

RESEARCH INTO SUPPORT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL ARTIST

FINAL REPORT

**TO THE ARTS COUNCIL/AN CHOMHAIRLE EALAÍON AND
THE ARTS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN IRELAND**

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PREFACE

This research was commissioned by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland in 1998 to provide information on the impact of both Councils' programmes of support for the individual artist. The research, its data and recommendations, formed the basis of a report by Professor Anthony Everitt, entitled *The Creative Imperative*, which was published by both Arts Councils in March 2000.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The study would not have been possible without the help and support of a large number of people. We would like to thank all the artists and resource organisation representatives who gave us their time in responding to our research. We would also like to thank the steering group from the two Arts Councils. This comprised Nick Livingston for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Tara Byrne, Mary Cloake, Phelim Donlon, Marian Flanagan, Richard Guiney, Dermot McLaughlin, June Tinsley, and Sue Leigh Doyle (an external research consultant) for the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon, and Professor Anthony Everitt, the Steering Group's independent Chairperson. In addition, we thank staff throughout the Arts Councils for responding to our requests for information and guidance.

Lastly, but not least, we would like to express our appreciation to our two Irish interviewers, who worked as part of our team: Jan Branch and Ruairí Ó Cuív.

Annabel Jackson Associates
December 1999

SUMMARY

Objectives

On December 21, 1998 Annabel Jackson Associates was appointed to carry out research into the impact of the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland programmes on the individual artist.

The objective of the research was to undertake a detailed appraisal of direct and indirect support for the creative and interpretative artist and to assess the impact of these supports. Direct support consists of grants in the form of bursaries, travel schemes, education or training awards, residencies, equipment or premises awards, or commissioning. Indirect support refers to shared space and equipment, information, advice and training, networking, collective marketing and exhibitions, documentation and archiving, advocacy, and other services provided by associations, studios, galleries, or other resource organisations.

The rationale for the research was two-fold:

- To assess the effect of the Councils' policies on the professional formation and career path of the individual artist.
- To assist the Councils in ascertaining the most appropriate models and mechanisms for supporting the artist.

The research methodology comprised desk research, analysis of grants, interviews with Arts Council staff and resource organisations, and a survey of 225 artists, 82 from Northern Ireland and 143 from the Republic.

Findings and Conclusions

The Arts Councils differ in the structure and scale of their programmes for support of the individual artist. Our information suggests that there were in the order of 2,350 applications and 1,654 awards between 1993 and 1999 for the Republic of Ireland. There were approximately 556 applications and 225 awards between 1995 and 1998 for Northern Ireland.

The average size of award for 1998 is £1,719 for the Republic and £993 for Northern Ireland. The average size of award is rising in the Republic and in Northern Ireland is only now recovering from an earlier dip.

Sums granted are lower than the amounts for which artists applied. On average, awards are likely to be cut to about 15% of their original application size in the Republic and 42% in Northern Ireland.

The main objective of the grant programmes was to fund artists to complete work and our research found that this objective was met. Over 80% of award winners said they undertook a piece of work as a direct result of their support.

The benefit of the support extends far beyond the direct financial effect. Even small sums are important in giving artists recognition and endorsement, which is reflected in their own confidence and status. A major perceived benefit of the support was to help

with recipients' artistic development. Grants are not generally judged to be large enough to affect artists' financial stability.

The application process is seen as simple and straightforward. Ninety five per cent of those in the Republic and 60% of artists interviewed in Northern Ireland report no problems with applying for grant support. Over 85% in each area felt that the application process was clear.

Artists would like changes to the decision-making process to make it faster and more transparent. In particular, they would like to understand why applications are rejected. Artists would like more direct contact with the Arts Councils.

Artists' income is low and unpredictable. The uncertainty of the amount is described as more important than its inadequacy. Based on figures for the Republic, the average gross income is around £12,000, with art expenses on average £5,000.

Resource organisations play an important role in supporting artists, revolving around a core function of providing information. The depth of support they can provide is heavily curtailed by under-funding.

Artists believe that direct grants are the best way of supporting artists.

Three per cent of artists work in the Irish language. These receive around 5% of grant funding.

Recommendations for The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

1. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider consolidating its programmes to reduce duplication. It could consider structuring programmes more by function (e.g. education, training, commissioning, residency). This will remove uncertainties about the boundaries of art forms, encourage work across art forms, and reduce confusion to the applicant. Success on this task could be measured in terms of the reduction in repeat applications, a problem that is currently resulting in duplication of work from artists and Arts Council officers.
2. We recommend clarifying the objectives of the awards to artists. Objectives should be stated precisely in terms of the effect that the money is expected to achieve. Exclusions should be clarified, for example, whether the grant money can be used to pay off debt.
3. Criteria and conditions of support programmes should be stated explicitly. Inconsistency between art forms should be removed where practical.
4. Marketing and publicity of grants should be strengthened and targeting increased. Clearly communicating the purpose of grants should help to raise the standard of application. Information to Irish artists currently living abroad should be improved.
5. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider means for increasing the total budget allocated to the individual artist. This will have a direct result in increasing the amount of work artists can produce.
6. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should review its current practice of awarding applicants less money than that for which they applied. This can undermine the original purpose of the application, and in a small number of instances is reported to have led to the artist going into debt.

7. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider the scope for extending the number of multi-annual grants. This would help address the main financial problem experienced by the artists interviewed – that of uncertainty of income. Funding work from production through to exhibition would also strengthen the link between support to the individual artist and public benefit.
8. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider increasing the average size of grants, so long as this is not at the expense of the number of people benefiting.
9. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider ways of leveraging financial support by linking the grant programmes to other support activities. This would be compatible with the role of the Arts Council as a development agency. For example, grants could be integrated with funded activities such as exhibitions, festivals, concert tours or with organisations such as artists’ studios or galleries. The aim would be to make the best of the limited budget, and to co-ordinate support so as to strengthen the infrastructure for artists.
10. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should review its current proposal to target mid-career and established artists. Interviewees placed a high priority on support to younger artists, or expressed the view that needs were spread throughout an artist’s career.
11. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should schedule a review of each grant programme every three to five years. This would prevent programmes rolling over without clear direction or need.
12. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider means for co-ordinating support across the two jurisdictions. Possibilities include consolidating resource organisations across the country, organising joint publicity, and linking more of the grant programmes.
13. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider means for speeding up decision making. Increasing delegated authority could be considered. With the normal checks and balances, this would provide a lean, accountable system. Clarification of objectives would allow policy decisions to be separated from administrative decisions: the former would remain with the Council or panels; the latter could be delegated.
14. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider increasing the number of grant deadlines so that artists can apply throughout the year. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider ways of adapting the application process to make it more appropriate for multimedia and new technology.
15. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should review its procedures in relation to applications from women. Our analysis suggests that while women have a roughly equal share of applications and support they apply for smaller grants than men on average.
16. Monitoring should be strengthened and formalised. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider a telephone survey of all grant recipients after their grant has been received to evaluate the application process and obtain feedback.

17. We recommend explicitly recognising the role of resource centres and artist organisations in supporting the individual artist. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider a clearer contract with resource centres and artist organisations stating what they are expected to deliver and the standards they are expected to reach.
18. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should produce an all-Ireland strategy for the resource centres and artist organisations, based on an examination of the pattern of support provided, gaps, appropriate development, and long-term resource issues. This strategy should consider how to extend support beyond the capital city where most organisations are located.
19. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should work with resource centres and artist organisations in advocacy for artists. The most important public policy issues mentioned in our work were taxation and social security – both a reflection of the low incomes of artists interviewed. Other issues mentioned were pensions, supply and financing of arts education, and the provision of business support for artists.
20. Consultation with artists, above that mentioned in Recommendation 16, should be maintained through large scale telephone surveys such as that carried out during our study.
21. Further research on support to the individual artist should include an examination of the following:
 22. The prevalence and implications of changes in art form boundaries.
 23. The determinants of artists' income.
 24. The impact of specific legal or regulatory changes on artists' income and working conditions.
 25. The character of artists not currently applying for support.

Recommendations for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland

1. We recommend clarifying the objectives of the awards to artists. Objectives should be stated precisely in terms of the effect that the money is expected to achieve. Exclusions should be clarified, for example, whether the grant money can be used to pay off debt.
2. Criteria and conditions of support programmes should be stated explicitly. Inconsistency between art forms should be removed where practical.
3. Marketing and publicity of grants should be strengthened and targeting increased. Clearly communicating the purpose of grants should help to raise the standard of application. Information to Irish artists currently living abroad should be improved.
4. The Arts Council should consider means for increasing the total budget allocated to the individual artist. This will have a direct result in increasing the amount of work artists can produce.
5. The Arts Council should review its current practice of awarding applicants less money than that for which they applied. This can undermine the original purpose

- of the application, and in a small number of instances is reported to have led to the artist going into debt.
6. The Arts Council should consider the scope for offering multi-annual grants. This would help address the main financial problem experienced by the artists interviewed – that of uncertainty of income. Funding work from production through to exhibition would also strengthen the link between support to the individual artist and public benefit.
 7. The Arts Council should consider ways of leveraging financial support by linking the grant programmes to other support activities. This would be compatible with the role of the Arts Council as a development agency. For example, grants could be integrated with funded activities such as exhibitions, festivals, concert tours or with organisations such as artists' studios or galleries. The aim would be to make the best of the limited budget, and to co-ordinate support so as to strengthen the infrastructure for artists.
 8. The Arts Council should schedule a review of each grant programme every three to five years. This would prevent programmes rolling over without clear direction or need.
 9. The Arts Council should consider means for co-ordinating support across the two jurisdictions. Possibilities include consolidating resource organisations across the country, organising joint publicity, and linking more of the grant programmes.
 10. The Arts Council should consider means for speeding up decision making. Increasing delegated authority could be considered. With the normal checks and balances, this would provide a lean, accountable system. Clarification of objectives would allow policy decisions to be separated from administrative decisions: the former would remain with the Council or panels; the latter could be delegated.
 11. The Arts Council should consider increasing the number of grant deadlines so that artists can apply throughout the year. The Arts Council should consider ways of adapting the application process to make it more appropriate for multimedia and new technology.
 12. The Arts Council should review its procedures in relation to applications from women. Our analysis suggests that men make more applications, for larger average amounts, and have a higher success rate.
 13. Monitoring should be strengthened and formalised. The Arts Council should consider a telephone survey of all grant recipients after their grant has been received to evaluate the application process and obtain feedback.
 14. We recommend explicitly recognising the role of resource centres and artists organisations in supporting the individual artist. The Arts Council should consider a clearer contract with resource centres and artists organisations stating what they are expected to deliver and the standards they are expected to reach.
 15. The Arts Council should produce an all-Ireland strategy for the resource centres and artist organisations, based on an examination of the pattern of support provided, gaps, appropriate development, and long-term resource issues. This strategy should consider how to extend support beyond the capital city where most organisations are located.

16. The Arts Council should work with resource centres and artist organisations in advocacy for artists. The most important public policy issues mentioned in our work were taxation and social security – both a reflection of the low incomes of artists interviewed. Other issues mentioned were pensions, supply and financing of arts education, and the provision of business support for artists.
17. Consultation with artists, above that mentioned in Recommendation 13, should be maintained through large scale telephone surveys such as that carried out during our study.
18. Further research on support to the individual artist should include an examination of the following:
 - The prevalence and implications of changes in art form boundaries.
 - The determinants of artists' income.
 - The impact of specific legal or regulatory changes on artists' income and working conditions.
 - The character of artists not currently applying for support.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

On December 21, 1998 Annabel Jackson Associates was appointed to carry out research into the impact of the Arts Councils' programmes on the individual artist.

The Brief

The stated rationale of the research was:

- To assess the effect of the Councils' policies on the professional formation and career path of the individual artist.
- To assist the Councils in ascertaining the most appropriate model and mechanisms for supporting the artist.

The objective was to undertake a detailed appraisal of direct and indirect support for the creative and interpretative artist and to assess the impact of these supports. Direct support consists of grants in the form of bursaries, travel schemes, education or training awards, residencies, equipment or premises awards, or commissioning. Indirect support refers to shared space and equipment, information, advice and training, networking, collective marketing and exhibitions, documentation and archiving, advocacy, and other services provided by associations, studios, galleries, or other resource organisations.

Other issues to be addressed in the review were:

- Artists' incomes.
- Career paths and barriers to entry.
- The impact of new technology.
- The legislative framework.
- Variation across the 32 counties.
- The role of resource organisations.

The review is intended to provide practical insights that will feed directly into programme planning and design.

Steering Group

The study had a steering group from the two Arts Councils. This comprised Nick Livingston for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Tara Byrne, Mary Cloake, Phelim Donlon, Marian Flanagan, Richard Guiney, Dermot McLaughlin, June Tinsley, and Sue Leigh Doyle (an external research consultant) for the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. The Steering Group had an independent Chairperson, Professor Anthony Everitt. It met five times during the study.

Methodology

A note of the issues considered in designing the review is given in Appendix One. Sampling for the artists' survey is described in Appendix Two. The main sources and methods of data collection were as follows.

Desk Research

We examined:

- Policy documents and discussion papers.
- Reviews carried out by the Arts Councils.
- Documentation for the grant programmes: publicity material, application forms, assessment guidelines, and client files.
- Research into the individual artist carried out in Ireland and abroad.

Analysis of Arts Council Grants

We collected, collated, cleaned and analysed data on grants to individual artists from the Arts Councils. The data related to the period 1993-98 (with some data for 1999) for the Republic and 1995-98 for Northern Ireland.

The analysis supported by programme data was as follows:

- Scale of awards.
- Size of individual awards.
- Repeat applications.
- Applicants working in the Irish language.
- Sex of applicant.
- Art discipline.
- Location.
- Comparison of Northern Ireland and the Republic

Interviews with Arts Council Staff and Resource organisations

We interviewed 25 Arts Council Staff and representatives of 22 resource organisations across the Republic and Northern Ireland. The purpose of the consultation was three-fold:

- To clarify the brief for the study.
- To describe and evaluate the performance of the artists support programmes of the Arts Councils.
- To obtain information on the needs of artists, the impact of Arts Council programmes, and potential improvements to the programmes.

The information sought in the interviews included:

- Objectives for supporting the individual artist, how these have changed through time, and how they should change.
- Details of specific programmes: date of establishment, status, eligibility criteria, perceived strengths and weaknesses.
- Potential to improve the programmes: a smaller number of larger grants; targeting more established artists; working in partnership with non-art agencies; scope for integration.
- Plans for new programmes.
- Needs of artists in their art form.
- Perceived impact of Arts Council programmes on the individual artist: confidence, credibility, work/commissions, financial stability, time to produce art, contacts, career development, artistic development.
- Views on Aosdána.
- Priority to different forms of support: direct to artist, indirect through resource centres and resource organisations, indirect through advocacy or tax incentives.
- How they would measure success.
- Expectations of our study.

These interviews illustrated perceptions of the programmes, as well as providing hypotheses for further exploration during the survey of artists.

Interviews with Artists

We interviewed 225 artists. Ten artists were interviewed face-to-face to pilot the questionnaire. 215 were interviewed over the telephone and these provided the respondent base from which we present our results. Out of the 215 artists, 77 had applied from Northern Ireland and 138 from the Republic. We interviewed people who had received grants (described as direct support), and those who had not received grant support but were referred to us from an arts organisation providing advice or assistance to artists (described as indirect support).

We had intended to interview 250 artists, 175 from the Republic (85 direct support; 60 indirect support, 30 rejected direct support), and 75 from Northern Ireland (30 direct support; 30 indirect or no support; 15 rejected direct support). The shortfall is explained entirely by our difficulty in finding artists who had not obtained support.

Interviewees were chosen to give a range of respondents in terms of these variables:

- Art form
- Age
- Sex
- Education
- Use of Irish language
- Location

- Type of programme

Our questionnaire sought information on:

- Number of grants received. The questionnaire covered the most recent grant.
- How they heard about the grants.
- Whether they completed a piece of work as a result of the support, and whether they would have been able to do this without the grant.
- Whether the grant gave them more time to spend on their art, and how much time this was.
- Other effects of the support: confidence, credibility, showcasing work, commissions, financial stability, contacts, career development.
- Whether the grant contributed to their artistic development, and if so, how.
- Whether the process of applying was clear; whether they received any assistance; how long it took them to fill in the application form.
- Whether the speed of the decision was satisfactory.
- Any other ways the application process should be changed.
- Views on Aosdána.
- Views on the relevant resource centre/association for their art form.
- The best way for the Arts Council to find out about the needs of artists.
- The most effective way for the Arts Council to support the individual artist.
- Whether they think it would be better to have a smaller number of larger grants.
- Whether there are particular categories of artists who deserve special support.
- At what stage support to artists is most effective.
- Their own career structure and barriers encountered.
- The main restrictions on the range and quality of their work.
- Their employment status and income.
- The language in which they work.
- Their age.
- Any disability.

Structure of the Final Report

Chapter Two gives basic facts on the portfolio of support to the individual artist. Chapter Three discusses policy issues around the portfolio of support. Chapters Four and Five present our survey findings, first for the Republic and then for Northern Ireland. Chapter Six presents conclusions and recommendations. A note explaining the issues considered in the design of the research methodology is given in Appendix One. The survey sampling process is explained in Appendix Two. Appendix Three contains the survey questionnaire. Appendix Four gives background information on each of the programmes in the support portfolio. Appendix Five explains the model of

public sector programmes referred to in Chapter Three. Appendix Six summarises the work of the resource organisations interviewed. Appendix Seven gives notes produced for us from the International Arts Bureau on the situation of artists in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland with regard to copyright, royalties, taxation and social security.

CHAPTER TWO: DESCRIPTION OF THE SUPPORT PORTFOLIO

Introduction

This chapter gives an outline of the Arts Councils' support portfolio to the individual artist. The first section describes direct support, grants or awards. Further information on the character, background, status, objectives and area of the grant programmes is given in Appendix Four. The second section summarises the activities of resource organisations providing services to artists. Additional information on these is given in Appendix Six. As well as this support delivered through resource organisations, the Arts Councils have a role in lobbying government to ensure that national policy is written with an awareness of possible impacts on the individual artist. Appendix Seven gives brief information on some of these other areas of interest to artists.

Direct Support

The Arts Councils together have a portfolio of support comprising 55 individual programmes including:

- Bursaries.
- Professional awards.
- Training awards.
- Education awards.
- Residencies.
- Travel awards.
- Equipment and premises awards.
- Commissioning.
- Aosdána.

