

DESK REVIEW OF ACNI'S FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
FINAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

THE PLAN

Ambitions for the Arts: A Five Year Strategic Plan for the Arts in Northern Ireland 2013-2018 pursued ACNI's mission of placing the Arts at the heart of Northern Ireland's social, economic and creative life with these stated ambitions:

- To make excellent art accessible to all.
- To support individual artists create work of excellence.
- To core fund arts organisations.
- To help arts organisations deliver benefits to the community.
- To build partnerships.
- To support skills development.
- To encourage voluntary activities in the arts.

The three themes of the strategy are to:

- Champion the Arts
- Promote Access
- Build a Sustainable Sector

The strategy followed a period of strong achievement. For example, in the previous plan period 74% of Arts Council funding (£40.7m.) had gone directly into the most deprived areas. The percentage of adults reported participating in arts event increased from 26% in 2009 to 30% in 2013. Derry/Londonderry became the UK's inaugural City of Culture in 2013.

In a briefing conversation on August 24th, ACNI asked me to use the Ambitions from the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan as my chapter headings, which I have done.

CONTEXT

In the period of this review the arts faced exceptional stresses:

- Government investment in the Arts fell by 30% in cash terms over the six years of 2012 to 2017, from £14.1m to £9.8m, figure 1, closer to 40% when inflation is taken into account.
- National Lottery funders fell from £10.9m in 2014/15 to £9.1m in 2016-17, with further decline forecast.

- The reduction increased the gap between ACNI and other UK arts councils. In 2017-18 the Arts Council of Northern Ireland received £5.31 per capita compared with £10.03 in Wales and £12.79 in the Republic of Ireland.
- Changes in the education system, including the focus on STEM, are reducing the number of students studying arts subjects¹.
- The student loan system reduced the number of young people from lower socio economic groups going to university, so complicating the work that was being done by the Arts Councils to broaden recruitment and diversity in the arts².
- The absence of a functioning Assembly Executive at Stormont has weakened public accountability in decision-making.

However, societal changes, which I summarise in my book *Imagining Arts Organizations for New Audiences*³, are increasing the opportunities for, and need for, the arts:

- The Creative Industries is a growth sector with potentially greater resilience to AI and national relocation.
- Young people are increasingly changing from a value system around possessions to one around experiences.
- Reported mental health problems became increasingly prevalent among young people in a period that coincided with the reduction in formal arts engagement (as well as other factors like austerity)⁴.
- Beyond the creative industries, companies tend to describe creativity as one of the skills that young people most need to thrive in environments that are subject to every increasing change.
- Digital technologies are increasing the creative resources available to non-specialists.

THE BRIEF

My brief is to produce an undertake an independent review of the evidence based on secondary sources that:

- Produces a project initiation document of the conceptual framework for the review. Instead I produced a draft final report.
- Analyses qualitative and quantitative data provided by the Arts Council.
- Focuses on the Intercultural, Arts and Older People's and ARTiculate programmes.

¹ The data for England shows a clear fall. Entries to Arts Subjects at Key Stage 4, Rebecca Johnes, September 2017, Education Policy Institute, <https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/EPI-Entries-to-arts-KS4-1.pdf>

² Does Student Loan Debt Deter Higher Education Participation? New Evidence From England Claire Callender, Geoff Mason,

³ <http://www.phf.org.uk/publications/imagining-arts-organizations-for-new-audiences/>.

⁴ The Princes Trust Marquarie Youth Index, 2018,

- Consults with the senior management team.
- Produces a report for internal use.
- Gives a chance to comment on the draft report.
- Provides weekly emails showing progress.

This review should not be seen as a full account of the public benefit of ACNI. For example a comprehensive analysis would include not just ACNI's programmes but also where the Arts Council has added value by working in partnership with other government departments' programmes.

TO CORE FUND ARTS ORGANISATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Specific elements of the strategic plan are to:

- Support a strong arts infrastructure that provides the strategic platform to deliver strengthened public and community engagement.
- Protect the health and well-being of key arts organisations, including encouraging an entrepreneurial spirit – so as to improve their long-term creative and financial future.

THE NUMBER OF ANNUALLY FUNDED ORGANISATIONS HAS BEEN SUSTAINED

ACNI funded 108 Annually Funded Organisations in 2014-15, 109 in 2015-2016 and 106 in 2016-2017.

ACNI has managed to fund across the artforms, although the number of organisations funded in Literature and Dance leaves little room for further reduction.

FIGURE 1: NUMBER OF ANNUALLY FUNDED ORGANISATIONS BY ARTFORM (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	%	2015-2016	%	2016-2017	%
Visual Arts	21	19%	21	19%	21	20%
Combined	33	31%	34	31%	34	32%
Literature	5	5%	5	5%	4	4%
Music	15	14%	15	14%	14	13%
Traditional Arts	13	12%	13	12%	12	11%
Dance	5	5%	5	5%	5	5%
Drama	16	15%	16	15%	16	15%
All artforms	108		109		106	

FUNDING TO ANNUALLY FUNDED ORGANISATIONS HAS FALLEN

The funding to Annually Funded Organisations has fallen by some 38% during this time period.

FIGURE 2: AMOUNT AWARDED TO ANNUAL FUNDED ORGANISATIONS BY ARTFORM (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	%	2015-2016	%	2016-2017	%
Visual Arts	1,640,440	10%	1,503,783	11%	1,522,911	11%
Combined	6,243,902	40%	5,856,611	41%	5,476,306	39%
Literature	753,983	5%	441,749	3%	302,546	2%
Music	3,506,257	22%	3,204,261	22%	3,156,712	23%
Traditional Arts	642,358	4%	673,955	5%	664,240	5%
Dance	402,513	3%	386,906	3%	384,381	3%
Drama	2,579,686	16%	2,194,877	15%	2,408,489	17%
All Artforms	15,769,140	100%	14,262,143	100%	13,915,585	100%

THE FALL HAS BEEN GREATER FOR SMALL ORGANISATIONS

The percentage of funding going to small organisations has fallen, in part due to the desire to maintain the critical mass of flagship large organisations, which might be called the orchestra effect.

FIGURE 3: AMOUNT AWARDED TO ANNUAL FUNDED ORGANISATIONS BY SIZE (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	%	2015-2016	%	2016-2017	%
Small ⁵	3,122,457	20%	3,058,547	21%	2,436,692	18%
Medium	6,744,811	43%	6,076,159	43%	6,353,669	46%
Large	5,901,872	37%	5,127,436	36%	5,125,225	37%
All Sizes	15,769,140	100%	14,262,143	100%	13,915,585	100%

Professor Robert Flanagan, at Stanford University, produced an analysis showing that no symphony orchestra in the world would be financially viable on its own⁶.

FIGURE 4: AMOUNT AWARDED TO THE ULSTER ORCHESTRA (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	%	2015-2016	%	2016-2017	%
Ulster Orchestra	1,879,568	12%	1,779,568	12%	1,779,568	13%

ANNUALLY FUNDED ORGANISATIONS ARE BEING PROACTIVE IN REDUCING DEPENDENCY ON ACNI

Analysis of the AFS Finance Data suggests that, as well as the Annual Funding Programme, the total funding from other programmes to Annually Funded organisations has gone down, but the organisations' dependency on ACNI has also gone down. Funding from An

⁵Small <£200,000; medium = £200,000 to 800,000; large > 800,000.

⁶The Perilous Life of Symphony Orchestras, 2012, Yale University Press

Chomhairle Ealaíon, Trusts and Foundations and Earned Income have all gone up, which demonstrate that organisations are taking actions to diversify their income.

