



Arts Council of Northern Ireland
Youth Arts Strategy 2013 - 2017

Prepared by Strategic Development

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1 Introduction

This strategy has been developed by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) to provide a strategic direction and vision for the youth arts sector for the period 2013 – 2017. It is the product of an extensive programme of research undertaken over a six month period between January and June 2011 involving direct consultation with children, young people and key stakeholders working in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors across Northern Ireland.

The terms of reference asked that the research considered the following:

- The impact and achievements of the previous strategy
- The character, needs and challenges facing both the formal and informal sectors of applied youth arts
- Identify and review relevant international practice
- The wider policy environment in which the strategy operates
- The changing external environment, including the changing structures of the RPA, incorporating a review of general societal trends data
- Any environmental considerations that need to be addressed during its implementation including the interests of other art form sectors; barriers or impediments to its success and the external communication of that strategy.

Key components of the research undertaken involved:

- Engaging with over 100 children and young people in a range of education, arts, non-arts and care based contexts
- The design, co-ordination and distribution of two surveys involving nearly 400 children, parents and practitioners
- Two youth arts sector focus groups in Derry~Londonderry and Belfast and;
- 15 interviews with strategic stakeholders

In order to contextualise the results from this primary research, ACNI undertook extensive desk based research. This included examining the wider policy context in which the strategy was being developed, analysing client performance data and considering broader social and demographic changes using data from external sources. Overall, the research has generated a wealth of information about the successes, aspirations and concerns of all stakeholders involved in the delivery of youth arts, all of which has been given careful consideration in the development of the new strategy.

For the purpose of this research and to maintain a consistent definition between strategy periods, a child, young person or young adult is considered to be an individual aged between 0 years and 25 years old. In developing this strategy, consideration has been given to the developmental and professional training needs across each of following age bands:

- Early Years (0-4)
- Primary age (5-11)
- Young People (12-15)

- Young adults (16+)

Within the context of this strategy, youth arts is about the entitlement of all Children and Young People to engage in a diverse range of arts-led cultural opportunities in safe and enabling environments. Youth Arts should be taken in the broadest possible sense and should include participative arts and work created for Young People as audiences.

Youth arts refers to a whole range of creative, cultural or expressive activities, involving children and young people up to the age of 25 years, both in and outside of formal education settings, community groups, professional arts organisations etc. Youth arts can take place, anytime, anywhere, with almost any one, and with any kind of art form or creative activity. It could be poetry slams, street dance, circus skills, drama, fashion design, film, graffiti, music, Dj-ing, Vj-ing, craft, opera, hip hop.

The development of this strategy reflects the priorities set out in the Arts Councils Five Year Plan Creative Connections (2007 to 2012), the aim of which is to place the arts at the heart of our social, economic and creative life. The strategy's four key themes are:

- Theme 1: Art at the Heart – promoting the value of the arts including the role that it plays in achieving a range of policy objectives
- Theme 2: Strengthening the arts - supporting artists, arts organisations and the physical infrastructure
- Theme 3: Growing audiences and increasing participation – Encouraging as many people as possible to enjoy and take part in arts activities
- Theme 4: Improving our performance - our objectives for improving the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's business processes and developing the organisation and its people

With regard to children and young people, Creative Connections recognises the role of arts in education, helping young people develop the creative and intellectual resources our economy depends on. It also appreciates that introducing children to the arts at a young age can ensure a lifelong interest in the arts and can help remove the intellectual and social barriers to attendance and participation.

1.1 Strategic Context

This strategy is being developed within a fluid political, social and economic context. The £1.4m reduction in exchequer funding for the arts over the four year period 2011-2015 has led to greater funding uncertainty within the sector, creating a challenging environment for arts organisations to retain ambitious and innovative programmes of activity.

The well documented transformative role the arts can play in young people's lives from an educational, social and personal perspective is recognised within the priorities of government departments such as the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). Its strategy 'Shared Future', *Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern*

*Ireland*¹ recognises the youth sector as having a particularly important role in developing coherent programmes to promote good relationships between children and young people within and between communities. This is an area in which the arts can play a transformational role by bringing young people together, from all backgrounds helping to promote dialogue, respect and tolerance.

There exist a number of cross-cutting departmental strategies which place the education and employment of marginalised young people at their heart. These are contexts in which the youth arts sector have proven particularly adept at working, highlighting the potential role the sector can play in meeting priorities set by a number of other government departments. An example of this is the Department for Employment and Learning's new strategy *Pathways to Success*² which aims to address rising youth unemployment by working in partnership with other government departments, the community and voluntary sectors to engage with the most marginalised young people by building bridges towards training and employment opportunities.

'Youth Works' is a programme intervention described within this strategy. Run in collaboration with the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), it aims to support young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) to gain a recognised qualification using a youth work methodology.

Reductions in public spending is placing a growing onus on policy makers in Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK to identify new ways of addressing the endemic challenges of deprivation and social exclusion. There is a growing body of evidence³ suggesting that adopting a more preventative approach to policy interventions could be more cost-effective in the long run, meeting individuals' longer-term physical, social and physiological wellbeing needs.

Evidence suggests that the most effective preventative spending is that targeted at the 0-3 early years age group,⁴ when children are developing basic abilities and aptitudes. If a child is not motivated to learn and engage at this stage, he or she is more likely to fail in fulfilling their full potential, academically or socially, and this places a greater burden on public services. Art plays a role in enriching play-based experiences in the early years by helping to develop self expression and shape children's learning skills as well as exploring new ways of engaging with others.

1.2 Evidence of Impact

Evidence suggests that the impact of the arts on individuals' lives is varied and unpredictable and depends on a range of individual and broader community factors that combine to influence

¹ <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/asharedfuturepolicy2005.pdf>, last accessed 23.08.2011

² <http://www.delni.gov.uk/pathways-to-success-consultation-document.pdf>, last accessed 23.08.2011

³ Compiled by the Scottish Finance Committee (SFC) in 2010

⁴ Research and Library Service Research Paper (2011). Preventative Spending.

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/researchandlibrary/2011/1011.pdf>. Last accessed 23.09.2011

engagement patterns. Recent research by the Department of Culture Media and Sport provides a comprehensive, examination of literature in the fields of culture and sport.⁵ The review found compelling evidence that participation in structured arts activities improves academic attainment in secondary school aged students, improves early literacy skills of pre-school and primary school aged children and improves young people's cognitive abilities. The benefits of engagement in the arts for young people therefore stretches beyond the learning environment extending into the development of personal attributes.

At least eight key competencies of cognitive growth are developed through involvement in the arts by children, including perception of relationships, problem solving skills, adaptability and visualization of goals and outcomes⁶.

There is also clear evidence to demonstrate the benefits of participation on young people's language development⁷. Participation in the arts through sustained engagement for a period greater than six weeks results in the increased use of syntactical complexity, hypothetical reasoning and questioning approaches amongst children involved in the research.

These effects are thought to be inherent in the art activity undertaken, rather than dependant on a specific method of teaching the arts. One study⁸ found that, through engaging with the arts in a participative way, young people become adept at dealing with high levels of ambivalence and develop skills in discovering internal coherence among conflicting experiences.

Self expression too is an outcome particularly associated with involvement in the arts, allowing people to distinguish themselves from others, to reflect on their own beliefs and needs, and validate their own self-concepts. In particular, the arts have been proven to be particularly effective at: providing space for experimentation and articulation using non-verbal language, encouraging interpretation and by encompassing emotion as well as reasoning⁹.

Increased confidence is probably the most commonly reported outcome associated with participation in the arts. In 2009, over half of those questioned as part of the General Population Survey commissioned by the Arts Council to gauge the general public's arts engagement habits cited increased confidence as a personal outcome they associated with participation in the arts. Youth arts seems to be a particularly effective mechanism in achieving this: it facilitates interaction with engaging artists, allows one-to-one instruction, releases physical and psychological stress, allows young people to express themselves individually, is delivered in a rich and non-judgemental environment and provides a sense of achievement.

⁵ DCMS (2010) CASE: The Culture and Sport Evidence Programme.
http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/research_and_statistics/5698.aspx. Last accessed 22.09.2011

⁶ Eisner, E (2005). Re-imagining Schools. Taylor and Francis.

⁷ Heath, B (1999). Arts Show: Youth and Community Development, Washington DC: Partners for Liveable Communities

⁸ Friske, J (2007). The rise of the creative class and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life, New York, Basic Books.

⁹ Harland, J et al (2005). The arts-education interface: a mutual learning triangle? Slough: NFER

Other, broader community based impacts have also been well documented, illustrating how the benefits associated with engagement in the arts can extend beyond the classroom contributing towards, civic engagement, equality of opportunity, community cohesion and cultural engagement in later life. Figure 1 provides an illustration, in case study form, of a Northern Ireland based programme intervention that was instrumental in triggering some of the positive outcomes described using a creative intervention.

Figure 1: Creative Youth Partnership Case Study

The Creative Youth Partnership (CYP) was established in 2004 under the cross-departmental strategy 'Unlocking Creativity' to increase access to and participation in, the arts for children and young people aged 2 to 25 by bringing children and their teachers together with creative organisations and artists to work in partnerships on creative projects.

It was run by the Arts Council in collaboration with each of the five Education and Library Boards, Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and Department of Education (DE) and involved the delivery of both short and long term projects in both the formal and informal education sectors. In addition to increasing participation levels, the programme set out to:

- Develop a creative arts infrastructure at a local and regional level;
- Enable artists and arts organisations contribute directly to the Creative Curriculum as well as Youth Work practice;
- Encourage more collaborative working between government departments and Youth Arts Sector
- Enhance the perception and value of the arts and how they contribute to learning and the personal and social development of children and young people

The programme supported innovative, long and short-term partnerships between schools, youth clubs and creative professionals, including artists, performers and architects. These partnerships lead to young people's participation in many different types of arts activities in different school and out of school settings.

Over the period of the programme, over 83,000 children and young people were engaged in the programme through a range of formal and informal education settings including schools, further education institutions and youth service settings. Nearly 100 artists benefitted from the programme through employment and accredited training and 4,700 youth workers, teachers and trainee teachers received Continuous Professional Development support.

The independent programme evaluation found that participant outcomes varied, reflecting the range of activity delivered but that at its core, participating children and young people measurably felt more confident, had more positive attitudes towards learning, showed raised self-esteem and showed improved social behaviour. In addition, an evaluation by the Education and Training Inspectorate found that CYP encouraged children's engagement in education; enhanced their employability and that of professional artists. It introduced new imaginative and results-driven ways of teaching the curriculum and contributed positively to the creative economy.

Despite the obvious benefits associated with engagement, there remain a significant proportion of children and young people who choose not to (or are not given the opportunity to) engage with the arts. The challenge therefore remains to build on current methods used by professional youth arts organisations to engage with excluded young people in ways that spark their imagination and to develop and sustain their involvement by maintaining access opportunities.

It is important for the youth arts sector to articulate the value of its work by describing the role, impacts, and outcomes of engaging young people in quality arts practice both from an intrinsic (and instrumental) perspective. More evidence-based research and evaluation is key to this process, enabling funders to better understand what works and how limited resources can be put to best effect.

Maintaining and enhancing the work of the sector will require a much more integrated and joined-up approach, including the sharing of artistic and physical resources and working in partnership with other sectors including education, sport and employment. Significant infrastructure investment and forthcoming cultural events e.g. City of Culture, Cultural Olympiad, provide a genuine opportunity for maximising young people's engagement with arts and culture.

1.3 Youth Arts in Northern Ireland

The Arts Council has had a long standing commitment to the funding of youth arts activity, recognising the value it has as a means of improving quality of life, enabling self-expression, enhancing learning and furthering the exploration of personal and social identity for children and young people as they grow and develop.

Youth Arts in Northern Ireland has developed significantly over the past ten years and now represents a vibrant and diverse sector. It offers children and young people access to an extensive range of quality arts activities across a number of different artforms and within a range of different contexts delivering quality artistic experiences for children and young people. A number of case studies have been prepared to illustrate the diversity in opportunity provided by youth arts organisations. These are presented in the section which follows.

Figure 2: Oh Yeah Music Centre

Based in Belfast, the Oh Yeah Music Centre has established itself as a lead body in the promotion of contemporary music in NI by creating a space offering studio, learning and performing facilities to local children and young as well as emerging musicians.

Oh Yeah seeks to develop the music sector by creating clear pathways and opportunities for people under the age of 18 interested in moving towards employment in creative sectors. Amongst the range of activity delivered by the Centre, Oh Yeah provides opportunities for emerging bands to perform live and receive instant feedback from audiences; organizes music events showcase young talent at venues suitable for children under the age of 18 and provides fledgling creative organisations the opportunity to work in an office environment to develop core business skills and share best practice.

Figure 3: The Nerve Centre

For over 20 years the Nerve Centre has provided access to training, education and production facilities for young people of Derry~Londonderry

The centre encourages local young talent by providing music lessons, practice facilities and recording studio space as well as by hosting music workshops and occasional events such as Music Hothouse and Rock School. Regular opportunities are also awarded to local bands to perform in-front of live audiences and work alongside international acts.

More recently, the Nerve Centre has become a Creative Learning Centre; embracing emerging creative technologies in music, film, video, animation and digital media to engage with school children to become active, self-directed learners.

Figure 4: Belfast Community Circus

Located in Belfast Cathedral Quarter and operational since 1985, Belfast Community Circus builds the self-esteem and motivation of young participants by engaging them in a range of circus based skills development programmes and initiatives. Transferable skills including team building and communication are also enhanced through the activities which are often undertaken on a cross-community basis.

Established in 1985, the Circus School has established an extensive outreach programme which operates throughout Northern Ireland in association with local venues.

Youth arts sector funding outputs

Primary youth organisations provide artistic experiences to a huge number of people of all ages across Northern Ireland, using a diverse range of interventions delivered through participation and audience based activity. Loosely grouped under participation, performance and exhibition based activity, the Regularly Funded Organisation (RFO) survey provides a detailed 'snap-shot' of their work, in this case relating to financial year 2009/10.

Participation based opportunities for children and young people were provided by the greater number of primary youth arts organizations in 2009 (90%, n=18). These organisations delivered 900 events which breakdown into 6,500 individual sessions. An analysis of survey data revealed that:

- Activities were variable in scale, ranging from small interventions involving two or three participants to large scale productions involving upwards of 60 people
- A substantial amount of work was integrated; linked to local service provision through partnerships with organisations, often working in other sectors.
- Activity was based both in and out of school and undertaken on a range of different timescales
- Activity was both tailored and responsive to the needs of young people, often within specific age ranges (e.g. early years).

Table 1 shows the number of people engaged by primary youth organisations by age range in 2009. As can be seen, the largest proportion of activity involved children in the age range 0 to 11 (28%), followed by young people aged between 17 and 24 (18%). Combined, children and young people (aged 0 to 24) comprise 62% of all participations. The extent of engagement demonstrates the current interest young people have in the arts, highlighting the significance of the group in terms of targeting resources.

Table 1: RFO Engagement by age range

Age Band	Number of participants	%
0 to 11	9,513	28
12 to 16	5,276	15
17 to 24	6,225	18
25 to 39	5,895	17
40 to 59	4,059	12
60 to 70	2,929	9
80+	203	1
Total	34,100	100

Source: 2009 RFO Survey

Youth arts organisations receiving regular funding from the Arts Council are encouraged to report methods used to support access to funded events or activity. This helps illustrate the

measures employed by organisations to maximise access to an event or activity, regardless of location or disability/ability.

Table 2 compares the support methods used by youth arts organisation to access arts activity. As can be seen, youth arts organisations were significantly more likely to employ outreach¹⁰ and affordability as methods to enable participation. This suggests that groups targeted by primary youth organisations tend to be harder to reach and share characteristics associated more with deprived communities, a finding supported by the fact that over 70% of activity delivered was free of charge to the participant.

Table 2: A comparison of method used to support access

	Primary Youth Arts Organisations (%)	All Organisations (%)
Outreach	68	43
Affordability	66	56
Accessible Venue	39	44
Different Format	9	7
Help Transport	8	10
Different Languages	4	3
No Access	3	6
Support Worker Costs	2	5
Childcare	1	1
Speech to Text	0	1
Sensory Interaction	0	4
Audio Described	0	0

Notes:

Source: 2009 RFO survey

Total add up to more than 100% as respondents can select more than one response

In addition to participation based activity, 59% of youth arts organisations funded in 2009 also held a performance targeted at or involving children and young people. These performances attracted audiences of 205,000, representing 21% of the total audiences attracted by all regularly funded organisations in 2009.

Exhibition work comprises a relatively limited component of primary youth art organisation activity. In 2009, 35% (n=7) primary youth arts organisations held 34 exhibitions delivered across 600 exhibition days.

