

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education, Culture and Sport
DATE	24 November 2009
DIRECTOR	Annette Bruton
TITLE OF REPORT	Cultural Grant Allocation
REPORT NUMBER	ECS/09/065

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents to elected members a request for grant funding for the Aberdeen Visual Arts Awards.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the committee:

- i) Approves £3,000 in cultural grant funding to the Aberdeen Visual Arts Awards.
- ii) Approve the allocation of up to £5000 towards a cultural funding week

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Following the approval of £101,004 in cultural grants by the Resources Management Committee on March 10th 2009 and £12,500 in additional grants on 29th July 2009 by the Urgent Business Committee, there is £8,924 remaining in the Cultural Grants budget for 09/10. A further grant of £3,000 to the Aberdeen Visual Arts Awards and £5000 to a cultural funding week would leave a remaining balance of £924.

Applicants for 09/10 grants were invited to be considered for grants of up to 50% of the costs of their projects, showing either match funding or an in-kind contribution. The Aberdeen Visual Arts Awards has secured 50% of the project funding from the Scottish Arts Council.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

There is a requirement for all successful applicants to illustrate how their projects connect to one or more of the local outcomes in the Single Outcome Agreement. The Cultural Forum for Aberdeen City leads on National Outcome 13: 'We take pride in a strong and inclusive national identity' with the local outcome: 'To maintain and develop arts and heritage activities and venues which have a positive impact on the social, economic and cultural development of the City'.

The project proposed also relates to local outcome 2, 'Aberdeen will have high quality employment opportunities for it's citizens' and local outcome 3 'Encourage and support people of all ages to take an active part in their own learning'.

The recommendations within this report will contribute to the following Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking commitments:

"Support arts venues to bring the best and most innovative performances to the city."

"Continue to support the best city festivals."

"Recognise the contribution of Sport, Culture and Arts to promoting the area as a tourist destination."

"Recognise the role of Sport and the Arts in tackling anti-social behaviour."

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, environmental or health and safety implications. The approval of this report will result in improved delivery of national and local Cultural objectives.

6. REPORT

The Aberdeen Visual Artists Awards Scheme is a partnership between the Scottish Arts Council and Aberdeen City Council. The Scheme was established in 2000 to support the work of outstanding Aberdeen-based artists by awarding grants towards the cost involved in researching and creating new work. It is hoped that the Scheme will encourage artists to stay in the city and that the existence of the Scheme will raise the profile of Aberdeen -based artists at a local, national and even international level.

Funding is allocated (in the form of grants) by the Council to successful applicants that satisfy the panels desire for new quality art work through an open application process. The Awards are open to Aberdeen-based artists of all ages, at any stage in their career, working in any visual media. One of the outcomes of the funding is that successful applicants have the opportunity to publicly exhibit their work and hence raise their profile and generate further opportunities.

While the Vibrant Aberdeen cultural strategy is in draft form it is evident from the work undertaken to date that opportunities to develop emerging talent and support for those wishing to have a career in the creative industry are lacking in the region. The draft strategy identifies the cultural contribution to the economy (ie creating jobs) as an area of focus. The opportunity provided through this Award is one of the ways in which this region can begin addressing this challenge.

Research into the cultural grants programme has shown signs of an increasing dependency on the programme amongst cultural groups and organisations. Following discussions with some groups it is clear that this reliance is often caused by a lack of knowledge on other potential funding streams. Many also

felt they lack the expertise to go through these often difficult application processes. In partnership with the Creative Cultures Scotland and the Cultural Enterprise Office, it is proposed that Aberdeen City Council deliver a funding week which will provide a range of information and practical advice on funding streams. The week is provisionally scheduled for February and will cover a range of funding streams to suit individuals and organisations from across all cultural sectors. The programme will consist of sessions based around providing information on various public and private funding sources, practical advice on application processes and raising awareness of support mechanisms. This will also be augmented by good practice case studies and networking opportunities.

Early indicative support in providing workshops has come from the big lottery, Scottish arts council and grantfinder. The Aberdeen City Council cultural grant programme for next year and the city wide cultural strategy will also be covered in depth. The core aim of this event is to equip cultural practitioners in the city with increased information on cultural funding streams and the skills and confidence to be successful. It is anticipated that this will attract increased funding to the city and reduce dependency on the cultural grants programme.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Grants to Cultural Organisations 2009/10 - Resources Management Committee
– 10/3/2009