

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education, Culture and Sport
DATE	7 th June 2012
ACTING DIRECTOR	Patricia Cassidy
TITLE OF REPORT	Cultural Grants 2012/13
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/12/019

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present to Elected Members the recommendations for Cultural Grants for the financial year 2012/13.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that members of the Committee agree:

- (i). The allocation of cultural grants to the total value of £217,414.00 as presented in the appendix to this report.
- (ii) The establishment of further application opportunities later in 2012/13
- (iii) The 2012/13 'themes' for cultural grants as presented in the background/main issues section of this report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A total of £365,819.00 is available within the 2012/13 budget to support the Cultural Grants programme. Applicants were invited to be considered for support of up to 50% of the costs towards a cultural project or initiative, showing either match funding or an in kind contribution.

Forty eight applications were received, requesting funds of £336,131.70. At this time it is recommended to allocate cultural grants to the value of £217,414.00. This leaves a total of £148,405.00 remaining for this financial year.

In order to avoid any potential duplication of funding, applications were considered in the context of cultural provision across Aberdeen and, where possible, against other relevant funding opportunities provided by Aberdeen City Council. By providing up to a maximum of 50% of the project funding, the Council's proportionate level of exposure is reduced. The grant scheme is designed to encourage partners to

carefully examine the opportunities for a range of alternative funding streams, consider the further development of self sustainability within their projects and encourage partnership working and innovative approaches to the delivery of cultural opportunities for the community.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Officers considered a number of factors when presenting recommendations:

- Reducing the level of dependency on Council grants which could result in organisations not being able to continue to operate should Council funding not be granted.
- Where external funds will not be brought to the City if matching funds are not made available by the City Council.
- Funds not being used by organisations for the purposes for which they were granted.

These risks have and will be continue to be managed through a robust assessment of each application and through systems to monitor and review funded activities throughout the year.

There are no additional legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, environmental or health and safety implications arising from this report at this time.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Grants to Cultural Organisations

A table is attached as an appendix presenting the applications and the recommendations of the Cultural Grants Selection Panel for funding. The criteria for which the selection panel made the attached recommendations for the dispersal of funds included:

- Evidence of impacts on the objectives in Aberdeen's Single Outcome Agreement
- Evidence of links to 'Vibrant Aberdeen' – the Cultural Strategy for Aberdeen
- 50% match funding (in kind or financial contribution)
- Evidence of beneficial partnership working, and best value to the Council
- Evidence of best value to the City Council
- Evidence of activity happening within Aberdeen City and being for the benefit of Aberdeen City residents
- Where relevant, a report back on the use of last years funding.

5.2 Ineligible Applications

Four applications received did not meet the stated terms and conditions and have been deemed ineligible. This includes applications which had no match funding pending or secured, inappropriate legal status or requesting funding for the promotion of activity which would not have been available to all. Each ineligible applicant will be supported by officers to resubmit their application should a second application process be open and through the proposed restructure of the application process. For reasons for rejection please see appendix 1.

5.3 Review of External Investment for Culture and Sport

The PBB option ECS C_10, Root and branch review of commissioned arts and sports services is currently being conducted by Officers in the Education, Culture and Sport Directorate. Recommendations relating to this review, designed to achieve significant budget savings and to improve the return on the City's investment in external culture and sports providers, will be presented to Elected Members in Spring 2013. The cultural grants programme is subject to that review, and as such, Officers are working with several of the Cultural Grant supported organisations to assess the impacts of their work in the City, and will make recommendations accordingly.

5.4 Conditional Recommendations

Highlighted in the appendix 2 are applications which have been provisionally recommended for a grant. The provisional nature of these recommendations is based on the organisations ability to meet a number of different requirements. This includes confirmation of matching funding and providing further evidence on the impact and sustainability of the organisation or project.

Several of these organisations have funding applications or decisions pending from other external funders. Should these provisional recommendations be approved by Committee, only when these conditions have been met will funding be confirmed.