The majority of exhibitions involved showcasing work by children undertaken in a range of different settings such as schools, youth groups, festivals and daycare centres. Other activity

¹⁰ Within this context, outreach is a method used to encourage engagement by a particular audience or group within the community. Outreach strategies are often linked to an organisations strategic objectives or goals.

had a strong education focus. For example, The Champion of the Child Exhibition, curated by Young at Art, charted the life of a pioneering children's rights activist. As well as being of interest to children the exhibition also supported strands of the school curriculum, demonstrating how an exhibition can complement and enhance its delivery. The cross age-range remit of the venues included in the ACNI Youth Arts portfolio meant some exhibition work was targeted at audiences other than children

Activity is often tailored and responsive to the needs of young people within specific age range and can be broadly broken down into five areas:

- Engagement with children and young people in community development contexts and from vulnerable and marginalised communities in a creative context to promote tolerance, social inclusion and respect
- Engage with children and young people in formal and informal education contexts to support the delivery of the core curriculum using creative learning techniques
- Maximising the skills, qualifications and potential of promising young artists through the delivery of training and education driven opportunities
- Producing arts experiences for children of all ages and their families through festivals and professional theatre delivered through local venues. A number of organisations specialize in touring product
- Sector support organisations providing a range of resources and materials, advice, ideas and training for people working with children, young people and community groups

Table 3: Exchequer funding distributed between 2007 and 2009

	2007	2008	2009
ASOP	906,321	1,106,904	1,189,524
Lottery	395151	452618	524393
Total	1,301472	1,559,522	1,713,917

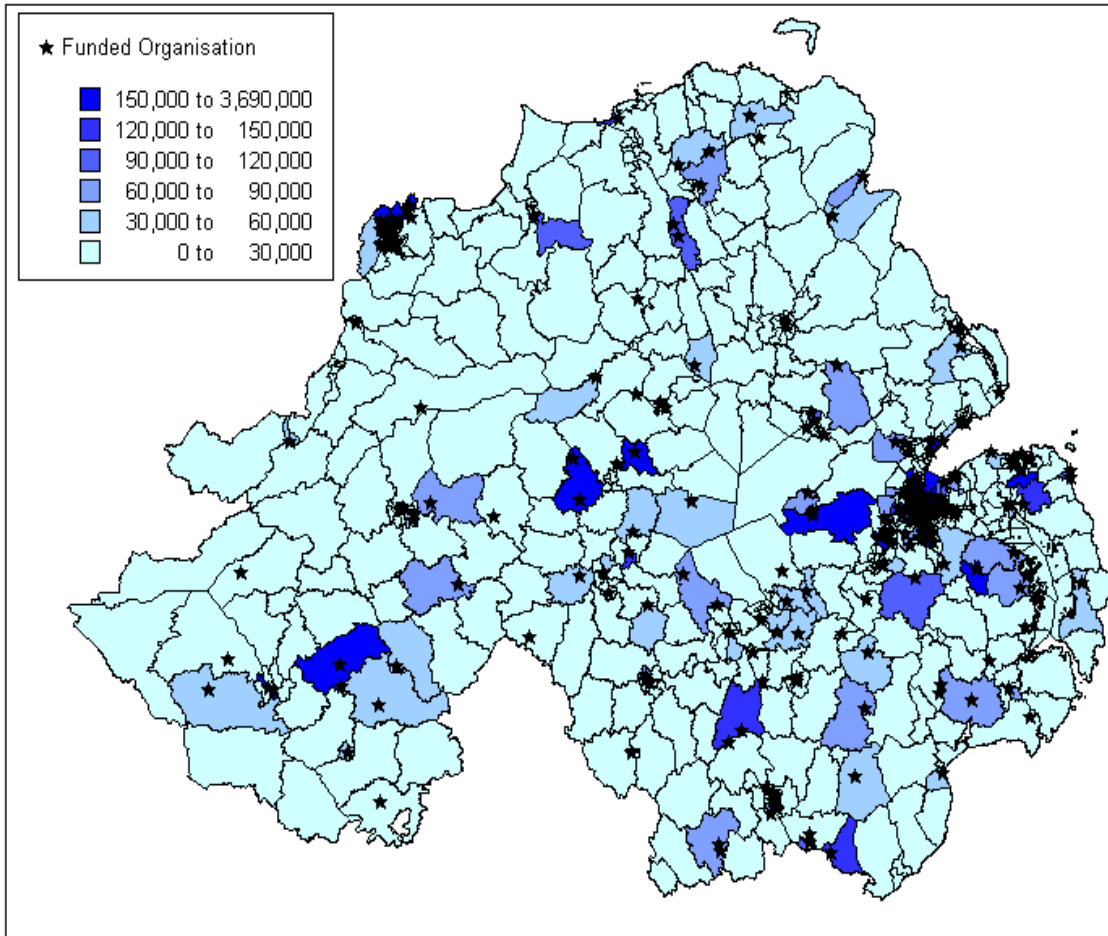
Between 2007 and 2009, a total of £4.5m was allocated to primary¹¹ youth arts organisations via the Annual Support for Operations Programme (ASOP) and Lottery funds. Each year has seen a slight increase in funding awarded, comprising between 10% and 12% of total funding distributed during this period (Table 3).

Figure 5 shows the geographical distribution of funding awarded to youth arts organisations between 2006 and 2010. As can be seen, the proportion of youth arts clients are based either

¹¹ Primary youth arts organisations are those that specialise in providing artform specific programmes for young people. In 2010 there were 23 organisations receiving support from the Arts Council

within Belfast or Derry~Londonderry. However, their activity is often delivered on a Northern Ireland wide basis through touring and outreach activity benefiting communities with poorer access to the arts such as those in rural locations.

Figure 5: Youth arts organisations in receipt of ACNI exchequer funding between 2006 and 2010



A large proportion of professional artists that work in the Youth Art sector do so as facilitators/tutors; working with children and young people in participative settings and through a range of artforms including visual arts, drama, song writing, photography and dance. Depending on the context activity is undertaken in, this type of engagement requires a range of complementary skills, some of which can only be developed through dedicated training.

Research commissioned by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and An Chomhairle Ealaíon in 2010 created a comprehensive and up-to-date evidence based on the living and working conditions of professional artists working across the artform portfolios. This comprehensive piece of research considered artists training needs within the context of Continuous Professional Development (CPD). The research found that the majority of training undertaken

related to their creative development, with less emphasis placed on the development of complementary skills such as the development of facilitation skills (within, for example youth work contexts) business development and IT. There was a strong recognition amongst artists of the important role CPD in their career development, but the general consensus was that there were too few opportunities to advance their skills base.

2 Desk-based Research

This section of the report provides an important backdrop to the primary research findings, by setting out evidence of the benefits of young people engaging in arts and cultural activity; technological advances that impact on consumption and engagement in the arts; regional, national and international policy which will have a bearing on the direction of the strategy; and examples of local and national practice that might inform ACNI's youth arts strategy.

2.1 Importance of the Arts for Children and Young People

Besides the intrinsic value of the arts, there is recognition worldwide of the importance that the arts have in the personal and social development of children and young people. The Centre for Arts Education in New York¹² advocates that, *'beyond having great value in and of themselves, the arts promote the health and well-being of children, including academic and personal growth, critical thinking and analytical skills, and the motivation to stay in school and excel'*.

Americans for the Arts, a non-profit organisation for advancing the arts, advocates that arts education¹³:

- Stimulates and develops the imagination and critical thinking, and refines cognitive and creative skills
- Has a tremendous impact on the developmental growth of every child and has proven to help level the "learning field" across socio-economic boundaries
- Strengthens problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, adding to overall academic achievement and school success
- Develops a sense of craftsmanship, quality task performance, and goal-setting—skills needed to succeed in the classroom and beyond
- Teaches children life skills such as developing an informed perception; articulating a vision; learning to solve problems and make decisions; building self-confidence and self-discipline; developing the ability to imagine what might be; and accepting responsibility to complete tasks from start to finish
- Nurtures important values, including team-building skills; respecting alternative viewpoints; and appreciating and being aware of different cultures and traditions

Arts Council England in its 10 year strategic framework, *Achieving Art for Everyone*¹⁴, recognises the importance of the arts in *'contributing to the well being of children and young*

¹² <http://www.cae-nyc.org/fag>, last accessed 27th July 2011

¹³ http://www.artsusa.org/get_involved/advocacy/funding_resources/default_005.asp, last accessed 27th July 2011

people in fuelling curiosity and critical capacity'. The arts are also seen as 'inspiring future audiences and the next generation of artists and arts leaders'.

The Arts Council of Wales in its Plan 2009 -2012¹⁵ believes that engagement in the arts and in creative opportunities transforms the way children and young people learn and explore the world around them, whilst helping develop specific skills. Through arts based initiatives the Arts Council of Wales shows how the arts can tackle youth poverty, inspiring young people with new ambition and confidence. The importance of out-of-school arts initiatives are viewed as particularly effective routes in arts-based interventions for the excluded, those at risk helping to build self esteem and engagement.

2.2 Advances in Technology

Advances in technology have had a significant impact on the way in which individuals now chose to engage with the arts and culture. Improved digital infrastructure such as broadband and wireless technology, as well as the development of digital devices such as mobile phones and music devices, means that digital media is becoming ever more popular as a means of accessing arts related content. Not only do these forms of digital media act as a marketing tool for the arts and culture sector but they also provide a vehicle through which to consume, share or create artistic content.

Digital technology makes the arts more attractive and accessible to children and young people. It is also becoming embedded in education. Whether it be taking and editing a digital photograph, making a sound track or producing and editing a film, digital media provide children and young people with experiences that help to stimulate imagination and creativity, empowering them to become active and creative citizens.

Arts Council England's research on Digital Audiences¹⁶ has classified interaction with arts and cultural content in digital environments into five main categories: access, learn, experience, share and create.

- **Access:** discovering what's on, filtering opportunities and planning attendance and participation
- **Learn:** acquiring new skills and knowledge (for example finding out more about the life of an artist)
- **Experience:** experiencing the full creative or artistic work online
- **Sharing:** using the internet to share content, experiences and opinions
- **Create:** use of the internet to assist with the creative process itself

¹⁴ Arts Council England, Achieving Art for Everyone, http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/achieving_great_art_for_everyone.pdf, last accessed 27th July 2011

¹⁵ Arts Council of Wales Plan 2009-2012, <http://www.artswales.org.uk/about-us/council/plans>, last accessed 19th May 2011

¹⁶ http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/doc/Digital_audiences_final.pdf, last accessed 29th July 2011

The research concluded that social media, and in particular Facebook, has become a major tool for discovering as well as sharing information about the arts and culture, suggesting these sites are now a key channel. It also concluded that people who engage with arts and cultural content online tend to participate in the arts through live events as well. Other findings include:

- Over half (53%) of the online population have used the internet to engage with arts and culture in the past 12 months. This rate is higher among young adults
- A significant minority (18%) of the online population have chosen to use the internet on their mobile phone to engage with arts and culture (much higher among younger people)

Another piece of research entitled *Digital Content Snapshot*¹⁷ looked at the provision of content in digital format by Arts Council England's funded clients. This research revealed that in addition to managing their own online domains, RFOs actively use social networks to market themselves, with over half (56%) maintaining a profile on at least one social network. Facebook was the most common of these with 45% of organisations having an official Facebook profile and 20% having a MySpace profile. Many RFOs have a multiple online presence with many using core websites as marketing tools and social networks to build and communicate with online communities.

Digital media therefore offers arts and cultural organisations opportunities for broadening and deepening their engagement with audiences, in particular children and young people who tend to be adept in modern technology. It also increases opportunities of engagement for young people who face barriers to and have limited access to arts events. Arts Council England has been proactive in looking at ways to develop the digital capacity of its organisations. In March 2011, it joined forces with the BBC Academy to provide a training and guidance programme for the arts sector across England to help organisations maximise the creation and distribution of high quality arts content for audiences on digital platforms, including online, mobile and internet protocol television. The programme supports the development of the arts sector's media production skills by bringing together the BBC's media and digital experience with the Arts Council's extensive knowledge of the arts sector. The programme, which will run until August 2012, will provide practical seminars, an online guide to commissioning, facilitated masterclasses and an online resource of filmed content. The seminars will be filmed and made available online followed by 12 masterclasses from autumn 2011.

In addition to the above, in June 2011 Arts Council England, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) announced a new Digital R&D Fund for Arts and Culture, for projects that harness digital technologies to connect with wider audiences and explore new ways of working. Arts and cultural organisations are asked to work with those with digital expertise to help them understand the potential offered by new technologies and together develop innovative project proposals for submission to this new research fund.

Another example of digital engagement is the Yale Centre for Digital Storytelling¹⁸ based in Yale College, Wrexham. Developed from a relationship with the BBC Capture Wales, this project was

¹⁷ ACE, Digital Content Snapshot, 2009. <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/downloads/MTM-snapshot.pdf>, last accessed 26th September 2011

¹⁸ www.artscouncilofwales.org.uk/3055.file.dld, last accessed on 26th September 2011

initially developed to provide digital storytelling opportunities for F.E students. The programme now targets general members of the public and points to the potential for new technologies to promote participation including with traditionally difficult to reach groups and disadvantaged communities. The project is:

- exploring new forms of narrative delivery including mobile phone capture given its potential appeal to young people
- linking digital storytelling with academic awards in Further Education and offering a BTec and National Diploma course in digital storytelling
- working externally with Communities First partnerships via a £20,000 award from Communities@One the WAG Digital Inclusion Initiative

The production of digital stories is part of a number of growing creative forms, which amalgamate new technology, filmmaking, photography, music, story and social purpose. These activities cut across boundaries in the arts and demonstrate the ability to attract groups who may not be attracted to more conventional literary and arts based activities.

2.3 The importance of the creative industries

The creative industries have undergone astonishing growth in the past two decades. The UK's creative sector is reportedly the largest in the European Union, representing an estimated 6.4% of the economy and growing faster than any other sector. It has also been through unprecedented technical revolution and yet it is far from clear that the sector is prepared for this transition. There are few large employers and a mass of tiny businesses and while the free structure is innovative and exciting, many fear that few micro-firms are focused on developing the talents and skills upon which its future depends.

The economic downturn has seen youth unemployment soar across the UK. Unemployment among 16-24 years old is at an all time high with even highly skilled graduates are faced with the challenge of trying to secure employment in what has become a very competitive job market. The situation is no different for young aspiring artists and creators. Despite the creative industries appearing to fair well during the economic downturn, graduates still appear to be struggling to secure employment. This is characteristic of the arts industry in general where few jobs appear to be advertised, internships can be difficult to secure without contacts and cultural organisations exploit the use of unpaid internships as a source of organised unpaid labour. In the case of the latter, cultural organisations are offering little or no training and frequently breach existing minimum wage legislation. Below we provide two case studies looking at the importance of developing the creative skills and improving career development opportunities for young artists.

Figure 6: New Deal of the Mind

New Deal of the Mind (NDotM) is a coalition of artists, entrepreneurs and opinion formers who recognise the economic, social and cultural value of creative talent. The concept grew from an article written in the New Statesman by Martin Bright suggesting that cultural elements of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) introduced by President Franklin D Roosevelt during the 1930s depression could be adapted for the UK today.

The coalition includes prominent individuals from the country's leading arts institutions and music and film industries who believe the creative economy can help drive recovery. The organisation was formally launched in March 2009 and is a not-for-profit company, which works closely with the Government and partner organisations to devise plans for job creation in the creative sector. From its inception, New Deal of The Mind has been interested in looking for examples of successful work creation schemes from the recent past in Britain, one of which is the Enterprise Allowance Scheme (EAS) which gave creative and entrepreneurial individuals the opportunity to set up their own business with government support. New Deal of the Mind has successfully lobbied for the return of the Enterprise Allowance Scheme and is pushing for government policy that encourages self-employment and freelance opportunities. The group is working with the Government to help put unemployed people into creative placements in arts and culture and in finding spaces across the UK with the potential of becoming 'incubator centres' providing space, support and advice for people setting up on their own.

The New Deal of the Mind group was commissioned by Arts Council England to investigate policy options for helping young people who wish to enter the creative industries develop the necessary creative and entrepreneurial skills. Their report, *Cultural Survival in Hard Times* (March 2010)¹⁹ set out a series of recommendations some of which included:

- The arts sector and creative industries should urge government to establish an enterprise scheme for the 21st century based on the Enterprise Allowance Scheme of 1983-1991
- To encourage fairer access to jobs, the Arts Council England should promote fair treatment of those undertaking work experience and sector skills councils establish a "kitemark" which acknowledges best work-placement practice
- The Arts Council should encourage the setting up of a national mentoring programme and call on larger employers to draw up guidelines of good practice that encourage their senior staff to participate
- The creation of hubs, incubators and spaces where artists and creative entrepreneurs can work should be encouraged

Figure 7: DCMS Jerwood Creative Bursaries

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Arts Council England have joined forces to pilot a scheme providing creative bursaries to support talented recent graduates access a career in the arts. The DCMS Jerwood Creative Bursaries scheme is managed by the Jerwood Foundation and Jerwood Charitable Foundation. The longer term aim is to open up arts careers to a wider group of people, creating a more diverse work force and encouraging best practice in recruitment and staff development.

Arts organisations from around England have been selected to host bursary recipients in placements lasting between six and twelve months. These new roles have been specially designed to give new graduates the very best start to their careers, covering a wide range of jobs in the arts across art forms. Running initially as a pilot across a two year period until March 2012, 42 placements have been created. Successful candidates receive a bursary of £15,000 per annum pro rata, are assigned a mentor and are encouraged to take part in structured networking opportunities throughout their placement. The scheme also offers financial support to host organisations.

¹⁹ http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/creative-survival-hard-times/, last accessed 5th October 2011

The Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL) has taken the lead in developing the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland with a particular emphasis on nurturing skills and talents to develop and sustain a vibrant and successful creative industries sector. In its Creative Industries Strategic Action Plan ²⁰ its mission is *'to contribute to the growth of Northern Ireland's cultural capital by supporting creativity & creative talents and in particular their expression in business activities'*. The Action Plan identifies Priorities for Action under three broad themes

- Innovation in Business
- Innovation Through People, &
- Innovation Through Sectoral Infrastructure & Knowledge

Nurturing and developing the creative capacity of our children and young people is essential to growing a creative economy in Northern Ireland. Career development opportunities such as those supported by the DCMS Jerwood Creative Bursaries are invaluable to young people. They enable young people to gain first-hand experience of a career in the arts, providing them with direction and motivation whilst enabling further skills development. Below is a case study of a local youth arts organisation striving to provide career development opportunities for young artists.

Figure 8: Youth Action Northern Ireland

YouthAction Northern Ireland is a regional voluntary youth organisation providing a number of youth arts development programmes that strive to provide the highest quality training, classes, performances, outreach programmes and issue based theatre opportunities for urban and rural young people across Northern Ireland, particularly those without access to traditional theatre opportunities. All of Youth Action's artistic work is underpinned by youth work principles and practices.

As part of their Leadership and Training programmes, Youth Action has been piloting Northern Ireland's first Youth Arts Apprenticeship scheme. The apprenticeship uses drama and dance facilitation training to enable young artists to achieve recognised training in both arts and youth work as well as gain work experience in local communities. Alongside developing their abilities in performing arts, The Apprentices also have the opportunity to develop technical skills in the broader aspects of production, music, film and digital media. This is a growth area within the Creative Industries sector and provides other opportunities for Youth Arts Apprentices alongside contributing to sector growth and development.

As a result of Youth Action's Apprenticeship scheme, 3 apprenticeships to date have been accepted onto youth work courses at university to train further in the delivery of Youth Arts Work, 1 has been accepted onto an Arts Therapy Course, 7 have secured jobs as freelance artists with a number of arts organisations across Belfast, 2 have secured jobs in the Lyric and 1 has secured a full time Youth Arts Post.

²⁰ http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/index/arts_and_creativity/creative_industries.htm, last accessed 6th October 2011

2.4 Promoting Positive Mental Health

In Northern Ireland 21% (369,390) of adults and 6% (105,540) of children have a disability and the incidence is higher here than in the rest of the UK. Over one quarter of all families in Northern Ireland are affected (Disability Action, 2010). Information supplied by Disability Action. Recent research undertaken by Queens University in collaboration with Princes Trust Northern Ireland and Save the Children²¹ found that over 20% of children in Northern Ireland suffer significant mental health problems. Youth suicide is particularly prevalent and represents a growing area of concern particularly in areas of high economic and social deprivation characterized by ongoing sectarian violence.²² Reasons for suicide are very much dependent on individual circumstances. However, there are a number of common factors that increase the risk of suicide, most notably unemployment, social deprivation, low self esteem and educational attainment, poor physical health and environment, alcohol and drug misuse, and domestic and sexual violence.²³

In the ten years between 1999 and 2009 a total of 2,258 deaths were recorded as suicide. In 2010 alone, there were 313 related deaths, a 20% increase on the previous year. Comparative analysis with other parts of the UK emphasizes the significance of the problem with Northern Ireland routinely leading regional youth suicide rates.