Background

The start date of programmes varies widely. On the one hand, several programmes have been set up in the last year or so. This demonstrates the dynamism of the Arts Councils' activity and the way they are continually responding to need. On the other hand, some programmes are very old, in some cases over twenty years old.

Most programmes are ongoing. Both music and visual arts in the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon are considering consolidation of grants into a smaller number of categories. This change comes after a long period of time over which new programmes have been introduced without reviewing and discontinuing old programmes.

Objectives

Objectives are open-ended. In most cases, objectives are described in words that mean "to support the artist" (for example "to support people wishing to pursue careers as professional play directors"). In some cases, programme objectives state the area of activity for which the artist is supported ("to gain experience or carry out research", "for professional development," "to provide education," "to encourage

collaboration”). Less commonly, some programme objectives state which artists have priority for support.

In most cases objectives are not instrumental – they are process-oriented rather than impact-oriented. With the exception of commissioning, grants are not expected to produce particular effects. For instance, the programmes state that they are supporting professional development (or education, training etc.) but do not give higher level rationales: to raise the standard of art in Ireland; to allow artists who might otherwise have gone abroad to work in Ireland; to develop cross media etc. Support to the artist is assumed to be sufficiently justified in itself. In some of the programmes in the North wider objectives are given (for example “to support the welfare of the whole community”) but the link from these to the lower-level objectives (“to support artistic development of the artist”) is not explained.

Objectives are not strategic. In most cases, they are reducible to the needs of the individual. There is no stated relationship between grants. The whole is the sum of the parts.

Area

Out of the 55 programmes described, six are limited to Northern Ireland, ten were set up on an all-Ireland basis, and 38 are administered by the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. All the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon programmes are open to artists in the North. Even given the greater population of the Republic, this suggests a higher priority to the individual artist than in Northern Ireland and a greater level of fragmentation.

All of the programmes that cover Ireland equally involve some form of partnership outside the Arts Councils. This suggests that matched funding might be easier to raise by making explicit the possibility of operating across Ireland. There are an additional nine or so programmes which involve partners that do not span Ireland.

Character

Forty-three of the 55 programmes are structured by art form. Twelve span art forms, most of which are residencies. Dance, drama and film have two to five programmes, music has eleven and visual arts has sixteen. The apparent bias towards visual arts reflects the individual nature of this art form. Artists in group art forms such as dance, music and drama receive indirect support from resource organisations but also from theatres, orchestras and other Arts Council clients.

The average upper limit across all the programmes is £5,000. This is relatively low for a grant programme.

An analysis of applications confirms the impression that the programmes give out small amounts. The average given out is below £2,000 for both Arts Councils, with a small increase between 1996 and 1998.

Table 1: Average size of Arts Council awards in Northern Ireland and the Republic 1993-1998

	The Republic	Northern Ireland
1993	£1,971	Information not available
1994	£1,401	Information not available
1995	£981	£1,005
1996	£1,451	£846
1997	£1,630	£657
1998	£1,719	£993

In the period 1993-99 the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon gave out £2.55 million in 1,654 successful awards to support 1,005 artists. The average award was £1,554 but the distribution was heavily skewed towards smaller sums. Nearly 70% of all awards were under £1,500.

The database compiled for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland showed there were 556 applications across all programmes between 1995 and 1998, accounted for by about 425 individuals. The total value of applications to the programmes was just under £1 million, with nearly £190,000 being given in 225 awards. There was considerable variation in the success rate by different monetary value of applications, with larger applications tending to have less chance of winning support.

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland uses financial years; the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon uses calendar years. We have calculated figures from individual applications using calendar years. The information for Northern Ireland does not, therefore, match budget figures from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Application Deadlines

The majority of support programmes have one deadline per year. A couple have two or four deadlines. Five of the programmes – travel awards and residencies – operate on a rolling programme.

Funding

The pattern of demand varies across the portfolio, with some programmes heavily over-subscribed and some under-subscribed.

Our analysis of application data shows that the Arts Councils receive a large number of applications, 30% of which are not funded in the Republic, and 60% in Northern Ireland. Data on applications to the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon cover a longer period than the database for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and includes over four times as many cases.

Table 2: Number of applications made to the two Arts Councils

	Award	Reject	Total
The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon (1993-99)	1,654	696	2,350
The Arts Council of Northern Ireland (1995-98)	225	331	556

Source: GMS and ARTPAY data for the Republic.

Funding by Gender

Looking first at the Republic, the database shows that application between the sexes is very even in terms of numbers of artists and applications. The slight differences mean that men on average are awarded larger sums of money than women.

Women have a higher success rate than men. They account for 45% of rejected applications. The rejected applications by men are on average considerably larger than those of women. Women's share of the total value of rejected applications is much smaller than their share of the number of applications, being only 38%.

Table 3: Support by artist, by gender

	Artists	Applications and awards			Rejections*		
		Number of applications	Total value of awards	Average value of application	Number	Total value of rejections	Average value of rejection
Female	663	1,211	£1,297,283	£1,397	283	£1,121,890	£3,964
Male	636	1,140	£1,254,816	£1,570	340	£1,794,795	£5,278
Female share of total	51%	52%	51%		45%	38%	

*GMS only

Year by year, women have accounted for a declining proportion of applications and have received a declining share of awards. Women's falling shares of awards (and their higher success rates) seem to be accounted for by the smaller size of their applications. Women tend to have more awards between £500 and £1,000 with men having more over £2,500.

Turning to Northern Ireland, men make more applications for support than women and seek a relatively higher share of the support. The value of the average application made by men is £2,387 compared to the £1,840 average for women. Men also have a higher success rate than women. Their share of awards is larger than their share of applications.

Table 4: Share of support, by gender

	% of number of applications	% of value of applications	% of number of awards	% of value of awards
Male	52.9	59.0	53.3	60.1
Female	44.8	40.1	44.9	37.9

Evaluation

We asked Arts Council officers and resource organisations about the strengths and weaknesses of each individual programme. From these, patterns are detectable across the support portfolio. Both revolve around the issue of flexibility. On the one hand, flexibility, openness and benefit to the artist are given repeatedly as strengths of the different programmes. On the other hand, lack of strategic information on need; lack of criteria; inflated expectations from applicants; low quality of applications; overlap between programmes; lack of continuity or progression between programmes; difficulties in marketing the programmes; effort involved in handling small grants; and the low budgets relative to the aims, are given as weaknesses. The second are in part a reflection of the first.

This analysis of strengths and weaknesses applies most strongly to the Republic, where support to the individual artist is central. In Northern Ireland other categories of strengths and weaknesses recur, for instance, those about the benefit to the community, the advantages of partnership, and the ease or difficulty of administering the programmes.

Clarification of objectives would ease the process of marketing the grants, improve the management of expectations, increase the quality of applications, reduce the fallout rate and reduce the duplication between programmes. It is clear that this process of narrowing down programmes will be relatively difficult for the Arts Councils, because some artists will be excluded. Exclusion of specific people or circumstances is another common category of perceived weakness – this is to say, a task that the Arts Councils feel uncomfortable about.

Indirect Support

We interviewed representatives from 22 resource organisations that work specifically with artists. The activity of the resource organisations interviewed is very broad. We categorised work into six general areas:

1. Shared space and equipment, for example:

- Studio space.
- Shared computers, printers, scanners.
- Slide copiers, video cameras, editing suites.
- Internet access, website.
- Dark rooms.

2. Information, advice and training, for example:

- Support with filling in grant application forms.
- Advice on technical matters like tax or the law.
- Training in skills such as selling or presentation.
- A library with publications and unprinted reference material.
- Conferences, seminars, workshops.

3. Networking, for example:

- Databases of members.
- Directory of members.
- Social events.

4. Collective marketing and exhibitions, for example:

- Portfolio days, where artists meet curators or purchasers.
- Readings or other methods for bringing artists together with potential purchasers or audiences.
- Educational projects with schools.
- Magazines.
- Mail-outs to potential purchasers.
- Criticism and reviews are in this category, although they could be identified as a separate heading.

5. Documentation and archiving, for example:

- Slide libraries.
- Copies of music scores, CDs and other reference material.

6. Advocacy, for example:

- Work to encourage public interest in the art form.
- Trade union type activity.
- Lobbying for further funding to the art form.
- Lobbying government on specific issues such as tax.

More detailed examination of services suggests that information, advice and training are the core activities of most organisations. Shared space and equipment provides the rationale for a different group of organisations. Collective marketing, promotion and exhibitions represent another central area of work. Networking and advocacy, documentation and archiving are secondary activities arising out of the information function. Interviews suggest that the later two areas – documentation/archiving and advocacy are of increasing interest but resource organisations are unable to carry out the work they would like because of resource constraints. Resource constraints lead to a patchy pattern of delivery.

CHAPTER THREE: DISCUSSION OF POLICY ISSUES AROUND THE SUPPORT PORTFOLIO

Introduction

This chapter examines the importance of the individual artist and the current issues in supporting the individual artist, as identified from meetings with Arts Council staff and resource organisations.

Importance of Support to the Individual Artist

The individual artist lies at the centre of the work of the Arts Council of Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. The 1995-1997 Arts Plan (p. vi) emphasised that: “At the core of the arts in Ireland is the productive labour of Irish artists.” The first listed output of the Arts Plan (p. xi) was “increased awards for artists ensuring a steady delivery of new work and an appropriate support structure, with special provision for writers in the Irish language.” One of the seven Strategic Objectives of the Arts Plan was: “To improve the status of artists and arts workers. To foster a climate which encourages innovation.” The 1997 Annual Report (p.1) states that “Support of the individual arts practitioner is the cornerstone of the Council’s mission and the Council understands that it has a clear responsibility to foster those structures which assist and develop dialogue between artists, the arts and the communities from which they emerge.” In the second Art Plan, the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon confirms its commitment to “Improve the professional formation, practice and career development of artists.” (Strategy 1)¹

For the Arts Council of Northern Ireland support to the individual artist gains importance in part through contribution to wider policy aims. There are only ten grant support programmes, and these span art forms. The language of its plans and grant programmes is rooted in community benefit rather than support to the individual artist. For instance, a general condition of eligibility – variously phrased - is that the artist should “contribute regularly to the artistic activities of the community”. The mission statement expressed in “To the Millennium” is: “To develop the arts in Northern Ireland so that as many people as possible can enjoy as many forms of art as possible to as high a standard as possible.”

Scope for Strengthening the Support Portfolio

A Discussion Paper on Support for the Individual Artist produced by the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon in September 1998 raised the following questions:

- Should the Arts Council be providing training and education awards indefinitely?
- Is funding compatible with lifecycle and career paths?
- Is the Cnuas integrated with other support?
- What is the appropriate balance between direct support to the individual and grant aid to resource organisations?

¹ The Arts Plan 1999-2001 (1999) The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon, Dublin.

- How can the Arts Council influence the position of the artist in society generally e.g. as members of a build team?
- Are legislative or regulatory changes required?
- Can the Arts Council identify categories of artists with special needs and agree policies to meet their needs?
- What are the values which inform a programme of support for the artist? Is support to artists a route to public benefit or an end in itself?

The paper made the following recommendations:

- Introduce fewer, higher-value awards of greater duration linked to individual artists' development plans and referenced to Arts Council's own stated priorities and policies.
- Introduce clearer assessment procedures for all awards and involve international figures on panels.
- Develop a more sensitive approach to supporting the commissioning of new work, in collaboration with appropriate resource organisations.
- Consciously reward and promote resource organisations who help with exhibition/production.
- Develop residencies more effectively by clarifying the nature and purpose of each and ensuring terms and conditions are contractually agreed and upheld.
- Clarify training and education objectives, in discussion with artists' representative bodies and the Department of Education.
- Develop clearer public understanding of the role and function of Aosdána.
- Ensure awards mirror real needs and keep pace with developments in contemporary practice.
- Look at innovative ways, perhaps in partnership with high performing funded organisations, to enhance the career opportunities and status of individual artists.
- Review the operation of Artflight and make it two-way travel.
- Specify more clearly the purposes for which funding is provided to artists' resource centres and facilities providers. Establish clear evaluative criteria for funding decisions.

During our consultation with Arts Council staff and resource organisations we considered a shortlist of possible improvements, as a way of clarifying issues for the survey of artists.

Clarifying Objectives

The analysis in Chapter Two suggested that the grant programmes do not have precise objectives. This lack of precision seems to be partly intentional, because of a desire to ensure flexibility and responsiveness to the individual case. Especially in the Republic, support to the artist is a high priority in itself, and little further justification for funding is needed. The current form of objectives, without stated outcomes, makes

evaluation more difficult. For this reason, during our consultation with Arts Council staff and officers, we led a group to generate a more precise set of objectives. The resulting list greatly increases the clarity around the intentions for the programmes:

- Reward excellence.
- Allow artists to spend more time on art.
- Fund specific projects.
- Develop artistic potential of the artist.
- Move artists to the next stage in their career.
- Increase financial stability of the artist.
- Speed up the creation of innovative work.
- Enhance the status of the artist.
- Ensure cultural diversity in artists.
- Encourage community artists.
- Support experimentation.

On a more practical level, grant decisions by the Arts Councils are made according to:

- Artistic quality of the work.
- Appropriateness of the application to the programme.
- Need.
- The capacity and ability of the applicant to spend the money/deliver any work implied.
- Spin-off effect/impact of the money beyond the individual.

Clarifying objectives could have several benefits. It could improve effectiveness by highlighting the circumstances where grants are best deployed. It could generate deeper discussion about the aims and processes of the Arts Councils. Communication and transparency to the applicant could be improved. Consistency between objectives and aspects of processing such as conditions and speed of decision could be increased. Monitoring could be strengthened.

Concentrating Funding by Having a Smaller Number of Larger Awards

This issue was raised by the Discussion Paper on the Individual Artists but also by the evaluation of the first Art Plan by Indecon, who recommended that “Greater resources should be targeted on assisting established individual artists (whether working in Irish or English) who are capable of creating world class work, to realise their potential.” (p xxiii)

Our consultation found that both Arts Council staff and resource organisations were wary of a strategy of concentrating money on a smaller number of individuals. There was a concern that this would give too much weight to each decision. Some interviewees felt that art is an elitist, middle-class activity in Ireland and that concentrating funds would in practice mean focusing on recognised artists, which

could perpetuate this. There was also a concern that larger grants might increase the concentration on the urban areas at the expense of rural areas.

In Northern Ireland, where average grants are smaller, there was a greater feeling that amounts should be increased. Attempting to spread out the benefit has led to grants being scaled down to a level where they are sometimes too small to be effective.

Focusing on Emerging Rather Than Established Artists

Staff in the two Arts Councils and resource organisations gave reasons for supporting artists at all stages of their career but on balance gave more reasons for supporting the young:

- Need is greater earlier in the artist's career.
- Young artists need support to build up their confidence.
- Aosdána supports the more established artist.
- One interviewee thought that the Arts Council would have difficulty encouraging established artists to apply because they place a higher value on their time than entry-level artists and would not be willing to spend the time demanded to prepare an application.
- Linked to this, the small sums available are more applicable to young artists.
- Young artists cannot compete with those who are working full-time – the quality of their work will be compromised by lack of equipment, for example, poor framing for visual artists.
- Entry-level support is important because without it artists of potential might fail to make a career in the sector at all.
- It is important to fund entry level for art forms that are at an early stage of development in Ireland.
- The educational infrastructure is weak or missing for some of the art forms in Ireland.
- Students who win places at educational establishments should not then find that they cannot obtain the money to take up the place.
- Early to mid-career is important because artists need to build up a body of work.
- Prioritising entry level is compatible with the Government's priority to youth.

Arguments in support of more mature artists were:

- Several resource organisations in the visual arts thought that there were too many artists in their sector and that this was being encouraged by support at the entry level.
- Quality is easier to judge when an artist is older, and therefore money is better spent.
- Money can be used strategically, to help artists improve their skills, for instance to use new technology.

- It is the role of the Arts Councils to support artists. The Arts Councils cannot themselves make up for gaps in the education system. Lobbying the Education Department would be a more effective way of filling these gaps.

“You can’t apply a sticking plaster to the inadequacies of the education system.”

A number of people thought age was not relevant:

- Some art forms, such as visual arts or literature, do not have a discernible career path. Artists progress in cycles.
- There are needs at all levels. For example, writers often find they are forgotten after their first couple of novels.
- Funding should reflect a clear diagnosis of need rather than simplistic assumptions of stage.
- Support should be sustained throughout the career. The Arts Councils should not suddenly forget about people.

Increasing the Balance of Funding to Artists’ Resource Centres and Resource Organisations

Several resource organisations made a determined case that funding was more effectively channelled through them than given directly to artists:

- Aiming grants at individuals is not useful for art forms that are group activities. Several interviewees, especially those from music and dance, commented that individuals would not be able to bring together the different elements of a project.
- Related to this was the comment that organisations were more likely to have the resources (information, expertise, network of contacts) to help individuals to identify and then meet their needs. Groups have greater economies of scale, for instance in administration, and are therefore more effective at organising projects for individuals. Without a programme, structure, or guidance, some individuals will not develop on their own.
- Many interviewees emphasised the strong benefit to the artist from networking.
- Individual grants do not build an infrastructure – especially in Northern Ireland where infrastructure is often weak and grants are small.
- Money to groups is easier to control and less open to abuse.
- There is a limit to what the Arts Councils can do. They also have a role to empower artists. As a heavy-weight partner, they can add credibility and weight to the artist.

Notwithstanding these comments, which to some extent reflect the survival instincts of resource organisations, groups are aware that there are limitations to their role. They are concerned that money should not be swallowed up in administration, that it should filter down to the artist. There also seems to be a strong feeling that the resource organisations are not well placed to carry out advocacy and lobbying.

Increasing Partnership with Non-Arts Agencies

Partnership is often mentioned by government as a way of leveraging public money. Arts Council officers and resource organisations were cautiously optimistic about the scope for partnership. The Arts Councils have experienced problems in developing partnerships with other organisations such as local authorities because of a difference in objectives. Other government agencies are motivated by economic development, regeneration, or social objectives that can pull against artistic objectives. Partnerships with commercial organisations such as galleries might provide more positive experiences for the Arts Councils as these share artistic objectives. FÁS is a potential partner, given its existing support to arts organisations through funding placements.

Several interviewees gave examples of how the Arts Council could deepen its relationship with their organisation for the benefit of artists. Possible collaboration included marketing of grants, framing of eligibility criteria and conditions. These comments need to be seen in the context of organisations' desire to extend the activities and support of their own operations.