5.5 Restructuring of the Cultural Grants Applications Framework

Officers have identified a need to support unsuccessful applicants in their desire to develop stronger and more robust funding requests, and also design an application process which attracts new applicants and addresses clear gaps in the types of cultural provision in Aberdeen. Officers propose to use the following themes for future 2012/13 funding rounds:

- **Access and Participation** – to support organisations and projects that will breakdown barriers to cultural engagement, for those who are currently less likely to engage in cultural activity. This theme will seek to attract hard to reach groups, including those from disadvantaged communities.

- **Aspire** – this theme will support innovative, high quality work, raising the profile of Aberdeen as an attractive and vibrant place to live and work. This programme will seek to support collaboration and partnership proposals, international and national opportunities, and the production of new work whilst enhancing the quality work already being made in the city.
- **Cultural Support** – many of the applications received evidenced a need for additional support and training, both to improve the quality of their submissions and for more specialised input. This would include a need to improve fundraising initiatives, organisational structures, audience development, and community engagement, marketing and volunteering.

Previously, the scheme has supported a number of support agencies, to offer specialist cultural business, marketing and networking support. Unfortunately this is considered to have limited impact. By introducing a more tailored approach, organisations will receive support based on their needs as opposed to the current generic offering.

- **Public Art** – The existing public art scheme was established in 2011/2 and has proven to be an effective way to engage city residents in cultural activity in public spaces. The fund supports the aims of the public art tool kit, encouraging and empowering residents, communities, artists and organisations to use public art as a key driver in developing the City. The tool kit, which is currently hosted on the council server with its own domain, www.publicartaberdeen.com, is an easy to use guide, providing information on the production of public art, contacts, funding sources and good practice.

This fund in 2011 supported the City's Olympics public art project 'Lightspeed' which will be presented as part of Aberdeen's Olympic torch relay celebrations. The fund also supported two community commissions, allowing communities a first time opportunity to commission public art. The EU funded 'Lively Cities' project has also benefited from the establishment of the fund.

There are significant benefits to restructuring the cultural grants scheme, including:

- A greater incentive to organisations to develop higher quality applications and proposals.
- Developing a wider range of quality engagement opportunities.
- Ensuring more equitable access across the sector
- Increasing the wider awareness and profile of Aberdeen City Council's priorities, cultural objectives and commitment to investment in culture.

- Developing a stronger evidence base, performance indicators and more robust monitoring process.
- Increasing the opportunities for new organisations to apply for support.
- Reduced dependency on Aberdeen City Council funding.
- Improved partnership and collaborative practice and a reduction in duplication
- Improving accountability in the sector whilst supporting organisations to become stronger independent bodies.

Organisations currently supported will be eligible to apply to the restructured investment scheme, but will be asked to consider where best they fit within the new themes and how they can develop further.

5.5 Internal Applications

As previous years, applications from council services have been assessed separately to ensure a fair and equitable process. Separating the internal and external applications provides Officers with an overview of circumstances where internal services could potentially support or work in partnership with external organisations or groups, providing better value and leading towards a more cohesive sector. The level of funding provisionally allocated to internal projects is based on an average of internal grant awards over the past five years.

6. IMPACT

All successful applicants must illustrate how their projects meet the key objectives of 'Vibrant Aberdeen' the City's Cultural Strategy.

'Vibrant Aberdeen' has five objectives:

- Establish a cohesive cultural sector.
- Increase community engagement in cultural activity.
- Improve the city's cultural profile.
- Increase investment in culture.
- Effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of culture.

Successful applicants must evidence a connection to one or more of the local outcomes in the Single Outcome Agreement. The projects proposed directly relate to strands of the following Local Outcomes:

Outcome 2, 'Aberdeen will have high quality employment opportunities for its citizens',

Outcome 3, 'People of all ages take an active part in their own learning to achieve their full potential' and 'Learning and training is appropriate and accessible to learner's needs.

Local outcomes for National Outcome 4, 'Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens'.

Outcome 7. 'Improve the quality of life in our most deprived areas.'

Outcome 12, 'Aberdeen is widely recognised as a City with high quality natural assets, biodiversity, architecture and heritage which instill civic pride in its citizens.'

Outcome 13 'We take pride in a strong and inclusive national identity'.