Set up in 2002, the policy response to these mental health issues in Northern Ireland has been underpinned by the Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability. This independent review looked at the law, policy and provisions which affected people with mental health needs or a learning disability in Northern Ireland. The review completed its task in 2007 and, following the NI Executives acceptance of the broad thrust of its recommendations in 2008, a detailed Action Plan (2009-2011) was developed to improve mental health and wellbeing and drive service improvement for those with a mental health need or learning disability.²⁴

The Action Plan emphasizes the need for integrated working, not just across Government departments, but also with the statutory, voluntary and private sectors - supporting people to live as full a life as is possible through early intervention and support; the promotion of independence, personal fulfillment and, where possible, recovery. The Public Health Agency has been given a pivotal role in delivering the Action Plan.

There is strong, independent evidence that creative engagement, either as a participant through a creatively driven activity or attendee at a performance can support the enhancement of the personal attributes sought by the Action Plan devised by DHSSPS, such as self esteem.

²¹ Mc Alister S et al, 2009. Childhood in Transition. Queens University

²² DHSSPS 2006

²³ <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/suicideandhomicidenisummary.pdf>, last accessed 23.08.2011

²⁴ DHSSPS, 2009. Delivering the Bamford Vision. http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/bamford_action_plan_2009-2011.pdf. Last accessed on 06.10.11

Indeed, a number of arts organisations have created innovative and creative responses to mental health issues.

Amongst them is Replay Production's, an independent theatre company that specialises in the production of educational theatre and storytelling. Motivated to respond to the growing mental health problems in Belfast, the Company commissioned playwright Gary Owen to create a play in the style of verbatim theatre that reflected the personal mental health experiences of young people in Northern Ireland. Featuring the personal experiences of fictional teenage brother and sister, Alex and Michael, the play presents an interpretation of the real life mental health experiences of young people living in Belfast, tackling head on issues, including suicide, self-harm, ADHD and Bipolar disorder. Targeted at post-primary schools, the touring production was performed in front of 2,000 children between January and March 2010 and was well received by both children and teachers. In recognition of the need to provide information on further professional supports services a resource pack was prepared and distributed following each performance.

Participative community arts based groups, working in deprived inner city areas are recognised by the Arts Council as being particularly well placed to address the mental health needs of young people. Using participatory arts based interventions; New Lodge Arts provides community-based learning and personal development opportunities for children in the Long Street area of North Belfast.

Since 2006, New Lodge Arts has given disadvantaged children and young people aged between 5 and 18 the opportunity to express personal experiences through a range of artform media including performance and visual arts. The Arts Academy has engaged with nearly 2,500 young people since being established and has created a referral system for participants identified as needing specialist help through local groups such as Public Initiative for the Prevention of Suicide and Self-harm (PIPS) and Mind Wise. PIPS was set up in 2003 by the Health and Social Well-being Forum in response to the growing number of suicide and self-harm incidences in North Belfast.

Using the art as a medium to push against barriers, boundaries and pre-conceptions to promoting social inclusion is evident in qualitative research conducted with participants in similar arts based projects in England, affirming the value of the arts as a vehicle to counter the circumstances and symptoms of mental ill health.²⁵

2.5 Policy and Legislative Context

The Northern Ireland Executive is committed to supporting and realising the rights of all our children and young people in order to improve children's outcomes and help them to achieve their potential. This is evident in the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister's

²⁵ White, M (2000). Mental Health and the Arts: A Discussion Paper.
<http://www.ippr.org/uploadedFiles/events/2003/Mike%20White%20Paper.pdf>. Last accessed: 07.10.11

dedicated strategy to children and young people *Our Children and Young People – Our Pledge - A ten year Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2006-2016*. The shared vision of the strategy is that all children and young people living in Northern Ireland will thrive and look forward with confidence to the future. The hope is that come the end of the Strategy period there will be evidence that children are: healthy; enjoying, learning and achieving; living in safety and with stability; experiencing economic and environmental well-being; contributing positively to community and society; and living in a society which respects their rights. The strategy highlights the importance of non-formal education, through youth work, sport, the arts and volunteering, to enhancing and complementing the personal and social development of our children and young people.

The Executive also considered the rights of the child in the development of its Programme for Government (PfG) 2008-11. The Executive's priorities in relation to children and young people is set out in its Public Service Agreements, these include:

PSA 6: Children and Family - To ensure that children are cared for, live in safety, are protected from abuse, receive the support they need to achieve their full potential, become more independent and grow into well adjusted adults, taking their place in the community;

PSA 9: Promoting Access to Culture, Arts and Leisure - Contribute to Northern Ireland's economic, health and educational goals by increasing participation and access to Culture, Arts and Leisure activities;

PSA 10: Helping our children and young people to achieve through education - Encourage all our children to realise their potential by improving access to formal and non formal education and provision tailored to the needs of disadvantaged children and young people.

The Arts Council's sponsor Department, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) holds lead responsibility on delivering on PSA9. In its corporate plan for the same period, the Department outlines its commitment *"to protect, nurture and grow Northern Ireland's cultural capital by providing strategic leadership and resources for the promotion and sustainable development of the culture, arts and leisure sectors"*. Its objective in relation to arts and culture is to *"enable as many people as possible to improve their quality of life by experiencing, participating and accessing the excellence of our cultural assets"* with the hope of increasing by 2 percentage points the proportion of the population who attend/participate arts events in Northern Ireland.

The Department recognises the importance of creativity and innovation in contributing to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of Northern Ireland. This will become increasingly important over the coming years given the drive from the Executive to rebalance the economy, with a particular focus on high value added export sectors as well as growing the creative industries. DCAL's *Unlocking Creativity* strategy defines creativity as *'imaginative activity with outcomes that are both original and of value'*. Creativity is recognised as essential to the

personal and social development of individuals enabling the growth of self-confidence, self-expression and self-esteem. The Department believes that a more complete investment in creativity will enable multiple connections to develop between teachers, artists, entrepreneurs, designers, inventors, children, government, industrialists, workers and students. The mission of the strategy is to develop the capacities of all our people for creativity and innovation, and so promote and sustain the social, cultural and economic well-being of Northern Ireland. The strategy aims to:

- ensure full and co-ordinated provision for creative and cultural development in the curricula of formal and informal education and lifelong learning
- ensure access to training and employment opportunities, and promote business development through creative and cultural development
- validate the concept that creativity is central to all aspects of work, learning and leisure in Northern Ireland through ensuring effective partnerships between organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors

DCAL's own Learning Strategy, developed by representatives of DCAL's Arms Length Bodies in collaboration with the Education and Training Inspectorate, sets out its vision '*to contribute to and support the creativity and lifelong learning agenda, by developing the capacities of all our people for creativity and innovation, and so promote and sustain the social, cultural and economic well-being of Northern Ireland*'. The aims of the strategy include:

- to enhance participation, performance and quality in culture, arts and leisure activities and help develop employability skills and provide opportunities to contribute to economic regeneration;
- to contribute to the further development of creativity in education, society, culture, business and enterprise in Northern Ireland; providing information and support for entrepreneurs and the creative industries;
- to develop stronger links with other government departments - in particular DE and DEL – and to contribute to the educational and learning aims of other departments; and
- to raise awareness and maximise the contribution of arts, leisure and cultural activities to the emotional health and well-being of the communities.

A strategic learning co-ordinator has been appointed to work with DCAL's Arms Length Bodies in collaboration with the Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) to develop a set of Quality Indicators (QIs) to enhance quality assurance of the projects/ programmes that they run. The Arts Council has supported the establishment and implementation of DCAL's Learning Strategy and the QIs as a means to review, develop and quality assure arts-related educational provision in Northern Ireland. In common with the other ALB's sponsored by DCAL, the Arts Council was involved in a number of focus groups/workshops from June 2010 to develop and agree a set of QIs as a means to quality assure educational provision by organisations sponsored by DCAL.

The Arts Council piloted these QIs amongst a cohort of its clients working in youth arts, each of whom submitted their reports in February 2011. The ETI delivered a final report in June 2011 and formal feedback to clients will be taking place in autumn 2011. Thereafter the Arts Council will take steps to determine how this process can be rolled out across all organisations over the coming months.

The Department for Employment and Learning in its Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland, Success Through Skills – Transforming Futures²⁶, forecasts that degree subject requirements will become more skewed towards physical sciences, mathematical and computer sciences, engineering and technology and creative arts and design. Consideration needs to be given to the ways in which students can be encouraged to study these subjects. The strategy recognises further the important role that skills play in contributing to social inclusion providing individuals with a route to stable employment, better wages, and long-term prosperity, as well as personal development and fulfillment. Out of this comes wider benefit, including better health and greater social stability.

The Department of Education recognises the importance of developing creativity in our children and young people. The Revised Northern Ireland Curriculum (which was phased in from September 2007) aims to empower young people to develop their potential and to make informed and responsible choices and decisions through their lives. Its intention is to develop children's personal, interpersonal and learning skills and their ability to think creatively and critically through opportunities to engage in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum including the arts. The Curriculum identifies the arts as being important in helping develop creativity, allowing children to express their ideas, feelings and interpretations of the world in diverse ways through pictures, sound, drama and dance. It highlights the need for children from a young age to be involved in a wide range of activities that continue to develop their imagination and natural curiosity and that allow them to express and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings with confidence. Art, Design and Music are identified as having distinct roles in developing children's artistic, musical and kinaesthetic talents and intelligences. They are also described as presenting different modes of learning which are integral to children's development. They contribute to and enhance other learning areas for example:

- **Language and Literacy** – by encouraging children to talk and write about their own art and design and music and respond to that of others using appropriate language and some specialised vocabulary
- **Mathematics and Numeracy** - by exploring shape and space, position and movement, patterns and relationships; by creating and interpreting musical ideas from symbolic representation

²⁶ <http://www.delni.gov.uk/success-through-skills-transforming-futures.pdf>, last accessed 5th October 2011

- **Personal Development** - by focussing on aesthetic and emotional development: developing social skills through group work and finding a range of ways to express and communicate feelings
- **Physical Education** – by using the Arts as a stimulus for developing a range of movement skills
- **The World Around Us** – by encouraging children to observe and interpret their environment, past and present; record and represent their learning visually and through sound, movement, drama and dance

The Education (NI) Order 2006 places a mandatory requirement on Boards of Governors to provide all pupils at grant-aided schools with access to the Entitlement Framework (EF). The EF is an integral part of a young person's education within the Revised Curriculum at Key Stage 4 and post-16. The EF aims to ensure that all post primary pupils aged 14 and over are offered a greater breadth and balance of courses throughout their educational journey, suited to their needs, aptitudes and interests, irrespective of where they live or the school they attend, including a minimum range of vocational courses. It is hoped that the EF will help contribute to the Department's goal of raising standards within all post-primary schools and of reducing the levels of educational underachievement that currently exist.

The target date for the full implementation of the EF is September 2013. From that date, schools will be required to provide pupils with access to a minimum number of courses at Key Stage 4 (current target 24) and minimum number of courses at post-16 (current target 27). At least one-third of the courses must be general (academic) and at least one-third applied (vocational/professional/technical). The remaining one-third of courses is at the discretion of each school and provides schools with an opportunity to develop a unique and distinctive curricular offer whilst enabling young people to choose from a package of courses that leads to progression to further education, higher education, training and employment.

The Department of Education's Early Years (0-6 years) Strategy 2010-2015, also aims '*to enable every child to develop their full potential by giving each one the best start possible*'. One objective of this strategy is to improve the quality of early years' provision thereby promoting better learning outcomes for children by the end of the Foundation Stage especially in language and number; it also provides for the child's personal and social development, physical and cognitive growth, emotional well-being and readiness to learn. This is one area in particular where the arts can play a key role.

It is not only through the formal education sector that the arts can contribute to a young person's development. Non formal education, and in particular the youth sector is another area in which the arts can play a significant role. The Department of Education in its Strategy for the Delivery of Youth Work in Northern Ireland 2005-2008 outlines its aims and priorities to guide the development of the youth service. Their approach was categorised under four key themes:

- **Delivering Effective Inclusive Youth Work:** To ensure that high quality youth work was inclusively and effectively delivered to facilitate the personal and social development of young people within a supportive public policy framework;
- **Participation:** To ensure that young people have the skills, knowledge and opportunities to make informed choices about their lives; are at the heart of designing, managing and evaluating youth work policy and practice; have opportunities to address issues they are interested in, and can make a meaningful contribution within their communities and within public and political decision-making processes
- **Resources and Funding:** To ensure adequate funding and resources to consolidate existing provision and effectively deliver the Youth Work Strategy
- **Implementation:** Ensure clear roles and responsibilities for the delivery of the Youth Work Strategy and that the organisations involved are held accountable for that delivery and collaborate effectively

The ability of schools to work in partnership with a wide range of individuals and organisations to enrich provision for creative and cultural education was recognized in *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* (1999), a report published by the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education. This report recognised that the benefits of successful partnerships and the roles of various partners in creative and cultural education are different but complimentary. The report went on to suggest that better use should be made of the great deal of best practice that exists in this area in ensuring the effectiveness of partnerships created.

The Department of Education is in the process of developing Priorities for Youth which will build on the above Strategy. In developing this document, the Department has been working with stakeholders from across the sector to identify the main issues currently facing youth work and to determine the priorities on which to focus. The Department began a process in 2008 to gather information and evidence to inform its development. Questionnaires were issued to children and young people; youth workers, leaders and volunteers; and managers in youth or relevant children's youth settings. Over 800 responses were received and independently analysed. Recommendations from the consultations and those which are important in the context of developing the Arts Council's Youth Arts Strategy include:

- Youth provision should provide a greater range of activities for children and young people, and alternatives to sport (for those not interested). An extension of activities and courses relating to the **arts, drama, dance** and **music** is particularly important
- The need to ensure appropriate funding and resourcing of youth services, including services by voluntary and community sectors and uniformed groups
- Providing positive activities within safe and welcoming environments, where young people have a relaxed and enjoyable space to meet and socialise; develop their own identities; increase their self confidence, skills and motivation; reduce feelings of isolation

- Complementing formal education – with some direct work in schools, informal community-based activities/ projects/ programmes and specialist programmes/ projects to meet the needs of those not accessing, or excluded from, mainstream provision

At the time of writing, the Department of Education is due to issue the 'Priorities for Youth' for public consultation in Autumn 2011.

The arts are also relevant in the context of play, particularly amongst younger children. OFMDFM's Play and Leisure Policy aims to place high value on play and leisure as an essential element in the development of children's lives, families, communities and society. The strategy outlines the advantages that play has on a child's development including the development of problem-solving skills, supporting language development and literacy, developing social skills, expressing emotions, developing imagination and creative interests and abilities. Priority areas of the strategy focus on: ensuring that places and spaces for play are accessible to all; promoting a greater recognition of the benefits of play and providing training opportunities for those working with children and young people.

2.6 Youth Arts Policy and Best Practice Approaches

In developing this strategy, ACNI undertook an extensive desk based research exercise looking at youth arts policy in other jurisdictions including cross border, nationally and internationally. This provided contextual background including evidence on the importance that is placed on youth arts as well as an overview of best practice approaches that are being used in helping support development of the sector. We looked at youth arts policies developed by the other UK Arts Councils including Arts Council England, the Arts Council of Wales, Creative Scotland and An Chomhairle Ealaíon (AnCE). This was expanded to look at policy and best practice in Australia.

Below we provide an overview of the policies that are in place elsewhere.

2.6.1 Arts Council England

In a recently published 10 year framework for the arts, Achieving Art for Everyone²⁷, Arts Council England has identified 5 goals that lie at the heart of its work. One of the underlying principles is that every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts. The strategy recognises the importance of the arts in contributing to the well being of children and in fuelling curiosity and critical capacity. The arts are seen as inspiring future audiences and the next generation of artists and arts leaders. To deliver on this priority, Arts Council England is committed to:

²⁷ Arts Council England, Achieving Art for Everyone, http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/achieving_great_art_for_everyone.pdf, last accessed 19th May 2011

- advocating for a coherent and targeted approach to high-quality arts provision for children and young people, working with the Department of Education, funded organisations and artists, schools, cultural partners, local authorities and higher and further education institutions
- investing in the development of arts practice and programmes that are inspired by, and produced for, with and by children and young people
- championing high-quality opportunities for children and young people to enjoy the arts in and out of school

By pursuing these priorities, Arts Council England is seeking the following outcomes:

- a coherent, national approach to the development of children and young people's engagement with the arts, in and out of school
- more children and young people having access to excellent art and are shaping their future arts provision as creators and critical consumers
- England becomes a world leader in artistic programming for children and young people

Over the period 2011-2015, the focus of Arts Council England in relation to this goal will be to improve the delivery of arts opportunities for children and young people and raising the standard of art being produced for, with and by children and young people.

In 2005, Arts Council England launched a dedicated youth arts Strategy, known as 'Children, Young People and the Arts'. This Strategy was developed in light of Every Child Matters and Youth Matters. Arts Council England how the arts were able to contribute to achieving all five outcomes: being healthy, staying safe, making a positive contribution, achieving economic well-being and enjoying and achieving.

The aims of this Strategy were:

- to foster a world-leading arts infrastructure alongside other cultural organisations that supports and values the cultural expression of children and young people and increases their opportunities to engage in activities relevant to their needs and interest
- to ensure the arts and creativity have a place within wider Government and other policy agendas that have an impact on children and young people
- to see wide social recognition of the value and transformational power of the arts and creativity, particularly in relation to children and young people

In order to achieve a high quality of creative arts and cultural engagement for all children and young people, Arts Council England set out to:

- develop and implement corporate approaches to ensure that the views of children and young people are heard, engage them in decisions that affect them and broaden the range and appeal of its 'offer' to ensure it is relevant
- maintain an accurate picture of what is currently available for children and young people enabling the identification of areas of need and to use resources to the best advantage
- develop the skills, capacity and knowledge of people in organisations engaged with children and young people in arts and cultural activity and to help the sector understand and link with Government and wider policy agendas

- use existing strategic programmes and initiatives to continue to develop, share and advocate for innovative practice with, for and by young people and for all programmes to achieve a collective impact wider than any single programme or initiative
- work with partner organisations – local authorities and agencies – to maximise the contribution of the arts to their existing and emerging strategies
- advocate effectively for the transformational power of arts and creativity by monitoring, evaluating and sharing high-quality work and using the lessons learned from initiatives as evidence

In support of its long standing aim to ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, Arts Council England introduced the Artsmark award scheme in 2001.

Figure 9: Artsmark

Artsmark is a national award that accredits quality arts education in England. It is the Arts Council England's flagship programme to audit, celebrate and develop high quality arts education in schools, further education colleges and youth justice settings. Developed in partnership with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Department of Education and OfSTED, the Artsmark award is designed to encourage schools to increase the quantity, range and type of arts activity they provide as well as raise the profile of arts in education.

The scheme provides schools with rigorous criteria against which to benchmark their current arts provision, helping them to identify areas for development and highlighting the school's strengths in the arts. It provides schools with the opportunity to celebrate achievements in the arts, to work with arts education professionals and rewards those schools which are committed to embedding high quality, broad and sustainable arts provision. Gaining an Artsmark at any level shows that a school is committed to the wider development of young people. It also raises the status of the work of teachers within schools and increases awareness of continuing professional development opportunities in the arts for all teachers.