Tracking Performance Against Objectives

We asked resource organisations for their view of how to measure success in support to the individual artist. A variety of dimensions were suggested, spanning process and output elements. These can be classified into ten areas:

- Take up. Inclusion, accessibility of grants to working-class people. Proportion of Irish artists who receive support.
- Production of work. That something is produced and shown publicly.
- Quality measures of the work. Improvement in quality of work.
- Critical acclaim to work funded. Developing criticism. Exhibiting at places of status.
- Increase in artists who can survive financially.
- Increase in people engaging with the arts as viewers or purchasers. Quality of the experience. Increase in the number of performances from Irish playwrights/composers.
- Quality of the experience from the community's perspective. That they feel represented, that skills are transferred.
- Long-term sustainability of relationships e.g. where contacts have been made during the period of grant aid.
- Artists' perception of how they have been helped.
- Northern Ireland – whether artists stay in Northern Ireland.

That this list was obtained demonstrated that interviewees are relatively sympathetic to the idea that outputs and processes need to be measured in some way. Some of the dimensions would be difficult to specify and measure, but all reflect the need for performance indicators to be rooted in artistic objectives.

An Interpretation of the Support Portfolio: Client-led Programmes

The Arts Councils together provide a rich and highly-complex portfolio of grant support to the individual artist that has evolved over a number of years. Artists can enter the system at different stages in their career, for different purposes, with relatively few conditions compared to other public-sector funders. The downside of this flexibility is that the grant portfolio is split between a large number of individual programmes that suffer from overlap and lack of progression or continuity.

It is important to understand the reasons underlying the existing structure so that its benefits can be retained in any restructuring. At first appearance the support portfolio can appear unstrategic, fragmented and cumbersome. However, these are common features of what we describe as a “client-led” approach. This is a classification that arises from our Structural Model of Public Sector Programmes, which is presented in Appendix Five. Briefly, this model distinguishes between “client-led” and “policy-led” programmes. Client-led programmes are designed around the needs of the user. Where clients are diverse and their needs varied, client-led programmes respond through a proliferation of elements, or through great flexibility in order to allow responsiveness to individual need. At its most extreme, a client-led programme would provide a different response to each client. Policy-led programmes are designed around one or more strategic issues, for instance, social exclusion, poverty, or the environment. Funding to individuals is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. A large number of individuals are excluded from the programme because they are judged not to contribute to strategic objectives. Action is heavily targeted, and often based around short term projects that provide easily measured payoffs.

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon programmes are client-led because:

- Objectives describe support to the individual artist as an end in itself rather than a route to some further policy objective. This explains the apparent vagueness of objectives.
- Most programmes are named by the type of artist eligible, or by an activity such as travel or education that is easily understood, rather than by policy concerns.
- Because of this focus on different artists, there are a large number of small programmes.
- Conditions are relatively unrestrictive, and flexibility to the applicant is accented.
- The culture of the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon is to identify strongly with the individual artist. The existence of Aosdána is widely seen, and admired, as a demonstration of this commitment.

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland appears to operate a little further towards the policy side of the spectrum of the Structural Model.

The different priorities of the two Arts Councils have produced an inconsistency in funding. All of the grant programmes of the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon are available to artists in Northern Ireland. The smaller programme of Northern Ireland does not reciprocate. Furthermore, some of the resource organisations are funded to

support artists from Northern Ireland, but the demand exceeds the finance supplied. For example, The Contemporary Music Centre receives approximately 6% of its funding from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland but 12% of its work is with artists from Northern Ireland.

If the rationale for support to the individual artist is client-led, it follows that the first place to look for improvements is in strengthening benefit to the client. Our conversations with Arts Council officers and resource organisations suggested several possible ways of updating the programmes to reflect emerging arts practice:

- Programme classifications could span art form boundaries. In practice, some areas of artistic practice, such as popular music, appear to be excluded. Broader more generic programmes, like those employed in Northern Ireland, might be more flexible and easier to communicate.
- Programmes could be more closely designed around critical points in artistic development. For example, one of the music projects suggested a bursary scheme for recording.
- Application processes and criteria could be updated to reflect changes in arts practice, especially the use of new technology.
- Rather than responding to demand, the Arts Councils could target areas of particular need: for instance, artists who have particular financial difficulty such as poets, and visual artists who produce installations; marginal, unorthodox, or controversial art; cross art-form work; art using new technologies; and artists working in the Irish language.
- Integration across individual grants could be increased. Several possibilities were mentioned by interviewees: linking grants across the whole cycle of performance or production: from writing or creation to work through to production or exhibition; organising support in or through centres such as studio buildings (for visual arts or dance) or resource centres (for composers or writers); co-ordinating programmes across Northern Ireland and the Republic.

The survey of artists, reported in the next two chapters, provided information that helped to test these possibilities.

CHAPTER FOUR: SURVEY OF ARTISTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from our telephone survey of artists who had applied for support to the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon or received indirect support from resource organisations. Details of sampling procedures are provided in Appendix Two.

This chapter is the report of a survey. Opinions are recorded as they were expressed to us. Views described here are not necessarily those of the researchers.

Profile of the Respondents

We have categorised our respondents by the art forms given to us by the artists. These do not always equate to the classifications used by the Arts Council. Like the total applications made to the Arts Council, our sample is dominated by visual artists. Our sample approximately reproduces the structure of all applications across art forms, with greater representation of the smaller art forms. The classification does not reveal the degree of multimedia and multi-art form among the respondents, which is an increasing aspect of art in the Republic. Seven per cent of interviewees describe their work as cross art form but more commented on the restrictive nature of art form boundaries.

Table 5: Comparison of survey respondents with applicants by art form (%)

	Interview survey respondents	Applicant data base
Visual Art	38.2	37.9
Literature	18.4	13.2
Drama	15.4	8.4
Music	11.0	16.8
Film & video	9.6	8.5
Dance	5.1	5.9
Not stated/other	2.2	9.3
Total	100.0	100.0
Number of cases	138	2,350

Artists within visual arts tend to identify their specialism, such as painting, film or sculpture but are also likely to say that they work across media, that is across the visual arts media and other art forms.

Table 6: Artform of survey respondents

Arts discipline	Painter	Film	Sculptor	Photography	Writer	Drama	Music	Dance	Other	Total
Visual	28	13	11	6			1		16	75
Literature					22	3				25
Performing						12	5	6		23
Other/DK							1	1	13	15
Total	28	13	11	6	22	15	7	7	29	138

We had difficulty in finding artists who had not received grants, almost two-thirds of the respondents had received an award. A number of artists who were on our list of indirects were re-categorised as successes or rejects as the nature of their experience of the support system became clear during the interview. They had usually applied for support a long time ago or for minor awards not directly related to producing a piece of work. We felt that most should be analysed as having experience of applying to the Arts Council. This enabled us to interview more artists with experience of the support system than was originally intended.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents by art form and success in obtaining an award (%)

	Success	Reject	Indirect	Total
Visual	22.5	16.7	2.9	42.0
Literature	7.2	7.2	1.4	15.9
Drama	10.9	1.4	0.7	13.0
Music	9.4	0.7	0.0	10.1
Film	5.8	3.6	0.0	9.4
Dance	4.3	0.7	0.0	5.1
Multimedia	2.9	0.0	0.0	2.9
Other	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.4
Grand Total	64.5	30.4	5.1	100.0

Number of cases: 138

The Geography of Awards

Dublin dominates the applications. Fifty-six per cent of applications were made from Dublin. The second largest share was that of Cork, with 9%. After Cork, only Galway and Wicklow had more than 2%. Applications from Northern Ireland accounted for 3%, those from the rest of Britain accounting for 5% and those from elsewhere overseas just over 1%.

Experience of the Support Programmes

This is a group of respondents with considerable and often very recent experience of the support system. Over 60% of those who had received an award had received one in the last two years. More than half the successful recipients had received more than one award. Those who had received an award in the last two years had the greatest experience of multiple awards.

Table 8: Total number of awards respondents received in the last six years

Latest year of award	1	2	3	4	5	6+
1994	2	2				
1995	2	1		1	1	2
1996	4	4	4	1		1
1997	2	3	3	1		3
1998	12	8	8	3	2	4
1999	1	1		2		2
All	23	17	15	6	3	9

Number of cases: 86

The latest awards received by our respondents were mainly bursaries and travel or Artflight awards. These make up half the type of support received most recently by our respondents.

Table 9: Distribution of most recent award (%)

	% of occurrences
Bursaries	29.5
Art Flight/travel awards	20.0
Materials and equipment grant	10.5
Education, training and study awards	10.5
Drama awards	6.3
Film and video award	6.3
Artists in residence	5.3
Studio assistance	3.2
Other fellowships & awards	3.2
Arts management training award	2.1
Project grants	2.1
Commissions	1.1
Grand total	100.0

Number of cases: 86

We have summarised the reasons given for applying into eight broad categories. The three leading categories are directly related to the immediate or imminent production of art works. Nearly 60% of the respondents are in this category. Nearly 30% of the respondents said that they wanted the award to complete a piece of work. This ranged across art forms, from writing novels and poetry to completing a film or musical composition. A second important purpose was to fund further study. Nearly 30% of the respondents wanted the award to study under a particular teacher or with a particular group, such as the National Opera Company or would use the money to undertake further studies at special arts colleges.

Table 10: Reasons for applying (%)

Time to complete work	29.1
Equipment & materials	17.4
Research for art work/attend events	11.6
Study period with special artist/group	10.5
Travel for course	9.3
University/specialist arts college	9.3
Wider audiences/return for Irish event	7.0
Work abroad	5.8

Number of cases: 86

Over 90% of respondents found out about the grant programme by word of mouth or through prior contact with the Arts Council.

Table 11: Source of information about grants

	Number of mentions *
Word of mouth	42
Through Arts Council	42
Newspaper	2
Other	2
Arts organisation referral	2

*Some questions allowed artists to give more than one reply. The aggregate of these does not relate directly to the number of artists responding to these questions.

Number of cases: 86

Impact of Support

Over 83% of the respondents said they produced a piece of art as a direct result of the support they received and over 58% said that they would not have been able to complete the work without this support. This is consistent with the extent to which artists said they applied for support in order to work on an immediate or imminent project. Arts Council support made the production of art easier. It allowed the work to progress more quickly and in ways that improved its quality.

Table 12: Award recipients' completed work (%)

Produced piece of work	Able to complete work without Arts Council support			
	No	Yes	DK/NA	Total
Yes	51.0	26.0	6.3	83.3
No	8.3		8.3	16.7
Total	58.3	26.0	14.6	100.0

Number of cases: 86

For three-quarters of award winners the support allowed them to spend more time on their art. Most of these artists usually put at least half their time into their art. The

awards allow a considerable shift in this. The single clearest effect was in helping more people to dedicate all their time to their art.

Table 13: Effect of award on time spent on art

Time spend before award period	Time spent during award period				Total
	Over 25 to 50%	Over 50% to 75%	Over 75% to 95%	Over 95% to 100%	
Up to 25%	2	1	1	1	5
Over 25 to 50%	2	3	1	11	17
Over 50% to 75%		5		3	9
Over 75% to 95%			3		3
Over 95% to 100%				24	
Total	4	9	5	39	59

Number of cases: 86

The time that the award buys for these artists varied considerably. It is not just dependent on the size of the award. It is also a function of the normal commitment of the artist, the type of art and the purpose of the award. Some awards bought only a few weeks of time. Others bought particular periods such as college terms. Some bought up to two years, providing the vital extra income needed to bridge the gap in earnings. The most usual time periods mentioned are from three months to one year.

Beyond the purchase of time, the other effects of the awards were spread over the whole range of potential benefits that we asked about. The thrust of these is that the scale of the award was not in itself sufficient to make a single large impact on an artist's career but was influential enough to affect everything that then followed for that artist. The main effect of the award was to help the individual artist in their personal and artistic development. While this meant opening up new opportunities and building contacts, so providing a better base for future earnings, relatively few artists mentioned that the award had positive direct financial benefits. On the contrary, these are the things which artists are most likely to say were not achieved by the awards. A small number of artists used the money to pay off debts.

Table 14: Other effects of the support

	Number of mentions	
	Achieved this	Not achieved this
Increased confidence	72	8
Contribute to artistic development	70	17
Greater credibility	68	11
Take up opportunities	62	19
Showcase the work	55	24
More useful contacts	55	21
More financially stable	42	34
More commissions/sales	24	49
Pay off debts	10	59

Number of cases: 47

The award contributed to artistic development in a wide way, without any specific element of this standing out. Indeed, it is quite difficult to tie the effects down, given the range of awards and the freedom they gave the artists in how the money was used. A small number of artists commented that the sum they received was too small to have the effects they hoped for.

Table 15: Particular aspects of artistic development to which the award contributed

	Number of mentions
New approaches	37
New techniques	37
New audiences	33
New partners	30
New applications	28

Number of cases: 86

Most Valuable Effect of the Awards

Although money is vital to the artists we interviewed its essential role is to help artists develop and focus on their work without distraction and with the freedom to choose projects important to them, whether they are painters, writers or dancers. These are by far the two most frequently-mentioned effects. The importance of the money itself is diminished for some artists by not being large enough to support a long period of work. This helps to explain the value placed on the moral boost of recognition that comes from winning an award.

Table 16: Single most valuable effect of the support

	Number of mentions
Wider experience/developed as an artist	29
Dedicated time/able to complete project	23
Moral boost, greater status recognition	12
Artistic freedom	8
Financial stability	8
Able to promote/exhibit work	4
Vital start to get going	3
Access to training/education	3
Cash to live/pay debts	3
Motivation - to keep going	2
A commissioned work	1

Number of cases: 86

The Processes

Nearly 95% of the respondents said they did not have problems in applying for the award. Artflight in particular is praised for its speed and simplicity. The simplicity of the new application form was described as a great improvement over the old. The main problem in making an application was for work that crosses art form boundaries.

Thirty-nine per cent of applicants took under two days to complete the application, and 56% took from two days to seven days to complete the form. For the 5% where presentations or auditions were involved, application took two to three weeks. Fewer than 10% said they had any help in completing the application.

About 85% of the applicants said that they were clear on what the application process expected of them. The main complaint was in knowing how to apply the questions to particular art forms. Some also said that the process lacked follow-up, mainly in explaining why an application was rejected. Some disliked the ambiguity of the process, in that they felt they could not simply say that they needed time off their work to pursue their art.

For almost all the applicants the main reason they felt qualified for an award was experience and track record. Over 85% mentioned their standing in the arts world and the depth and quality of their work. Only two artists mentioned that the proposed work was itself novel and interesting. Others who mentioned the work rather than their own standing emphasised that the attraction to the Arts Council was that the project was already almost completed or that most of the alternative funding they needed was now in place.

The main weakness mentioned in the process was the speed of the decision and, as a feature of this, not being able to predict how long it would take. One-third of applicants said it was too slow for them while others commented that they knew that it had been too slow for others. The problems this caused were mainly in delays to work, usually through delays in being able to commit time or money for materials.

Changes to the Application Process

Approximately 65% of applicants want to see changes in the application process. The proportion of rejected applicants is higher here than successful award winners. The changes proposed cover a wide range of issues and suggest that artists would like to have a greater say in how the process operates or know that other artists are representing them in this.

The main issue is to do with faster and clearer processes and greater information about success and failure. Many of the rejected applicants say they were not told why they had failed. There is a wish for more information about the criteria and ground rules, and for this to be available to artists living abroad too.

An important change that would make the process simpler for the applicants would be to use personal interviews instead of, or as well as, application forms, and to use the resulting art as the basis for second-stage funding. Visual artists in particular say that their images speak for them better than a completed application form. Changes of this sort link to the wish to have the Arts Council more directly involved in the world of the artists. Two particular problems could be resolved by this:

- Inflexible art form boundaries and low priority to innovative arts.

- Low priority to artists outside Dublin. A number of artists felt that Dublin was a golden inner circle. Rural artists feel they are less known to the Arts Council and therefore have lower chances of successful applications.

Table 17: Ways to change the application process

	Number of mentions
Simplify, clarify criteria and streamline	26
More transparency and reasons for decisions	19
Different application process	10
More direct involvement by Arts Council	8
For innovative work	7
Larger sums/no reductions	5
More frequent deadlines	2

Number of cases: 90

There is a general desire for more information about how the processes work but there is naturally a greater concern among rejected applicants with the reasons for failure and with things they cannot see. Lack of feedback can lead rejected applicants to accuse the Arts Council of nepotism and to complain of an over-emphasis on visual arts and, within this, on painting and sculpture.

We asked a specific question about the effect of having a limited number of deadlines. About half the survey feel that the system would be better with more frequent times when applications could be made.

Applicants were also asked whether they would support a change to a smaller number of larger grants rather than the present allocation. Sixty per cent were opposed, compared to 16% of applicants in favour. Respondents were against anything that would reduce the number of grants.

The Resource Centres and Arts Associations

Cnuas and Aosdána

Only four of our 138 respondents received the Cnuas. Indeed, 27% of respondents said they had not heard of Aosdána.

“Aosdána is incredibly radical in its intent, if not always in its execution.”

Of those who knew of Aosdána nearly two-thirds thought it a good idea and admirable in principle. At the practical level, it is seen as enabling artists to continue in their work and (as a vital additional element to that) to continue to live in Ireland. The Cnuas is seen as valuable recognition – from fellow artists as well as the community as a whole. Overall it was seen to benefit arts in the whole country by bringing continuity and stability.

“Aosdána is perhaps one of the most democratic organisations in the world.”

Sixty of the one hundred interviewees who were familiar with Aosdána expressed concerns about it. The main comments were that it could be perceived to be elitist, inflexible and conservative. There was a desire that it should be more open to the younger and innovative artists, rewarding current excellence rather than being a “pension scheme” for the long-established. A number of ways to bring changes were suggested, including providing more information on the system, making elections more open and membership less “political”, and putting limits on the period of the award.

Support and Professional Organisations

Two-thirds of the respondents belong to an association or resource organisations. Relatively more rejected applicants than successful ones belong to an association.

Table 18: Membership of associations or resource organisations

Award status	Not member	Member	Total
Successful applicant	34	52	86
Rejected applicant	12	30	42
Indirectly supported		10	10
Total	46	92	138

Number of cases: 138

Most of these artists obtain a mix of benefits from their membership of resource organisations. Eighty per cent of responses are about information such as newsletters and periodic bulletins. Contacts are also a major benefit from resource organisations. They are seen as supportive for artists, especially when starting out or moving abroad. They provide good sources of technical as well as moral support. Direct support such as helping the artist promote their art, or bringing in work, are less common.