FIGURE 5: FINANCIAL ANALYSIS FROM THE ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: INCOME (CATEGORIES AND % OF TOTAL INCOME) (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	%	2015-2016	%	2016-2017	%
Total ACNI Funding	15,769,140	31%	14,262,143	31%	13,915,585	28%
An Chomhairle Ealaíon	1,310,872	3%	1,261,142	3%	2,013,377	4%
NI Government departments or agencies	4,701,242	9%	3,649,375	8%	3,918,943	8%
NI Local authority funding	3,337,388	7%	3,449,274	7%	3,153,326	6%
European funding programmes	432,424	1%	394,319	1%	168,333	0%
Other UK public sources	2,249,773	4%	767,274	2%	1,520,680	3%
Other RoI public sources	429,198	1%	453,530	1%	422,319	1%
Total Earned Income	18,735,555	37%	18,921,995	40%	20,420,100	42%
Total Trusts and Foundations	3,172,186	6%	3,599,621	8%	3,403,425	7%
Total income	50,137,779	100%	46,759,044	100%	48,936,091	100%

ANNUALLY FUNDED ORGANISATIONS ARE SHOWING SIGNS OF FINANCIAL STRESS

Turning to costs, I have picked out categories of discretionary and long-term expenditure that are indicators of financial stress in the organisations. The figures show that arts organisations have experienced a rise in overheads, as would be expected, but have still managed to safeguard fees to artists. However, publicity/marketing/promotion are falling, which would be expected to have a long-term effect on audiences. Building maintenance seems low across the whole portfolio, which might be storing up problems for the future. Expenditure on training is not recorded in the survey.

FIGURE 6: FINANCIAL ANALYSIS FROM THE ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: EXPENDITURE (SELECT CATEGORIES AND AVERAGE) (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	Average	2015-2016	Average	2016-2017	Average
Overheads	5,074,202	46,983	4,881,819	44,787	5,263,042	49,651
Maintenance	1,226,138	11,353	1,055,807	9,686	1,256,568	11,854
Artists costs	17,134,055	158,649	15,723,667	144,254	17,236,636	162,610
Publicity/Marketing	1,744,206	16,150	1,736,562	15,932	1,690,609	15,949
Total programming costs	26,315,911	243,666	25,329,758	232,383	27,274,200	257,304

To give some perspective on these figures, I calculated chosen areas of spend as a percentage of total income/turnover. Analysis of Arts Council England's Portfolio

organisations suggests an average spend of 5%, which confirms the impression that marketing spend in NI is low⁷.

FIGURE 7: FINANCIAL ANALYSIS FROM THE ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: EXPENDITURE (SELECT CATEGORIES AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INCOME) (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

Expenditure	2014-2015	% of total income	2015-2016	% of total income	2016-2017	% of total income
Overheads	5,074,202	10%	4,881,819	10%	5,263,042	11%
Maintenance	1,226,138	2%	1,055,807	2%	1,256,568	3%
Artists costs	17,134,055	34%	15,723,667	34%	17,236,636	35%
Publicity/Marketing	1,744,206	3%	1,736,562	4%	1,690,609	3%
Total programming costs	26,315,911	52%	25,329,758	54%	27,274,200	56%

CONCLUSION

This objective/achievement, which is stated at the activity level, was undoubtedly met. ACNI has maintained a portfolio of core-funded organisations. The funded group of arts organisations is working to reduce dependency on ACNI, which will be supported by the proposed Resilience programme developed with Belfast City Council and by the Blue print for the Future programme. The reduction in funding has caused arts organisations to cut back on discretionary funding and investment which might be expected to have negative consequences for the number and profile of audiences and their quality of experience in the short, medium and long-term.

⁷ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-data/our-npos-and-annual-data-survey>

TO HELP ARTS ORGANISATIONS DELIVER BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

Specific elements of the strategic plan are to:

- Support arts organisations to be innovative and resourceful, to share, and to collaborate.
- Reach new audiences especially people who are disabled, diverse, older people, marginalised children and youth, through dedicated programmes of outreach and partnership.
- Use investment in capital to provide a platform for building new audiences for the arts, strengthening the cultural offer and increasing diversity.

ANNUALLY FUNDED ORGANISATIONS HAVE INCREASED THEIR LEVEL OF ACTIVITY OVER THE PLAN PERIOD

The Annual Funding Survey gives data on the reported activity and audiences of the arts organisations. The number of performances has been maintained, with a drop in year 2 and return in year 3.

FIGURE 8: ANALYSIS OF ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: PERFORMANCES (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Visual Arts	71	81	22
Combined	4,983	4,403	4,228
Literature	140	80	172
Music	721	471	610
Traditional Arts ⁸	536	702	1,466
Dance	169	126	156
Drama	1,462	1,622	1,622
All artforms	8,082	7,485	8,276

The number of participatory activities has increased. However, it is important to note that number does not equate to quality or impact. As our account of good practice in the Evaluation of the Creative Schools Partnership Programme explains, depth on engagement (repeated attendance from a smaller number of participants) has been shown to have deeper and more sustainable impact than a more shallow approach.

⁸ The increase for Traditional Arts in 2016-17 is due to the Armagh Rhymers reclassifying their work from participation to performances.

FIGURE 9: ANALYSIS OF ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITY (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Visual Arts	1,334	1,198	1,132
Combined	18,676	19,901	19,293
Literature	307	1,352	1,995
Music	6,293	4,298	5,405
Traditional Arts	3,511	3,735	4,013
Dance	1,951	1,999	1,652
Drama	5,627	6,462	5,548
All artforms	37,699	38,945	39,038

The number of exhibitions has increased in the analysis period.

FIGURE 10: ANALYSIS OF ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: EXHIBITIONS (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Visual Arts	218	144	217
Combined	308	207	302
Literature	15	6	7
Music	4	310	230 ⁹
Traditional Arts	22	29	8
Dance	5	5	19
Drama	5	19	38
All artforms	577	720	821

PARTICIPATION HAS INCREASED

The number of participants has risen considerably, possibly because arts organisations are increasingly working for funders who are unaware of the depth versus breadth principle.

FIGURE 11: ANALYSIS OF ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: PARTICIPANTS (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Visual Arts	54,037	54,958	187,805
Combined	266,274	242,080	254,902
Literature	18,368	23,180	40,622
Music	33,941	39,424	48,180
Traditional Arts	34,098	36,935	266,780 ¹⁰

⁹ The figures of 310 and 230 forexhibitions come from the Nerve Centre, whose activity included touring the Lego exhibition and exhibitions at Ebrington Barracks as part of Nerve Visual.

¹⁰ The figure of 266,780 is mainly because of an event with an estimated attendance of 206,116 people.

Dance	14,979	15,310	15,777
Drama	44,695	43,557	49,179
All artforms	466,392	455,444	863,245

BUT AUDIENCE NUMBERS HAVE FALLEN

Consistent with my prediction from the analysis of expenditure, audience numbers have fallen.

FIGURE 12: ANALYSIS OF ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: PERFORMANCE AUDIENCES (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Visual Arts	38,609 ¹¹	18,806	354
Combined	2,509,343	2,003,934	1,529,374
Literature	21,897	3,172	11,327
Music	148,544	96,778	175,517
Traditional Arts	301,472	396,205	321,856
Dance	24,552	9,395	36,973
Drama	174,915	198,688	258,641
All artforms	3,219,332	2,726,978	2,334,042

The number of exhibition visitors has fallen, especially in the visual arts. This figure is less easy to interpret than for performances, as the exhibition planning cycle is longer and so figures are more affected by the timing of data gathering, but the trend seems clear.