Having been re-launched in September 2011, the scheme now provides an online application system and refreshed criteria that addresses both the quantity and quality of arts provision. Arts Council England has also introduced a training programme for applicants to prepare them for the application process.

In 2006, the first large-scale evaluation of Artsmark was carried out by Matthews Millman looking at the impact the scheme had on schools in England.²⁸ The evaluation showed that a high proportion of schools attributed the process of applying for an award with an increase in the range of arts curriculum activity they offered and in generating cross-curricular links. There was also evidence of work being undertaken to remedy gaps in provision. It was also clear that Artsmark had helped to position the arts more centrally within the wider curriculum. Almost one third of schools at this time had also managed to increase lesson hours available to the arts subjects with marked increases in out-of-school hours provision. This helps demonstrate the success of Artsmak in meeting its aims and objectives.

²⁸ http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/the-impact-of-artsmark-on-schools-in-england/, last accessed 5th October 2011

2.6.2 Creative Scotland

In July 2010, Scottish Arts Council merged with Scottish Screen to form Creative Scotland. Creative Scotland is the new lead body for arts and screen industries in Scotland.

Creative Scotland recently launched its 3 Year Corporate Plan, 'Investing in Scotland's Creative Future 2011-2014'²⁹. Outlined in this plan is its ten year vision including a number of aspirations, one of which is for Scotland to be recognised as an international leader in the arts for children and young people, ensuring that every child in Scotland has access to the arts. To help achieve this vision, Creative Scotland will launch a national youth arts strategy which will establish Scotland as an international leader in the arts for children and young people. It is hoped that young people will be central to the development and implementation of the strategy. The core purpose of the strategy will be to:

'Enrich young people's lives through the arts and creative activity by creating a policy framework for youth arts to contribute to, integrate with and cross other national policy areas such as education, skills development, employment, health and justice. The strategy will be a rallying call for Scotland's young people, our artists and creative practitioners, cultural organisations (e.g. national youth arts companies) and other relevant agencies to reflect upon current practice and seek to establish new ways to improve access, promote engagement and nurture creative excellence'.

Whilst the strategy is being developed, Creative Scotland will continue to roll out initiatives that are aimed at growing participation and attendance of children in the arts.

Figure 10: Creativity Portal

The Creativity Portal is a collaborative environment for practitioners designed to inform, inspire and encourage debate around creativity. It aims to stimulate new approaches to learning and teaching through joint working between education and the cultural sectors. It supports the Curriculum for Excellence which promotes partnerships within and out with school communities to enrich learning experiences for children and young people. It is a partnership that has been developed between Learning and Teaching Scotland and Creative Scotland.

The Creativity Portal highlights some of the most inspiring recent collaborations which have resulted from creative partnerships between cultural organisations and schools. The Portal brings together practitioners from both the arts and education sectors to place creativity at the heart of all learning and teaching. It offers access to many of Scotland's arts and cultural organisations and provides links to articles and research concerned with aspects of creativity.

The launch of the portal coincided with the Scottish Executive's Education and the Arts, Culture and Creativity Action Plan³⁰ which brings together the education and cultural sectors to provide exciting learning experiences to ignite children's imaginations and help them develop their creative skills. In this plan, the Executive recognises creativity as a vital element of a good education and the development of creative skills as crucial to the futures of Scotland's children

²⁹ <http://www.creativescotland.com/sites/default/files/editor/Corporate-Plan-Singles-17-3.pdf>, last accessed 19th May 2011

³⁰ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/920/0104516.pdf>, last accessed 16th September 2011

and young people, whilst also benefiting Scotland's business and enterprise sectors. It regards Creative Scotland as an important partner to Scotland's education sector.

The vision of creativity in the context of this Action Plan is that all children and young people will be empowered as well-rounded individuals to develop their imagination, demonstrate capacity for original thought and understanding of meaningful innovations, contributing effectively to the world at large. To help achieve this, the Scottish Executive has set out the following conditions should be developed in education:

- Creativity is recognised and valued at the heart of all learning;
- All learners and practitioners are supported to be creative and innovative;
- The vital role of Creativity is advanced in each of the 4 capacities of Curriculum for Excellence – supporting children and young people to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective communicators

Well planned teaching and learning through the arts and culture plays a key role in enabling young people to develop as:

- Successful learners with openness to new ideas and thinking, able to think creatively, flexibly and independently;
- Confident individuals with ambition, able to develop and communicate their own ideas, using multiple means, and live as independently as they can;
- Responsible citizens with commitment to participate in political, economic, social and cultural life, able to make informed choices and decisions;
- Effective contributors with resilience, an enterprising attitude, able to apply critical thinking in new contexts, to create and develop ideas and solve problems.

The Action Plan focuses on building collaborative approaches to improve young people's experiences within the curriculum. The aim is to impact positively on their achievements and career paths. The four workstreams of the plan are:

- Develop a vision for, and understanding of, the importance of developing creative skills in children and young people and the application of creative learning and teaching;
- Build capacity, skills and expertise of learning providers and creative professionals to support creative learning and teaching;
- Share information and good practice, including applications of creative teaching;
- Develop a strategic approach to pathways for the enthusiastic and talented across lifelong learning and into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

Table 4 below provides an overview of the remit and actions associated with each of the 4 themes described above.

Table 4: Scottish Government's *Education and the Arts, Culture and Creativity Action Plan*

Workstream	Lead Partner	Remit	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a vision for, and understanding of, the importance of developing creative skills in children and young people and the application of creative learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative Scotland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To achieve endorsement by national bodies and relevant sector leaders of the value and benefits to children and young people of embedding the arts, culture and creativity within the curriculum, and promote interest in the agenda amongst teaching and creative practitioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a shared vision for creativity and its role in learning and teaching in the context of Curriculum for Excellence, highlighting the importance of the creative skills of children and young people, and the characteristics which should be promoted by creative learning and teaching in the arts and culture, and across the curriculum - Raise awareness of the importance of the arts in learning and teaching within the curriculum. Work with key stakeholders including Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, Learning and Teaching Scotland, Scottish Qualifications Authority to endorse jointly future publications/ events as appropriate and ensure the partnership has visibility - Promote the place of arts and culture as contexts for learning and developing skills in creativity, and the benefits of effective learning and teaching in the arts and culture across a range of subjects. Encourage organisations participating in the Creativity Portal to provide suitable case studies showing the type of good practice in action and providing links to further information - Support the development of Creative Learning Networks, funded by Creative Scotland to develop links that support creative learning in local authorities - Raise awareness of existing high quality programmes and projects currently available to support schools' engagement with the arts, culture and creativity - Ensure that Scotland is engaged with international developments in arts, cultural and creative education – raising awareness of advances and activity in Scotland and learning from good practice in other countries - Promote programmes for teachers to gain experience of the application of creativity and innovation in the workplace - Promote appropriate points of contact within education authorities which can be accessed by artists and cultural organisations for collaboration and deliver practice that stimulates creativity in young people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build the capacity, skills and expertise of learning providers and creative professionals to support creative learning and teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning and Teaching Scotland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To provide teacher, and cultural and creative practitioners, with professional support and development opportunities, appropriate to their needs, to enable them to become more confident and effective in using the arts, culture and creativity in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engender recognition of teachers' skills for employment, including creative skills - Explore how undergraduate arts courses can raise awareness of the skills required by creative practitioners to gain employment in the education sectors - Build the capacity of cultural organisations funded by Creative Scotland to plan and deliver high quality education activity, expanding on the support provided through the LEARN fund - Take stock of the range of current CPD provision and professional

Workstream	Lead Partner	Remit	Actions
		<p>delivering across the curriculum</p>	<p>support across the shared agenda. Identify needs for professional development and consider ways of addressing them, to help teachers and creative practitioners to acquire skills and confidence to work and plan together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with key stakeholders to develop opportunities for training to meet identified need including possible joint training of teachers and creative practitioners and explore the potential for professional acknowledgement / accreditation of skills developed through collaborative working - Develop practical support for teachers and schools to help embed the arts, culture and creativity across the school curriculum - Creative Scotland will lead the work on a project to develop a national strategic approach to professional development provision for artists. This is likely to include joint CPD opportunities for teachers and artists' to train together, initial teacher education, undergraduate artists' training and bespoke models of training - Promote the current range of CPD and professional support available to teachers which support the implementation of <i>Curriculum for Excellence</i> through creativity and the expressive arts through listings on Learning and Teaching Scotland's website and the Creativity Portal - The national performing companies are alive to the importance of supporting school teachers to develop confidence in using the arts as a creative tool for learning and teaching e.g. that is the aim of the 2 day course for primary school teachers '<i>Hitting the High Notes</i>' offered by Scottish Opera - Learning and Teaching Scotland will work with key partners to develop an online framework of joint, peer and professional development opportunities for practitioners from both sectors. - Scottish Qualifications Authority and Learning and Teaching Scotland to continue to work in partnership to develop new qualifications and ensure expressive arts professionals are represented on the SQA's Qualification Design Teams and Curriculum Area Review Groups which are working on the suite of expressive arts qualifications - Develop on-line advice for teachers and creative practitioners to support collaborations in planning and delivering the arts, culture and creativity in education through interdisciplinary learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share information and good practice, including applications of creative teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning and Teaching Scotland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To increase awareness across local authorities, schools and learning centres and practitioners of the range of opportunities within the strong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce the Creativity Portal as a one-stop-shop illustrating to the education community in Scotland the education offer available to be accessed from leading arts/ cultural/ creative organisations; the Portal will also provide a medium for disseminating good practice in

Workstream	Lead Partner	Remit	Actions
		<p>creative and cultural/ education 'offer' available to be acquired from cultural organisations. Also to disseminate and increase understanding about the good practices in cross-sector collaboration which can ensure the best kinds of enrichment in curriculum teaching; and to promote access to educative and cultural and creative opportunities for children and young people by advising ways to overcome perceived barriers</p>	<p>developing young people's creativity and in overcoming barriers to projects involving cross-sector collaboration. Overall aim is to boost marketing and uptake by local education authorities and schools of the rich cultural offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build on the work of networks/ partnerships and national organisations such as the Tapestry Partnership, Youth Music Initiative and the Heads of Instrumental Teaching Scotland (HITS) who are involved in improving awareness of the benefits of arts activity direct with schools - Make explicit the benefits of the arts to children's general well-being, achievements and opportunities, to contribute positively to those, and wider, outcomes in the National Performance Framework – capitalizing on these connections and exemplifying best practice to develop understanding about the immediate and longer-term impacts for children and young people - Establish an interactive Glow Forum within the Creativity Portal for teachers and creative practitioners to discuss and share practice - Continued development of exemplars of practice in creative learning and teaching and acquisition of creative skills including use of the arts to enhance teaching of literacy - Deliver a series of 'Glow meets' bringing together artists and people from other disciplines who have been involved in creative collaborations to inspire new ways of working in pupils and teachers. A series of interactive 'Glow meets' will bring artists into classrooms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a strategic approach to pathways for the enthusiastic and talented across lifelong learning and into positive and sustained destinations beyond school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative Scotland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To establish new/strengthen links between schools and external partners to develop positive, sustained pathways and destinations, easing young people's passage into further/ higher education, training, mentoring, employment etc. in the creative/ cultural sector. This should be done in ways that can address young people's individual needs. Also, increase children and young people's engagement with and understanding of workplace applications of creativity across a range of sectors (such as science, technology and engineering) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with national youth arts/ creative organs to develop pathways for talent. Building on existing Creative Scotland partnerships – in particular the national youth arts organisations, Young Scot, Youth Music Initiative and others – develop a strategy for a joined-up approach to arts, culture and creative provision for young people including opportunities for participation for all and access to pathways to excellence - Work with Scottish Creative Industries Partnership (SCIP), including Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council, to ensure pathways/ opportunities into creative careers are well signposted for all young people and to highlight the advantages of developing creative skills in achieving positive and sustained destinations in other career areas - Progress the agenda towards developing a youth arts strategy for Scotland - Develop links between schools and institutions of further and higher education; for example, establish pilot schemes for further and higher educational institutions to make advice, facilities and equipment relating to arts, culture and creativity available to schools - Collaborate with higher Education sector to create an on-line resource

Workstream	Lead Partner	Remit	Actions
			<p>for teachers and pupils illustrating creative career pathways and routes into industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publish a framework for engagement of young people with the arts, culture and creativity in a variety of settings which can help them to develop their creative talent beyond their time at school, through tertiary education, mentoring work experience, apprenticeships, master-classes etc. - The national performing companies offer opportunities for adults to learn about the arts

Creative Scotland also supports the Youth Music Initiative. The purpose of this programme is to support access to quality music making programmes, particularly for young people that would not normally engage in music activities. Substantial funding has been allocated to this initiative (£10m. in 2011-12). It can either be in a school or out of school. There are a number of different strands of funding offered through this initiative. These are summarized in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Youth Music Initiative

Formula Fund: 80% of the overall YMI allocated to 33 local authority areas to sustain the P6 target of all school children having access to one year's free music tuition or supported music making activities by the time they reach the end of Primary 6

Informal Sector Small and Large Investments: To support organisations working within the informal sector who wish to programme music making activities for young people out with mainstream education settings or for children under 5 either in or out of nursery settings

Access and Excellence: To support the work of organisations to provide excellent learning experiences and create opportunities for those who have limited access to learning and developing music skills

Youth Music Forums: To support local music providers to create forums and begin the process of having a unified approach to music provision which reflects local needs and demand

Training and CPD: To support individual musicians, music facilitators and organisations providing music making activities for children and young people to undertake professional development that will extend and improve their professional practice, capacity and ability to deliver quality music making activities for children and young people aged 0-25 years

Early Years: To support regular music making opportunities, for toddlers from 0-5 years led by organisations specialising in early years. Support is provided for participatory programmes that involve toddlers and parents/ carers and training programmes.

Creative Enterprise Fund

Creative Scotland and Young Scot³¹ are about to launch a dedicated funding pot to support young people aged 15-22 in activities which allow them to flourish within the creative industries. The fund has been designed to support a number of creative ventures for example running a local dance class, getting a band off the ground or producing theatre. The new fund replaces the previous Scottish Arts Council Arts Action Fund. Once launched, the fund will award £200 to individuals or £750 to groups of three or more young people, where two thirds of the group are aged between 15 -22 (inclusive). In addition Creative Scotland leads on an initiative known as 'Room 13', more details of which can be seen in Figure 12.

³¹ Young Scot is the national youth information and citizenship charity providing young people, aged 11 - 26, with a mixture of information, ideas and incentives to help them become confident, informed and active citizens. Young Scot provides information on a huge range of topics including a dedicated section on arts and culture in Scotland,

Figure 12: Room 13

Room 13 is a social enterprise organisation which encompasses an expanding network of linked studios worldwide. The concept behind Room 13 emerged in 1994 when a group of students designed their own art studio in Room 13, Caol Primary School near Fort William, Scotland. The studio operates as a business, raising funds to buy art materials and employ professional artists in residence. The concept grew to become a network of studios throughout the UK and abroad and now encompasses an expanding network of studios worldwide who share their work and thinking. Each studio facilitates the work of young artists alongside a professional adult artist-in-residence, providing an exchange of ideas, skills and experiences across the ages. The concept can be adapted to a wide variety of educational environments and art forms.

Each studio is unique, having slightly different ways of working including their own individual management teams, working with different artists or art forms. How they are run depends on what works best for the students, educators, artists and the local community. However despite these differences, every studio is said to 'feel' welcoming and works as a conducive environment for creativity and creative exchange.

The Room 13 Network represents a growing international culture of creativity and social enterprise, which becomes absorbed into the schools environment. It is accessible to individuals of all ages and generates benefits for the wider community. By building on established links and continuing to develop the network, a forum is created through which artists and young people can engage with different sectors of society, gain experience and enhance their curriculum learning. Students also benefit from the international relationships and cultural exchange that they have developed. Room 13 now offers professionally run courses and creative workshops, painting holidays, expeditions, training and all manner of creative development for all ages.

2.6.3 Arts Council of Wales

One of the priorities of the Arts Council of Wales' Plan 2009-2012³² is to encourage more young people to participate in the arts. It believes that engagement in the arts and in creative opportunities transforms the way children and young people learn and explore the world around them whilst helping them to develop specific skills. Through arts based initiatives, the Arts Council of Wales wants to show how the arts can tackle youth poverty and inspire young people with new ambition and confidence. The Arts Council of Wales recognises the importance of out-of-school initiatives. They are viewed as particularly effective routes in arts-based activity for the excluded, those at risk, and others to help to build self-esteem and engagement. The arts can also be used outside of the formal education system in helping develop the confidence, skills, knowledge and employability of young people who have become disengaged from the formal education system.

An example of these is *Reach the Heights*, a Welsh Assembly Government initiative aimed at reducing the number of young people in Wales (aged 11-19) who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) or at risk of being so. The programme is a large-scale initiative, part funded by the European Social Fund and involves working with a number of project sponsors in the procurement, delivery and management of the project activities, many of which are arts-based initiatives. Young people are inherently creative, and with the right kind of encouragement, they can learn to make films, to use new technology to create images and design, to write, or take part in a performing group. The project offers training, workshops, taster sessions, mentoring, advice, support and work-related experience. Through these initiatives, young people become more confident in their abilities and acquire some of the practical skills that will help them get a job.

In working on its strategies for the arts, the Arts Council of Wales has recognised the need for better resourced specialised routes and pathways for nurturing talented young artists and creators. In its strategy for children, young people and the arts, 'Changing Lives', the Arts Council of Wales believes that its focus in the future should be two-fold: support for young people to develop their creative talents and to foster an environment in which talent can be identified, inspired, nurtured and celebrated. The aims of this strategy, along with proposed actions, are summarised below in Table 5.

The Arts Council of Wales plans to deliver this strategy through a variety of funding sources including Welsh Assembly Government funding, Lottery funds, European funding, and funds from other sources such as Legacy Trust UK.