Table 17: Benefits from resource organisations

	Number of mentions
Useful information	80
Source of contacts	72
Help promote art	42
Save money	35
Bring in work	21

Number of cases: 138

“We suffer from peripherality. The Arts Council don’t have enough people on the ground. Without the AAI bulletin we would be wholly out of touch.”

The main weaknesses mentioned are related to the limited resource-base of the resource organisations. They are perceived as being under-staffed and under-funded, and therefore unable to offer concrete help or to be pro-active rather than reactive.

Overall, two-thirds of the respondents do not think their resource organisations could provide them with more help, given the current limits on resources. The main support artists want is for their associations to lobby for their art more strongly.

Some of the more critical comments suggest that the Arts Council should look closely at some of the resource organisations it funds to ensure that they are providing the support they claim to.

The Needs and Priorities of Artists

Information on the Needs of Artists

There is an overwhelming view that the best way for the Arts Council to find out about the needs of individual artists is to talk directly to them. Interestingly, artists think that the information currently available to the Arts Council on applications is a better source than their own associations and support agencies. This is the case even for indirects.

Table 19: How best for Arts Council to find out needs of individual artists

	Number of mentions			
	Award	Indirect	Reject	Total
Direct survey of artists	79	10	40	129
Information from grant applications	27	2	8	37
Through associations	14	3	9	26
Other	9	3	7	19

Number of cases: 138 (interviewees were allowed multiple responses)

Needs and Priorities

There is a strong preference in our survey for the Arts Council to provide individual grants rather than support artists by other means. This preference is clear whether applicants were successful or not.

Table 20: Most effective way for Arts Council to support individual artists

	Number of mentions			
	Award	Indirect	Reject	Total
Direct grants	77	9	40	126
Through resource organisations	46	5	28	79
Lobbying government	48	4	25	77
Changing public perceptions	35	5	20	60
Other	12	7		19

Number of cases: 138

About half the respondents feel that no particular categories of artists deserve special support. Rejects are more likely to take the view that there are such categories.

Although art forms are mentioned, most of the categories thought to deserve special support run across art forms: young and newly-started artists, the poor and those in sectors for which there is little support or poor facilities in Ireland.

This is borne out by views on which stages are thought to be best for delivering support. Most of the respondents thinks support should be given to artists at all stages of their careers but with the main emphasis on those starting out. The means of delivering support is perhaps as important in its effect as the support itself.

Table 21: Stages when support is most effective

	Number of mentions			
	Award winner	Rejected	Indirect	Total
Training/starting out	83	41	9	133
Mid-career	46	26	8	80
Mature career	36	20	6	62

Number of cases: 138

A number of sensitive issues overlap here and a careful balance must be struck. We were told, on the one hand, that many artists need money after training to get established or they will give up but, on the other hand, artists often flounder in mid-career and need support. This mid-career crisis may be especially true for those who feel themselves on the fringe of their art. The perception of our respondents is that grants tend to go to established artists. This is contrasted with, for example, the experience in Wales, where awards are given to new writers.

Career Development

These views and experiences come mainly from artists in mid-career and, to a lesser extent, from artists starting out. Very few artists in our sample describe themselves as at a mature stage.

Table 22: Career stage

	Number of mentions			
	Award	Indirect	Reject	Total
Training/starting out	29	1	15	45
Mid-career	53	28	7	88
Mature career	5	4	2	11
On pause/over	2			2

Number of cases: 138

This reflects the age of our artists. Nearly 40% were aged between 25 and 35 years old. Twice as many were under 25 years old than were over 50.

Table 23: Age distribution of respondents (%)

Up to 25 years old	10.2
Over 25, up to 35 years old	38.8
Over 35, up to 50 years old	41.0
Over 50, up to 65 years old	4.3
Over 65 years old	1.4
DK	4.3

Number of cases: 138

Just over 10% of the respondents said that they spoke Irish but only one-third of these said that they worked in Irish. Most of these worked only occasionally in Irish and then often as an adjunct to their own art form, for example, writing a translation, making visuals for poets writing in Irish.

Most artists in our sample came to art through an art education although a substantial number were self taught. Overall, relatively few have come from another career but these are a large proportion of the rejects in our sample.

Table 24: Route to art

	Number of mentions			
	Award	Indirect	Reject	Total
Art education	69	5	29	103
Self taught	28	4	13	45
A late art career	6	3	8	17
An early art career	1			1

Number of cases: 138

Two-thirds of the respondents say they have had barriers to their career development. A common source of concern is that education does not equip artists for the jobs available.

Table 25: Barriers to career development

	Number of mentions			
	Award winner	Indirect	Reject	Total
Yes	53	7	28	88
No	32	2	14	48
NA	1	1		2
All	86	10	42	138

Number of cases: 138

Artists were asked about problems that restrict the range and quality of their work. The most commonly reported barriers are directly due to financial problems but most of the others also have financial implications.

Some of the less frequently mentioned barriers were:

- Feeling that their working-class backgrounds and education have been against them. This touches on the view that the culture of the Arts Council is elitist.
- Geographical isolation. Artists outside of Dublin, even those in Cork, feel that they suffer from not being in Dublin.
- Perception that there is an anti-arts culture in the Republic of Ireland.

The main issue for these artists is the problem of having to work outside their art to make a living. These artists continue to face uncertainties over income and inadequate incomes. Nearly a quarter of the respondents has to work outside the arts to get by.

Table 26: Problems that restrict the range and quality of work: financial

	Number of mentions
Work in non-arts	81
Uncertain income	66
Inadequate income	61
Equipment	42

Number of cases: 138

“If you really concentrate on your career you have to sacrifice everything for your art.”

The lack of promotional opportunities is mentioned much more frequently than any other factor. It echoes the less-mentioned factors of lack of demand for their work and public attitudes to artists, which are to an extent also subsumed under this major heading. A number of artists mentioning this suggested that the Arts Council organises exhibitions itself, both as a way of supporting art and to raise its own profile.

“You have to promote yourself in Ireland.”

The other major restriction on the range and quality of work is simply the lack of dedicated time for art, a factor closely related to the finances of the artist.

Given the number of visual artists in the sample, we would expect to see many mentions of the lack of studio space as a restriction on the range and quality of artistic work. However, elsewhere we can see how a number of smaller problems impinge on particular groups of artists. Women, for example, are limited by childcare and family duties and sex discrimination. New artists and those seeking to be innovative are constrained by the education available. New artists and the innovative are also constrained by the priority given to known artists over the unknown. Many of these factors combine to put particular barriers in the way of artists from poor families and outside Dublin.

Table 27: Problems which restrict the range and quality of work: non financial

	Number of mentions	% from females
Lack of promotional opportunities in Ireland	51	49
Lack of time to do the work well	42	48
Lack of access to studio space	34	53
Lack of promotional opportunities abroad	28	46
Difficulties for unknown artists	16	31
Difficulty in accessing new technology	15	40
Childcare and domestic duties	15	47
Public attitudes to artists in Ireland	14	43
Lack of demand for work	13	38
Lack of the right course in Ireland	12	58
Lack of training	9	67
Sex discrimination	8	88
Lack of trained teachers/directors	7	57
Problems due to age	6	50
Other	14	43

Number of cases: 138

Examining these restrictions by gender shows that the one that women raise most as affecting them is sex discrimination, although women also feel relatively more restricted by issues around education than do men. This may be put into perspective by the low score which women gave to experiencing difficulties when not yet well known or the lack of demand for their work. These are problems that come later in the process of working as an artist.

Income and Employment of Artists

The employment status of artists in our survey is complicated. The norm here is for artists to combine more than one of the employment possibilities which we listed for them, namely: self-employment, full or part-time employment, unemployment, training or retirement, and for them to mix work in their art with work in arts-related fields or non-arts. This leads to a complex pattern of artistic and economic activity:

- More than half the respondents give their main employment status as self-employed artists although a quarter of these also work full or part-time or are registered unemployed.
- About 30% of the respondents are in full or part-time employment. The details given to us show that nearly 80% of these are in jobs related to the arts. Twenty per cent of these part timers are registered unemployed.
- Nearly 11% of the respondents are students, although some of these are also registered unemployed.
- Five per cent of the respondents give unemployment as their main status although, as we have seen, a third of these also consider themselves self

employed artists and an additional 3% are in part time employment while also being registered unemployed.

Table 28: Employment status

Main employment category	Secondary employment category					All
	Self-employ	Fl/time	Pt/time	Unemploy	Other	
Self-employed	41.6	5.8	4.4	1.5		53.3
Part-time employment	1.5		9.5	2.9	1.5	15.3
Full-time employment		13.9	0.7			14.6
Student				1.5	9.5	10.9
Unemployed			2.9	2.2		5.1
Retired					0.7	0.7
All	43.1	19.7	17.5	8.0	11.7	100.0

Number of cases: 138

This complexity of employment status reflects the problems artists have in generating sufficient income from their art or from any single source of earnings. This complexity adds to the financial uncertainty artists already have, and can make it difficult for any association or conventional business support agency to offer them particular advice.

“I would like the Arts Council to help develop an artists’ self-employment scheme.”

Income by Main Employment Type

The overall incomes of our artists change over time, as do the shares to the different employment categories, reflecting the changing employment status of the artists in our sample over time. We have used figures for the last five years to look at the main features of change. About 70% of the respondents was able to provide us with detailed income data for the most recent of the last five years and about 25% for the further-off years of the mid 1990s. We obtained details on four sources of income: Arts Council grants, other grants, sales of art and earnings from non-art. The actual figures and trends that we can calculate from the data may not be exact but the orders of magnitude and directions should be valid.

Individual Incomes

In 1998, the most recent year, the overall average income for our respondents was around £12,000. This is an increase of 25% since 1995. The range is considerable and very skewed. For example, only 8% of the artists who gave a figure earned more than £30,000 but one of these earned in excess of £150,000. By contrast, half the respondents were living on a total income of £10,000 or less in 1998.

There is a wide range of earnings in our sample. The main element is the income artists make from their art. The highest annual income from art in our sample is £50,000 compared to the highest non-art element of £9,000. The averages are

considerably lower than this. More than half our respondents had an arts income of £5,000 to £10,000 in 1998 and the average overall was between £11,000 and £12,000 a year. The average income from non art was around £4,000 in 1998.

Earnings from the sale of art can be one of the main elements of income for our respondents but it is also the element most liable to fluctuate. The swings in this can be enormous. One of the most financially successful of those we interviewed went from arts earnings of around £4,000 a year to £65,000 in 1998. One artist who earned a total of £20,000 in 1998, when his art element was around £5,000, had received £40,000 from art sales two year earlier in 1995. These, of course, are among some of the more successful in our sample. More typical is a change in art income from £2,000 a year to £8,000 or from £1,000 to nothing.

Fluctuation is the norm. Only 18% of our artists had the same income in 1998 as they had in 1996. Total income had fallen for 22% of the respondents and risen for 70%. Large variations from year to year are more common than a steady pattern. One-third of those whose income had fallen now had less than half the annual income they had in 1996. Nearly 10% of those whose income had risen now received more than ten times what they earned in 1996. Large relative changes do not imply that an artist has ever had large earnings. More usually, the base of the change is very low.

Such huge fluctuations make financial planning hard. They involve whole shifts in the different elements that make up an artist's income, so that in some years they earn nothing from their art, in other years they receive no grants. The main certainty for most artists is that, whatever the fluctuations, their overall income will still be very low. The art sales elements shows that the art of many of those we interviewed can command high prices yet the average income of around £12,000 is from a sample of mainly experienced artists, well into mid career, with the family responsibilities to be expected of people in their thirties and forties, and typically receiving 15 - 20% of their income as grants.

The average amount spent as expenses on art for our sample is around £5,000. This is a substantial figure relative to the earnings, and again the distribution is highly skewed. A more telling figure than this is that 45% of the respondents could not give a figure for their expenses but simply say that all earnings from their art go back into it.

Shares in Sources of Income

There is remarkable stability in the distribution of income across the different employment categories. The main category for the artists in our sample remains self-employment, although this has been in relative decline, falling from around 60% five years ago to 53% now. The main change has come about as artists earn a higher proportion of their total income from full time employment. This, as we have mentioned, is mainly in arts-related work. The share of income coming from unemployment benefit has fallen over time, from 4.3% to 2.5% of total income.

Table 29: Annual shares of total artist income by employment status over time

Employment status	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
Self-employed	52.8	53.0	57.0	60.2	60.3
Full-time employment	26.4	24.7	22.3	17.3	13.9
Part-time employment	12.2	14.8	11.3	11.1	12.4
Unemployed	2.5	2.3	2.8	3.5	4.3
Retired/other	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.6	6.6
Student	2.6	2.3	3.1	4.2	2.5

Number of cases: 97

Over the last five years the main source of income for our sample has been other than the sales from art. This, however, has fallen considerably from nearly 70% of all income to 45%. This has been a consistent trend over the last three years. The main substitute for non-art income has been income from the sale of art. This has increased as a share of total income from 27% to 37% in the last three years. The income from Arts Council grants has remained fairly steady at a share of 10% to 12% in the last three years.

Table 30: Shares of income by source over time (%)

	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
Non-art	45	49	55	66	68
From art	36	29	27	22	21
Arts Council support	11	9	11	9	8
Other grants	6	11	5	1	1
All	100	100	100	100	100

Number of cases: 97

About 30% of the respondents said they could not give actual income figures or that their income fluctuated too much to be estimated. An annual income is difficult to calculate for those in irregular part-time jobs or receiving benefits, both of which are typical of our sample. About 15% of our respondents were supported by their partner's earnings. The typical household incomes mentioned by those living with a partner were around £30,000 to £32,000 in 1998. This puts into context the income our artists make from their art and non-art, which is typically less than half this.

Comparison Between Direct and Indirect Support

Information is tentative because only 8 indirects give income data compared to 114 others. Over the whole sample the difference between the average income of award winners and those who were rejected is roughly the £2,500 of the average Arts Council award.

Table 31: Average income 1998 (IR £)

Award status	

Indirect	£11,913
Reject	£9,386
Success	£14,911

Number of cases: 122

Average income varies considerably across the sample. The greatest range is for those who were successful in winning an award. This is the only group with incomes over £40,000 in 1998. Over 30% of applicants in the sample earned less than £5,000 during 1998 and nearly 55% of the whole sample earned less than £10,000.

Table 32: Average income 1998 by application outcome

Income band	Success	Reject	Indirect
<=£1000	4	1	1
£1001<=£2500	5	3	
£2501<=5000	13	10	1
£5001<=£10000	20	8	1
£10001<=£15000	14	7	2
£15001<=£20000	6	6	2
£20001<=£30000	10	2	
£30001<=£70,000	3		1
>£100,000	2		

Shortfall in Awards

Overall, the value of the awards made to our sample was 49% of the amount applied for. About 80% of all applications were reduced. The degree of reduction varied by size of original application with smaller applications having the highest survival rate overall. Shortfalls are spread across the whole range of awards, so that an application for £800 may result in an award for £250 or an application for £12,000 end as an award for £3,000.

Table 33: Shortfall by size of original application

Size band	Average grant as % of application
Up to £500	78.9
Over £500 up to £1,000	66.9
Over £1,000 up to £2,000	81.8
Over £2,000 up to £3,000	75.0
Over £3,000 up to £5,000	65.4
Over £5,000	40.5
All	49.0

Number of cases: 86

This has added an extra degree of uncertainty to the awards process. These are large reductions in the amounts artists have said they need for their project. The consequences can be severe.

“People need to apply for double what they want because the Arts Council always cuts the amount in half. This can ruin a project.”

It appears that artists have adopted at least two strategies to deal with this:

- They put in more than one application for different schemes at around the same time.
- They apply for more money than they need or expect to get.

Conclusions

The system of support has been instrumental in delivering art. It has done this with a relatively simple and clear application procedure. Artists are less happy about feedback during their application and the transparency of the decision-making process. Artists see this as unwillingness to get directly involved on the part of the Arts Council. Applicants want to know why they were unsuccessful, so that they can improve their chances when re-applying. A successful application is worth more than money to the award winner, important though this is. Arts Council endorsement provides vital recognition and moral support.

The Arts Council is regarded with a degree of affection and respect. In part this is due to its care for the artists.

“The Arts Council does a good job. They acknowledge receipt of the stuff you send and return it.”

The Arts Council could use its standing to develop its future role and operations. Artists are very willing to have more direct contact with the Arts Council and our telephone survey has demonstrated that this is an effective form of two-way communication. The Arts Councils have much to gain from this in the future, in terms of more detailed understanding of the changing nature of the arts in Ireland, the needs of artists, its role in supporting them, and greater respect from the whole arts community. Respondents would like more lobbying for arts funding in the future, and see this as better done by the Arts Council than the individual support agencies.

Artists’ associations and organisations play a role in supporting about two-thirds of the artists we interviewed but there is perception that under-resourcing restricts what they can deliver. There is a clear gap in delivering support for self-employment and business skills. Nor do artists see Arts Council canvassing of the arts associations as a substitute for greater Arts Council contact with the artists themselves.

CHAPTER FIVE: SURVEY OF ARTISTS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from our survey of artists who had applied for support to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland or received indirect support from resource organisations.

This chapter is the report of a survey. Opinions are recorded as they were expressed to us. Views described here are not necessarily those of the researchers.

Profile of the Respondents

Art form headings reflect the departments of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. The artists used narrower headings when describing their work.

Table 34: Comparison of survey respondents with applicants by art form (%)

	Interview survey	Applicant data base
Visual Art	59.2	68.5
Performing	14.3	12.2
Literature	14.3	9.5
Music	4.1	4.0
Not stated/other	8.1	5.8
Total	100.0	100.0
Number of cases	77	556

The main effect of widening the range of arts through the survey is to include more creative artists and those in traditional arts and dance. Five per cent of interviewees say they are working across art forms. Over half of these are working in multimedia, while almost all the rest are connected to visual arts. Two are in performing arts. Many artists have a complicated arts profile and make the general point that art form definitions no longer capture the nature of art.

Film was only funded for a short time by the Arts Council and since 1996 has been funded directly through the Departments of Education and Economic Development. As a result, we have no interviews with film-makers in Northern Ireland but we do have interviews with photographers and those who practice and write about photography and film making.

Table 35: Distribution of respondents by art form and success in obtaining an award (%)

	Direct support	Indirect support	Rejected
% by outcome of application	44.2	36.4	19.5
Outcome by arts discipline			
Visual arts	58.8	17.9	60.0
Performing	17.6	35.7	6.7
Literature	14.7	10.7	13.3
Creative art	2.9	10.7	6.7
Music	2.9	10.7	6.7
Traditional Arts	0.0	7.1	6.7
Dance	0.0	3.6	0.0
Non-art	2.9	3.6	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Categories are those given by the artist interviewed and therefore there is overlap between headings.