FIGURE 13: ANALYSIS OF ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: EXHIBITION VISITORS (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Visual Arts	390,053	221,574	167,241
Combined	809,147	600,715	386,981
Literature	19,555	18,289	19,554
Music	10,580	41,300	43,059
Traditional Arts	7,430	47,720	2,045
Dance	2,983	9,280	825
Drama	909	2,159	8,635
All artforms	1,240,657	941,037	628,340

¹¹ The figures for visual arts performances are because organisations like Flaxart Studios and Photoworks are classified as visual arts organisations but actually deliver a wider programme. The Dance exhibitions for 2015-16 are from DU Dance (a photographic exhibition at Belfast City Hall, Crescent Arts Centre and Theatre in the Mill run alongside an international youth dance festival, that featured photography by Jo Fox). The figure for 2014-15 for Dance are for Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company (a one-off exhibition called Without documenting a 24 month dance project for young people organized as part of the City of Culture).

OVERALL ARTS ATTENDANCE IS STARTING TO FALL

The trend between 2011 and 2016 is for a gradual fall in attendance, after many years of steady increase¹². The main barriers cited by respondents were lack of time or interest. Notwithstanding this, 77.4% of the population engaged with the arts in 2016. The 2013-14 Business Plan had a target of 80% of the population engaging with the arts, which was not met. Note that this figure is nonetheless higher than for England: where the 2015/16 figure was 76.1% (although the definitions are not identical, figure from Taking Part¹³).

FIGURE 14: ARTS ENGAGEMENT (THE GENERAL POPULATION SURVEY)

Indicator	2011	2014	2016	Significant change since 2011
Has engaged with the arts in the last year	82.2	78.9	77.4	Yes
Attendance				
Not at all in the last 12 months	19.9	22.7	25.4	Yes
1+ in the last 12 months	80.5	77.3	74.6	Yes
1+ in the last 12 months (excluding cinema)	72.9	69.1	66.2	Yes
3+ times in the last 12 months	49.0	43.0	40.4	Yes
Participation				
Not at all in the last 12 months	70.3	69.7	72.7	No
1+ in the last 12 months	29.7	30.3	27.3	No
3+ in the last 12 months	5.7	4.4	2.5	Yes
Engagement by Index of deprivation				
1- Least deprived	87.3	85.9	85.8	No
2	87.0	82.1	78.0	Yes
3	78.6	78.8	76.7	No
4	81.1	76.6	70.9	Yes
5 - Most deprived	75.9	69.8	74.4	No
Engagement by Urban / Rural Classification				
Urban	82.5	78.2	80.8	No
Rural	81.7	80.1	71.1	Yes

¹² The data points reported are limited by the time periods of the General Population Survey, which is unfortunately not carried out each year.

¹³

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/495586/Taking_Part_2015-16_Quarter_2_Report_2.pdf

ENGAGEMENT FROM PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY FELL AFTER 2011 BUT THEN PARTLY RECOVERED

NISRA and ACNI's General Population Survey 2016 found a general increase in attendance and participation of disabled respondents between 2004 and 2011, reaching a peak in 2011 of 64%. Engagement of disabled respondents dropped in 2014 but recovered to 61% in 2016.

ACNI HAS MAINTAINED A PORTFOLIO OF TARGETED PROGRAMMES

ACNI has maintained programmes like the Arts Development Fund, Lottery Projects, and SIAP from the previous funding cycle, as well as introducing innovative and important new programmes such as Creative Schools Partnerships, Arts and Older People and the Intercultural programme (see Appendix Two).

FIGURE 15: NUMBER AND VALUE OF TARGETED PROGRAMMES: PREVIOUS FUNDING CYCLE (GIFTS DATABASE)

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Number of targeted programmes	14	18	20	18	20
Total funding £	16,791,956	31,493,543	17,550,334	18,495,889	24,530,422

FIGURE 16: FIGURE 17: NUMBER AND VALUE OF TARGETED PROGRAMMES: CURRENT FUNDING CYCLE (GIFTS DATABASE)

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Number of targeted programmes	17	19	12	15	12
Total funding £	20,265,784	22,387,415	17,108,259	18,016,002	18,504,356

DEDICATED PROGRAMMES REVEAL STRONG IMPACT ON PARTICIPANTS AND COMMUNITIES

Details are given in Appendix One.

Evaluations suggest outcomes for participants include:

- Enhanced mental health.
- Reduced isolation.
- Increased confidence.
- Increased interest in learning.

- Reduced isolation.
- Professional development for teachers, care workers and other partner staff.
- Increased community cohesion.

“Arts-led initiatives provided a safe, non-threatening and positive space where individuals and groups were able to explore similarities, differences and new ways of being and working together.” Intercultural programme evaluation, p4.

ACNI HAS EMPLOYED RIGOROUS EVALUATION TO EXPLORE IMPACTS

Evaluations have used standardised measures such as the Loneliness Scale and Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) to gather evidence. Further details are given in Appendix One.

CONCLUSION

Annually Funded arts organisations have worked hard to maintain their level of activity across the analysis period. However, audience numbers have fallen, perhaps because of the low level of marketing/publicity/promotion and cuts in other overheads. This combination could be described as an unfortunate or even a false economy. Reductions in funding make it difficult for ACNI to meet The Programme for Government Indicator 27: “Improve cultural participation. The percentage engaging with arts/cultural activities in the past year.”

Participation activity has increased, but this has not helped to drive an increase in audience numbers. These figures suggest that Annually Funded organisations should be supported to concentrate on depth rather than breadth in their participative work, and to more strongly link projects to audience development.

ACNI’s programmes have been innovative. ACNI was the first Arts Council in the UK to focus on older people.

The programmes delivered by ACNI have a special significance and urgency because of their unique ability to reduce sectarianism by bringing participants and communities together to share joyful and constructive experiences.

TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS TO CREATE WORK OF EXCELLENCE

INTRODUCTION

Specific elements of the strategic plan are to:

- Showcase the work produced by NI artists worldwide to demonstrate that the extraordinary quality and range of goes beyond what might be expected of a small region with a population of 1.8million people.
- Support artists' career development through the grant and residency programmes, including the Artist Career Enhancement Scheme (ACES) and expand the range of international opportunities for artists.
- Encourage the development of new work through programmes such as Building Peace Through The Arts – Re-Imaging Communities Programme, the Arts and Older People Programme.
- Support business development support through the Creative Industries Innovation Fund.
- Encourage others in the public and private sectors to commission artists' work for schools, hospitals, the public realm and major capital projects.

SIAP FUNDING HAS BEEN MAINTAINED

ACNI made 1,083 awards in the period 2014-2018. Activities included travel, commissions, professional development and partnership development. The amount of funding was higher in 2017-18 than in 2014-15.

The number of schemes being delivered under the SIAP programme have stayed relatively constant year on year. However the number of rounds has fallen from three to one over the strategy period, which has reduced the responsiveness of the programme. Furthermore, a benchmarking exercise (see Appendix Two) found that the average award in Northern Ireland is less than a third of the average in ROI and one fifth of the award in England.