³² Arts Council of Wales Plan 2009-2012, <http://www.artswales.org.uk/about-us/council/plans>, last accessed 19th May 2011

Table 5: Summary of the Arts Council of Wales Changing Lives Strategy

Strategic Theme	Objectives	Proposals
Putting arts and creativity at the heart of young people's education and learning journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with and supporting those who are responsible for developing arts in our schools, colleges and higher education bodies • Ensuring that projects with artists and arts companies become a properly resourced and regular part of the school experience • Encouraging teachers to nurture and develop their own potential as creative practitioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Welsh Assembly Government, Local Authorities and schools to better understand the current range and quality of arts activity, in and out of school, and ensure this provision is accessible to all • Work with partners to develop a scheme that celebrates and supports arts in schools and provide good quality information on how the arts can be developed in schools • Support artists and arts organisations to develop work that can enhance and complement the education and learning of young people and the production and presentation of arts experiences that can be enjoyed in formal and informal settings from schools to youth centres, theatres and outdoor spaces • Explore possibilities for work placements with leading arts companies so young people can experience working in the arts
Put the arts where they can really make a difference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support new innovative ways of engaging the most disadvantaged and disaffected young people • Make sure that arts projects designed specifically with these young people in mind continue to be available and that we retain and grow the artists who have the knowledge and skills to work with these young people • Putting the arts at the centre of government strategies to tackle child poverty in Wales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest and expand in programmes and projects which target young people at risk and those living in the most deprived communities • Work with funded organisations to develop innovative new ways for ensuring that there is free and subsidised access to cultural activities for low income families
Develop artists of the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting talent and aspiration, creating a climate within which talent, confidence and ambition can be nurtured and developed. • Invest in clear progressive strategies that help produce the next generation of creative and performing artists as well as the arts literate audiences of the future. • Supporting local, regional and national activities that provide opportunities for talented young people to embark on and progress along a journey that may bring them a career in the arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund a national programme of activity, through National Youth Arts Wales, that provides opportunities and progression routes for talented young people in Wales • Support through Academi, the development of Writers Squads to provide more opportunities for talented young poets, authors and play writes • Explore possibilities for talented young visual artists to develop and showcase their work • Work with Creative and Cultural Skills and others to develop apprenticeships and other programmes that provide young people with a first step into the arts workforce • Explore opportunities for supporting young creators to produce and present their own work • Work with portfolio of revenue funded organisations to develop training opportunities including placements, mentoring and

Strategic Theme	Objectives	Proposals
		apprenticeship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop stronger links with colleagues in further and higher education to explore pathways for young people moving from education and learning to employment in the arts
More opportunities for young people to get involved with the arts closer to where they live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that youth arts activities offered locally are known about and organised so that young people can take advantage of everything on offer • Offer more family friendly performances and events and make sure theatres and arts venues are places that are young person friendly • Prioritise funding for arts projects designed with children and young people in mind and secure new sources of money to support even more artists across Wales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with Local Authorities to develop local arts partnerships that will work together to offer a range of arts activities to their young people • Work with arts providers to develop more family friendly product for arts venues, and work with children and young people to make sure arts venues are a great place to be • Deliver the Legacy Trust funded Cultural Olympiad programme which will greatly increase the opportunities for young people in Wales to participate in the arts and celebrate their cultural heritage and diversity • Aim to make sure that all of their work and work funded by Arts Council of Wales is open and accessible to children and young people throughout Wales taking particular account of ability and background
Support the creation of the best art for young people to enjoy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a range of arts organisations and artists to create and produce high quality artistic work designed for young people • Support artists to develop the skills that they need to offer young people the best experience • Monitor and evaluate the impact of the work being undertaken and its impact on children and young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask all revenue funded organisations to develop and deliver programmes which include work for, with and by young people • Work with theatre companies to help them make the transition from producing purely theatre in education to producing theatre for young people that can be enjoyed in a variety of locations; work that will push artistic boundaries, challenge and excite young audiences • Fund training and development opportunities for artists to develop their skills and knowledge • Support opportunities for exchange of information, experience and skills • Continue to commission research that shows attendance, participation and attitudes to the arts in Wales amongst children and young people

2.6.4 Republic of Ireland Approach to supporting Youth Arts

The Arts Council of Ireland/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon is committed to the provision of quality arts experiences for young people in and out of school. This policy can be traced through the various strategic plans that the Arts Council has developed. The first Arts Plan (1995-1997) emphasised children and young people as a discrete audience and as citizens with rights to cultural provision. The second Arts Plan (1999-2001) identified youth engagement with the arts as a key element of one of three core objectives. As part of this plan, the Arts Council committed to:

- Supporting the establishment, jointly with the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands and the Department of Education and Science, of a committee to undertake developmental work in arts education, to include the promotion of higher standards of arts education practice, a more effective integration of the arts into the formal school curricula, action research into out-of-school and educational provision for children's and young people's aesthetic development;
- Undertaking a special developmental project, with additional specialist staff, on a medium-term basis, to develop and implement the arts education agenda jointly with others;
- Establishing a pilot project with certain local authorities to promote effective models of arts education development based on existing prototypes.

The third Arts Plan 2002 – 2006³³ aimed to extend and enhance the arts experience of young people in the formal and informal education sector with six objectives to broaden and enrich participation:

- Building capacity in arts organisations to enhance the experience of primary teachers in arts programming.
- With the National Youth Council of Ireland, enhance the capacity and scope of the National Youth Arts Programme.
- Disseminate best-practice models of arts in schools, through local authorities and other local agencies.
- Develop and campaign for proposals to achieve better arts in education.
- Commission a study on the values of youth arts practice with a view to encouraging the development of youth arts.
- Research, with the Science Council, the potential for young people to participate in the arts via new media and technologies.

Arts in Their Lives: A policy on young people and the arts was developed by The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI in 2003). In the policy statement, NYCI argued for a partnership approach where the arts and youth sector take joint responsibility for the artistic and cultural development of young people. The National Youth Arts Programme Strategic Plan 2003-2006 identified specific strategic priorities to advance best practice in youth arts, broaden youth participation in the arts and promote and advocate the contribution made by young people to the arts. The three strategic priorities were:

³³ <http://www.artscouncil.ie/Publications/ArtsPlan2002-6.pdf>, last accessed 19th May 2011

- Build strategic commitment to youth arts in relevant government agencies and departments, in arts organisations and within youth organisations.
- Broaden the range of art forms being explored and develop a range of mechanisms aimed at ensuring greater participation and quality youth arts experiences for young people.
- Enhance the quality of youth arts provision.

In the strategy document, Partnership for the Arts 2006-2010³⁴, the Arts Council of Ireland outlines its commitment to extend and enhance young people's experiences of the arts, including creating better opportunities for young people to participate in, create, and respond critically to the arts. In order to achieve this goal, the strategy outlines five key actions:

- to create a new support programme for arts organisations to enable them to identify and provide high-quality arts experiences for children;
- to design and implement a programme to provide high-quality arts experiences through local arts-in-education partnerships at first, second and third level;
- in partnership with the Department of Education and Science and others, test the feasibility of a countrywide education initiative, starting with music education;
- to work with other agencies to support arts practice in non-formal education;
- to implement a new programme to support youth ensembles and national youth art resource organisations.

The Arts Council's most recent strategy document, Developing the Arts in Ireland 2011-2013³⁵ builds on previous strategies and has a dual focus on supporting artists and arts organisations and on seeking to increase public engagement and participation in the arts. The strategy highlights the importance of partnership working with stakeholders in the field of arts and culture so as to broaden the reach and the impact that the arts have. In relation to arts provision for children and young people, a key area of partnership will be between the Arts Council and Education providers. During 2011-2013 the Arts Council wishes to build on the 2008 Report of the Special Committee on Arts and Education³⁶ and to work with the Department of Education and Skills and other partners to advance the actions proposed in that report. The report made 5 recommendations in total including:

- **Recommendation 1** - The development of a National Arts-in-Education Development Unit jointly resourced by the Department of the Arts, Sports and Tourism and the Department for Education and Science. The purpose of this unit will be to enable partnership, mutual understanding and joint actions by the arts and education sectors; to assist coordinated policy and provision; and to support research and development in this domain
- **Recommendation 2** - The establishment by the National Arts-in-Education Development Unit of a national programme of Local Arts Education Partnerships to encourage local partnerships to develop and resource provision for arts-in-education and related fields. The Local Partnerships would build on existing relationships as well as new relationships

³⁴ Partnership for the Arts, Arts Council Goals, 2006-2010, <http://www.artscouncil.ie/Publications/strategy.pdf>, last accessed 19th May 2011

³⁵ Developing the Arts in Ireland, Arts Council Strategic Overview, 2011-2013, http://www.artscouncil.ie/Publications/Developing_the_Arts_2011-2013.pdf, last accessed 19th May 2011

³⁶ Points of Alignment, The Report of the Special Committee on the Arts and Education http://www.artscouncil.ie/Publications/Arts_education_en_08.pdf, date last accessed 19th May 2011

involving professional artists and arts organisations; teachers, schools, third- level colleges and education centres as well as local councils and other key service providers

- **Recommendation 3** – Given the scale of need, the Arts Council should significantly increase its level of support to artists and arts organisations working wholly or in part in arts-in-education to support existing professional arts-in-education practice and to address major gaps in provision and infrastructure
- **Recommendation 4** – In pursuit of the principle of joint responsibility for in arts-in-education, it is recommended that the Department of Education and Science assist in:
 - the process of establishing the National Arts-in-Education Development Unit;
 - collaborating with the Department of Arts Sport and Tourism, the Arts Council and the National Arts-in-Education Development Unit to determine how the expertise of artists and arts organisations could be further used as a valuable resource for continued professional development and in supporting teachers;
 - reviewing current approaches to funding of arts-related projects with a view to assigning resources to art-in-education in a strategic, consolidated, and coordinated way;
 - Making provision in the Research and Development fund for the arts-in-education a significant theme in future requests for research tenders and to allocate an appropriate fund for Research and Development (up to 10% of an annual budget) to be managed within the National Arts-in-Education Development Unit
 - Grant representation to the Arts Council on the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and other key education bodies whose policies may impact directly on arts-in-education
 - Enable the Centre for Technology in Education to advise and contribute to the development and on-going support of the portal site and to develop specific digital resources for learning and teaching for the arts-in-education
 - Make provision of appropriate space and facilities for children and young people to engage in creativity and learning in the arts within the design and capital funding of new and existing schools and other education buildings
 - Actively promote the Per Cent for Art Scheme within all capital programmes for schools and other education building projects
- **Recommendation 5** – Finally, the Committee recommended that the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism uses its influence and allocate resources as appropriate to ensure that the report's recommendations are implemented. This includes:
 - To assist in the process of establishing the National Arts-in-Education Development Unit
 - Grant additional resources to the Arts Council so that it can take the actions deriving from Recommendation 3

- Incorporate the provision of facilities for education practice within future policy for capital expenditure programmes in arts and culture
- Sustain interest in and commitment to arts-in-education and wider education issues, in the context of the commitments set out in the Programme for Government *Towards 2016*

The Arts Council will also seek to work closely with the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and the National Youth Council of Ireland in recognising the importance of diverse arts experiences for young people in out-of-school settings and the wider public realm.

Elsewhere in Ireland there is continued support of opportunities for young artists to showcase their talents. An example of this is the work being undertaken by Kildare County Council which is summarised in Figure 12 below.

Figure 13: Kildare County Council

Kildare County Council is continuing to support the Oxegen Battle of the Bands competition which provides opportunities for emerging musicians living in or from Kildare to play at the annual Oxegen Music Festival with the winner being offered mentoring and recording opportunities at Leixlip Library recording Studio. Kildare County Council is also looking to offer financial support to young artists and has outlined plans to provide a Youth Arts Bursary as part of its annual arts grant schemes. Another approach used by Kildare County Council is the documentation and promotion of good practice of youth arts provision across the county. . In its Youth Arts Strategy 2009-2011³⁷ it also outlines plans to hold an annual Kildare Youth Arts Seminar for youth organisations which focuses on best practice, innovation and peer support.

³⁷ <http://kildare.ie/artsservice/PoliciesandPublications/LinkToDocument,20084,en.pdf>, last accessed 15th August 2011

2.6.5 International Approach to Youth Arts

Looking outside of the UK and Ireland, strategies that have been developed internationally. Below we provide a brief summary of these strategies and associated actions.

Queensland Government, Arts Queensland, Arts, Culture and Me – Children and Young People in the Arts Action Plan 2008/11

This three year action plan (2008-2011) was designed to help Queensland's children and young people (up to the age of 30) get involved in the arts. The plan recognises that there are more factors than just age that impact on children and young people's engagement in the arts including where they live, their cultural background and their social and economic circumstances.

The action plan reflects the priorities and desires of children and young people with whom they consulted. The vision of the strategy is to 'inspire a passion for the arts that will last a lifetime'. The Key Principles underlying this vision are:

- Respecting the rights of children and young people to access and design cultural experiences that enrich their lives
- Value the aspirations, interests and achievements of children and young people
- Engage children and young people in decisions that affect their experiences of arts and culture
- Recognise the important role of mentors, families and educators in the lives of children and young people
- Recognise the local context of communities in designing programmes and strategies
- Respect the role and contribution of arts and cultural organisations and artists engaging with children and young people

Table 6 below summarises the five areas requiring action in order to realise this vision.

Table 6: Arts, Culture and Me – Action Plan 2008/11

Platform	Associated Initiatives
<p>Creative Spaces - Enabling children and young people to access safe and welcoming spaces to experience, create and present art in all its forms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a state-of-the art facility for children and young people for art making, showcasing, learning and playing to include auditorium space, intimate workshop spaces, media labs and a range of stimulating outdoor spaces • Build public art spaces that welcome children and young people. This includes connecting children and young people with professional artists to design public art projects, employing young artists and arts workers to lead public art projects and promoting successful projects that demonstrate how to meaningfully involve children and young people in the creative process • Improve children and young people's access to creative spaces for developing and presenting work by supporting young artists to hire spaces; working in partnership to open up existing facilities; encouraging local councils to refurbish existing spaces for use by children and young people; improving youth arts companies access to high quality venues; and integrating the needs of children and young people in the planning and design of arts spaces
<p>Creative art makers and participants - Encouraging and enabling children and young people to experience the arts in active ways as creators, and participants, and promoting their creative achievements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a promotional campaign to encourage children and young people, their families, educators, carers and friends to get involved in the arts and culture • Work with indigenous communities to support holiday arts programmes for children and young people • Host a search tool (in2arts) on the Arts Queensland website to provide children, young people and their families with information on local arts and cultural organisations and activities • Encourage signature festivals and events to include a focus on children and young people • A touring strategy to help strengthen opportunities for children and young people to enjoy high quality, challenging and inspiring arts and cultural touring shows and access support to tour their own creative work
<p>Creative citizens - Providing opportunities for children and young people to develop their creativity as an essential life skill by connecting the arts, training and education sectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative community hubs – pilot a mixed table partnership in regional communities that brings together arts, education and community representatives to better plan and deliver local arts for, by and with children and young people • Arts and Education plan to work collaboratively with the department for Education, Training and the Arts to make arts and creativity an essential part of learning across the curriculum • Artists in residence programme – support three residencies in schools for public artists. These residencies will enliven school spaces and encourage teachers, students and their communities to explore creativity across key learning areas
<p>Creative pathways - Supporting children and young people to develop their arts practice and build careers in the arts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the career development of young indigenous artists and arts workers by employing them to plan and deliver holiday programmes for children and young people in indigenous communities. Young artists will be mentored by experienced Indigenous artists and supported by a peer network, professional development programmes and on-the-job training • Help young artists to develop a creative arts career portfolio to track their skills development, document their achievements and better articulate their competencies • Link young artists and arts workers into a state-wide mentoring network offering online and face-to-face career support

Platform	Associated Initiatives
<p>Creative generators - Strengthening the network of professional arts and cultural organisations to support children and young people's participation in arts and culture now and in the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an online knowledge portal of cutting edge research, case study samples, best practice guidelines and links to youth arts and cultural development organisations and artists • Support youth organisations to plan, coordinate and deliver regional arts programmes and profile their work in this area • Work in partnership with the youth arts and cultural sectors to develop a vision for the next 5 years (<i>Horizons</i>)

Arts Queensland in its progress report on delivery of its Children and Young People in the Arts Action Plan 2008/11³⁸ has invested fairly significant resources in 20 projects involving children and young people, 17 of which provided specific career development benefits for young artists. These included mentorships, showcasing opportunities and training opportunities. It has also contracted the Creative Industries Skills Council to develop and pilot the *Passport Project* to help young artists track their skills development, document their achievements and articulate their competencies.

The Queensland Government Action Plan for Youth Arts outlined above, led to the launch of Horizons – Children, Young People and the Arts Sector Vision 2009-2013. Table 7 summarises the five aspirations outlined in the document along with priorities for the four year period.

³⁸ ³⁸ http://www.arts.qld.gov.au/docs/acme_report.pdf, last accessed 10th August 2011

Table 7: Summary of Horizons - Children, Young People and the Arts Sector Vision 2009-2013

Theme	Objective	Actions
<p>Leadership - Innovative and effective leaders are valued and supported across the sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build knowledge, skills and capability across the sector through professional development • Connect people and share knowledge across the state • Position the sector regionally, nationally and internationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen partnerships with peak bodies to deliver professional development and advocacy • Collaborate across the wider sector to deliver better and more relevant training • Build strong urban and regional networks • Establish online communities of practice where arts workers and artists connect and share ideas and experiences • Establish research and evaluation as integral to practice in the Queensland Children and Young People in the Arts sector • Develop opportunities for the sector to showcase significant practice and attract state, national and international participation
<p>Arts and education - The arts are integrated as part of all children and young people's education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence the development of arts rich learning • Increase opportunities for schools to engage in creative and innovative approaches to learning in and through the arts • Develop community based arts and education partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to building the evidence base to inform arts and education policy and curriculum development • Increase professional experiences for teachers as arts and cultural champions • Support and provide more significant professional development opportunities for teachers • Develop a more coordinated approach to inform schools and learning providers of the diverse arts and cultural experiences available across the sector • Build partnerships with arts and learning providers to enhance children and young people's everyday arts and cultural experiences • Consolidate, support and promote Artists in Residence initiatives for schools and communities across the state. • Work collaboratively with learning providers to embrace the wider community in education and arts projects and programmes • Develop effective arts, education and community initiatives, evaluate their effectiveness and share what we have learnt
<p>Access and Equity - All children and young people are given access to quality arts and cultural experiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner to increase the breadth and diversity of opportunities for children and young people • Broaden arts and cultural reach • Contribute to community outcomes through the arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver professional development that builds partnership skills • Negotiate and collaborate in mutually beneficial local and state wide partnerships • Work strategically with arts and cultural organisations to deliver and debate best practice arts experiences for children and young people • Access policy driven opportunities for increased arts engagement • Build capacity for developing partnerships that target critical policy outcomes • Align business and operational plans to deliver effective partnership outcomes

Theme	Objective	Actions
<p>Arts Practice - Children and young people are offered opportunities to engage with art and develop as artists and arts workers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase opportunities to make work by, for and with children and young people • Promote and recognise excellence • Support new practice and innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with mainstream arts organisations to improve access to resources and expertise • Advocate for a greater focus on programming for children and young people • Replicate successful partnership models between sector companies • Support and increase showcasing, online profiling and promotion opportunities for all artforms across the state • Advocate for local partners to contribute their venues, expertise and resources to showcase work by, for and with young people • Promote and market young people's art locally, nationally and internationally • Increase opportunities for young emerging artists to develop their talent and their work in Queensland • Promote artistic work that is innovative and/ or crosses boundaries or establishes new genres • Advocate for more support specific to new and innovative work by and with children and young people
<p>Sustainable Careers - Sustainable careers for artists and arts workers are promoted and the development of emerging artists and arts workers is supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop skills and knowledge for sustainable careers in the arts • Expand internship, secondment and training opportunities for young artists • Increase mentoring opportunities for young artists and arts workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information and advice to the education and training sector to ensure training for artists and arts workers is up to date and relevant • Promote the range of education and training, research and professional development opportunities available for all career levels • Develop and promote online reflective learning communities • Work with the whole arts sector to increase the internships and secondments available to young artists and arts workers • Advocate for training to be more appropriate to the arts and cultural sectors • Further develop mentoring partnerships • Attract mentors from across the broader arts sector to support young people • Provide formal and informal mentoring opportunities across the broader arts sector, for young artists and arts workers across Queensland

Australia Council for the Arts

In 2003, the Australia Council for the Arts launched its first dedicated Young People's policy titled, 'Young People and the Arts'. This was an action-driven policy, created to deliver tangible benefits to young artists, young people and children who participate in artistic activity, and to arts workers who create work for young people. The definition of children and young people used in this policy interpreted a young person as being aged up to 26 and a 'child' (under 18 years). The vision of this strategy is one in which children and young people's creative practices are acknowledged for their inherent qualities, valued for their diversity and innovation and recognised as a key contribution to Australian culture, both locally and globally. Objectives of the policy and associated actions are detailed in Table 8.