Number of cases: 77

Geography of Awards

Across the counties 61% of the 34 successful applications came from Antrim and about 20% from Down. Overall, 56% came from Belfast. The next largest places were Bangor and Derry with about 5% of applications each. About 5% of awards were made to artists with addresses given as overseas. Most of these are in England.

Experience of the Support Programmes

Over half of the artists who had applied for support had made more than one application. Many of the indirect respondents had knowledge of the award system gained from working with groups who had applied for funding. This is, then, a population with considerable, recent experience on which to draw. There were a mix of reasons why indirect artists had not applied: not feeling eligible, being put off when they contacted the Arts Council, and their own inertia.

Successful applicants learnt of the support system through general awareness, from personal contacts and newspapers, rather than any specialist, arts-related source of information.

Table 36: Source of information about grants

	Number of mentions*
Word of mouth	17
Newspaper	10
Through Arts Council	5
Other	3
Arts organisation referral	2

*Some questions allowed artists to give more than one reply. The aggregate of these does not relate directly to the number of artists responding to these questions.

Number of cases: 49

Our survey covers several categories of support. Most awards were for materials and equipment. The second tier of bursaries and professional development awards runs at about half this level. The proportion of Artflight awards understates the scale of travel awards, since several of the other categories also involved overseas travel.

Table 37: Nature of awards given to respondents (%)

Nature of Award	%
Equipment and materials	31
Bursary	20
Professional development	15
Training	8
General	6
Artflight	3
Residency	3
Other/not specified	15
Total	100

Number of cases: 34

The norm is for the award to have funded a particular piece of work. Nearly 80% of award winners said they undertook a piece of work as a direct result of their support. For about half these artists the work is still in progress or is part of a larger project of several stages. Many also received or are receiving support towards these works from other means. In some cases artists needed to apply to the Arts Council for a second time in order to continue a piece of work, having misjudged the scale of their work or having developed the original into a larger piece. Some of this support was not aimed at a piece of work itself but at study, conferences and exhibitions. Some of these cases, too, resulted in finished art work.

Impact of Support

The figures show relatively high additionality. Nearly 43% of those who undertook a piece of work as a result of their Arts Council support reported that they could not have completed it without their grant, compared to 31% who could. The awards allowed artists to concentrate on their art. They could complete the work more quickly, with better methods or to a larger scale. Of those who said they could have completed the work without their Arts Council award, half said that the award made their work easier. Several said they would not have started the project without the support.

Table 38: Award recipients' completed work (%)

Produced piece of work	Able to complete work without Arts Council support			Total
	No	Yes	DK/NA	
Yes	31.4	42.9	5.7	80.0
No	14.3		5.8	20.0
Total	45.7	42.9	11.4	100.0

Number of cases: 34

The extent to which Arts Council support allows artists to spend more time on their art and so complete a particular piece relates to the size of award. In aggregate, the 25% of applicants who said that the award gave them more time to spend on their art received about double the amount of those who said it did not. Both groups applied for roughly the same average amount, between £2,500 and £2,700, but those who said they could spend more time on their art received an average award of £1,800 compared to £800 for those who said they could not.

For most artists the financial impact of the award was to supplement their general living costs and allow them to obtain materials or training. Training and better materials were both seen as vital to making better art.

Arts Council support had relatively little direct effect on the ability of artists to earn more or even to help them feel more financially stable. The time over which the money worked for them was too short for this to happen. However, it had important longer-term, intangible effects in helping the artistic development of award winners and giving them greater credibility and a higher public profile. It allowed them to seize opportunities and make contacts.

Table 39: Effects of the support

Effects of support	Number of mentions
Contribute to artistic development	34
Increased confidence	32
Greater credibility	28
Showcase the work	21
Help reach new stage in career	21
Take up opportunities	18
More useful contacts	18
More commissions/sales	9
More financially stable	6

Number of cases: 34

One conclusion from this is that the support has potential to help artists over the long term, but that the extent to which this happens depends on whether artists are able to survive on their own resources through the short term. Those award winners who said that the support had helped their artistic development referred to new ways of working rather than help in reaching new audiences or finding new partners.

Table 40: Particular aspects of artistic development to which the award contributed

	Number of mentions
New approaches	27
New techniques	19
New applications	18
New audiences	17
New partners	10

Number of cases: 34

Most Valuable Effect of the Awards

In summary, the most valuable effect of the awards was the practical one of achieving a piece of art. The support was valuable even when the amount was small. The grant improved skills, widened horizons, and raised standards in a number of different ways. It brought recipients recognition and status and vital extra time for dedicated work. It encouraged artists to continue. Only one applicant felt that the main effect was negative, in that it took time away from their art without putting anything back.

Table 41: Single most valuable effect of the support

	No of mentions
Practical outcome – finished a project	9
Learnt new skills/crossed arts boundaries	5
Recognition, status and enhanced confidence	5
More stable finances, with time for art	5
Provided materials, equipment and research	5
Widened audience	2
Encouraged to continue in the arts	2
Expanded artistic horizons	1
Fewer artistic compromises	1

Number of cases: 34

The Processes

Fewer than 30% of applicants had problems with the application form. Most found it simple and straightforward. Some complained of minor problems, such as having to use a typewriter rather than a computer to fill in the form. The single main problem that stands out is that completing forms is not a natural way for artists to express themselves. Form filling imposes a need to be clear in particular ways that some artists found foreign to them. In addition, some topics did not seem relevant to them while others that they wished to present in support of their application were not covered.

Table 42: Problems in completing the application form (%)

No	60.0
Yes	28.6
Not applicable/cannot remember	11.4

Number of cases: 49

Very few people said they had help in filling in the forms although many said that this was something of a communal activity, done with friends and fellow artists. This is consistent with many other comments that suggest that artists do not see these awards as competitive, even though they recognise that the budget cannot meet all demands.

Few recollected how long the form took them to complete. Over 90% said the form made clear what was expected of them, although it helped if they had previous

experience of the application form and were already clear about what they themselves wanted. Consistent with this, over two thirds of successful applicants said that what most qualified them for the award was their experience and body of previous work. Only 20% mentioned that the main ground on which they expected to win support was innovation in an art form or that they were starting out as artists.

About a third of applicants thought the Arts Council's decision-making was too slow. Those with experience of the programme or inside knowledge of arts administration were more prepared for the time taken. Some went ahead in the hope that the money would catch them up. However, several could not understand why the process needed to take so long, given that in their previous experience the Arts Council and now the Lottery are usually quick at making decisions. The main impact of slow decisions was to delay the purchase of materials, and hence set back the whole timetable of the art work as well as preventing forward planning.

Changes to the Application Process

Sixty per cent of applicants would like to see changes to the application process. Most want to see faster and clearer application processes as well as more transparent processes and explanations for decisions. Artists want reasons and feedback, to be reassured that their art and not just their application form has been taken into account, and to help them make successful applications in the future. They also want more openness in the process to remove accusations of nepotism and favouritism. They expressed a wish to know the names of the decision makers. Openness and greater direct involvement of the Arts Council with the artists would make artists more confident that the Arts Council is in touch with innovation and the newer art forms, especially those which cross art-form boundaries.

Artists would like to see a larger overall budget but there is a rough balance between those who feel that there should be more smaller awards (usually on the grounds of equality, helping new artists and because this works better for the unemployed, but also because of claims that some large awards were wasted) and those who argue for fewer larger ones (also to help the new artist, and because larger sums can support more worthwhile art).

Table 43: Ways to change the application process

	Number of mentions
More specific and smaller sums	10
Larger sums	9
Simplify, clarify criteria & streamline	9
More transparency and reasons for decisions	8
More feedback	6
More direct involvement by Arts Council	5
For innovative work	3
Larger overall budget	2
More frequent deadlines	2
For excellence	2

Number of cases: 49

The Resource Centres and Arts Associations

Cnuas and Aosdána

Only one of the respondents received the Cnuas. One other said they had turned it down some time ago. About 30% said they were aware of Aosdána. Both the Cnuas and Aosdána were seen as part of support in the Republic rather than Northern Ireland. This lack of knowledge limited the ability of the respondents to comment on the Aosdána, although our interviewers were briefed to explain this when our respondents did not know of it. Interviewees expressed strong support for the idea of Aosdána and the Cnuas but were concerned about the possibility of selection, elitism, secrecy and stagnation.

Support and Professional Organisations

The respondents drew on a wide range and large number of support and professional organisations. Most belonged to more than one agency. The only groups to have large memberships from our survey were the AAI for award winners, and Equity for those who received only indirect support.

Although 60% of the respondents were members of relevant resource organisations, only 28% commented on their strengths and weaknesses. This suggests that resource organisations do not play a very powerful role for individual artists.

Visual artists emphasised the practical help studios provide with space. Beyond that, the resource organisations are seen as providing help for artists in making contacts. Promotion of the art form or the individual artist were not seen as areas where resource organisations are active. Their main strengths lay in providing financial and legal advice, acting as business support agencies rather than specialist arts organisations. Those that do not provide business advice and support were criticised for it.

The Needs and Priorities of Artists

Information on the Needs of Artists

Artists do not see their resource organisations as the best source of information for the Arts Council when seeking to learn about the needs of individual artists. Some, of course, are not attached to resource organisations and so would be cut off from the debate, just as they would be if the Arts Council relied on information gathered from the application forms. Our respondents felt that direct contact with artists was by far the best method. This is consistent with the very enthusiastic response we received for this survey and the many comments that artists appreciated being asked their opinion on the arts.

Table 44: How best for Arts Council to find out needs of individual artists

	Number of mentions			
	Award	Indirect	Reject	Total
Direct survey of artists	27	25	12	64
Through associations	11	5	2	18
Information from grant applications	4	2		6
Other	2	1	3	6
Don't Know	2	1	1	4

Number of cases: 77

Many artists favoured some form of one-to-one discussion, as they had with our interviewers, because they felt they were individuals and wished to be heard as individuals. Some felt that group discussion failed to represent the views of everyone there, either because of different individual ideas or because of in-fighting.

There was a strong feeling that the views of everyone in an art form should be heard, and not just the established figures. The different viewpoints of newly started artists and those struggling to continue, for whatever reason, give a vital dimension for funders.

Artists in our sample appreciated being able to talk from their place of work. This, or a neutral location, was important to all of them but especially for those in rural areas who felt that their remoteness usually cut them off from any contribution. Artists in rural areas of Northern Ireland complained that too much attention is given to Belfast and Derry.

Artists feel that their needs should be understood more through their art rather than through bureaucratic methods of forms and applications. They would like to have more direct contact with Arts Council officers and for this to be initiated by the Arts Council rather than in response to contacts started by the artists. Artists are reticent about taking the initiative or appearing to put themselves forward as spokespersons for their art form.

Our fieldwork was conducted at a time of great political change in Northern Ireland when the support mechanisms for the arts are uncertain. Artists are concerned that arts funding might be a lower priority than in the past. Several felt that dialogue with the Arts Council was of limited value in these circumstances, and wanted to see more powerful lobbying of government in future.

Needs and Priorities

There is a clear preference in our survey for the Arts Council to provide individual grants rather than support artists by other means. This preference is clear even for those who have had their applications rejected and for the indirectly supported artists. Indeed, the indirectly supported artists much prefer this to having support channelled through resource organisations. None mentioned this latter route.

Table 45: Most effective way for Arts Council to support individual artists

	Number of mentions			
	Award	Indirect	Reject	Total
Direct grants	25	20	11	56
Through resource organisations	12		5	17
Other	8	8	4	20
Lobbying government	7	2	1	10
Changing public perceptions	4	3	1	8
Total	56	33	22	111

Number of cases: 77

As part of this preference for direct financial support artists would like to see more awards spread throughout the year and more information about what is available. They would like the awards to be at a larger scale - to give more support, and to be aimed at "ordinary" artists rather than the elite. This, however, is not to say that the established artists in Northern Ireland should not be given large awards. A balance needs to be struck in the scale of financial awards, and many artists would like either to have a voice in this or to see a more transparent process of decision-making.

There is a desire to see the Arts Council make stronger representations on behalf of artists to achieve tax exemptions and other benefits on a par with the Republic. Representation would include seeking changes to taxation on part time work so that artists are less penalised. Related to this is the desire to have the type of small business advice common in other sectors.

Grants are seen as an effective means of support but not the only one. Artists also say they need greater access to training, more advice on issues like preparing curriculum vitae and exhibitions, and more information about the arts world - such as data bases on awards and training opportunities. Some types of art impose considerable isolation on the artist, which could be tackled if the Arts Council were, for example, to set up exchanges outside the country. The way to initiatives such as this, in the view of our sample, is for Arts Council officers to relate more closely to artists, to be more flexible about art form categories and to be more innovative in breaking down old boundaries.

Artists perceive there is need for facilities such as providing affordable workshops, giving more support to rehearsal spaces and studios, and helping specialist publishing houses such as those for poetry.

Many artists would like to work in the community and see the Arts Council as having an important role in this. Putting more art into libraries and galleries, and more artists and writers into schools, for example, is seen as laying the foundation for a stronger arts sector in the future. Some of this comes down to new commissions but much is simply a matter of providing moral support to artists.

Interviewees were asked if they felt that some categories of artists needed more support than others. Only about one third of the respondents argue for this. The main concern was with supporting young artists and those who are particularly innovative or otherwise on the commercial fringe.

Although support is appropriate at each stage of an artist's career, and in ways appropriate to the individual and the time, there is a general preference to support artists when they are starting out or in mid career rather than when they have reached maturity.

Table 46: Stages when support is most effective

	Number of mentions			
	Award winner	Rejected	Indirect	Total
Training/starting out	26	14	21	61
Mid career	25	8	16	49
Mature career	14	5	7	26
Total	65	27	44	136

Number of cases: 77

Career Development

Artists in the survey seldom see themselves as at a single career stage. Many see their life as a continuing cycle of training, improvement and development with this becoming more marked as art forms merge and cross-over. Two thirds describe themselves as experienced and in mid career.

Table 47: Career stage

	Number of mentions			
	Award	Indirect	Reject	Total
Training/starting out	8	5		13
Mid career	28	21	14	63
Mature career	6	6	1	13
On pause	1	1		2
Total	43	33	15	91

Number of cases: 77

Two thirds of the respondents have come through art education rather than being self taught. Relatively more of our “indirects” were self-taught. It is not uncommon for artists to come to art late in life, having followed another career or family life.

Table 48: Route to art

	Number of mentions			
	Award	Indirect	Reject	Total
Art education	21	21	5	47
Self taught	6	11	7	24
A late art career	4	6	6	16
An early art career	1		1	2
Total	32	38	19	89

Number of cases: 77

78% of our respondents had faced barriers to the development of their artistic careers. This is most marked in the case of award winners. For most the main obstacle has

been lack of finance or not being in a commercial art form where they can survive on their sales or afford working space and materials to continue. Some complained about not being able to work abroad in larger art markets, such as England and, by extension, suffering lack of recognition or status as an artist in the culture of Northern Ireland. Those in rural areas suffer from lack of outlets for their art.

Some barriers are particular to the art form, for example, lack of female roles in theatre in Northern Ireland, problems of local attitudes to forms of painting, and unwillingness to accept innovative forms of art. These suggest points at which the Arts Council could help artists by changing public perceptions and building larger audiences.

Table 49: Barriers to career development

	Number of mentions			
	Award winner	Indirect	Reject	Total
Yes	28	17	9	55
No	5	10	6	21
NA	1	1	0	2
All	34	28	15	77

Number of cases: 77

Most financial problems that restrict the range and quality of work by these artists are to do with uncertainties over income or having an inadequate income. Nearly a quarter of the sample have to work outside the arts to get by. About 20% lack the money to obtain the equipment they need. Those few who are not restricted in their art by financial problems are able to live on a partner's earnings.

Table 50: Problems that restrict the range and quality of work: financial

	Number of mentions
Uncertain income	34
Inadequate income	25
Work in non arts	17
Equipment	15
Taxation	1
No problem	8

Number of cases: 77

There is a clear pattern to the main non-financial restrictions on the range and quality of the work of the artists we interviewed. The main obstacles, since they are to do with the lack of promotional opportunities, whether in Ireland or abroad, relate directly to financial problems. Other demand-side problems are also mentioned, such as the public attitudes to artists in Ireland and the lack of sales of their work. These are more frequently mentioned than the factors that relate to supply-side conditions such as space, equipment, and training.

Table 51: Problems which restrict the range and quality of artistic work: non financial

	No of mentions
Lack of promotional opportunities in Ireland	42
Lack of promotional opportunities abroad	22
Lack of access to studio space	20
Public attitudes to artists in Ireland	20
Lack of time to do the work well	19
Lack of demand for work	10
Lack of training	9
Difficulty in accessing new technology	9
Childcare and domestic duties	9
Lack of the right course in Ireland	4
Lack of trained teachers/directors	4
Sexual discrimination	4
Difficulties for unknown artists	2
Physical disabilities	2
Problems due to age	1
Other	10

Number of cases: 77

Income and Employment of Artists

Two thirds of our respondents were wholly or partly self employed. Over half the respondents had other sources of income, even if this is a student grant or unemployment benefit. Earnings from art are not only low but irregular, so that it is common for artists to say that they depend on their partner's earnings to maintain the household. This can become a problem when the partner is also an artist and their work hits a bad patch, as happened to some in our survey. Most of our respondents said they could not live on the income from their art. Typically, any sales are used to fund the costs of the next project. The strong message is that artists find income wherever they can without jeopardising the time they can find to pursue their art.

This puts into context the value of awards. The average value of awards made to the self employed (and those of them who are also registered as unemployed) is around £900 to £1,000. Those artists in part time employment tend to receive much less than this on average. Some of the artists in this category were running into debt to pursue their art, since their part time employment did not provide enough to live on full time, and the value of the sales of their art was very low. One artist was in the short-term trap of living on bank loans to pursue his art, despite working in a factory on alternate weeks. The level of art awards does not compensate for this.

Overall, the 33 successful applicants received £34,000. Twenty nine of these applicants provided us with full financial data. These received about 60% of the amount they applied for. On average, these artists applied for £2,400 and received £1,050. Nearly all applications were reduced, regardless of size, but the degree of reduction became more severe as the value of the application rose. One application for more than £5,000 was reduced to an award of less than £1,000.