FIGURE 18: ANALYSIS OF GIFTS: SIAP AWARDS (GIFTS DATABASE)

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of SIAP awards	279	232	305	267
Amount	545,176	588,700	681,607	598,382
Average award	1,954	2,538	2,235	2,241

CONCLUSION

ACNI has maintained a diverse portfolio of support to artists through SIAP. In practice, all of ACNI's work is likely to benefit artists. Financial Analysis from the Annual Funding Survey showed that money going to artists has been maintained over the funding period despite the funding cuts.

TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

Specific elements of the strategic plan are to:

- Maintain existing partnerships developed for Re-Imaging Communities Programme, the Creative Industries Innovation Fund, the Arts and Older People Programme, and the Inter-cultural Arts Programme, as well as the British Council, and Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
- Open up horizons through new partnerships, in key areas such as cultural tourism, education and learning, health and wellbeing, inclusion and community building and the economy.
- Foster strong east/west relations with the other Arts Councils of the UK, delivering benefits in key areas such as Cross Border Touring, exchange of ideas, values and practices.

THE BREADTH OF PARTNERSHIPS HAS BEEN STRONG

ACNI's partnerships have operated at the strategic and operational level.

Evaluation reports show strong partnership across the education, health and community sectors:

PROGRAMME	PARTNERS
Articulate The Young People & Wellbeing Programme	Public Health Agency Strategic Suicide Prevention Implementation Groups Schools Family Trusts Health Fora YMCA Addiction services
Arts and Older People Programme	Public Health Agency Baring Foundation Care homes Senior citizens' fora Local clubs and groups Churches Residents' associations Councils
Building Peace through the Arts: Re-Imaging Communities	IFI SEUPB The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

	Northern Ireland Housing Executive Department of Social Development Rural Community Network NI Community Relations Council Association of Local Authority Arts Officers Community and voluntary groups
Creative Schools Partnership Programme	The Education Authority Urban Villages Initiative Schools Local businesses Universities
Intercultural Programme	Community Arts Partnership Local groups and community organisations
Creative and Cultural Fund, Belfast	Belfast City Council Community groups
Local Government Challenge Fund	Local authorities
Thrive (Audience Development)	Arts and Business

Annually Funded Organisations have also developed partnerships. In 2016-17, more than half organisations reported partnerships with community development, and education and training organisations.

FIGURE 19: PERCENTAGE OF ANNUALLY FUNDED ORGANISATIONS REPORTING PARTNERSHIPS IN GIVEN CATEGORIES (ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY)

	2016/2017	% OF ORGANISATIONS
Sector		
Community Development	55	52%
LGBT	15	14%
Disability	33	31%
Education / Training	57	54%
Relief of Poverty	3	3%
Medical / Health	12	11%
Youth work / Development	43	41%
General Charitable Purposes	11	10%
Environment / Conservation	3	3%
Welfare / Benevolent	2	2%
	234	221%

THE DEPTH OF PARTNERSHIP HAS BEEN STRONG

My overall analysis is that ACNI has used partnership very positively for the arts. While partnerships have naturally been framed around instrumental rather than intrinsic benefits of the arts to give common ground with the partners, this process has tended to be consistent with the character of the arts rather than a distortion of artistic practice. For

example, objectives around mental health and community cohesion build on values of emotional engagement, empowerment and sharing that are inherent in artistic practice.

Drawing on my experience of the Creative Schools Partnership Programme, I would say that partners have been respectful of ACNI's specialist knowledge and their main role has been to set spatial targets and link to local community networks, both of which add value to ACNI's work.

CONCLUSION

Overall, partnership has been a way for ACNI to bring funding into the arts sector, negotiating large scale arrangements that would be well beyond the ability of individual arts organisations or associations to leverage on their own. These strategic alliances have also provided a valuable structure to demonstrate the value of the arts to other funders and agencies.

One of the challenges of partnership is maintaining quality control when delivery is at arms-length. ACNI programmes illustrate many areas of good practice, which is evidence of strong learning and management. However, a couple of the programme evaluations report variable quality across the projects, which suggests the need for more work capturing and sharing good practice principles.

TO SUPPORT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Specific elements of the strategic plan are to:

- Support arts organisations to deliver their core business activities through tough times.
- Help deliver an expanded programme of tailored support for non-executive board members of arts organisations.
- Make a long-term contribution to recruitment in the sector, delivering Creative Apprenticeships and encouraging take up of paid internships.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN AN INTEGRAL ELEMENT OF PROGRAMMES.

Skills development was supported through:

- Dedicated training programmes.
- The process of working in partnership alongside other artists and non-arts partners.
- Conferences and sharing events.

For example, the Intercultural Programme included:

- Eight funding clinics.
- A one day training exploring intercultural arts methodologies and how these might be applied within a Northern Ireland context with 80 artists.
- A two day extended training with 20 artists.
- Three seminars on the topic 'Rights and Responsibilities' (one for independent artists with 25 participants, one for arts organisations with 6 participants and one for community groups with 7 participants);
- Three conferences, (one to launch the programme in November 2017 with 120 participants), one during the week of March 2nd -6th 2015 (with 150 participants) and a celebration event held in September 2018.

The evaluation found that

- 71% of the artists thought that the Award enabled them to develop their professional skills.
- Questionnaires received from 186 audience members indicate that 98% thought that the event they attended had increased their knowledge and understanding of ethnic minority cultures.

- 89% of artist/facilitators involved in the programme thought that the project they had been involved in had contributed to their artistic development;
- 83% thought it had increased their knowledge of the social issues affecting ethnic minority communities; and
- 69% thought they had learned new ways of linking their art form to participant ability.

The Annual Funding Survey does not collect data on training expenditure.

CONCLUSION

Skill development was integrated into ACNI's funding to artists, arts organisations and partnerships.

TO ENCOURAGE VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES IN THE ARTS

INTRODUCTION

Specific elements of the strategic plan are to:

- Raise the profile of volunteering by sponsoring an awards scheme.

I am assuming that this objective is about the wellbeing benefits to the volunteer rather than any cost savings from replacing employment with volunteering, which I would consider to be poor practice both in terms of exploitative practices and inconsistency with the objective of diversifying the workforce.

OVERALL TRENDS IN VOLUNTEERING ARE UP

The number of volunteers has fluctuated, with an overall increase comparing 2014-15 and 2016-17.

FIGURE 20: ANALYSIS OF ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: THE NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Visual Arts	278	274	209
Combined	1,569	1,491	1,663
Literature	45	70	91
Music	254	233	245
Traditional Arts	251	1,395	385
Dance	95	77	59
Drama	725	2,286	2,157
All artforms	3,217	5,826	4,809

The number of volunteer hours worked has also shown an overall increase. The figures suggest an expansion of volunteering in year two, followed by a healthy process of shake out, where organisations concentrated on a smaller number of volunteers, each working a relatively large number of hours. This focused approach is likely to be more impactful for the volunteer and the arts organisation.

FIGURE 21: ANALYSIS OF ANNUAL FUNDING SURVEY: VOLUNTEER HOURS WORKED

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Visual Arts	6,918	7,286	5,448
Combined	25,888	26,426	40,410
Literature	1,996	3,585	4,947
Music	9,018	10,695	10,295

Traditional Arts	10,452	11,001	7,961
Dance	5,350	3,629	2,760
Drama	22,209	19,848	26,939
All artforms	81,831	82,470	98,759
Average per volunteer	25	14	21

CONCLUSION

ACNI has been successful in supporting volunteering activity through its Annually Funded organisations. Figures suggest that volunteer engagement is relatively deep and therefore likely to be impactful

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONSTRAINTS

The limitations of this analysis are:

- The Achievements/objectives are all phrased at the activity level. Where possible, I have inferred or explored a qualitative element but this is post hoc and subject to professional judgement.
- I do not have targets for the Achievements. I can comment on contribution to the objectives but cannot measure the extent to which the objective was met.
- The targets given in the business plans tend to be very detailed and activity or output based. A quantitative analysis lies outside of the terms of this review, which is at the strategic level.
- This analysis covers a period of reduction in ACNI's budget. Achieving a steady state when funding is being cut would be a positive result, but business plans tend to expect some level of improvement.