The Australia Council for the Arts also runs a programme entitled *Opportunities for Young and Emerging Artists*³⁹. Programmes funded under this initiative support young artists to set up artist-run initiatives; provide professional development through creative residences and collaborations with performing arts organisations; undertake mentorships with established artists to help develop their artistic practice; and participate in workshops and collaborations. It also provides a financial strand of support by offering micro grants to younger artists and arts workers via flexible and straight forward application processes. Other examples of funded initiatives include:

The Program⁴⁰: This online arts-focused social networking portal harnesses social networking and user-generated content to create an online space for young artists and audiences to interact and engage with Australian arts.

Jump: is a national mentoring program for artists aged 18-30, who are in the first five years of their professional practice. JUMP artists are supported to undertake a one-on-one mentorship with a leading professional of their choice, focused on a funded creative project. They also access online profiling and professional development opportunities, and significantly expand their national network during the 10-month mentorship period.

Residencies and commissions: Creative residencies and commissions are run by the Australia Council's Arts Organisations division, funding residencies with a range of arts organisations for young and emerging creative producers, directors and performing artists.

Artist Run Initiatives: The Australia Council offers a limited number of grants to artist run initiatives (ARIs), through the Visual Arts Board in partnership with the Inter-arts Office. The purpose of the grant is to assist ARIs to present cross-artform or interdisciplinary projects which develop the professional skills and/or networks for young and emerging visual and media artists.

³⁹ http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/grants/_opportunities_for_young_and_emerging_artists, last accessed 11th August 2011

⁴⁰ <http://www.theprogram.com.au/>, last accessed 11th August 2011

Splendid: A partnership between leading art agencies aimed to develop talent and to offer festival audiences new creative experiences. Splendid is made up of a series of Arts Labs, forums and commissions for young and emerging artists at the frontier of contemporary ideas creation, cross-artform collaborations and audience participation.

Table 8: Australia Council for the Arts – Summary of Young People’s Policy

Policy Objectives	Actions
Supporting and promoting the artforms and practices of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each board or division of the Australia Council will develop a statement about its current planned support for young people and the arts • Direct support for young people and their arts practices through grant programmes and through other initiatives • Decision processes will be refined to enable the support of individual, younger artists who show potential • Specific application and decision-making processes for young emerging artists to be explored • Initiatives such as micro grants to provide small grants for younger artists and arts workers via flexible and straight forward application processes • Expand the profile of young people and their artwork on a national and international basis • Ensure adequate staffing to support the policy
Improving understanding of the practices and processes of young artists and artworkers, engaging with them in direct and accessible language using their preferred methods of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a communications plan for young artists and artworkers • Funds will be given to all boards so that they can gain extra input from peers who have direct knowledge and/or experience of young people and the arts practice, including emerging artforms and cross-artform practice
Encouraging young artists/ artworkers and youth artworkers to access professional development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a free guide to mentoring • Artists and artworkers specialising in young people and the arts practices encouraged to apply to grants programmes • Encourage and support partnerships between young people and the arts and the broader arts sector, designed to provide training and professional development for young artists and artworkers
Providing resources to help young artists and artworkers realise their potential and achieve excellence in their artforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a How to / Where to guide for young emerging artists and artworkers on how to develop an arts project and where to find resources and support • Encourage further Council initiatives that support contemporary youth cultures, including cross-artform practice
Make new connections and strength existing ones between work by, for and with young people and the broader arts industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to develop a strong industry base within the young people and the arts sector by providing support in areas such as strategic planning • Support the strengthening of networks between individuals, groups and organisations in the young people and the arts area • Support partnerships between young people and the arts sector and partners outside the arts e.g. education sector, commercial arts and entertainment fields • Develop partnerships between the Australia Council and state and territory arts agencies that currently have young people and the arts policies • Hold discussions with other state and territory arts agencies about developing their own young people and the arts policies
Supporting children and young people’s active participation in the arts and cultural development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding programmes will continue to support companies and organisations that provide significant opportunities for creative collaboration between professional artists and young people in all aspects of artistic planning and the creative process • Support youth arts projects that exhibit community cultural development characteristics where young participants may develop new skills, interact and increase communication networking, address social justice issues and represent themselves to and inspire their own and other communities, as well as enjoying rich and diverse cultural activities

Policy Objectives	Actions
Strengthening opportunities for young people to experience the arts as audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support cross-community partnerships that deliver artistic and creative opportunities for young people • Support strategies or projects that engage young people and children in new or enhanced artistic experiences • Continued support of individuals and companies creating artistic work specifically for young people and children • Organisations offered special opportunities for young people and children to engage with aspects of their general programme
Expanding the important links between arts and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue advocacy and negotiation for change in arts education across the community • In collaboration with other research centres, help to establish a programme of research into the benefits of learning in and through the arts for young people • Grants programme will continue to support high quality projects that encourage collaboration between the education sector and artists or arts companies and organisations

3 Survey Findings and Demographic Characteristics

This section of the report considers secondary source data relating to children and young people's engagement with the arts either as participants or attenders in Northern Ireland.

3.1 Population Survey Data

Surveys of children and young people relating to attendance and participation in the arts in Northern Ireland point to a strongly engaged cohort. A survey of school aged children, conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistical Research Agency (NISRA)⁴¹ found that, in 2010, 91% of children aged between 11 and 16 attended the arts in the 12 months prior to the survey. If extrapolated to a general population level, this equates to around 210,000 individuals.

This level of attendance has remained fairly consistent since 2007 (the last time this survey was undertaken) and when compared to survey findings that monitor attendance patterns for the entire population illustrates the extent to which children and young people are more likely to attend the arts than the overall population which averages at around 74%.

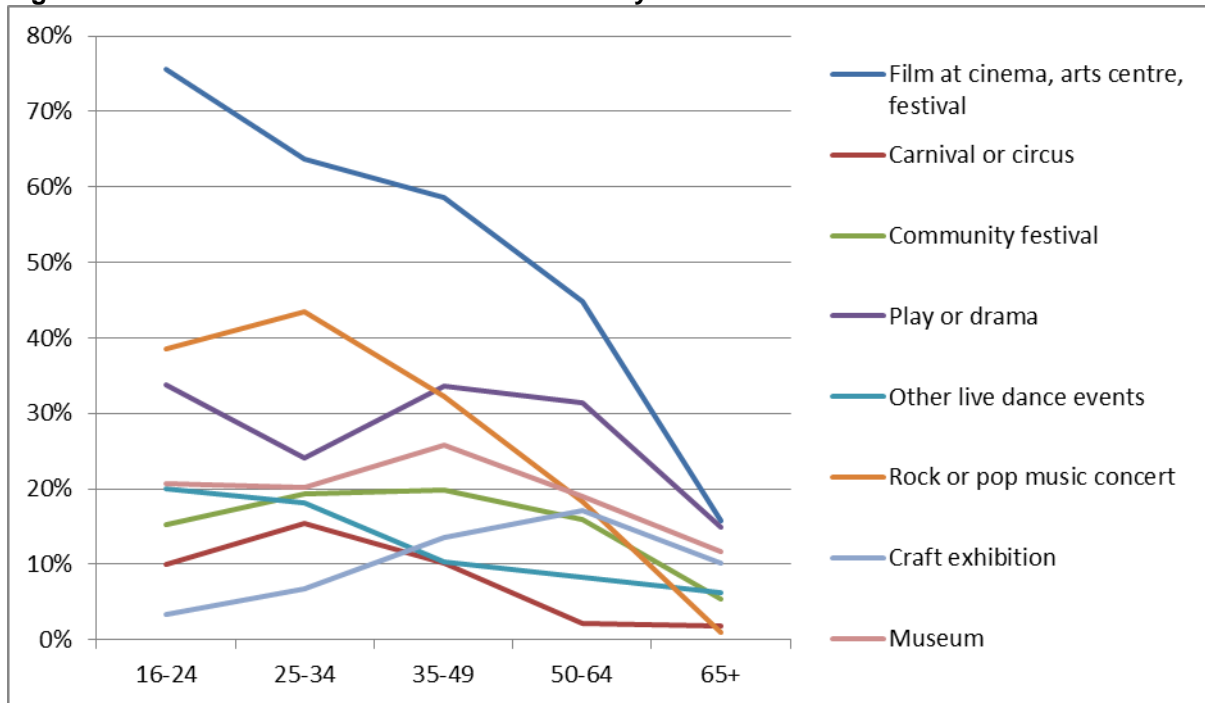
Figure 13 shows attendance by event type across five age bands, taken from the most recent General Population Survey commissioned by the Arts Council in 2009⁴². Overall, attendance levels at the majority of events were highest for the younger age groups, declining gradually towards the 65 and over age group. The most frequently mentioned type of event attended was film, identified by seventy six per cent of 16 to 24 year olds. This was followed by rock or pop music, concerts (39%) and plays or dramas (34%).

- Young females are more likely to attend an arts event than their male counterparts (94%, compared to 86%).
- Young people living in urban areas are more likely to attend an arts event than those in rural areas (94% compared with 85%).
- There were no significant differences in attendance rates when considering attendance between the two main religions.

⁴¹ The Young Persons Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (YPBAS) is a survey of school aged children (11 to 16 years) conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics Agency (NISRA) every 4 years. In 2010, the overall sample size was 4,070

⁴² The General Population Survey (GPS) is based on a random sample of the Northern Ireland population and is a survey of the adult population (16 and over). Sample sizes range from 1,126 to 1,293 and has been run on three occasions: 2004, 2007 and 2009.

Figure 14: Attendance at arts and cultural event by individual classifications

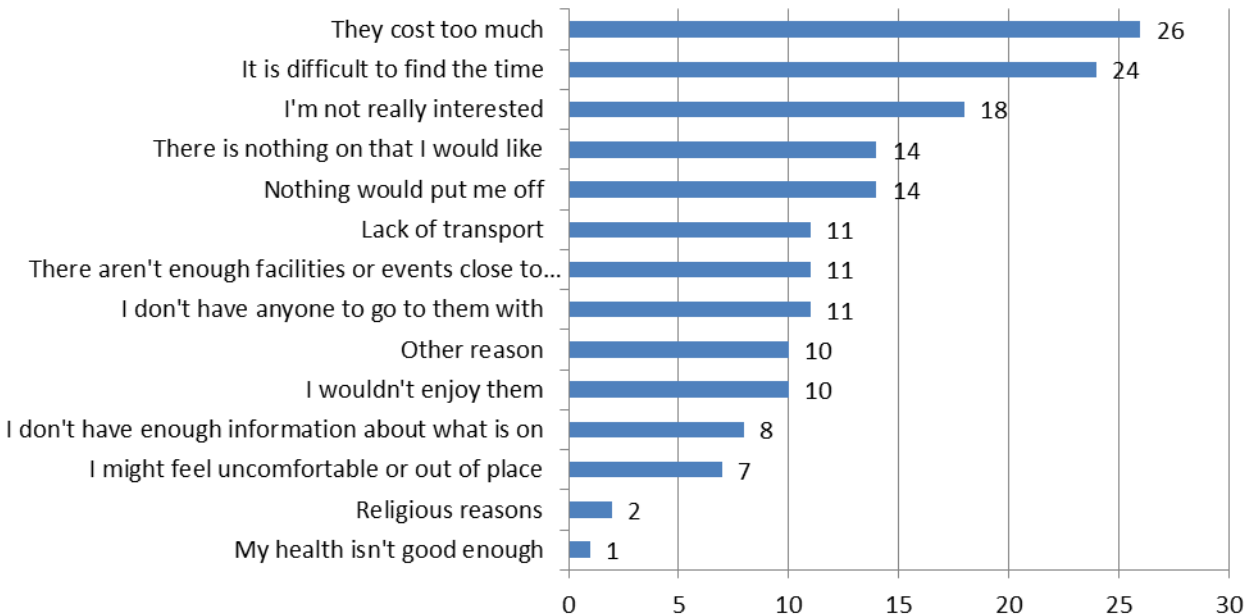


Participation rates amongst children and young people also tend to be high compared to the general population, although slightly lower than attendance rates. Based on findings from the Young Persons Behaviour and Attitude Survey (YPBAS), in 2010, 84% of young people (aged between 11 and 16) participated in the arts. This represents an increase in participation levels of 2% compared to 2007. The most popular types of participation were reading for pleasure (40%), painting or drawing (38%) and playing a musical instrument (33%).

Exploration of the barriers that prevent children and young people from engaging with the arts is an important consideration within the context of this strategy. Findings from the 2010 YPBAS can be seen in Figure 14 and suggest that 'cost' and 'difficulty in finding the time' are the two main barriers, identified by 26% and 24% respectively of those sampled. A lack of interest (18%) and 'nothing on that I would like' (14%) were reasons mentioned by a significant proportion of those sampled. There was little variation in barriers identified by gender or age.

The growth in digital and portable technology provides a range of opportunities for young people to listen to and view the arts. Related questions in the GPS enable us to examine the extent young people in Northern Ireland are accessing the arts through the range of technologies available (e.g. television, radio, listening devices and via the internet).

Figure 15: Barriers preventing arts engagement (%)



Ninety two per cent of young people questioned had engaged with the arts by way of viewing and/or listening to arts programmes through various media such as television, radio, listening device (e.g. MP3, iPod, CD). This compared to 76% of the overall population. This suggests that young people are particularly proficient at using these technologies to access the arts but whether this has had the effect of substituting or stimulating greater engagement with the arts is unclear.

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) is a spatial measure of deprivation. It comprises seven domains of deprivation each developed to measure a distinct form or type of deprivation, income, employment, health, education, proximity to services, living environment and crime. The NIMDM is a combination of all seven domains. The following findings are based on the set of most recent measures developed in 2010.

Using the home postcodes of the school children involved in this survey, YPBAS findings can be analysed to establish attendance by deprivation. Figure 15 shows the percentage of children and young people attending the arts across the spectrum of deprivation, ranging from 0 (most deprived) to 890 (least deprived).

YPBAS findings show a general trend towards increasing attendance levels with decreasing deprivation, although in the majority of instances differences are slight. Museums show the largest difference in attendance by deprivation, ranging from between 23% to 39%. Film has the next greatest difference, ranging from 78% to 84%. There were also a small number of event types that showed a trend towards increasing attendance with increasing deprivation, the most significant of which being circus or carnival ranging from 25% (most deprived) to 19% (least deprived)

Figure 16: Attendance at arts events by deprivation level

	←—————→					Percentage Change
	Most Deprived				Least Deprived	
	0 – 178	179 – 356	357 – 534	535 – 712	713 - 890	
Museum	23%	25%	25%	35%	39%	16%
Film at a cinema or other venue	78%	77%	80%	84%	84%	6%
Circus or carnival	25%	25%	22%	22%	19%	-6%
Attendance at one or more event	89%	91%	90%	92%	93%	4%

Other findings from the YPBAS survey demonstrate that:

- Girls are more likely to attend or participate in the arts than boys, the difference being greatest in relation to participation, with 97% of girls sampled participating, compared to 87% of boys.
- Ninety one per cent of those surveyed enjoyed the experience of either attending or participating in the arts. If enjoyment is taken as a measure of value, this would suggest that the majority of young people who engaged in the arts valued the experience increasing the likelihood of subsequent engagement.
- Over a quarter of those surveyed (27%) had received tuition from an instructor (other than a teacher) to help improve performance in any arts related activity. Fifty per cent had received tuition within the last 12 months.
- When asked what benefits they associated with either taking part in or attending the arts, nearly two thirds (64%) identified ‘fun’ as a key outcome. Around one quarter of interviewees associated engagement with ‘learning new skills’, ‘improving knowledge (26%) and enjoying being creative (26%). Girls were more likely to associate a benefit from engaging with the arts than boys
- Children surveyed used multiple methods to find out ‘what’s on’. The most frequently mentioned being television (50%), websites (49%), and word of mouth (46%).
- Participants were asked whether they would be interested in perusing a career from a range of professions which can broadly associated with the creative industries. Fifty per cent of those questioned identified music as a possible career, followed by design (40%), art and antiques (31%) and crafts (22%).

3.2 Arts Council Survey

To provide a more current and relevant snapshot of young people’s arts based engagement patterns, the Arts Council, in collaboration with Youth Action designed a web-based survey to

explore young people’s engagement with the arts in Northern Ireland. The survey was open for an eight week period between 17 January 2011 and 14 March 2011 and generated 400 responses.

Findings from the survey alone can only be considered indicative of overall population behaviour on account of the relatively small sample size, however, evidence emerging from one question designed to probe respondent’s perceptions of development needs within youth arts provided useful anecdotal evidence. The question asked respondents what they would do with a notional sum of money if they could invest it in the arts. Responses to this question were coded to allow findings to be themed by area (Table 9).

Table 9: Coded participant responses to sector development needs

Theme	Percentage Response
Greater opportunity to attend or participate	49
More arts venues to attend and participate	23
More materials, equipment or resources (in youth clubs)	21
Improve provision for young people to engage in the arts from disadvantaged areas	16
Improve local third level, professional development opportunities	15
Improve school based provision	10
Improve programming	8
Subsidie ticket costs	5
Improve promotion / advertising	5

Where a specific artform was referenced, the majority of responses indicated they would welcome more opportunities to attend or participate in performance theatre, dance, music (especially bands) film and festivals. Only a small number of respondents referenced literature or visual arts.

Increasing opportunities to participate in arts based activity through classes and workshops was cited by nearly a quarter of respondents particularly within the context of ‘having fun.’ This reflected an appreciation of the benefits associated with having a creative outlet and demonstrated the additional personal benefits of participation particularly as they relate to: increasing individual’s social network, improving self-confidence and developing cross-community engagement. The following response was typical of comments made:

“I would spend more on providing more opportunities for young people to get involved in creative workshops, particularly in rural areas.”