Table 52: Distribution of application and awards by value

Application band	Award band				Total
	Up to £500	Over £500 under £1000	Over £1,000 up to £2,000	Over £3,000 under £5,000	
Up to £500	4				4
Over £500 under £1,000	4	3			7
Over £1,000 up to £2,000	1	6	3		10
Over £2,000 up to £3,000		3			3
Over £3,000 under £5,000		1	1	2	4
Over £5,000		1			1
Total	9	14	4	2	29

Number of cases: 29

Conclusions

Artists in Northern Ireland cannot live on their earnings from their art. Even with other sources of income, they are still struggling. The scale of awards from the Arts Council does not address this strongly enough. Occasional small sums commit the artist to work in poor conditions in the short term without any certainty that they will still be working on their art in the longer term. Even though the support system allows artists to make several applications this does not address the problem of low income.

Many artists feel the need to live and work abroad. In part this is to open their art to other cultures, but it is also to boost their earnings. There are few obstacles to working in the Republic or Britain. However, many put particular value on being able to work in Northern Ireland.

The cultural issue, which runs as a theme through the survey, is that artists in Northern Ireland feel they lack status when they compare the conditions of the Republic and other parts of Northern Europe. Their view of their position in society follows from their income and living conditions. Those who have moved between Northern Ireland and the Republic feel that there is a culture of greater respect for art in the Republic from which it follows that people there are more likely to purchase art than is the case in Northern Ireland.

Those relying on unemployment benefit to pursue their art are directly vulnerable to changes in the welfare system. This impact on the arts community is unlikely to be taken into account by social and economic policy makers. Changes in the social welfare system have a serious impact on the artist's income. They also affect the state of mind and therefore how ready an individual is to create art. The recent change which requires claimants to be seen every three months has left several of artists living in dread that they are now due for interview and will have their benefits removed if they continue working on their art

Balancing this picture of artists in crisis is the enormous impact Arts Council support has in bringing about art. Small increases in the level of support have the potential to produce large amounts of new art. This is consistent with the low income of artists,

since even small injections of money to these households can enable large discrete chunks of time to be dedicated to art.

Impact of support

Without Arts Council support there would be much less art produced in much more difficult circumstances. Money is not the main motivator for artists but funding along with the moral support of status and recognition, of them and their art form, is vital to help in their artistic development. We were told that a lot of artists simply give up their art because they get no support. The impact of support for the artist, however, as many artists told us, goes beyond the personal. There is a great pride in Irishness, and the particular qualities and subjects dealt with by Irish artists, which is carried over to the overseas countries and companies they work in. This Irishness is not expressed through working in the Irish language.

“It looks great for Ireland that I’m supported by my country. I consider myself to be an ambassador for Ireland and the Irish Arts Council.”

Over the whole sample about 83% of artists produced art as a result of support. This varies by type of award. Both the main award groups of bursaries and training grants had a high proportion of recipients producing art. Some categories of award with low proportions of recipients producing a piece of work as a result of the award were those where the award simply fed into their whole work rather than a specific piece, and we would expect these artists to produce work without assigning it to the award. These categories of award include artists in residence, studio grants and materials and equipment. Lower proportions are associated with Artflight and travel, neither of which we would expect to be directly associated with pieces of art.

Table 53: Produced work as a result of support

	% of all awards	% of category saying yes
Bursary	30.5	93.1
Educ/training	15.8	86.7
Artflight	10.5	60.0
Materials	10.5	70.0
Project	8.4	100.0
Travel	8.4	75.0
Residence	3.2	33.3
Studio	3.2	66.7
Fellowship	2.1	100.0
Commission	1.1	100.0
Other	6.3	83.3
Total	100.0	82.6

Number of cases: 120

This is a strong base on which to build future support. Given the cross-border movement of artists and the importance of overseas experiences and audiences to the development of Irish art, there is a case for overview across the two jurisdictions. We have seen how artists from Northern Ireland may gravitate to the Republic and Dublin in particular, but this is in many ways no different from the way that artists from

elsewhere in the Republic gravitate towards Dublin or live with the consequences of not being in the centre.

Artists in both Arts Council areas see a major problem as lack of demand and means to promote their work. Artists in Northern Ireland look to the Republic as a place of better organised support and where the culture places more value on art. Artists in the Republic do not look to Northern Ireland for better conditions, but nor do they see their own country as ideal. They, like artists in Northern Ireland, must often travel and work overseas for income and artistic development. This is always likely to be the case, given the scale of Ireland relative to the rest of northern Europe and the USA. While our research points to a greater level and more organised support in the Republic it suggests that more is needed in both areas.

It is perhaps inevitable that artists will need to leave Ireland to develop their art and certainly our sample points to the importance of this. But too many artists in our sample regard it as impossible to survive on work in Ireland alone. We have mentioned how some value Arts Council support as a means of helping them stay in their own country. The other side of this coin as perceived by our respondents is that when artists are able to live and work in Ireland they are contributing to the environment of Ireland and helping to change public perceptions of art, both of which they see as supporting the purpose of the Arts Councils.

“If dancers were supported they wouldn't leave Ireland. It's a terrible talent drain.”

The support system, though relatively easily accessible, is better suited to the needs of some artists than others. Our research identifies these differences but also points to the benefits of involving artists more in defining what is needed. Artists would like the process to be simpler, clearer and faster, while also fairer and more transparent. Our report identifies much of the detail of this but a key point is that artists should be involved in shaping policy change, since so much hinges on the fine balances to be struck, for example, new starts over experienced artists, innovative over established art, large scale support over small sums. These are sensitive issues. At the same time, art forms are not static. Policy must cope with set structures and changing details, and be seen to be coping with these. The rapid shifts occurring in the nature of art now should be reflected in the support system if it is to have the respect of the artists. The artists are a vital source of information on these changes. The application process itself could be changed away from form filling to more personal contact or assessment so that it is not only in tune with the way artists work but also provides better information on change.

Although artists in Ireland form a relatively tightly knit community, where word of mouth and mutual support are the norm, the Arts Councils are seen as standing slightly aloof from this and cut off from much that is happening.

A major issue for artists is not the inadequacy of their income but its fluctuations and its uncertainty. It is difficult for the Arts Councils to affect the overall earnings of artists, since this has to do with deep-rooted matters of the artistic and money values

placed on art by the whole community. Given the lack of commercial infrastructure to support artists the Arts Council can do a number of things to help increase certainty: it can lobby financial institutions to design products that recognise the fluctuations of income; it give artists information on the amounts they are likely to receive and the time-scales for decisions.

“The Arts Council could liase with banks to help with the fluctuating nature of artists income and the problems it creates, such as getting a mortgage.”

Artists are very willing to provide information to help the Arts Councils understand the issues of living and working as an artist and the best ways to channel support. They wish to participate in a process of giving and receiving information. They wish the Arts Council to take a more direct approach to this. A telephone survey approach along the lines of the one we used here would be welcome and effective.

Artists in both Arts Council areas are living on the edge. Many are struggling and increasingly in debt to pursue their art. Many have no alternative but to live on the dole. They are affected by social and economic policies which change the rules of benefit or the balance between part time and full time employment. Those starting out as artists, without a reputation or sales, are perhaps even more affected by these than they are affected by arts awards.

“Artists have deep and ambiguous feelings about taking money from the state.”

As we have found before in our work on the arts community, artists often put others or the good of the art in general above their own private benefits. In terms of the award programmes, they see a dilemma in applying for support when they know that there is so little to go round and see so many of their fellows worse off than themselves. They may feel they should not be taking money when their financial need is less than others, but they want the wider effect of getting a bursary or other award when this brings the greater recognition they need to further their work.

CHAPTER SIX: MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings and Conclusions - Introduction

This report brings together several different strands of research into the Arts Councils' support to the individual artist. The report's main findings and conclusions are first presented in this chapter. The conclusions are consistent across the different areas of research. Recommendations are presented separately for the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Objectives

On 21st December 1998 Annabel Jackson Associates was appointed to carry out research into the impact of the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland programmes on the individual artist.

The objective of the research was to undertake a detailed appraisal of direct and indirect support for the creative and interpretative artist and to assess the impact of these supports. Direct support consists of grants in the form of bursaries, travel schemes, education or training awards, residencies, equipment or premises awards, or commissioning. Indirect support refers to shared space and equipment, information, advice and training, networking, collective marketing and exhibitions, documentation and archiving, advocacy, and other services provided by associations, studios, galleries, or other resource organisations.

The rationale for the research was two-fold:

- To assess the effect of the Councils' policies on the professional formation and career path of the individual artist.
- To assist the Councils in ascertaining the most appropriate models and mechanisms for supporting the artist.

The research methodology comprised desk research, analysis of grants, interviews with Arts Council staff and resource organisations, and a survey of 225 artists, 82 from Northern Ireland and 143 from the Republic.

Character of the Support Portfolios

The Arts Councils differ in the structure and scale of their programmes for support of the individual artist. Our information suggests that there were in the order of 2,350 applications and 1,654 awards between 1993 and 1999 for the Republic of Ireland. There were approximately 556 applications and 225 awards between 1995 and 1998 for Northern Ireland.

The Arts Councils portfolios of support to the individual artist have a number of characteristics that are relatively rare in public sector programmes:

- Objectives that generally describe support to the individual artist as an end in itself rather than a route to further policy objectives.

- Naming of programmes by the type of artist eligible, or by an activity such as travel or education that is easily understood, rather than by policy concerns.
- Fragmentation between a number of programmes.
- Relatively unrestrictive conditions on grants.
- Strong sympathy and support for the client group.

It would be easy to look at this pattern and conclude that the portfolios are weakly structured and need to be made more strategic. However, in our view, that would be an overly simplistic conclusion. These choices are consistent with a particular way of designing programmes, called the client-led approach. This analysis would suggest that flexibility is deliberate rather than the result of lack of direction. The challenge for the Arts Councils is how to improve the effectiveness of their portfolios – to clarify their thinking and introduce some structure - without losing their central philosophy of responding to the needs of the individual artist. This conclusion applies less strongly to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland because although the programmes are predominantly client-led, objectives and structure are somewhat further towards the policy-led end of the spectrum than is the case for The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon: Recommendation 1.

Objectives for the Support Portfolios

Programmes in the support portfolios typically have open-ended objectives that assume funding to artists is an end in itself rather than given to achieve a specific purpose. In practice, this means that programmes overlap, giving a potentially confusing picture to applicants. Our consultation within the Arts Councils showed that a more precise statement of objectives is possible, especially around supporting time for artistic work. This should be possible without sacrificing the flexibility and responsiveness that lie at the heart of the Arts Councils' client-led cultures.

Clarifying objectives could have several benefits. It could improve effectiveness by highlighting the circumstances where grants are best deployed. It could generate deeper discussion about the aims and processes of the Arts Councils. Communication and transparency to the applicant could be improved. Consistency between objectives and aspects of processing such as conditions and speed of decision could be increased. Monitoring could be strengthened. It is noteworthy that artists in both the Republic and Northern Ireland wanted to see clearer criteria for the grant programmes and more information on reasons for refusal. Clarifying the basis for funding could have practical benefits in terms of strengthening marketing and targeting. One area where marketing could be improved is in reaching artists living outside Ireland: international experience was given a high priority by groups of interviewees.

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon: Recommendations 2-4.
Arts Council of Northern Ireland: Recommendations 1-3.

Structuring the Support Portfolios

The average size of grants is extremely small. The upper limit on most programmes is £5,000 but the average grant given out is even smaller than this, under £2,000. The

average size of award for 1998 is £1,719 for the Republic and £993 for Northern Ireland. The average size of award is rising in the Republic and in Northern Ireland is only now recovering from an earlier dip.

Sums granted are lower than the amounts for which artists applied. On average, awards are likely to be cut to about 15% of their original size in the Republic and 42% in Northern Ireland. This shortfall increases the uncertainty of funding for artists applying.

Grants to individual artists have been extremely successful in meeting the main objective identified during discussions with Arts Council staff – that of funding artists to complete work. In the Republic, over 83% of our respondents said they produced a piece of art as a direct result of the support they received and over 58% said that they would not have been able to complete the work without this support. In Northern Ireland, nearly 80% of award winners said they undertook a piece of work as a direct result of their support and almost 43% of those who undertook a piece of work as a result of their Arts Council support could not have completed it without their grant.

The benefit of the support extends far beyond the direct financial effect. Across the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland grants appear to have given artists more confidence, contributed to their artistic development, increased their credibility, allowed them to showcase their work and take up opportunities, and to make useful contacts. Even small amounts have an important impact because of the low incomes on which artists live. Recognition and endorsement can have an impact far beyond the immediate financial benefit. Fewer artists describe the award as having helped increase their financial stability: a factor in part attributable to the small size and limited time period of the grant.

The small size of grant prevents the award from contributing to the financial success of the recipient, and in some respects adds to the uncertainty of artists' income and their need to combine small sums of money from many different sources. Any increase in budget for support programmes to the individual artist could be used to increase the average size of grant. The Arts Councils should also consider ways of leveraging their support through integrating grants with non-financial support, or working in partnership with other organisations that support artists.

Artists' need for support is clearly demonstrated by our research. Artists report that their incomes are low and unpredictable. The uncertainty of the amount is described as more important than its inadequacy. Based on figures for the Republic, the average gross income is around £12,000 with art expenses on average £5,000.

The needs of artists so far exceed the funding available that it is difficult to identify priorities. However, artists generally thought that support should be concentrated on emerging rather than established artists. Other interviewees, at the Arts Councils and resource organisations, reiterated the view that younger artists have greater need of support.

The start date of schemes varies widely. On the one hand, several programmes have been set up in the last year or so. This demonstrates the dynamism of the Arts

Councils' activity and the way they are continually responding to need. On the other hand, some programmes are very old, in some cases over twenty years old.

Three per cent of artists work in the Irish language. These receive around 5% of grant funding.

Our survey showed many similarities in the experiences of artists in the Republic and Northern Ireland, as well as a considerable movement of artists between the two jurisdictions. This commonality can be reinforced through improving the co-ordination of the support portfolios across the two Arts Councils.

At present, all the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon programmes and some of the indirect support from resource organisations are available to artists from Northern Ireland but the programmes of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland are not similarly available.

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon: Recommendations 5-12.
Arts Council of Northern Ireland: Recommendations 4-9.

Improving Application Processes

The application process is seen as simple and straightforward. Sixty per cent of artists interviewed in Northern Ireland and 95% of those in the Republic reported no problems with applying for grant support. Over 85% in each area felt that the application process was clear.

Approximately 65% of artists interviewed for the Republic, and 60% of artists from the Northern Ireland survey suggested changes to the application process. Apart from increases in the size of grants, the most common requirement was for faster decisions and clearer reasons for refusal. Artists want to understand why applications are rejected and they would like more direct contact with the Arts Councils.

The majority of support programmes have one deadline per year. Although this is helpful in allowing applications to be compared with each other it adds an important source of inflexibility. Artists were asked a specific question about the effect of having a limited number of deadlines and about half the survey felt that the system would be better with more frequent times when applications could be made.

Our conversations with Arts Council officers and resource organisations generated a list of dimensions for measuring performance. The readiness with which this list was produced suggests that there is now some appreciation of the value of monitoring performance.

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon: Recommendations 13-16.
Arts Council of Northern Ireland: Recommendations 10-13.

Strengthening Resource Organisations

Resource organisations play an important role in supporting artists, revolving around a core function of providing information. The depth of support they can provide is heavily curtailed by under-funding.

The artists interviewed gave a strong priority to direct financial support rather than indirect support through resource centres and artists' associations. Very few said they had heard about grants from an arts organisation rather than through word of mouth or directly with the Arts Councils. Very few thought that the Arts Councils could obtain useful information about the needs of artists through consulting associations and resource organisations rather than surveying artists directly or looking at grant applications. Direct grants were described as the most effective way for the Arts Councils to support individual artists, well above interest in resource organisations.

Notwithstanding this, our consultation with resource organisations suggested that much can be achieved through these organisations and that their potential has not yet been reached. Artists obtain useful information, contacts, help in promoting their art and cost savings through support from resource organisations.

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon: Recommendations 17-19.
Arts Council of Northern Ireland: Recommendations 14-16.

Maintaining Contact With Artists

As indicated above, artists felt that a survey was the best way of obtaining information on their needs. Interviewees were very positive about the process of being consulted by telephone. The desire for closer contact with the Arts Councils runs through many of the responses to our questionnaire.

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon: Recommendations 20-21.
Arts Council of Northern Ireland: Recommendations 17-18.

Recommendations

Recommendations for The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

1. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider consolidating its programmes to reduce duplication. It could consider structuring programmes more by function (e.g. education, training, commissioning, residency). This will remove uncertainties about the boundaries of art forms, encourage work across art forms, and reduce confusion to the applicant. Success on this task could be measured in terms of the reduction in repeat applications, a problem that is currently resulting in duplication of work from artists and Arts Council officers.
2. We recommend clarifying the objectives of the awards to artists. Objectives should be stated precisely in terms of the effect that the money is expected to achieve. Exclusions should be clarified, for example, whether the grant money can be used to pay off debt.
3. Criteria and conditions of support programmes should be stated explicitly. Inconsistency between art forms should be removed where practical.
4. Marketing and publicity of grants should be strengthened and targeting increased. Clearly communicating the purpose of grants should help to raise the standard of application. Information to Irish artists currently living abroad should be improved.

5. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider means for increasing the total budget allocated to the individual artist. This will have a direct result in increasing the amount of work artists can produce.
6. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should review its current practice of awarding applicants less money than that for which they applied. This can undermine the original purpose of the application, and in a small number of instances is reported to have led to the artist going into debt.
7. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider the scope for extending the number of multi-annual grants. This would help address the main financial problem experienced by the artists interviewed – that of uncertainty of income. Funding work from production through to exhibition would also strengthen the link between support to the individual artist and public benefit.
8. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider increasing the average size of grants, so long as this is not at the expense of the number of people benefiting.
9. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider ways of leveraging financial support by linking the grant programmes to other support activities. This would be compatible with the role of the Arts Council as a development agency. For example, grants could be integrated with funded activities such as exhibitions, festivals, concert tours or with organisations such as artists' studios or galleries. The aim would be to make the best of the limited budget, and to co-ordinate support so as to strengthen the infrastructure for artists.
10. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should review its current proposal to target mid career and established artists. Interviewees placed a high priority on support to younger artists, or expressed the view that needs were spread throughout an artist's career.
11. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should schedule a review of each grant programme every three to five years. This would prevent programmes rolling over without clear direction or need.
12. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider means for co-ordinating support across the two jurisdictions. Possibilities include consolidating resource organisations across the country, organising joint publicity, and linking more of the grant programmes.
13. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider means for speeding up decision-making. Increasing delegated authority could be considered. With the normal checks and balances, this would provide a lean, accountable system. Clarification of objectives would allow policy decisions to be separated from administrative decisions: the former would remain with the Council or panels; the latter could be delegated.
14. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider increasing the number of grant deadlines so that artists can apply throughout the year. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider ways of adapting the application process to make it more appropriate for multi-media and new technology.
15. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should review its procedures in relation to applications from women. Our analysis suggests that while women have a

roughly equal share of applications and support they apply for smaller grants than men on average.