CONCLUSIONS

This is the Achievements, which I am asked to report against:

- To core fund arts organisations. The objective was met.
- To help arts organisations deliver benefits to the community. This objective was met.
- To support individual artists create work of excellence. This objective was met.
- To build partnerships. This objective was met.
- To support skills development. This objective was met to some extent.
- To encourage voluntary activities in the arts. This objective was met.

Overall ACNI has managed to deliver a diverse and high quality programme with broad reach within the arts sector and the local community, a remarkable achievement given the funding cuts. However, damage to long-term sustainability is evident, especially in the Annually Funded Organisations. Any further funding cuts are likely to be counterproductive because of the resulting reduction in audience and participation: the arts sector will always prioritise artistic programming, but has cut back the marketing and audience development that ensure people can hear about and benefit from this work.

APPENDIX ONE: SUMMARY OF EVALUATION REPORTS

ARTICULATE THE YOUNG PEOPLE & WELLBEING PROGRAMME EVALUATION REPORT YEAR 1 2018, SOCIAL MARKET RESEARCH

Aim: to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people by engagement in high quality arts.

Intended outcomes: Improve emotional, physical and social wellbeing of participants; enable participants to express opinions or feeling using arts-based methods; improve services for young people with mental health issues; empower communities to take a more pro-active role in promoting mental health and wellbeing; reduce the stigma associated with mental health and wellbeing through improved education; and support and promote help seeking behaviour amongst participants.

Targeting: those at higher risk of suicide or self-harm defined in terms of: deprivation, unemployment, drug and alcohol abuse, isolation and loneliness, family relationships and sexual orientation.

Funding: £600,000, Arts Council of Northern Ireland: £300,000), the Public Health Agency: £300,000.

Number of projects funded: 14.

Timing: a 3-years, autumn 2016 to September 2019.

Description: Annual applications up to £20,000 from each of the five local Strategic Suicide Prevention Implementation Groups (SSPIG).

The evaluation found some evidence of:

- Increased confidence through mechanisms of being listened and talking in a group.
- Improved mental health through mechanisms of: sense of fulfilment from taking part in arts activities; being reassured that mental health problems were common/normal; being able to articulate their feelings through the arts; learning positive habits such as distracting negative thoughts through listening to music; and having a better awareness of services available.

“It was different doing it through art work. It’s being able to visualise my emotions and get them down onto a page or get them spray painted onto a wall. I didn’t need to put feelings immediately into words, just get them out through doing the activities.” Participant

- Wider impacts such as increased ability to concentrate or ask questions at school, improved grades at school and reduction in medication.

Analysis of a matched sample of 51 participants found that 41%, recorded significantly higher mean scores on emotional wellbeing (YPBAS); 63%, on self-esteem (Rosenberg) and 53% on resilience (Brief Resilience Scale). The proportion of young people participating in painting, drawing, sculpture or print making in their free time increased significantly between baseline (57%) and follow up (71%);

The good practices illustrated in the programme were:

- Having activities led by the young people.
- Integrating learning about mental health into creative activities.
- Engaging host staff so that lessons from the project are taken into the organisations.

EVALUATION OF THE ARTS AND OLDER PEOPLE PROGRAMME FINAL REPORT, WALLACE CONSULTING, JANUARY 2017

Aim: to increase opportunities for older people to engage with the arts, to support the policy drive towards active, positive and productive ageing.

Intended outcomes: reduce isolation and loneliness; inclusion; improve physical, mental and social wellbeing; and strengthen the voice of older people.

Targeting: older people living in disadvantaged, marginalized and deprived areas

Funding: the pilot was jointly funded by the Arts Council and The Atlantic Philanthropies; the second phase of the AOPP was jointly funded by the Arts Council, Department for Communities (formerly DCAL), the Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Baring Foundation.

Number of projects: 47 in the pilot; 117 in the second phase.

Number of participants: 13,067. 3,136 session hours; 21,500 in the second phase.

Timing: three year pilot programme launched in 2009; second phase 2016-2018.

Description: grants of £10,000 to £30,000, with at least 10% matched funding. But round 3 is up to £10,000.

Analysis of matched 514 matched pre and post questionnaires found small increases in the proportion of people who rated their physical (46% to 49%), mental health (64% to 66%) and enjoyment of life (63% to 68%) as good. In addition, there were statistically significant decreases in overall scores for loneliness. 81% of respondents (n=814) reported a sense of achievement; and 82% (n=817) reported having made new friends; 78% said the sessions had given them confidence to try different things. Improvements in cognitive functioning, concentration, engagement and mood was also identified amongst people with a dementia diagnosis. Artists reported evidence of improvements in participants' dexterity, mobility, agility and movement.

"It is considered that participating in arts, as opposed to other activities, has helped create a relaxed and playful atmosphere."

The good practices illustrated in the programme were:

- In some projects, developing activities specially to appeal to men e.g. the Men's Shed.
- Having a week-long Celebration of Age festival marked the end of the programme, providing an opportunity to showcase the projects funded, through exhibitions, workshops and performances.
- Publishing advocacy and support documents e.g. Not So Cut Off produced as part of the 2016 Arts and Age Festival and Conference programme.
- Partnership working via consortia based proposals.
- Producing artwork that is displayed in the host organisation.

The evaluation suggested these areas for improvement:

- Further work to signpost participants to follow on activities, including asking about exit strategy in the application and linking to, and incentivising attendance at, arts venues.
- Organising briefing meetings with host organisations to ensure artists have the information and safeguarding they need. "It was suggested that more could be done to educate management and care staff about the value of the arts for older people, as often artists are left on their own to facilitate large groups."
- Taking a more strategic approach to ensuring the programme supports artists' professional development.
- Further training of volunteers as facilitators to help sustain arts work in the host organisations and in outreach.
- Further thought about how projects should plan for and support older people with widely varying needs and abilities (e.g. separating strands for general and specialist needs, providing training to artists, including different evaluation methods).
- More explicit focus on legacy e.g. using funding to purchase supplies.

- Further work with MLAs, since a survey showed a decline in valuing of the arts between 2011 and 2014.
- Spending more time capturing and disseminating learning.

THE STATE OF PLAY: ACNI'S ARTS AND OLDER PEOPLE PROGRAMME

The aims are as above.

The average age of participants was 70.

The evaluators calculated that £1,084 would be needed to achieve the equivalent wellbeing benefit. I calculate a programme unit cost of £83 per participant (spreading the benefit over the participants and not taking account of the added benefit to 38,000 audience members. This shows that the arts are a very cost effective way of improving wellbeing.

The report mentions these personal and societal benefits for older people participating in the arts:

- Improved memory recall, alertness, concentration and emotional wellbeing, which can delay the onset of dementia and slow its progression. 70% of projects worked with people with dementia or long-term health problems.
- Increased range of physical movement, which can improve motor skills, flexibility and fitness levels.
- Enhanced communication skills, which can improve relationships with family and service providers.
- Improved social interaction, which can lead to volunteering or joining new groups and help to reduce loneliness and isolation. 78% of participants said they gained renewed confidence to try new things. 82% said they built good friendships. 53% went on to join new groups and activities.
- Stronger links to the community, which can enhance sense of pride, purpose and belonging. 86% of projects operate on a cross- community basis.
- Improved mental health from the above. 81% of participants said they felt better about themselves because of what they had achieved.