Physical space to engage in the arts was highlighted by a significant proportion of the sample (23%), particularly those who lived in rural areas. A common request was for a music or entertainment venue (similar to the Odyssey) being built within respondent’s local area. Greater theatre provision was also mentioned. There was little acknowledgement of existing arts venues

"I would build an art centre with things to do so people could come along and have a good time."

"I would spend more on building a centre for children of all ages and abilities were you can go to do music and perform."

One in five respondents identified equipment or materials as their main investment priority. Computer based hardware and software was particularly popular, within the context of film editing, music mixing and lighting design. These priority spend areas were normally associated with requests for better training of teachers.

"I would spend more on better art facilities and equipment such as paints, paintbrushes and microphones."

"[I would] fund technical areas such as lighting or sound which could greatly help our performances and enhance training opportunities."

For a significant proportion of the sample, a spending priority would be to strengthen social inclusion objectives. Comments in this area related to the benefits of participation in the arts through, for example, workshops and centered on either improving physical access or reducing financial constraints. One individual stated:

"I would get better facilities for those who live out of major cities and towns who often can't participate in arts activities due to lack of public transport or because they can't afford it."

In addition to these main themes, young people also identified a desire to:

- Develop quality and internationally recognised further education opportunities in Northern Ireland, especially in relation to drama and dance
- Have arts organisations offer significantly reduced-price tickets for young people wishing to attend performances
- Improve opportunities for community arts organisations to work with children in an education setting
- Improve the quality and reach of event advertising, making more direct use of virtual communication techniques

Other findings from the survey indicate that:

- Ninety two per cent of respondents had participated in the arts within the last 12 months. Music (singing or playing a musical instrument) was the most popular participation based activity identified (64%). A significant proportion of respondents (29%) also took part in some form of digital media activity which included digital video and digital art.
- Eighty-nine per cent of young people responding to the survey identified one or more barrier to participation. 'Not enough things going on where I live' was the barrier most frequently mentioned by respondents (42%), the majority of whom lived in rural areas. Participation opportunities were also perceived as 'too expensive' by nearly 30% of the sample, suggesting that value for money was an important consideration when considering engagement options.

- Physiological barriers also featured significantly in response to the barrier question. Perceptions that they 'might feel uncomfortable or out of place' were expressed by 28% of the sample with 19% discouraged from participating because 'their friends didn't do it', suggesting that peer pressure was also an important 'chill factor'.
- Consumption of the arts extends beyond attendance and participation; almost all respondents (99%) downloaded 'arts' within the six months prior to the survey. Music was the medium downloaded by the largest number of respondents (88%), followed by film or video (80%) and books for pleasure (62%). On average, individuals bought or downloaded 3 answer options in the 6 months.
- Findings from the survey suggest a definite movement away from the more traditional methods of finding out 'what's on'. Results support the notion that young people are very much part of a virtual communication culture, particularly in relation to mobile phone technology and social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter.⁴³

3.3 Early Years Small Scale Survey

The early years of a child's life present a unique opportunity to shape children's cognitive, behavioural, social, and emotional development⁴⁴ leading to creative fulfillment and enhanced wellbeing. At a broader societal level, these benefits have been demonstrated to impact positively on economic growth and social development.

The need for an effective and holistic approach to early childhood education is particularly relevant in deprived areas where children in low-income households are more likely to experience adverse health and educational outcomes – the benefits of engagement to them and wider society being particularly significant.

In Northern Ireland, the transfer of early year's policy responsibility to the Department of Education, from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) is seen as a positive move by government, providing an integrated approach to policy development and service provision for children.⁴⁵ This process is likely to be further enhanced by the introduction of specific early year's policy objectives by the Department for Social Development.

⁴³ Interarts Foundation, 2008. Access of Young People to Culture. [www.epractice.eu/files/Access of Young People to Culture - Final Report.pdf](http://www.epractice.eu/files/Access%20of%20Young%20People%20to%20Culture%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf). Last accessed 09 May, 2011.

⁴⁴ J Cooper, et al. (2009). Social-Emotional Development in Early Childhood – What Every Policymaker Should Know. National Centre for Children in Poverty. Accessed from: www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_882.pdf on 12 May, 2011.

⁴⁵ Department of Education (2010). Draft Early Years Strategy – An Evidence Based Paper. Accessed from: www.deni.gov.uk/index/pre-school-education-pg/16-draft-early-years-strategy-consult-pg.htm on 10 May, 2011.

To examine more specifically the role of art within a play and the creative context, the Arts Council undertook a small scale survey in conjunction with Early Years.⁴⁶ Children, parents and practitioners were surveyed to establish:

- The perceived role art and creative play on children's social, emotional and cognitive development
- The availability of physical resources to support children's development
- The extent of children's engagement in arts based activity outside of the playgroup and the availability of opportunities

With the help of Early Years, three Fermanagh based playgroups were chosen to take part in the survey: Irvinstown Cross-Community Playgroup; Tiny Tots, Mullymesker and Smallfry Community Playgroup, Maguiresbridge. Funded by the Department of Education, these playgroups are attended by children in their immediate pre-school year (aged between 3 to 4 years old). A total of 100 questionnaires were completed by all three stakeholders. Broken down, this comprised 98% of attending children; 37% of parents and 100% of daycare practitioners across all playgroups.

Practitioners questioned identified a lack of local facilities, providing materials, advice, ideas and training for people working with children, young people and community groups. Travel costs associated with accessing resources available from the nearest centre (Belfast) were too high to represent a feasible option.

Responses from parents surveyed illustrated how aware they are aware of the importance of play and creative expression in children's social, emotional and cognitive development. In a number of instances this understanding was illustrated with a series of examples which provides an insight into the value of early engagement:

- *"My child's confidence with peers is more easily found when engaged in play activities. He can also express ideas, worries and experiences more through play than in a structured formal way."*
- *"My daughter is quite shy and self-conscious. Through play and creativity she comes out of herself, has developed more confidence and interacts much better now with other children."*

Extrapolating some of the survey outputs relating to child benefits suggests that enriched play-based experience delivered through art and creativity is an essential component of self-expression, helping to shape children's communication and learning skills. Some specific outcomes include: enhanced emotional satisfaction, decision making, self-esteem, fine motor dexterity and a stronger aesthetic foundation on which subsequent appreciation and arts engagement can be built.

⁴⁶ A non-profit making organisation promoting high quality childcare for children aged 0 - 12 and their families.

3.4 Demographic Characteristics

A brief consideration of the number of young people suggests Northern Ireland has the largest number (as a percentage of the overall population) of children and young people compared to other parts of the UK. Based on 2009 NISRA mid-year estimates, 34% or 614,840 individuals were aged between 0 and 24, the target age range for this strategy. Table 10 provides a breakdown of the population that falls within each of the four age bands that comprise this strategies target group.

Table 10: NI population breakdown by age group

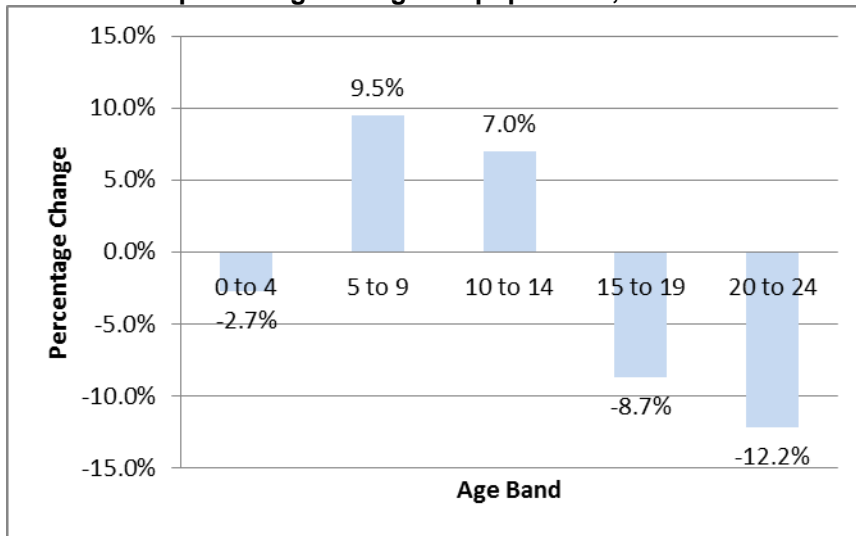
Age Group	Population	Percentage of Total Target Group
0 to 4	122,321	20
5 to 11	160,583	26
12 to 15	99,223	16
16 to 24	232,713	38
Total	614,840	100

At a regional level, Newry and Mourne had the greatest number of children and young adults (0-24) as a proportion of their overall population (39%), followed closely by Derry~Londonderry (38%) and Cookstown (38%).

Based on population projections⁴⁷ for the next 10 years (to 2021), the percentage of children and young people aged 0-24 is expected to fall slightly from 34% to 31%. This overall change hides significant variations within the age group range. As can be seen in Figure 16, projections suggest that the age range 5 to 9 will increase by nearly 10%, conversely, the age range 20 to 24 will see a population decrease of over 12%.

⁴⁷ NISRA, 2008. Population Projections. Available from: NISRA, 2009. Mid Year Population Estimates. Accessed from: www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp17.htm [Accessed on 29 March, 2011]

Figure 17: Estimated percentage changes in population, 2011 to 2021



4 Primary Research

This section of the strategy builds on the evidence gathered from secondary sources by presenting results from primary consultations conducted with two main groups: (1) Arts Council Youth Arts clients and (2) children and young people

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 Consultations with Youth Art Clients

Consultation with Arts Council's clients was an integral part of the strategy development process and provided an opportunity for clients to reflect on a range of issues including past successes, future challenges and partnership opportunities.

Consultation with the sector consisted of two components: The first comprised two focus groups held in Belfast and Derry~Londonderry on the 25th and 27th January, 2011 respectively. All core clients received an invitation to these sessions irrespective of artform and in recognition of the multi-disciplinary nature of the sectors activity patterns. Representatives from nineteen organisations attended at these events (Table 11).

Table 11: Arts Council client consultation

Dance United	Young at Art
Moving on Music	Play Resource Warehouse
Ulster Orchestra	Poetry Ireland
Prime Cut Productions	Grand Opera House
Cahoots NI	Crescent Arts Centre
Lyric Theatre	Youth Action
Tinderbox Theatre Company	Millennium Forum
Replay Theatre Company	Waterside Theatre
Kids in Control	The Playhouse
Ulster Orchestra	

The second element of the client consultation comprised twelve face-to-face interviews with primary youth arts clients to discuss issues raised at the focus group meeting in greater depth. Interviews were held between January and March 2011 and involved face-to-face meetings with clients. A list of clients consulted with can be seen in Table 12. Findings from each strand of the consultation were catagorised into a series of broad themes germane to the discussions held.

To ensure that young people with a disability had the opportunity to feed into the development of the strategy, the Arts Council surveyed 40 children attending Tor Bank Special School, Parkview and St Gerard’s Education Resource Centre. Young people with a disability were also consulted as part of the wider consultation with other youth forums and youth groups.

Table 12: Face-to-face interviews

Sticky Fingers	Replay Theatre Company
Kids in Control	Play Resource Warehouse
Young at Art	Derry Theatre Trust
Wheelworks	A’town Trad. and Contemporary Music Centre
Cahoots NI	Voluntary Arts Ireland
Waterside Theatre	Youth Action

The following section provides an overview of discussions held with clients during the consultation phase themed by priorities that emerged naturally from the process.

4.1.2 Consultations with Children and Young People

The Arts Council understands that effective and timely consultation with children and young people is fundamental to the development of a meaningful Youth Arts Strategy, forming the central evidence strand around which priority actions could be established. As a consequence, consultation methods were designed to ensure that:

- Young people could express their views openly and directly
- Engagement was meaningful and respectful, acknowledging young people’s standing as active and valued citizens
- There were opportunities for young people who faced particular barriers to engagement in the arts (such as those leaving or in care and disabled young people) to participate in the consultation process.
- Both those engaged and non-engaged were sampled through the consultation

With support from the Participation Network⁴⁸, the Arts Council engaged with nearly 100 children and young people through nine organisations which offered a range of recreation, care and support services to this group. Table 13 provides more details on these groups.

With the exception of consultations held with VOYPIC and An Munia Tober⁴⁹, focus groups were used as the main consultation method. Sessions were facilitated by Arts Council researchers and attended by organisation support workers. In order to ensure participants felt as comfortable as possible, sessions were held at venues chosen by the organisation, using a

⁴⁸ The Participation Network supports the Public Sector to engage effectively with children and young people in the development and review of policy and services that impact on their lives.

⁴⁹ Observation and informal questioning were the preferred method used with children and young people engaged with through these organisations

schedule of questions agreed with project co-ordinators in advance of the event. Sessions typically ran for between one and one and half hours.

In each case, the informal approach adopted allowed for a broad and open discussion about the arts and included insights into individual motivations and rationales for engagement.

Table 13: Youth Forums consulted

Group	Location	Age Range	Number of Consultees
Youth Action (Rainbow Factory)	Belfast	12 to 18	12
Craigavon District Youth Council	Craigavon	15 to 19	15
An Munia Tober (Traveller Children)	Belfast	7 to 10	9
Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPEC)	Belfast	13 to 17	9
Youth Action (Out and About)	Belfast	12 to 16	9
Interact Youth Arts	Derry	13 to 18	12
Belfast City Council - Youth Forum	Belfast	14 to 19	12
Omagh Youth Council	Omagh	12 to 18	12
Strabane Youth Council	Strabane	12 to 18	9

4.2 Youth Art Client

The following section provides an overview of discussions held with clients during the consultation phase themed by priorities that emerged naturally from the process.

4.2.1 Collaborative Working

A number of clients described projects they had undertaken with funding from government departments not normally associated with the arts such as DoE and DRD. In most cases, this involved collaborative arts-based projects in which school children were engaged in quality creative processes, for example, to design pieces of public art or plan the conversion of derelict spaces for recreational purposes. Consultees recognised that as well as generating a range of personal benefits, the process often illustrated the valuable role children have to play in local community development.

One client commented that these types of projects can help create strong and sustained partnerships across the public, voluntary and private sectors, especially at a local level, creating opportunities for funding not previously identified. In a number of instances, projects were delivered through primary and secondary schools – supporting the delivery of the core curriculum.

Despite the success of a number of collaborative projects, reservations were expressed by some focus group participants who had enjoyed less fruitful partnerships. They spoke of the skepticism of some officials as to the strength of the benefits 'the arts' can bring to an interagency project. However, it was generally agreed that benefits that accrued from a partnership approach outweighed the set-backs and that arts organisations are now more confident and more ambitious to achieve wider reach and also as a consequence will become less dependent of the Arts Council for funding.

One organisation commented that despite the growing necessity to develop collaborative approaches between organisations working in the arts sector, there was still a reluctance to engage due to perceived competition over funding.

The Arts Council should act as an advocate for youth arts, promoting it amongst government departments and agencies as a vehicle for achieving their targets. Particular emphasis was placed on the need to improve the relationship the Arts Council has with the Department of Education and promote opportunities for joint working within the creative industries sector.

Focus group participants encouraged the Arts Council to work closely with stakeholders to deliver strategy objectives.

4.2.2 Working with disadvantaged groups

A number of the clients represented at the focus group sessions worked extensively with issue based community organisations using a range of mediums to support programmes targeted at community safety and integration. One participant spoke of a dance project they ran which enabled children from both the host migrant communities to explore each other's cultures in a non-threatening, constructive environment helping to overcome barriers and build more cohesive and integrated communities.

Fundamental to the success of this project was the ability to create long-term relationships with groups representing both migrant and indigenous populations as well as schools and local youth clubs. This project operated outside the normal project operational framework; being flexible was considered essential in order to achieve good learner outcomes. Participants cited that short term funding did not help organisations achieve long term integration aims as the relationships formed were not sustained over any length of time.

Regional venues were recognised by nearly all as playing an important role in facilitating participation based youth arts activity. Staging performances involving young participants from ethnic minority populations sent out a strong message of inclusion to the wider population.

It was clear from the consultations undertaken that organisations recognised the added value their work brought to the wider government objectives of social inclusion. However, in pursuit of funding, it was recognised as important not to compromise the quality of the engagement. This was important if the integrity of 'the arts' was to be maintained. One client recognised this

imperative describing how they had 'stopped doing public workshops as there was no real investment in creating experiences of high quality.

It was recognised by consultees that using arts based interventions in youth work and community development required a set of abilities that extended beyond many artists core skills set. A number of organisations including Replay and Wheelworks described how training which they had facilitated addressed these skill deficits by providing work placement and mentoring schemes. It was recognised that, in order to embed these skills from an early stage in an artist's / youth worker's career, training should be provided through third level education, with on-going opportunities for Continuous Professional Development. One participant mentioned how 'young artists must be given more opportunity to develop and nurture the specific skills required to work with children and young people.'

An example of the contribution an artist can make to the personal development of young people within a community development context is provided by the Traveller Support Programme run by An Munia Tober. A six week programme of participative workshops, facilitated by professional artists, encourages children aged between 6 and 12 to express themselves creatively in a secure and non-threatening environment. Activities enable participants to express their emotions, address experiences which may have created stress or anxiety. A final exhibition of their work provides an opportunity for them to build self confidence and present the travelling community in a positive way.

A number of clients noted how limited, local training opportunities for aspiring set designers, lighting designers, production managers and stage managers had created a dearth in local talent for organisations to draw on, especially for those specializing in touring.

4.2.3 Schools

As well as 'adding value' to the delivery of the curriculum, some participants thought that the intrinsic benefits associated with engagement created an 'appetite' for further consumption outside the school which, in turn, created a platform for life-long engagement.

One delegate described how the revised curriculum had 'worked well' and how schools were 'much more willing to engage with artists through their organisations.'

A number of clients described projects they had undertaken in partnership with schools. These included: 'Stitch in Time' – a craft based intergenerational project involving eight schools in Derry~Londonderry; 'Mathemagic' – Sponsored by Northern Bank, a project aimed at helping primary school children improve their maths using theatrical illusions; and 'Cardboard Cities' – Developed in association with SPACE (School of Planning Architecture and Civil Engineering) the project involved the creation of a cardboard installation by school children. Participants were able to build the city of the future.

Figure 18: Cahoots NI

Cahoots NI is a professional children's touring theatre company based in Belfast. The company was formed in 2001 and concentrates on the visual potential of theatre whilst capitalising on the age-old popularity of magic and illusion as an essential ingredient in the art of entertaining. Each production is at the centre of a body of outreach work designed to maximise artistic potential, customise the individual theatre experience and extend the imaginative life of the piece beyond the actual event through the provision of follow up resource materials. The principal aim of Cahoots' work is to provide inspiring theatrical experiences for children across Northern Ireland in a number of different settings including schools, hospitals and regional venues that help to expand their imagination, stimulate their artistic creativity and help them to develop an appreciation of the arts.