Outcome 15, 'Our public services are consistently high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.' Guidance for Community Planning partnerships, from the Scottish Government entitled 'Culture Delivers' states: 'Cultural provision and infrastructure is part of the drive for best value. High quality should be promoted, continually seeking to improve its impact on communities and taking account of local aspirations and needs. Cultural activity can also help other sectors and services deliver in ways more closely matched to peoples wishes, and can assist in engaging citizens with civic life'.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Root and Branch Review of Commissioned Arts and Sports Services
EC&S Committee March 2011. Cultural Grants applications 2012-13
lodged in Members Library.

Appendix 1 and 2

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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Appendix 1

Cultural Grants – Please see below for frequent reasons for resubmissions, deferral or rejection of funding applications.

- No match funding
- Applications not fully completed or illegible
- Projects with no or limited cultural component
- Projects do not have clear outputs or outcomes
- The group is not constituted as required by the grants criteria
- Projects which were of limited value to the residents of the City, or primarily benefited those out with the City
- The organisation has outstanding debt with Aberdeen City Council
- The group cannot meet FTPP (Following the Public Pound) guidance and/or has not submitted the required reports against previous grant applications
- No clear evidence of need and/or duplication of existing initiatives
- Projects which included unrealistic costs or which were either over ambitious or unachievable
- Projects with recurring costs which were not sustainable (ie, staffing)
- Funding requested to cover a shortfall in previous revenue without demonstrating any benefits.
- Evidence that the projects can be delivered without requiring additional financial support from Aberdeen City Council.
- Inadequate or no monitoring or evaluation plans.

Council officers from a variety of backgrounds and knowledge work together to assess the wider value to the cultural sector of each application. All organisations who have been rejected for funding are contacted with individual feedback and supported, where necessary, to resubmit.

Feedback and additional support

Where time allows, Aberdeen City Council officers will contact organisations on receipt of their applications to seek further clarification or further information when appropriate. This is not always possible when applications are received close to the deadline for Committee reports. Applicants are offered a telephone call or face to face meetings to help improve their applications: a pre-submission meeting with the Cultural Policy and Partnership Officer is a criteria requirement for an application for funding support over £10,000.

In addition, officers provide advice and support to arts organisations with applications to Awards for All, Creative Scotland and other small grant funding streams.

Appendix 2
2012/13 Cultural Grant Recommendations

Category A – Up to £1,000
Category B- £1,000 - £10,000
Category C -£10,000 +

Category	Applicant	Project	Grant Requested	Award
A	Aberdeen Chamber Music Club	Concert Series 2012/13	£900.00	£675.00
A	Aberdeen Folk Club	50th birthday of Abdn Folk Club	£1,000.00	£750.00
A	Fersands & Fountain Community Project	Youth Festival & Gala Day	£992.00	£0
A	Fleeman Productions	David Toulmin Plays	£765.00	£765.00
A	Gordon Highlanders Museum & Piping Arts Ltd	Pipe Academy	£1,000.00	£1,000.00(Cond)
A	Grampian Festivals	Annual Highland Dancing Championship	£900.00	£500.00
A	Kim Walker & Limousine Bull Artists' Collective	Project Doocot Exchange	£760.00	£0
A	Learig Orchestra	Open Orchestra	£999.00	£0
A	Lemon Tree Writers	Cultural Event & Production of Chapbooks	£806.70	£480.00
A	Morven Singers	Contributing to the musical life of the City of Aberdeen	£100.00	£0
A	SCDF	Scottish Country Dance Festival 2013	£999.00	£0
B	AB+ Steering Group	Establish new cultural organisation to co-ordinate, champion and advocate the arts in Aberdeen	£10,000.00	Ineligible
B	Aberdeen Action on Disability Ltd	Musicability	£3,535.00	£0
B	Abdn & N-E Scotland Music Festival Assoc.	Annual Competitive Music Festival	£2,500.00	£0