NOT SO CUT OFF: CASE STUDY EVIDENCE TO ILLUSTRATE THE IMPACT OF THE ARTS AND OLDER PEOPLE'S PROGRAMME IN ALLEVIATING ISOLATION AND LONELINESS, UNA LYNCH AND JOAN ALEXANDER, THE ARTS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN IRELAND, APRIL 2016

Details are as above.

Stephoe et al (2012) used the English Longitudinal Study (ELSA) to examine the impact of loneliness and isolation on mortality amongst older people. The study revealed mortality rates were higher amongst lonely and socially isolated people.

The mechanisms implied are:

- Giving older people a reason to leave their homes.
- Giving older people something to talk about.
- Giving participants a shared purpose and structure to support each other.
- Reducing fear of young people by having intergenerational activities.
- Giving older people a feeling of being included, not left out.
- Giving older people an interest in modern society.
- Giving older people the chance to laugh, play and have fun.
- Querying stereotypes of older people such as their being invisible or frail.
- Showing that older people can still learn and develop skills.
- Allowing older people to pursue an interest in the arts that might have been unexplored since their childhood.
- Distracting participants from worries or preoccupations.
- Feeling proud of having work displayed, performed or exhibited.
- Giving older people something to feel grateful for.

"The Baring Foundation has recognised the ACNI's leadership as the first Arts Council in the UK to focus on older people and the only one to have developed a partnership with public health. The Public Health Agency has brought a wealth of expertise and networks to this current phase of the AOPP and the dividends are evident in the enhanced focus on older people living in rural communities, residential care and older men."

EVALUATION OF THE BUILDING PEACE THROUGH THE ARTS: RE-IMAGING COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME FINAL REPORT WALLACE CONSULTING, JANUARY 2016

Aim: to address poor community relations by encouraging communities to reflect on and plan for ways of replacing divisive imagery with more positive concepts; to promote peace-building through social and physical regeneration. Note that this is an extremely important but inevitably long-term aim that is inevitably to be achieved in partnership with other agencies.

Intended outcomes: work with communities to provide opportunities for more stable, safer neighbourhoods & develop strong, positive relations between people from different backgrounds; work with communities wanting to develop more inclusive civic and cultural identities through the production of high quality artwork for the public realm; utilise the arts and arts processes as a means with which to challenge sectarian and racist attitudes and build positive community relations at a local level; support progress towards a peaceful, shared and stable society and promote reconciliation through community led programmes of arts activities; utilise the arts and arts processes to connect communities.

Targeting: applications were invited from ROI as well as NI.

Funding: European Union's European Regional Development Fund through the PEACE III Programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), The Arts Council of Northern Ireland (the Arts Council) and the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). Total grant was: £228,008 for phase one and £1,338,798 for phase two.

Number of projects funded: 54 stage one projects; 32 projects completed stage two projects.

Timing: February 2013 to July 2015.

Description: Local authorities and constituted community and voluntary groups could apply to build upon localised Good Relations Strategies and Peace and Reconciliation Action Plans. There was a two-stage application process: community consultation and artwork creation, with different artists employed for the two stages.

The evaluation found that:

- 93% of survey respondents (n=868) said they felt safe in their neighbourhoods. This is perhaps because the communities are not currently mixed, which means that the target beneficiaries are in part people who have not yet moved into the neighbourhoods.

The good practices illustrated in the programme were:

- A complex definition of social divisions.

“Unlike the pilot programme, BPttA extended to the southern border counties and recognised non-visible ethnic divides. As such, it responded to the need to address the psychological legacy of division in towns, villages and rural communities. There was acknowledgement that the absence of cultural identity “branding” did not mean that a space is perceived to be non-threatening or used by all.”

- Establishing a BPttA Consortium with wide representation to provide strategic advice, assist with decision-making and oversight.

CREATIVE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP FINAL EVALUATION REPORT, ANNABEL JACKSON ASSOCIATES LTD, JUNE 2018

Aim: improve outcomes for disadvantaged young people through creative participation. The partnership meets a collective ambition to improve community cohesion, support government priorities and reduce educational inequalities.

Intended outcomes: strengthen relationships between young people, post-primary schools and the local community; support young people in contributing positively to the communities in which they live; use creativity as a tool to address school development priorities; support post-primary school leaders and teachers to meet the needs of disadvantaged young people using creative arts; and develop understanding and learning through shared practice events.

Targeting: The five Urban Village areas

Funding: run by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland in collaboration with the Education Authority and Urban Villages Initiative.

Number of projects funded: 10.

Timing: 2018

Description: The programme consisted of creative projects run with professional artists and designed to address specific school priorities.

Interviews with young people suggested a complex pattern of interlinked outcomes and mechanisms. The main outcomes and mechanisms described were:

The programme enhanced mental health and wellbeing through:

- Creating a fun, playful environment.
- Enabling students to externalise feelings and experiences and so gain perspective.

- Creating a non-judgmental environment (also relevant to other outcomes).
- Helping students to channel their feelings positively.
- Giving a route for students to express themselves and in some cases experience catharsis (also relevant to other outcomes).
- Giving students a method (e.g. drawing, visiting a gallery) to manage their emotions.
- Creating a soothing effect by the use of arts materials (e.g. the tactile effect of clay, the visual impact of colour).
- Refining students' ability to make choices (e.g. characterization in drama or debriefing processes).
- Giving students an increased sense of control over their lives.
- Generating intense concentration and so distracting participants from their problems.
- Placing students in/near nature for some activities (e.g. drawing or pottery-making).
- Giving students individual attention, which is not possible with large class sizes.

Students increased their confidence on the programme through:

- Feeling that their individuality was understood and appreciated.
- Feeling their ideas were valued.
- Trying out different identities (e.g. through drama).
- Being given responsibility (e.g. interviewing members of the public for a newspaper or film, being entrusted with expensive items of equipment such as cameras).
- Improving their communication skills by learning specific skills (e.g. voice projection, open body language, interviewing questions).
- Finding they could talk to people outside their usual friendship group.
- Finding that they already had valuable skills they didn't know they had (e.g. visual acuity from using social media).
- Feeling special from being included in an arts project and present at launch events.
- Receiving praise and encouragement.
- Replacing voices of internal criticism with a voice saying 'you can do it'.
- Feeling more powerful because of a potential impact on an audience.
- Gaining a sense of achievement from e.g. being in a film, on a stage, in print or in an exhibition.
- Having - through the arts - a broad range of possibilities to find their special talent.
- Producing artwork that they could take home to show their families.

The programme increased students' interest in learning through:

- Strengthening students' thinking skills (e.g. their ability to deal with complexity and ambiguity).
- Showing students that they could concentrate for long periods of time when they were interested.
- Avoiding the frustration students feel when some members of the group don't want to engage and so disrupt learning for all.
- Suiting different learning styles (e.g. learning by doing, sense-based learning).
- Teaching step-by-step processes (e.g. for writing, drawing, interviewing, cooking).
- Giving a framework for children to be more comfortable to give and receive feedback (e.g. because of the fast decision-making process in animation).
- Developing students' problem-solving skills.
- Giving instant results (e.g. in animation).
- Giving time for students to develop their work to the stage where they were satisfied with it and so were more aware of what could be achieved with dedication and effort.
- Increasing students' motivation by showing the real world importance of the subjects (e.g. of writing in journalism, cooking in the hospitality sector).
- Giving positive role models (e.g. of local businesses, artists).
- Taking children to arts venues and other places that were previously outside their experience.