16. Monitoring should be strengthened and formalised. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider a telephone survey of all grant recipients after their grant has been received to evaluate the application process and obtain feedback.
17. We recommend explicitly recognising the role of resource centres and artist organisations in supporting the individual artist. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should consider a clearer contract with resource centres and artist organisations stating what they are expected to deliver and the standards they are expected to reach.
18. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should produce an all-Ireland strategy for the resource centres and artist organisations, based on an examination of the pattern of support provided, gaps, appropriate development, and long term resource issues. This strategy should consider how to extend support beyond the capital city where most organisations are located.
19. The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon should work with resource centres and artist organisations in advocacy for artists. The most important public policy issues mentioned in our work were taxation and social security – both a reflection of the low incomes of artists interviewed. Other issues mentioned were pensions, supply and financing of arts education, and the provision of business support for artists.
20. Consultation with artists, above that mentioned in Recommendation 16, should be maintained through large scale telephone surveys such as that carried out during our study.
21. Further research on support to the individual artist should include an examination of the following:
 - The prevalence and implications of changes in art form boundaries.
 - The determinants of artists' income.
 - The impact of specific legal or regulatory changes on artists' income and working conditions.
 - The character of artists not currently applying for support.

Recommendations for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland

1. We recommend clarifying the objectives of the awards to artists. Objectives should be stated precisely in terms of the effect that the money is expected to achieve. Exclusions should be clarified, for example, whether the grant money can be used to pay off debt.
2. Criteria and conditions of support programmes should be stated explicitly. Inconsistency between art forms should be removed where practical.
3. Marketing and publicity of grants should be strengthened and targeting increased. Clearly communicating the purpose of grants should help to raise the standard of

- application. Information to Irish artists currently living abroad should be improved.
4. The Arts Council should consider means for increasing the total budget allocated to the individual artist. This will have a direct result in increasing the amount of work artists can produce.
 5. The Arts Council should review its current practice of awarding applicants less money than that for which they applied. This can undermine the original purpose of the application, and in a small number of instances is reported to have led to the artist going into debt.
 6. The Arts Council should consider the scope for offering multi-annual grants. This would help address the main financial problem experienced by the artists interviewed – that of uncertainty of income. Funding work from production through to exhibition would also strengthen the link between support to the individual artist and public benefit.
 7. The Arts Council should consider ways of leveraging financial support by linking the grant programmes to other support activities. This would be compatible with the role of the Arts Council as a development agency. For example, grants could be integrated with funded activities such as exhibitions, festivals, concert tours or with organisations such as artists’ studios or galleries. The aim would be to make the best of the limited budget, and to co-ordinate support so as to strengthen the infrastructure for artists.
 8. The Arts Council should schedule a review of each grant programme every three to five years. This would prevent programmes rolling over without clear direction or need.
 9. The Arts Council should consider means for co-ordinating support across the two jurisdictions. Possibilities include consolidating resource organisations across the country, organising joint publicity, and linking more of the grant programmes.
 10. The Arts Council should consider means for speeding up decision-making. Increasing delegated authority could be considered. With the normal checks and balances, this would provide a lean, accountable system. Clarification of objectives would allow policy decisions to be separated from administrative decisions: the former would remain with the Council or panels; the latter could be delegated.
 11. The Arts Council should consider increasing the number of grant deadlines so that artists can apply throughout the year. The Arts Council should consider ways of adapting the application process to make it more appropriate for multi-media and new technology.
 12. The Arts Council should review its procedures in relation to applications from women. Our analysis suggests that men make more applications, for larger average amounts, and have a higher success rate.
 13. Monitoring should be strengthened and formalised. The Arts Council should consider a telephone survey of all grant recipients after their grant has been received to evaluate the application process and obtain feedback.

14. We recommend explicitly recognising the role of resource centres and artists organisations in supporting the individual artist. The Arts Council should consider a clearer contract with resource centres and artists organisations stating what they are expected to deliver and the standards they are expected to reach.
15. The Arts Council should produce an all-Ireland strategy for the resource centres and artist organisations, based on an examination of the pattern of support provided, gaps, appropriate development, and long term resource issues. This strategy should consider how to extend support beyond the capital city where most organisations are located.
16. The Arts Council should work with resource centres and artist organisations in advocacy for artists. The most important public policy issues mentioned in our work were taxation and social security – both a reflection of the low incomes of artists interviewed. Other issues mentioned were pensions, supply and financing of arts education, and the provision of business support for artists.
17. Consultation with artists, above that mentioned in Recommendation 13, should be maintained through large scale telephone surveys such as that carried out during our study.
18. Further research on support to the individual artist should include an examination of the following:
 - The prevalence and implications of changes in art form boundaries.
 - The determinants of artists' income.
 - The impact of specific legal or regulatory changes on artists' income and working conditions.
 - The character of artists not currently applying for support.

APPENDIX ONE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ISSUES

Introduction

Evaluation is one of the more complex areas of applied research. It combines the technical problems of designing a research methodology, together with the conceptual problems of defining expectations and programme objectives, and the practical problems of carrying out a bounded exercise that is useful to decision-making. The arts sector presents particular problems because of the intangible nature of many of the important dimensions such as artistic quality and the great diversity of the art forms.

This appendix outlines the issues considered in the design of our research methodology and the constraints on the results.

Evaluation consists of five elements²:

- Knowledge acquisition/description.
- Valuing/comparison.
- Use.
- Practice.
- Conceptual development.

Knowledge Acquisition/Description

Our brief was to examine “the impact of support to the artist.” This contains three parts: impact, support and artist.

Defining Impact

There is no stated definition of impact for Arts Council programmes. Our first task, then, was to unpack the term into testable elements.

It is helpful to think of individual impact as having two different parts – direct and indirect. Direct refers to the presence of the grant itself. Indirect refers to the chain of personal and professional impacts that arise from receipt of the grant. The hypothesised impact is as follows: the grant provides money or help in kind but also an implicit endorsement from the Arts Council. The money could have the effect of increasing the amount of time the artist can spend on their art and allowing them to start or complete a piece of work. The endorsement could increase the artist’s confidence and enhance their credibility. Enhanced credibility, and the existence of the additional work, could help the artist to make contacts, market their work, and obtain further commissions. All of these factors could increase the artist’s income, career development, and artistic development.

² William R. Shadish, Thomas D. Cook, and Laura C. Leviton (1995) *Foundations of Program Evaluation: Theories of Practice*. Sage.

This gives the following list of possible impacts:

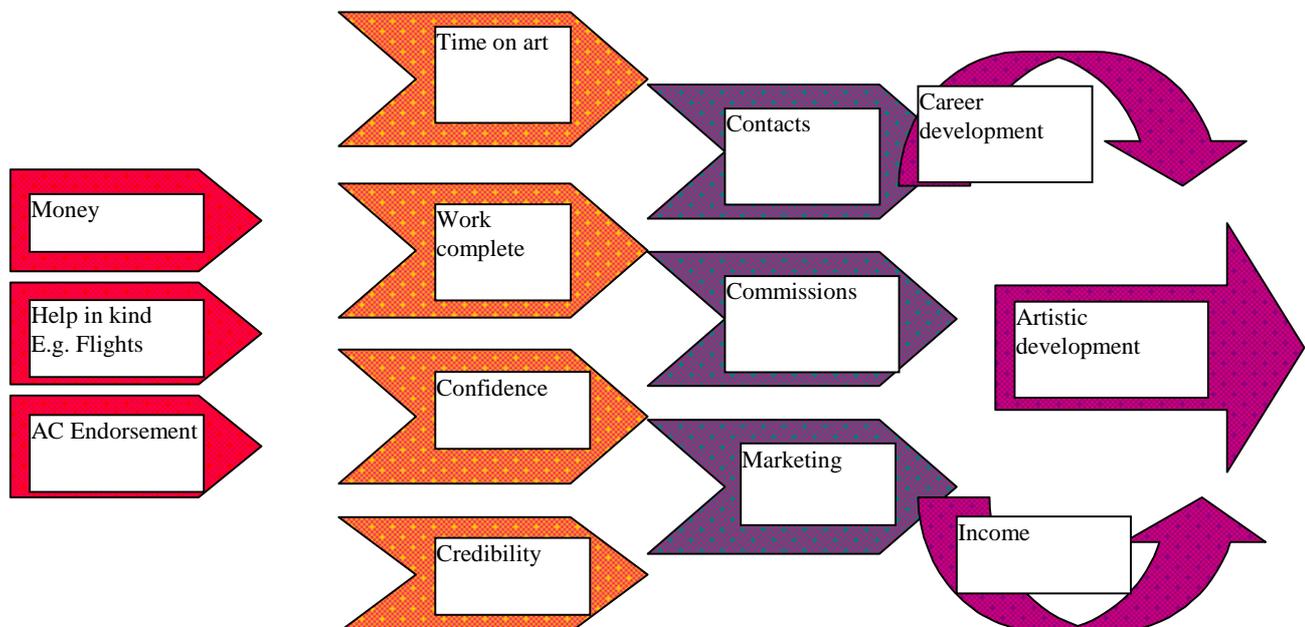
Direct:

- Money.
- Help in kind e.g. flights.
- Endorsement.

Indirect:

- Time on art.
- Work completed.
- Confidence.
- Credibility.
- Contacts.
- Commissions.
- Marketing.
- Career development.
- Artistic development.
- Income.

Figure 1: Representation of direct and indirect impact



Analysis of Arts Council grants provided hard information on recipients: a profile of applicants, a profile of approvals, and analysis of aggregate spend. This gives one

measure of the benefit of Arts Council money. However, the Arts Councils' direct programmes to artists have consisted in the main of very small sums of money given with few conditions, and only very general criteria. This suggested that the direct impacts were likely to be very small, and indirect impacts must be looked at to give the full picture.

The indirect elements of impact present two problems of uncertainty:

- Some of the elements are intangible and subjective. Confidence, credibility, and artistic development are all relatively soft variables.
- Causality, and therefore additionality, are not clear. Some of the impacts, new commissions or further income for example, could be partly due to the Arts Council grant, but partly due to other factors.

We tried to contain the problems of uncertainty in three ways:

- We asked interviewees to be precise about the nature of the effect. For instance, where they say the grant gave them more time to work on their art, we asked how much.
- Where possible, we unpacked soft indicators, to give a clearer picture of their meaning. For example, we pre-coded a question about the grant's contribution to the artist's artistic development into responses indicating new techniques, new approaches, new audiences/participants, new applications, and new partners.³
- Where interviewees indicated an effect we checked that this was attributable to the grant by asking about the position (amount of time spent on the art and income) before the grant.

Clarifying the potential effects of the grant allowed us to quantify soft impacts: we asked each artist whether they experienced each effect. We could therefore produce aggregate statistics of observed effects. The impact is, then, comparable across the population of artists. However, it is still a reported rather than an independently verified effect. Results are reliant on the willingness of artists to attribute their success to the Arts Councils – what is called their “internal locus of control.” If artists have a high internal locus of control they will not perceive the Arts Councils to have played a large part in their success.

Defining Support to the Individual Artist

Returning to our brief of evaluating support to the individual artist, the second element - “support”- needed to be unpacked. Three levels of support can be identified:

- Direct support. This consists of grants, bursaries and awards to individual artists.
- Indirect support. This is where the Arts Councils fund other organisations (associations, resource centres etc..) with the specific goal of supporting the individual artist.

³ Note that these are categories to code responses, not closed questions.

- Indirect funding. A full analysis of financial impact needs to include an overall figure for the amount of money to funded organisations which is paid to artists.

Our analysis concentrated on the first two of these.

The first was dealt with in the analysis of grant applications and approvals. Both categories were dealt with where they were picked up in the survey of artists.

In addition, we covered indirect support through:

- Interviewing a small number of resource organisations in order to find out the number of artists who have benefited. This data was used to calculate a unit cost, which was compared with direct support.
- Asking artists about the specific support organisation relevant to their art form: perceived strengths and weaknesses, and possible improvements that would increase the benefit to the individual artist.
- Asking artists and other interviewees about their views on the relative value of different approaches to supporting the individual artist. This data is soft (it was hardened by asking recipients to justify their responses).

Defining the Artist

This subject has been much discussed in other studies⁴. On the one hand, objective measures (such as the nature of major employment) are criticised for excluding many artists who are early in their career or otherwise unable to make a living from their art. On the one hand, subjective measures (self definition) are criticised for being too open-ended. Defining artists on their own evaluation avoids adopting the views of arts institutions. This, then, allows comparison to be made on other criteria between artists recognised by the resource organisations and those who are not.

The solution adopted by Frey and Pommerehne (*Muses and Markets*, 1989) is to use a mix of subjective and objective criteria:

- Time spent on artistic work.
- Income derived from art.
- Reputation among the general public.
- Recognition among other artists.

⁴ Frey and Pommerehne (1989) *Muses and Markets*. Oxford. Blackwell.
Ruth Towse (1996) *The Economics of Artists' Labour Markets*. The Arts Council of England. Research Report No 3.
R. Towse (1992) *The Economic and Social Characteristics of Artists in Wales*. Cardiff. Welsh Arts Council.
R. Mitchell and S. Karttunen (1992) "Why and how to define an artist?" in R. Towse and A Khakee (eds.) *Cultural Economics*. Hiedelberg. Springer.
Scottish Arts Council (1995) *A Socio-Economic Study of Artists in Scotland*. Edinburgh. Scottish Arts Council.
UNESCO (1980) *Recommendations Concerning the Status of the Artist*. Paris. Springer.
or

- Quality of art produced.
- Membership of professional or artistic association.
- Qualification.
- Self evaluation.

The project Steering Group decided that our study should concentrate on professional rather than amateur artists. In practice, watertight categories are not needed because our survey covers artists who have received a grant or support from a funded artists organisation, and support is itself an acknowledgement that the individual is accepted by the Arts Council as being an artist. This pragmatic definition includes an element of self-definition (that applicants put themselves forward as artists) and institutional definition (that applicants have been judged to fit the criteria of the Arts Councils or referred to us from resource organisations).

Valuing/Comparison

Description of programmes is only part of evaluation. The next stage consists of applying value judgements in order to judge whether the actual performance is good or bad. Valuing presents three difficulties:

- Identifying the criteria on which the programme is to be judged.
- Measuring the programme against the criteria.
- Weighting performance on different criteria, or by different parts of the programme, so as to come up with one overall judgement about achievement.

The evaluator is comparing two variables - actual against expected/ideal - each of which is subject to measurement error and random variation.

The valuing dimension is always obtained through some kind of comparison:

- Performance against objectives/targets.
- With versus without.
- Reported before versus after.
- Relative performance of different programmes.
- Relative performance of different programme elements.
- Relative performance of different time frames.
- Impact on individuals through time – longitudinal analysis.

The first of these has the greatest practical legitimacy as a source of criteria. The rest can be rolled into a general category about comparing performance.

Clarifying Objectives

Neither of the Arts Councils has precise objectives or targets for their artist programmes. There are several reasons for this:

- Programmes have evolved through time. The oldest date back ten or twenty years.

- The Arts Councils have deliberately protected the flexibility of programmes so as to allow them to respond to the emerging needs of individual artists. This has reflected a desire to make the best of a relatively small budget.
- In the past, the Arts Councils have not had the time to reflect on strategic issues. More urgent matters have taken priority.
- Support to the individual artist is so central to the culture of the Arts Councils, especially in the Republic, that little further justification has been needed.
- The Arts Councils have operated without a performance measurement culture. Decisions have been made in a holistic fashion, rather than according to mechanistic guidelines.

All of this is understandable. However, it is important to note that in strict terms the lack of precise objectives means that the programmes are unevaluable.

The evaluation can help by defining objectives after the event, which gives a start in judging performance. Possible objectives of support to individual artists, identified in discussion with Arts Council officers, include to:

- Reward excellence.
- Allow artists to spend more time on art.
- Develop artistic potential of the artist.
- Move artists to the next stage in their career.
- Increase financial stability of the artist.
- Speed up the creation of innovative work.
- Ensure cultural diversity in artists.
- Encourage community artists.
- Support experimentation.

The first of these is not evaluable – rewarding excellence is an end in itself. The next four are included in the description of impact described above, and are therefore covered by our survey of artists. The last four, which arose from discussion in the Steering Group Meetings, are included to illustrate the range of possible objectives.

Judging Performance

Comparison or benchmarking is necessary to interpret and explain the descriptive findings on impact. Without some kind of baseline the evaluator cannot judge whether performance is higher or lower than might be expected. There are three elements to this:

- The control or counterfactual⁵. Some or all of the effects that appear to be attributable to the programme might instead reflect external factors. There are

⁵ “The control group is a group that does not receive the “treatment” (e.g. service or product being evaluated. The function of the control group is to determine the extent to which the same effect occurs without the treatment.” Michael Scriven (1991). *The Evaluation Thesaurus*. London, Sage.

several possible ways of generating controls. Our methodology includes two. The first of these, which is a subjective approach, relies on the judgement of the artist in saying whether the effect observed (work produced, income etc.) would have been possible without the grant. Longitudinal analysis (tracking individuals through time) would allow these comparisons to be verified. The second and more objective approach is to compare indicators (such as income) between two samples, one of which has had grant support and the other of which has not. It is important to remember that this methodology still contains a source of bias because the group of artists who are successful in receiving grants will not be randomly distributed in the population. If artists creating higher quality work had a higher chance of receiving a grant then success - whether financial or otherwise - would be expected to correlate with receipt of a grant. Provision of a grant cannot, on its own, be interpreted as responsible for this success.

- **Comparison.** Comparison between different programmes or programme elements is useful to show the range of possible impacts on artists. This work also helps interpretation, in showing which sub-elements of the programme are associated with greater impact. Our survey allowed us to compare Northern Ireland and the Republic; as well as comparing different types of support (travel, training, bursaries etc.).
- **Calibration.** Comparison of programmes over time helps the evaluator to see the variability in impact, and the apparent sensitivity to external conditions or implementation choices. This can also be helpful in tracing lags between the receipt of the grant and its impact. Analysis of income is complicated because of the great economic and cultural changes that have taken place in Ireland in recent years. Differences in the income of artists given grants in different years could reflect external factors rather than the impact of the support itself.