B	Aberdeen Choral Society	General planning & performance of 2 concerts	£2,000.00	£1,000.00
B	Aberdeen Hindu Association	Core activities & year round religious festivals	£5,955.00	Ineligible
B	Aberdeen Sinfonietta	Music Hall Concert Series 2012-12	£6,000.00	£3,000.00
B	Aberdeen Youth Choir	Ongoing work of Aberdeen Youth Choir	£3,400.00	£2,000.00 (Cond)
B	Aurora	International Folk Dance & Music Festival	£1,500.00	£0
B	BeCause	Festival of Handel culminating in the production of oratorio	£3,300.00	£0
B	Bethany Christian Trust in partnership with Peacock Visual Arts	Home	£2,582.00	£2,582.00
B	Cultural Enterprise Office	Delivery of Cultural Enterprise Office services	£4,721.00	£0
B	Film Fund Initiative	Film Programme	£2,000.00	£0
B	Gordon Highlanders Museum & Arts Development	Battalion Bling	£2,900.00	£0
B	Granite City Highland Dancing Association	Granite City Highland Dancing Festival	£1,700.00	£1,000.00
B	Interesting Music Promotions	Music Promotion	£5,000.00	£0
B	N-E Scotland Music School Ltd	Development grant to allow continuation of existing work	£7,500.00	£2,500.00 (Cond)
B	Nigerians in the Diaspora Organisation Europe	Bringing Nigeria to UK North	£4,000.00	Ineligible
B	NEAT	Present professional touring theatre in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus & Mora	£3,000.00	£1,500.00 (Cond)
B	Pushing Out the Boat	Issue 12	£1,200.00	£1,000.00 (Cond)
B	Scottish Ballet	2 programmes of ballet and associated educational activities	£5,000.00	£0
B	SCO	Series of Concerts	£2,100.00	£0
B	Scottish Community Drama Association	Annual Programme	£3,000.00	£1,000.00 (Def)

B	Scottish Ensemble	Aberdeen Concert Series, Year 5	£10,000.00	£10,000.00
B	Scottish Opera	Performance & education activity in Aberdeen	£5,000.00	£4,000.00 (Cond)
B	Torry Arts Forum	Torry Arts Community Programme	£9,100.00	£6,825.00
B	Woodside Writers	Writers Group Book Publication	£2,000.00	£0
C	Aberdeen Artists Society	Cultural growth & expansion of Aberdeen Artists Society	£15,000.00	£0
C	Aberdeen Arts Centre	Programme of participatory arts	£42,000.00	£42,000.00 (Cond)
C	Aberdeen International Youth Festival	The Port	£15,000.00	£3,760.00 (Cond)
C	Creative Cultures Scotland	Ongoing work	£15,000.00	£0
C	Jazz Scotland	Aberdeen Jazz Festival	£20,000.00	£11,250.00 (Cond)
C	Limousine Bull Artists Collective	Promote contemporary art in Aberdeen	£10,530.00	£0
C	Peacock Visual Arts	3 Projects: Global Reach Inc; Shale Stories; Animation Festival	£11,980.00	£11,980.00 (Cond)
C	SC&T	Core activities	£20,000.00	£10,000.00 (Cond)
C	Sound	Sound Festival 2012	£18,000.00	£10,000.00 (Cond)
C	Station House Media Unit University of Aberdeen	shmu SOUND	£16,000.00	£10,000.00 (Cond)
C		Flagship Programmes	£17,500.00	£7,000.00 (Cond)
C	Scottish Ballet	Dance Parallel	£16,907.00	£16,907.00
		total grant requested	£336,131.70	
		Total Recommended for Award		<u>£163,474.00</u>

Internal Grant Recommendations

Team	Project	Award
Aberdeen Art Gallery	House of Annie Lennox Exhibition	£10,000.00
Aberdeen Art Gallery	Lunchtime Concert Series	£8,000.00
City Moves Dance Space	Dance Live	£10,350.00
City Moves Dance Space	Step Forward	£3,600.00 (deficit)
City Moves Dance Space	Dance-A-Mazin	£0
Aberdeen City Libraries	Creative Writing Festival	£1,995.00
Arts Education	Arts Across Learning Festival	£13,000
Arts Development	100 Words	£4495.00
Arts Development	Faces of Political Heritage	£2,500.00
	Total	£53,940

Other Recommendations

Public Art Fund (inc community commissions)	£50,000
Cultural Support and Professional Development	£30,000
Access to Participation Scheme	£30,000
Aspire – new work/ showcases /events programme	£38,405