Math 'a' Magic is just one example of a recent Cahoots NI production delivered in partnership with Northern Bank and Arts and Business to primary 7 pupils across Northern Ireland. Math 'a' Magic was a fun, interactive performance where children witnessed magical effects that involved mathematical skills such as estimation and calculation. The production had a number of educational benefits linked to the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 2. The most obvious was Mathematics and Numeracy with a focus on problem solving, communicating and reasoning mathematically, an introduction to probability, developing skills in patterns, relationships and sequences in numbers and looking at operations and their applications. It also had links to Language and Literacy through discussions around mathematical ideas, explaining thinking and presenting outcomes. The Arts were used to explore mathematical issues creatively through the use of drama and Personal Development and Mutual Understanding were developed through encouraging confidence in pupil's mathematical abilities.

Arts Council RFO survey returns show that over the period 2010/11, Cahoots NI worked with over 90 primary schools across Northern Ireland engaging with a total of 4,200 children and young people.

Consultees identified a number of characteristics were associated with 'successful' school based arts projects. These were: the creation of long-term relationships between arts organisations and individual schools; a clear demonstration (by the arts organisation) of the 'added value' programming could bring to the subject area; the ability of interventions to address local (school or community based) issues such as immigration and bullying through imaginative and innovative arts based responses; and the construction of projects with the support / input of third parties such as local universities and higher education colleges.

Despite the success of individual projects, consultees were, in the main, frustrated by the lack of strategic engagement by the Department of Education in facilitating more mainstream arts involvement in schools. From discussions, the following themes emerged:

- The opportunity to work with schools is dependent on the attitudes of senior staff. Some schools are more confident than others in using arts-based teaching methodologies, suggesting that the capacity of some schools to undertake such projects needed to be enhanced.
- Delays in the Review of Public Administration (RPA) (and the implementation of ESA) was thought to have created a risk adverse environment

- A lack of funding in schools undermined opportunities for engagement; transport costs limited the use of coaches necessary for children to attend performances at the local arts venue

4.2.4 Funding

ASOP clients emphasized the importance of sustaining core funding of their work to ensure the retention of core staff and development of quality artistic product. It was thought the platform provided by ASOP Funding had given organisations the freedom to seek funding elsewhere, enabling them to diversify their income streams.

Restrictions in funding had meant some organisations had to concentrate on their core programme activity, de-prioritising partnership opportunities with outside agencies.

A number of clients commented on the restrictive nature of the grant-giving process employed by some public bodies, describing how Trust and Foundations placed greater emphasis on the skill of artistic staff to make programming decisions without the need for direct input. It was generally thought that Trust and Foundations also applied less stringent reporting requirements allowing organisations to place more emphasis on delivery of the work, rather than the reporting.

One participant described how deeper, more sustainable outcomes could be gained by working with a smaller number of children over a longer timeframe in, for example, a workshop format. It was felt that this would prevent criticism of 'tokenism' leveled at a number projects.

The timeframe allowed for the completion of funded activity was thought to be too short. It was further noted that funding programmes 'did not fit with school planning cycles', restricting the scope for partnership opportunities.

Evaluation processes have been embedded in the management systems of a number of youth arts clients. It was generally thought that this allowed organisations to reflect self-critically on activity, building stronger, and better informed projects. Contributors felt that youth arts organisations should prioritise the sharing of evaluation and case study so that the benefit can be shared more widely.

A number of clients were critical of the Arts Councils own project monitoring systems, calling for a 'lighter touch' approach, commensurate with the level of funding and with requirements of other funders.

4.3 Children and Young People

The following section provides an overview of discussions held with children and young people during the consultation phase themed by priorities that emerged naturally from the process.

4.3.1 Current Engagement with the Arts

This theme aimed to explore the extent to which children and young people are currently engaged in the arts. Most of the children and young people were involved in the arts in some capacity, although some more than others.

The most common responses included going to the cinema, concerts (including local gigs and larger concerts in the Odyssey) and going to the theatre (e.g. Grand Opera House, Waterfront Hall, Millennium Theatre) although there were some who had never had the opportunity to attend such events for a number of reasons which are outlined later in this section. Music was an area in which a number of young people expressed a keen interest both in and outside of school. This included playing musical instruments such as the guitar, piano, violin and percussion with a few young people having been involved in setting up their own band or playing in the school orchestra. Some enjoyed singing and one young person even had their own radio show.

Other popular arts activities that were mentioned included crafts and in particular making things with clay, drawing, painting, photography, DJing, creative writing, dance and drama. Some young people expressed a keen interest in creative industries such as film making and gaming, with one young person having already created his own game.

4.3.2 Reasons for and Benefits of Engaging in the Arts

There were a number of themes that emerged from the consultation findings in terms of the reasons/ benefits for young people's engagement in the arts. The benefits captured from the consultations were wide ranging impacting on personal, social and educational development as well as health and well being.

- **Reasons for engaging in the arts**

The main reason cited by young people for getting involved in the arts was because their friends *'do it'* or already because they are involved in the arts at school e.g. choir, orchestra, art classes. In the case of drama and dance, it appeared to be a personal choice to get involved in these activities. For some young people however, their parents or guardian had forced them to attend or participate in an arts activity in the past, which although for some had stimulated a greater interest in the arts, for other this had resulted in a bad experience first time round, becoming a barrier to future participation.

- **Personal benefits**

Children and young people emphasised the personal benefits they gain from being involved in the arts. Examples included increased self-confidence and self-esteem, particularly through being involved in drama and music. Young people said that being involved in the

arts has helped improve their communication skills, in particular their ability to express themselves in front of others as well as developing team working skills through being involved in activities such as a play or part of a music band.

For a number of young people, involvement in the arts has given them a focus and a gateway to new opportunities. Seeing themselves progress and improve provides them with a sense of achievement, pride and ambition. The arts were described as being fun and as giving young people *'something different to do'*. A number of young people said that being involved in the arts helps stimulate their imagination and encourage them to become more creative. Many young people described how they *'get a buzz'* out of taking part in the arts.

The arts were described as being a form of 'escapism' and 'relaxation' enabling young people to forget about the pressure of exams and school work. One young person described the arts as being *'an outlet that enables me to release emotions and impulses'*. Some mentioned that the arts activities they are involved in take place in more informal settings where their views are respected,

- **Community Development/ Integration**

Our consultation with children and young people highlighted the important role that the arts play in contributing to community development and integration. Young people described how being involved in the arts provides them with *'a common ground to meet new people and make new friends.'* It was emphasised that the arts bring people together who otherwise wouldn't normally meet, therefore helping to remove social and cultural barriers. Some young people felt that the arts help to breakdown stereotypes as *'people get to know you for who you really are before making a judgment based on your religion or sexual orientation.'*

- **Educational benefits**

The arts were identified as providing young people with an opportunity to learn new skills and develop new talents, all of which can be transferred into other aspects of their lives e.g. school, workplace. One group of young people involved in craft workshops said that being involved gives them the opportunity to try new things and use equipment not available in school. For those involved in drama, many of the plays have a direct link to the curriculum, helping to improve school performance.

A number of young people described the arts as being an effective way of learning. One example provided was how in school they use role play in History class as a more interesting and interactive way to learn about the subject. Many noted how through the arts, young people can learn together and from each other. The role and importance of peer leadership was also highlighted.

For some, their involvement in the arts has given them an idea as to what career direction they might take and for some this is an arts-related career. Examples include wanting to be a stage actor, working backstage in the theatre and getting involved in arts-related youth work.

- **Health and Well being**

Young people recognised the arts as having a positive impact on individual health and well being. With regard to mental health, the arts were identified as being a vehicle through which to relieve stress and *'take your mind off other things'*. One contributor said that *'the arts help to keep you sane'*. They were also identified as having a positive impact on physical health for example through dance and drama.

4.3.3 Barriers to engaging in the arts

The consultations identified a number of reasons why children and young people do not engage in the arts. One reason was having previously had a bad experience of the arts e.g. being told you aren't any good, forced to go by your parents. There was also the impression from some young people that not all schools appear to value the arts and see them as *'softer options'* in comparison to other subjects such as the sciences and mathematics. In such cases, there is no encouragement from teachers or careers advisors to get involved in the arts.

Time was identified as another barrier to participating or attending the arts. Some mentioned having to balance school work, part time jobs etc. and not having the time to get involved in any other activities. In contrast to this, over school holidays, when young people do have more time to get involved in such activities, the young people felt that arts provision is limited.

The youth consultation revealed that there were some young people that were just not interested in the arts and preferred other activities such as sport. For others, they lacked the confidence to get involved in certain artforms e.g. playing a musical instrument, drama. Some also stereotyped the arts as being *'for snobs'* and that *'only posh people can get involved.'*

Financial reasons were recognised as a barrier to not engaging in the arts all that often or, in some cases, at all. It was argued that tickets for concerts and the cinema are expensive and that if there are no facilities in the local area, transport costs add to this expense. With regard to theatre tickets, young people said that tickets for youth performances were cheaper, however, to go to a professional performance in it is much more expensive with fewer available concessions.

Lessons in music and drama were also noted as being expensive. One young person highlighted the expense of materials such as pens, brushes, drawing pads etc. Although

there is an Educational Maintenance Allowance for some students at school, it is means tested and not all students are eligible to receive this grant; they depend on their parents to underwrite costs or take-up part-time work to support these activities.

Access to the arts was also seen as a barrier with some rural communities. Transport can act as a barrier in that it can be difficult to get to and from arts activities given that public transport is restricted during evenings and weekends, particularly in rural areas. Therefore young people are dependent on their parents to get there.

Communication of 'what's on' in the arts was also noted as acting as a barrier to accessing the arts, with some young people being unaware of what activities are on offer in their local areas. Traditional means of advertising such as posters, flyers etc. were regarded as no longer being effective means of advertising, with preferred methods being social networking sites such as Facebook and/or a dedicated website advertising.

4.3.4 The Arts as a Career

A number of young people expressed an interest in pursuing a career in the arts. From an educational perspective, however, it appeared that some schools are more supportive than others. In some schools *'the arts aren't taken seriously'*. Some reported a lack of enthusiasm for the arts when discussing career choices with careers teachers having a tendency to push students down the traditional academic route. A report commissioned by DELNI on skills needs reveals that Northern Ireland has the lowest rate of employees with art degrees. Using 2008 LFS data, this report details that the NI economy has 3,000 less STEM graduates and 7,000 less arts and design graduates in comparison to the rest of the UK.⁵⁰ There are strong parallels here with observations made in All Our Futures,⁵¹ which highlighted a tendency for the national debate on education to be expressed as a series of exclusive alternatives: for example, a choice between the arts or the sciences. The report went on to suggest that a more productive approach would be to recognise mutual contribution both have in raising standards of achievement and motivation.

Young people said that there are very few work experience/ work shadowing opportunities in Northern Ireland to give young people *'a taste of what a career in the arts might be like'*. Of the few that do exist, these are mainly in Belfast and Derry. Study opportunities are also limited in Northern Ireland with a large number of students going overseas where universities are considered to be better equipped and offer the best learner and career opportunities. This is particularly characteristic of performing arts students who tend to go to London. There were however, some young people who felt that more opportunities are

⁵⁰ Forecasting Future Skill Needs in NI: Summer 2009 Update, Oxford Economics

⁵¹ National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Expression (1999).

<http://www.cypni.org.uk/downloads/alloutfutures.pdf>. Last accessed on 05.10.11

becoming available to get involved in the Creative Industries in Northern Ireland e.g. Game Development at Belfast Metropolitan College.

4.3.5 What would make the arts better?

When asked what would make the arts better, the children and young people provided a number of suggestions. One included having more workshop opportunities in schools, local communities and arts venues for children and young people to come along and try the arts. It was felt that experiences such as these would help stimulate young people's interest in the arts and give them the confidence to get involved. In terms of making arts accessible to all, young people would like to see more arts programmes being run in local communities that provide opportunities for children and young people to work with professional artists, including cross community arts projects. This would help *'bring the arts closer to home'* whilst helping to build good relations and promote community integration. There was an opinion that more could be done to help increase access to the arts for young people living in rural areas.

Young people would welcome more opportunities to showcase their work. Suggestions included a dedicated Youth Arts Gallery or as an alternative, a dedicated space within galleries where young artists could display their artwork. A few consultees mentioned having set up their own band but noted there is a lack of dedicated space where they can meet to practice together. Developing performance space such as this would be welcomed by young people.

Given the financial barrier to the arts, young people said they would like to see cheaper tickets to theatre performances, concerts and the cinema. They would also like to see the provision of grants to help support young artists in their development.

Raising awareness to the arts was seen as a priority for children and young people. The elitism which is sometimes attached to the arts needs to be removed so as young people realise that the arts are for everyone. To help achieve this, young people suggested that there is a need for better promotion of what the arts are and what is available. It was suggested that galleries need to be more welcoming of children and young people as their current focus is on adults and older generations. Another suggestion was for more youth performances in larger more prestigious venues e.g. Opera House, Lyric which would help raise awareness to the importance of youth arts and its contribution to wider society. A dedicated *'Youth Arts Day'* was also suggested as a way to help raise awareness of youth arts, which would provide taster sessions and opportunities for young people to showcase and share their work.

Young people identified a role for schools in helping improve access to the arts for young people. Consultees suggested that professional artists should be encouraged to come into schools and deliver careers talks, share their experiences and also give the young people opportunities to ask questions. Another suggestion was that schools should bring in arts

organisations to deliver plays and other arts activities to give children and young people an opportunity to sample what is available.

5 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis (Figure 18) helps to evaluate research findings identified in earlier sections, translating them into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This provides a platform on which to build a youth arts strategy. Some of the issues raised through the consultation are beyond the immediate reach of this strategy. However, there are specific issues that the youth arts sector, can more readily address.

Figure 19: Youth Arts Sector SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Large youth population in Northern Ireland2. Strong public support for provision of arts based engagement opportunities for young people3. Engaging young people in creative activity supports and enhances personal, social and educational outcomes targeted by government4. Investment in the capital Infrastructure has created more opportunities for engaging young people in culturally-led activity5. Experienced, committed and innovative organisations providing quality engagement opportunities for young people6. Internationally recognized youth arts organizations and artists.7. Opportunities for engagement through a range of artforms and organisation types8. Recognition within artist community of the need to retain and develop creative and complementary skills9. Strong reflective practice within some areas of the youth arts sector
<p>Weaknesses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Arts-driven creative engagement does not appear to be a priority for Department of Education.2. Funding environment discourages joint working and collaborations between arts organisations3. Short-term funding does not maximise potential project/programme outputs4. Lack of defined organisation role limits potential effectiveness (duplication/synchronicity)5. Limited reflective practice at sector level limits the transfer of best practice and impedes sector development6. Too few training opportunities young artists wanting to work with young people within a community development or early years context7. Teacher training includes limited arts based skills development8. Access to youth arts restricted for some children and young people e.g. living in marginalised communities, rural areas9. Lack of information / suitable conduits about what's on for children and young people

10. Lack of research demonstrating the impact of young people's engagement in the arts
11. Limited opportunities for youth arts organisations to share and discuss best-practice.

Opportunities

1. Social networking and advances in digital technology provide a platform for engagement with young people as well as a means through which to deliver artistic content
2. Strong social objectives underpinning funders' remit provides funding opportunities at programme and project level
3. Demand within formal / informal youth sector for training of workers using arts-based approaches
4. High profile events (2012 Cultural Olympiad, 2013 City of Culture, Derry provide opportunities to engage with children and young people
5. Growing emphasis by government on the use of preventative interventions delivered at early years.
6. Willingness of artists to engage in training to advance career opportunities
7. Opportunities to explore bespoke training for artists through third level education institutions
8. Participatory arts techniques are used widely within community and voluntary, offering potential opportunities for artist employment
9. High quality research being undertaken regionally and internationally offers opportunities to inform artistic practice and support advocacy work
10. Piloted DCAL Quality Indicators provide a mechanism for establishing the quality of activity designed and delivered by funded youth arts organisations

Threats

1. Reduced opportunities for agencies to engage with young people.
2. Reduced school based creatively driven arts engagement reduces propensity for long-term commitment
3. Frustration felt by organisations who feel obliged to meet social objectives
4. Delivery of arts workshops by non-artists limits creative benefits of engagement
5. Reduced resources for the arts
6. Pressure on Education budget

6 Towards a Strategic Vision

This section builds on the SWOT analysis by providing details of the intended direction and associated priorities of the youth arts strategy. It sets out the strategies overarching vision, and objectives, presenting a series of actions under the themes: community, formal education, informal education, the economy and early years. A number of practical recommendations are also made in relation to the Arts Councils own systems and processes.

This review has highlighted how the Arts Council's funded organizations have an excellent track record of working with schools and with other providers in creating opportunities for children to make and experience the arts. Supporting organisations that provide quality arts experiences for children and young people will continue to be a priority area for the Arts Council over this strategy period. The Arts Council's commitment to developing provision for children and young people is based on the knowledge that the arts are a means to improving quality of life, enabling self-expression, enhancing learning and furthering the exploration of personal and social identity for children as they grow and develop.

In developing this five-year strategy, the Arts Council engaged with children and young people as both consumers and participants in the arts. This proved to be a lively source of inspiration and moving forward regular testing should be sustained. It is therefore important that Youth Arts provision respond positively to the experience of young people as this will ensure that they are supported to become active culture makers in their own right.

The review has identified how there has been an over-reliance on fairly short-term projects rather than sustained activity, largely due to funding pressures in the main funding programme, AFP, and at times this has contributed a perception of lack of clarity around core purpose. Mindful of the reducing funding profile over the successive years of the Northern Ireland Budget and the need to lever investment from other sources, we therefore conclude that the Arts Council should focus on delivering the objectives outlined below:

1. Place emphasis on supporting excellence, creativity, innovation and access amongst the network of arts organisations
2. Encourage progression, sharing and development amongst the youth arts clients, in view of the importance of the network of arts organisations as the primary vehicle for improving the quality of arts provision
3. Act as a broker between the arts and the education sectors, encourage greater alignment between arts organisations and other agencies charged with the child's education and welfare
4. Work in partnership with the Department of Education and other key stakeholders to create a Northern Ireland wide award scheme that recognises schools with a high level of provision in the arts.

5. Work in partnership with the Department of Education, Education and Library Boards and youth music organisations to maintain and promote access to quality music education in and out of school with the emphasis placed on progression and talent development.
6. Promote the delivery of quality arts opportunities for children and young people by encouraging more effective use of artists as catalysts for creative engagement
7. Strengthen engagement with early years providers to create new creative platforms for early childhood education that aligns with governments preventative priorities
8. Pilot a youth sector initiative aimed at young people at risk that harnesses arts-based resources and supports interagency intervention targets
9. In conjunction with the Careers Service, strengthen the promotion of careers advice in the creative arts
10. Work to implement an apprenticeship programme in conjunction with the Creative & Cultural Skills Sector, offering diversity and creative routes for progression