY FOR

- Costs that will have been incurred before we make a decision on your application
- Travel to events outside Northern Ireland
- Events which promote religious or political views

CAN YOU HOLD MORE THAN ONE AWARD?

You can hold only one Small Grants Programme award at a time. An award is not finished until we receive your End of Project Report.

HOW TO APPLY

You MUST apply online. We will not accept applications in hard copy, by email or by fax.

Online applications may be edited, saved and returned to at any time until you submit. You MUST submit ALL mandatory enclosures associated with the application at the same time, ie. at the point at which you submit your online application. These enclosures are listed within the online application and also in the sample application document (available for download on our website).

The online application allows you to upload and attach the necessary enclosures to your application. All such documents must be in Word, Excel or pdf format. We cannot accept documents in other formats. Total size of documents should not exceed 25 Mb.

All of the information you provide will be held on computer. This information will be used for the administration of applications and grants, for producing statistics and information on successful applicants. Remember to keep a copy of the completed form and enclosures for your own records.

WHEN SHOULD YOU APPLY?

Decision meetings are held on a monthly basis except August.

- You should apply at least 3 months before the start of your event (applications which start within 3 months of the application date will not be accepted)
- We will make a decision within 2 months of receiving your application.
- The extra month is to give you time to read and agree the letter of offer and comply with any pre-commencement clauses and receive your letter or commencement.
ASSESSMENT AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

- The Arts Council will acknowledge receipt of the online application.

- The Arts Council will provide you with a unique reference number and the name of the Arts Development Officer who will be responsible for the application.

- The application will be assessed by the Arts Development Officer. This process will be based on the information contained in the application form as well as your organisation’s management of any previous awards.

- Applications are scored as follows:
  - Artistic Practice (max 13 marks), including quality of production, artists
  - Public Benefit (max 15 marks), including under-represented local authority area, contribution to Arts Council strategy/artform policy and contribution to the growth of arts in the community
  - Financial Viability (max 7 marks), including grant compliance history; value for money; partnership funding
  - Project Management (max 5 marks), including appropriate planning and management

- Applications are moderated at a meeting attended by all assessing officers, chaired by a Director. This meeting will make decisions on applications.

- Decision meetings are held on a monthly basis except August.

- The total amount of funding available to the scheme is £500,000 per year. This roughly equates to £45,000 per meeting. Because of these limited funds it is not always possible to fund all applications recommended by officers. Those applications achieving the highest scores will receive funding until there are no funds remaining.

- The final decision will be communicated to you by letter.

- Successful applicants will be issued with a contract outlining the conditions attached to the award and the purposes for which the award can be used. You will not be able to start your project until you have met certain pre-conditions of grant and received a letter of commencement from the Arts Council. You should take this into account when planning your project.

- If your application is rejected, the Council will provide you with detailed reasons for the rejection.
OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

- **Publicity**
  Full listings of all the grants we award are published in our Annual Report and on our website. You will be required to acknowledge Arts Council of Northern Ireland funding in all your publicity. Failure to credit the Arts Council of Northern Ireland will affect payment of your grant.

- **Openness and accountability**
  Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 any information held by us (which will include your application) is potentially accessible by the public.

  Information supplied by you will be held in manual files and on a computer-based grants management system. Reports from the information you supply and from comments made on your application by staff members and external assessors, where relevant, are also on both manual and computer-based systems. The information you supply will be made available to those assessing any grant applications you make.

  By submitting your application you waive any right to raise any type of proceedings against the Arts Council of Northern Ireland as a consequence of, or in contemplation of, any disclosure of the contents of your application in response to an information request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

- **Data protection**
  Data held on our grants management system is used for all of the following purposes: statistical reporting, application assessing, accounting purposes and for contacting you. The details of your grant will be public information (see Openness and Accountability). However, any personal details will be held within our grants management system and our paper files, and accessed only by our staff, appointed auditors and individuals or organisations that may help us assess or monitor grants. You have a right under the Data Protection Act 1998 to access the data held on you by Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

  We view your signature on your application form as acceptance of the use of your data as outlined above.

- **Level of fees for artists and personnel:**
  - In line with other Arts Council programmes, we will not normally contribute more than £35 per hour for workshop session.
  - In some cases, the calibre of the artist you want to employ may mean you wish the Arts Council to contribute more than the normal contribution above. If this is the case you must give us the reasons why within your application.