Teachers mentioned these outcomes from the programme. They:

- Developed their knowledge of specific artforms e.g. how to work to a high quality cost-effectively.
- Learnt techniques to motivate students.
- Saw the benefit of a sustained project or learning activity.
- Saw how naturally children learnt through creative approaches.
- Strengthened their interest in using creative approaches across the curriculum.
- Built confidence for even more ambitious projects in the future.
- Created learning resources that can be used for other classes.
- Had a positive context for making contact with parents.
- Develop relationships with local businesses.
- Developed connections with and understanding of the practice of local artists and arts organisations.
- Identified ways film and other artforms could be used in assessment.

The programme brought groups and communities together through:

- Creating neutral spaces in which friendships could develop.
- Giving a shared experience of an intense and intensive project.
- Increasing empathy through e.g. character or narrative development, interviewing or considering the audience.
- Demonstrating or requiring interdependency because of safety or other practical requirements.
- Participants realising that other people are a source of ideas, knowledge and support, and that working together is easier than struggling alone.
- Learning about other cultures.
- Changing hierarchies in the group, (e.g. with those who were usually non achievers helping those who were more academic).
- Displaying an artwork that symbolizes sharing and co-existence.

In terms of community outcomes, the programme:

- Raised participants' aspirations and created images or experiences that inspired other students and in some cases families.
- Raised the status of the arts with this group of students and so gave students interested in creative careers a greater feeling that they had a place in the school and community.
- Communicated creative values around originality that embody respect for individuality and difference.
- Implied a complex view of place that allows for pride in history and community, combined with an openness to new ideas and horizons.
- Gave students the experience of, and interest in, travelling outside their communities.
- Gave students the confidence and independent thought to question the prejudices of their parents.
- Helped engage all students in learning and so reduced feelings of disadvantage.
- Showed children that there were enjoyable and rewarding jobs in creative fields that they could find or develop for themselves.
- Brought students and families from different backgrounds together in a positive and bonding experience that went beyond religion.
- Helped create cohesion across newly integrated schools.
- Gave parents positive experiences of schools that might override negative associations from their own schooling.
- Strengthened the link between students and teachers so that the students were more willing to accept help and had someone to talk to if they had problems.
- Made the schools more visible in the local community.

The good practices illustrated in the programme included:

- Basing projects around a specific strategic objective of the school.
- Having a sustained engagement with the young people.
- Having multiple contacts in the school including the principal.
- Involving parents.
- Bringing schools together for a learning seminar.

“The programme exemplified good practice in schools creativity. The quality of the projects was substantially higher than we would expect from a pilot programme, which we attribute to the experience of the project coordinator and contacts in the Arts Council.”

The evaluator concluded that: “The pilot was a success in terms of the individual project objectives and outcomes for students and parents.”

The evaluator recommended that:

- The programme should be continued with an initial term of three years.
- The structure should be designed to embed creativity across learning in the pilot schools and to use them as ambassadors to reach a wider group of schools.
- The schools should give more attention to legacy.

STANDING OVATION, A STRATEGIC EVALUATION OF THE CAPITAL BUILD PROGRAMME, DELOITTE, JANUARY 2014

Aim: to establish dedicated cultural venues in towns and cities across Northern Ireland.

Funding: £70m

Number of projects funded: 39.

Timing: 1994 to 2014

Description: This level of capital funding in the physical infrastructure of the arts in Northern Ireland was unprecedented.

The evaluation found that in a sample of 11 projects selected for detailed review:

- ACNI contributed 36% of the total funding requirement, suggesting average leverage of £3million for each of the sample venues.
- The capital build of the eleven venues supported approximately 464 jobs within the construction industry and 116 additional jobs through induced expenditure. In total 580 temporary jobs were supported over the construction period;

- The eleven venues created or sustained 161 permanent jobs.
- A further 32.5 jobs were supported through induced expenditure which creates a total employment impact of 193.5 jobs. The majority of these jobs were new, additional jobs to the Northern Ireland economy as the eleven venues were new buildings to their local areas.
- The growth in arts and cultural venues outside of Belfast makes a significant net economic impact – an average annual net economic impact of £8.2m.
- Additional Visitor Spend (AVS) is a key contributor to the net economic impact, attributing £7.4m to the overall £16.3m net economic impact over 2009/10 and 2010/11. 40% of venue users are estimated to be from outside the local area;
- The average earned income per attendance for all eleven venues over 2009/10 and 2010/11 was £3.54. The average total local authority subsidy (grant or direct local authority subsidy) per attendance for the same sample in this period was £2.70 per attendance. This indicates that the amount of subsidy is more than matched by the income earned by the organisations, at £0.84 per attendance.
- There is now an arts venue within a 20 mile radius of every person in Northern Ireland.

The evaluators concluded that:

“The Capital Build Programme has succeeded in broadening the reach of arts and culture across Northern Ireland. Towns and cities that previously had little access to the Arts or no venues in which to put on performances, events and activities now have modern, fit-for-purpose buildings in which arts and culture can flourish.”

The good practices illustrated in the programme were:

- All venues have improved access to the arts for the disabled.
- The main criteria included testing the local demand for the new venue.
- High standards of design were applied, and some buildings won awards (the Market Place Theatre in Armagh (Civic Trust Centre Vision Award 2001 and nominated for the Stirling Prize); the Verbal Arts Centre (Civic Trust Award 2001 and RIAI Regional Award 2001) and; Millennium Forum Theatre (Civic Trust Award 2003 and RICS Award for Excellence 2003).
- Three of the venues supported, and were important elements in the delivery of, Derry/Londonderry City of Culture.
- The programme enabled some arts organisations to own their building, so increasing their future sustainability.

The evaluation suggested these improvements:

- Improve audience data.

- Strengthen performance measurement of venues.
- Ensure venues deliver a programme of sustained building maintenance.

OPENING DOORS: AN ARTS-LED APPROACH TO BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL, EVALUATION REPORT, ARTS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN IRELAND INTERCULTURAL ARTS PROGRAMME 2012-2015, GERRI MORIARTY AND GURDEEP THIARA, JULY 2015

Aim: to create many avenues for minority ethnic communities to access and participate in the arts in Northern Ireland and further afield

Intended outcomes: promote exchanges between different cultural groups within society; develop collaborative working, through arts and cultural activity between new and existing communities; cohesion and integration for a shared and better future for all; develop understanding of the diversity that exists in Northern Ireland; develop good relations between new and existing communities in Northern Ireland; using the arts as a vehicle to tackle racism

Funding: £202,644

Number of projects funded: 31

The evaluation reported:

- 3,500 participants and 5,053 audience members took part. 20 Minority Ethnic Individual Artist awards were made to 18 individual artists, (£22,702); and two Artist in the Community Awards were made (£8,450).
- The countries of origin or heritage of individual artists awarded funding through the programme included Argentina, Mexico, Ghana, South Africa, India, Sri Lanka, Bulgaria, Hungary, Japan, Jamaica, Poland, Portugal, and England

“As a collective body of work, the art created through the programme by individual practitioners and by participants working with skilled facilitators illustrate the power of the creative imagination to celebrate diversity, address the injustice of racism and influence feelings and thinking in wider society.”

The good practices illustrated in the programme were:

- ACNI organised a symposium, the Art of Inclusion, as well as networking events for arts organisations, artists and community and voluntary sector organisations.
- Many projects created artworks that gave a legacy from the process.

- Some projects introduced participants to local venues and so gave a natural follow on activity through joining existing groups or classes. Examples of legacy work include: the Belfast Migrant's Centre Belonging Project is touring within Northern Ireland and to the Southbank Centre in London. Accolade Community Choir became a fully constituted arts organisation during the course of the programme.
- Learning from the first year was used to develop guidelines for the second year.

The evaluators suggested these improvements:

- More sustained engagements rather than taster experiences.
- More training and capturing of learning about how artists should address challenging subjects of racism directly in the artistic process. I would add that my experience is that the arts often work because they address tough issues indirectly rather than in a style that could be perceived as didactic, but the principle that artists should have these skills is nonetheless well made.
- More reflection and post-project review.

“There have been some missed opportunities for dialogue, connection and profiling within the programme. These can largely be attributed to weaknesses in project design and lack of resources for post-award development work. These two areas should be given greater prominence in the design of any future programme. “

REVIEW OF THE SUPPORT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL ARTIST PROGRAMME (SIAP) FOR THE ARTS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN IRELAND, DRAFT REPORT, JOHN ADAMSON, APRIL 2016

Aim: Not referenced, this was a process review.

Funding: £2,724,470 between 2011-2012 and 2015-2016.

Number of projects funded: 1,288 between 2011-2012 and 2015-2016.

Timing: The review covers 2011-2012 to 2015-2016.

Description: The programme has these specific schemes:

- Anne O'Donoghue Award
- Artists Career Enhancement
- Artists in the Community
- International Development Fund

- Corners
- EU Partnership
- General Art Award
- International Programme
- International Residency - New York
- Major Individual Award
- Mike Moloney Award
- Minority Ethnic Individual Artists
- Professional Arts Abroad
- Self Arranged Residency
- Travel Award
- Young Musicians' Platform

The evaluation reported that:

- The number and value of the awards made over the last five years has been reasonably constant at around 250 awards per year averaging £2,119.
- The four artforms of: visual arts, drama, literature and music account for three quarters of all the awards.
- 75% of the funding has gone to urban areas.
- 56% of applications are received on the cut-off day and these have the highest rejection rate with nearly a third of applications being ineligible.
- The average award in Northern Ireland is less than a third of the average in ROI and one fifth of the award in England.

The evaluation recommended that:

- There is a need to create a culture where more artists (people with disabilities, community artists and older artists) e.g. apply for funding as funding tends to be provided for the same group of artists each year. Better use could be made of social media and other methods to target.
- The assessment process is relatively cumbersome compared to the level of funding.

The evaluation recommended that:

- All applications should be processed online.
- Artist details should be preregistered.
- Procedures for moderation should be simplified.

- Budgets should be set by artform.
- The requirements for supporting material should be simplified.
- The possible maximum size of award should be increased.

APPENDIX TWO: ANNUAL TOTAL FUNDING TO TARGETED PROGRAMMES

FIGURE 22: ANNUAL TOTAL FUNDING TO TARGETED PROGRAMMES: PREVIOUS FUNDING CYCLE (GIFTS DATABASE)

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
AFP - Core					13,951,119
AFP - Programming					
AFP - Returning Applicant					
AFP - Studio Groups					
AFP - Sustainability					
Arts and Older People			234,265	140,310	252,899
Arts Development Fund	350,646	312,166	406,550	779,963	716,533
ASOP	9,651,785	10,228,993	10,583,097	10,956,048	
Building		8,648,578	22,500	154,698	18,750
Building Peace through the Arts (Re-Imaging Communities)					
Capacity Building		250,000	50,000		150,000
City of Culture - Construction				50,000	3,329,140
City of Culture - Equipment					690,652
City of Culture - Legacy					
Creative Industries	282,504	3,211,271	110,000	391,232	548,272
Creative Schools Programme					
DCAL Capital Fund	216,000	2,146,000	503,000	221,000	
DCAL Monitoring Round	125,000	100,000	75,000	414,919	341,000
Equipment	140,809	302,984	289,186	196,486	155,989
Intercultural Arts Programme					44,070
Lottery - Creative and Cultural Belfast					
Lottery - Feasibility				27,775	
Lottery - Local Gov Challenge Fund					
Lottery - Project Funding	3,232,851	3,766,157	2,860,599	3,013,931	2,819,024
Lottery - Special Initiative			190,000		
Music Touring					
Musical Instruments	144,316	99,822	203,761	191,874	202,691
Olympic Legacy Fund		750,000	4,120	182,542	23,254
Other Grants	852,000	550	497,500	567,500	22,430
Public Art	260,570	75,000	203,216	215,525	157,550
Re-Imaging - Large Grant	399,744	329,008	151,391		

Re-Imaging - Multiple Grants	486,489	134,747			
Re-Imaging - Small Grant	91,118	193,303	79,696		
SIAP	558,124	477,711	545,445	483,992	495,086
Small Grants Programme		467,252	438,459	413,538	411,963
STart UP			102,549	94,556	50,000
Visual Arts Development Programme					150,000
YP and Wellbeing Arts Prog					
Grand Total	16,791,956	31,493,543	17,550,334	18,495,889	24,530,422

FIGURE 23: FIGURE 24: ANNUAL TOTAL FUNDING TO TARGETED PROGRAMMES CURRENT FUNDING CYCLE (GIFTS DATABASE)

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
AFP - Core	2,556,581	2,315,437	13,541,192	8,595,438	8,454,822
AFP - Programming				4,693,715	4,678,354
AFP - Returning Applicant	11,818,791	11,904,048			
AFP - Studio Groups		127,407		177,407	
AFP - Sustainability				309,707	
Arts and Older People	283,516	196,561	95,295	127,482	192,190
Arts Development Fund	515,475	183,574	124,074	15,500	171,950
ASOP					
Building		32,000	12,537		
Building Peace through the Arts (Re-Imaging Communities)	208,498	1,135,735	198,797		
Capacity Building	109,685				
City of Culture - Construction					
City of Culture - Equipment					
City of Culture - Legacy		707,631	280,670		
Creative Industries	513,336	506,311			
Creative Schools Programme					61,405
DCAL Capital Fund				90,000	906,000
DCAL Monitoring Round	577,037	1,264,000	108,295	360,000	625,000
Equipment	303,784				
Intercultural Arts Programme	91,859	66,715		69,430	
Lottery - Creative and Cultural Belfast		445,000			
Lottery - Feasibility					
Lottery - Local Gov Challenge Fund				285,000	587,640
Lottery - Project	1,603,854	2,026,441	1,549,751	1,513,498	1,515,000

Funding					
Lottery - Special Initiative					
Music Touring		89,115	99,618	50,000	
Musical Instruments	200,555	95,969		296,016	205,916
Olympic Legacy Fund					
Other Grants					
Public Art	112,500	157,790			
Re-Imaging - Large Grant					
Re-Imaging - Multiple Grants					
Re-Imaging - Small Grant					
SIAP	622,637	570,176	613,700	706,607	623,382
Small Grants Programme	598,669	489,085	484,330	556,339	363,652
STart UP	37,960				
Visual Arts Development Programme	111,047	74,420			
YP and Wellbeing Arts Prog				169,863	119,045
Grand Total	20,265,784	22,387,415	17,108,259	18,016,002	18,504,356