Use

The intended use of the research is to help the Arts Councils plan the overall direction of support to the individual artist. We designed our methodology to provide practical information to feed into strategic and operational decisions:

- We have devised a model of public sector programmes that can be applied to the Arts Councils' portfolio of support to the individual artist. This is explained and analysed in Appendix Five. The model serves to explain apparently problematic aspects of the programmes – such as the lack of clear objectives – while also highlighting the range of choices available to the Arts Councils for fine-tuning the programmes in the future.
- The surveys investigated the needs of artists, and barriers to their development.
- The survey of artists asked about the application process itself – how the artist found out about the programme (marketing), whether the form was easy to understand, whether they received or needed any assistance in its completion, whether the speed of the decision was satisfactory. These questions gave direct feedback on practical ways of improving grant processing.

- The survey asked about the artist's view on priorities for funding – grants against indirect support, targeting, stage of support, size of grant.

Practice

This refers to the need to prioritise different areas of work within evaluation. Our work has concentrated on carrying out as many interviews with artists as the budget would allow. This was necessary to ensure coverage of the different elements of the support portfolio, and to allow analysis of subgroups.

Conceptual Development

Support programmes all have at their heart assumptions about the environment in which they operate. Clarifying the assumptions underlying support programmes can help to reveal inconsistent logic, or incompatibilities with implementation, and thereby help to improve impact. Exposing assumptions can also help to strengthen the explanatory power of evaluation.

Programmes of support to the individual artist can be seen to rest upon two sets of assumptions: assumptions about the needs of artists; and assumptions about the role of different support structures and support mechanisms. Assumptions about the needs of artists are themselves reliant on knowledge about the financial problems of artists, and their career structures, as well as definitions about the nature of the artist.

Taking one example, the financial problems of artists, illustrates the process of unpacking concepts so as to test and develop concepts. Financial problems might extend beyond low aggregate income levels to include:

- Uncertainty about income.
- Cash flow problems as a result of uneven income, retrospective or late payment, and poor financial management.
- Poor status with financial institutions such as landlords, banks, and insurance companies.
- Changes in the welfare system.
- Tax problems, for instance, regarding royalties.
- Changes in colleges' and universities' use of part-time lecturers.
- A more flexible labour market, allowing more part-time employment.
- Difficulties in pricing. These could reflect weak skills in pricing, or vulnerability to increases in material costs especially in the visual arts, or weak negotiating position as in some performing arts. It could also reflect external factors, such as the lack of agreed norms or minimum standards.
- Wages/fees not adequately reflecting age and experience.
- Debt, which could be student loans or other personal loans.
- Poor advice from agents such as pension advisors.
- Premises problems such as lack of suitable supply, insecurity of tenure, inadequate health and safety precautions and escalating rents.

- Increase or decrease in costs as a result of new technology. A change in the balance between fixed and variable costs will also affect barriers to entry and profitability of artists.
- Changes in the cost of living.

The Arts Councils are considering further more detailed research into the needs of the individual artist, which should be able to develop these conceptual concerns.

APPENDIX TWO: SAMPLING IN THE ARTISTS SURVEY

Introduction

During March and April 1999 Annabel Jackson Associates conducted a sample survey of individual artists who had successfully applied and received Arts Councils awards, or had applied and been rejected for an award. In addition, we conducted interviews with artists who had not applied for awards but had received support indirectly through association with an arts organisation funded by the Arts Councils. These were surveyed as a control group. For brevity these are called "indirects" in our report. In total we interviewed 215 artists: 77 who had applied to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and 138 who had applied to the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

The survey was designed to collect information of value to both Arts Councils of Ireland and is the largest such exercise undertaken by them. It has also been an important opportunity for Irish artists to communicate to the Arts Councils and, as we report below, many of our respondents commented favourably that the Arts Councils had initiated this.

We interviewed more successful and rejected artists than our sample target but fewer indirects than planned. There was always a problem here of knowing with certainty in advance whether or not an indirect had previously applied for direct support. Where we contacted indirect artists who had already applied to the Arts Councils we interviewed them as direct support rather than indirect and allowed the final mix to vary slightly from the target.

Our sample of 49 direct applicants in Northern Ireland (34 + 15) is equivalent to nearly 12% of the number of artists (425 artists), who have applied for Arts Council support between 1995 and 1998. The sample of 128 direct applicants in the Republic (86 + 42) is just over 9% of those (1,005) who applied for Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon support between 1993 and 1999. The proportion for the Republic is higher than originally planned, as contacts were converted from indirects to direct as the fieldwork progressed.

Table 54: Distribution and balance of survey respondents

	Northern Ireland	The Republic	Total No.
Direct support	34	86	120
Indirect support	28	10	38
Rejected for support	15	42	57
Total	77	138	215

The sample of artists receiving or being rejected for direct support was designed to be representative of the main groups who apply. The initial random selection was later adjusted to ensure that some of the smaller strata, such as dancers or Irish speakers, were also covered.

We conducted each interview on the telephone, speaking directly to the artist concerned. We used a semi-structured questionnaire that obtained a mix of hard, comparable quantitative data and more descriptive personal opinion on:

- The awards for which they had applied.
- The art and other benefits that resulted from this support.
- The longer term artistic and other impacts on the artist of receiving support.
- Practical aspects of the process of applying and ways to improve it.
- The role of resource organisations.
- The needs and priorities for arts funding.
- Personal, artistic and financial development of the interviewee.

Sample Selection: Direct Support

The sample of applicants was taken at random from data provided by the two Arts Councils in the form of computerised lists. The raw data on these lists was adjusted to deal with repeat applications from individuals and sorted so that the main categories of art form and timing were randomly distributed. A sample was then drawn of approximately three times the number of intended interviews for approved and rejected applications, to allow for non-contacts and refusals. Where a selected name was unsuitable, because they lacked a telephone or because they had an overseas address (other than elsewhere in the British Isles - Irish artists living in England, Scotland and Wales were included), the next name in the list was substituted. This is standard practice but might introduce an element of bias, for instance, if there is a consistency in the type of artist who lacks a telephone or needs to pursue their art outside the British Isles.

Sample Selection: Indirect Support

We contacted the indirectly supported artists through arts associations, support agencies and professional bodies. These were asked to provide names and contact details of their members. The purpose of sampling indirectly supported artists was three-fold:

- To provide a control group for the survey.
- To have a measure of the reach of the Arts Councils' support.
- To obtain views on the support artists received from such organisations.

The arts infrastructure in Ireland is highly centralised. Finding artists outside the support system was difficult. First, most artists who have had formal training or belong to assisted associations have applied to the Arts Councils for support at some time in their careers. The support programme is very well known. Teachers and organisations make a point of advising artists to apply for Arts Council support. Artists in studios and other places of joint working routinely apply when others in the studio remind them. The small scale of awards, and the range of activities which qualify for funding (conferences, travel, etc.) makes this a very accessible support system. Second, in the time available to us, and given the priorities of the research

brief, we were largely limited to working through agencies who received Arts Council support. Their members might be more likely to know of individual awards and to have applied for them than artists working in rural areas or in unsupported art forms.

Our sampling suggests that the reach of the Arts Councils is good but channelled. In Northern Ireland there is great concentration on visual artists, consistent with the pattern of grants available. In both Northern Ireland and the Republic there is more support for creative artists rather than interpretative artists such as actors and musicians. Those indirectly contacted in these art forms often felt that the Arts Councils did not run schemes appropriate to them. In some cases in Northern Ireland, of course, support is provided by Lottery funding. Another group who felt that they were being excluded from potential support in the future were those Irish artists living abroad. They felt that the Arts Councils were not providing them with information on awards and support comparable with the information available to artists living in Ireland.

Response

The artists we contacted were very willing to be interviewed on the telephone and to answer our questions fully and frankly. Only one person explicitly declined to be interviewed, although many needed to re-arrange for a more convenient time. The norm was for artists to call us back or fix another time if we 'phoned them when it was not convenient for them. The number of artists who had moved or could no longer be traced was high. In particular, artists whose application was rejected were more difficult to trace than those who were successful. This points to a mobile population. Irish artists are able to practice their art in many different countries, or may wish to spend time where they can further develop their art. Those whose applications for support were refused may have had even greater pressures on them to seek audiences abroad. The mobility of the population meant that the Arts Councils' address records for their clients were often out of date.

We have conducted many telephone surveys of artists with considerable success but were warned at the outset of this project that telephone interviews were novel and untried in collecting information from artists in Ireland. In the event, the approach worked very well for us here too and revealed a number of clear advantages over other survey methods:

- Several artists said they had been unwilling to respond to written surveys in the past (or to believe the published findings of such research) because they took the view that too many other artists would also not respond.
- Many said they preferred the anonymity of telephone over face-to-face interviews. Certainly, those we interviewed were very willing to respond on the whole range of topics covered in the questionnaire.
- The direct contact of a telephone call gave a sense of "talking to" rather than "talking at" the artist, and helped them feel that we were genuinely able to listen to them. The inter-personal method gave respondents a feeling of inclusion in the arts world.

- Artists felt more comfortable discussing their experience of funding in their own place of work or on neutral territory, rather than in the offices of the fund-giver.

APPENDIX THREE: SAMPLE ARTISTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Contact	Interviewer	Date
Name:		
Address:		
Telephone number:		
Sex:		
Discipline:		
Subdiscipline:		
Creative or interpretive artist (code):		

A. Experience of Grant Programmes

1. Have you ever received an individual grant from the Arts Council? Write down total number of grants. *If no, go to Q18.* No
2. If yes, how many of these were in the last six years? No
3. If yes to 2. What was the most recent grant applied for? (write full name of programme and code).
.....

Interview for one grant only. For agency referred choose the most recent grant excluding 1998. For AC referred, interview for the specific grant listed.

- Bursary.
- For professional development.
- For education.
- For training.
- For travelling.
- Artflight.
- For equipment.
- A residency.
- Commissioning.
- A general award.
- Other, please specify.

4. *If yes:*

- When?
- How much did you receive? £.....
- How much did you apply for? £.....
- Why did you apply?

How did you hear about the grants?

- Word of mouth
- Previous contact with ACE
- Referral through arts organisation
- Newspaper
- Other, please specify

1. Did you complete a piece of work as a result of this support? If yes, what? If no, why not?
Yes Comment
No Comment
2. Would you have been able to do this work without the grant?
Yes Comment
No Comment

3. Did the support give more time to spend on your art?
Yes No

If yes:

What percentage of your time did you spend on your art before the grant?
What percentage of your time did you spend on your art during the grant?
For roughly how long did the grant support you?

4. Were there other effects of the support (ask)?
Yes No

Did it increase your confidence?
Did it raise your credibility? What was the effect of this?
Did it give you a chance to showcase your work?
Did it allow you to take up an opportunity which you would not otherwise have been able to take up?
Did you obtain more work/commissions as result? How much in value?
Do you feel more financially stable as a result?
Did you make any useful contacts for your art work?
Do you feel you reached a new stage in your artistic career?
Did it contribute to your artistic development?

5. If yes to artistic development, how? – Did it introduce you to (code):
Yes No

New techniques.
New approaches.
New audiences/participants.
New applications.
New partners.
Other.

6. If it didn't contribute to your artistic development, why not?

7. What would you describe as the most valuable effect of the support?

B. Process

8. What did you think of the process of applying for the money? Did you have any problems filling in the application? Explain.

9. How long did it take you to fill in the application form? _____ hours

10. Was it clear what was expected of you?

Yes Comment
No Comment

11. Did you receive any assistance with filling in the form? If yes, from whom? (code)

Arts Council staff
Arts organisation
Friends
Other, please specify

Other, please specify

D. Needs and Priorities

23. What do you think is the most effective way for the Arts Council to support the individual artist?
(code)

- Direct grants to the artist.
- Support organisations.
- Lobbying of Government e.g. tax, dole, Education Department.
- Helping to change public perceptions.
- Other additional ways, please specify

24. Are there particular categories of artists who you think deserve special support? If yes, who?

25. At what stage do you think support to artists is most effective? Why?

- Training/starting out.
- Artistic development/mid career.
- Mature career.

Comment

26. At what stage are you now?

- Training/starting out.
- Artistic development/mid career.
- Mature career.

27. Probe to discover career background and code.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Self taught | Early art career |
| Art education route | Came to art later from another career |

28. Have you encountered any barriers to your career development in the arts? If yes, please specify?

- | | |
|-----|---------|
| Yes | Comment |
| No | |

29. Do you have any educational qualifications? If yes, what is the highest qualification you have?

30. What are the main restrictions on the range and quality of your work? (open question, code)

- Financial problems. Please specify:
- Inadequate income.
 - Need to work in non arts field to earn income.
 - Uncertainty about income.
 - Money for equipment.
 - Tax problems.
 - Copyright problems.
- Lack of access to studio space.
 - Lack of training.
 - Lack of the right course in Ireland.
 - Difficulty in accessing new technology.
 - Difficulties for unknown artists.
 - Lack of time to do the work well.
 - Lack of promotional opportunities in Ireland.
 - Lack of promotional opportunities abroad.
 - Lack of demand for work.
 - Lack of trained teachers/directors.
 - Childcare and domestic duties.
 - Physical disabilities.
 - Problems due to age.

Sex discrimination.
Public attitudes to artists in Ireland.
Other, please specify.

E. Income

31. What is your employment status:

- Self employed
- Employed full time in art in arts related work in non-arts
- Employed part time in art in arts related work in non- arts
- Unemployed
- Retired from employment

32. What was your Arts Council grant income, income from art, income from non-art, expenses, and total family income for the last five years?

	Grant Income	Income from Art	Income from Non-art	Expenses
1998				
1997				
1996				
1995				
1994				

F. Background

1. In which language do you work?
Irish English
2. What is your age?
3. Do you have any disability?

APPENDIX FOUR: BACKGROUND ON PROGRAMMES

Introduction

This set of tables gives background information on the programmes and schemes available to the individual artist. We appreciate that the Arts Council uses the terms programmes and schemes to apply to different areas of activity. For the sake of this analysis, the term programme will be used to cover both.

The tables have two purposes:

- To present information on different programmes and schemes in a consistent format, thereby allowing comparison.
- To highlight gaps or ambiguities in the operation of programmes.

Although the tables present a large amount of information, they are not intended to be comprehensive. Our interest is in the patterns across programmes rather than in the details of individual programmes.

The aim of this analysis is to inspire thought and discussion, for instance:

- Are the objectives clear? Do different parties within the Arts Councils agree on the objectives?
- Are the conditions comprehensive? Are there unspoken conditions that need to be made explicit?
- Do some perceived strengths and weaknesses recur? What does this tell us about the structure of the portfolio?

Key points can be summarised by explaining each heading in turn.

Background

This covers the age of a programme or scheme, any partners, changes in its organisation and other aspects of its history. Historical factors can be important in explaining the rationale behind programmes – this is especially the case where grant programmes were set up in response to circumstances in the past that have subsequently changed.

The start date of schemes varies widely. On the one hand, several programmes have been set up in the last year or so. This demonstrates the dynamism of the Arts Councils' activity and the way they are continually responding to need. On the other hand, some programmes are very old, in some cases over twenty years old. This gives the advantage of continuity and stability. It begs the question of whether programmes need fine-tuning to reflect current circumstances and priorities.

Status

Most programmes are ongoing. Both Music and Visual Arts in the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon are considering consolidation of grants into a smaller number of categories. This change comes after a long period of time over which new programmes were introduced without reviewing and discontinuing old programmes.

Objectives

Objectives are open-ended. In most cases, objectives are described in words that mean “to support the artist” (to support people wishing to pursue careers as professional play directors”). In some cases, programme objectives state what area of activity the artist is supported for (“to gain experience or carry out research”, “for professional development,” “to provide education,” “to encourage collaboration”). Less commonly, some programme objectives state which artists have priority for support.

In most cases, objectives are not instrumental – they are process-oriented rather than impact-oriented. With the exception of commissioning, grants are not expected to produce particular effects. For instance, the programmes state that they are supporting professional development, (or education, training etc.) but do not give higher level rationales: to raise the standard of art in Ireland, to allow

artists who might otherwise have gone abroad to work in Ireland, to develop cross media etc. Support to the artist is assumed to be sufficiently justified in itself. In some of the programmes in Northern Ireland, wider objectives are given (for example “to support the welfare of the whole community”) but the link from these to the lower level objectives (“to support artistic development of the artist”) is not explained.

Objectives are unstrategic. In most cases, they are reducible to the needs of the individual. There is no stated relationship between grants. The whole is the sum of the parts.

Three observations can be made as a result of this analysis:

- Especially in the Republic, support to the artist is clearly a high priority in itself.
- The general nature of objectives clearly provides flexibility.
- Lack of precise objectives makes evaluation more difficult.

Clarifying objectives could have the following benefits:

- Improving effectiveness by highlighting the circumstances where grants are best deployed.
- Generating deeper discussion about the aims and processes of the Arts Council.
- Improving communication and transparency to the applicant.
- Improving consistency between objectives and aspects of processing such as conditions, time of decision etc.
- Strengthening monitoring.

Area

Out of the 55 programmes described, six are limited to Northern Ireland, ten were set up on an All Ireland basis, and 38 are administered by the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon, although all the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon programmes are open to artists in the North. Even given the greater population of the Republic, this suggests a higher priority to the individual artist than in Northern Ireland, and a greater level of fragmentation.

All of the programmes that cover Ireland equally involve some form of partnership outside the Arts Councils. This suggests that matched funding might be easier to raise by making explicit the possibility of operating across Ireland. There are an additional nine or so programmes which involve partners which do not span Ireland.

Character

Forty three of the 55 programmes are structured by art form. Twelve span art forms, most of which are residencies. Dance, drama and film have two to five programmes, music has eleven and visual arts has sixteen. This roughly reflects the balance between individual and collective art forms. In collective art forms indirect support to the individual artist is likely to be more important than direct support.

It is useful to look beyond the specific art form descriptions to see similarities and differences. To do this, we classified programmes into eight categories:

- Bursaries.
- Professional awards.
- Education awards.
- Training awards.
- Travel awards.
- Residencies.
- Equipment and premises awards.
- Commissioning.

Some of the categories are wide, for instance residencies. Where possible we have classified general awards (e.g. those named after their founder or funder) by their purpose (e.g. travel or residency). In some cases, programmes serve more than one function (for example Artflight is a travel award directed at professional development), so we have chosen the main function.

There are similarities between programmes within these categories. For instance, travel awards and equipment awards are typically small (the average upper limit is £1,950 and £1,250 respectively), training and education have higher upper limits (averaging around £3,000-£4,000), bursaries are slightly larger (an average of £6,600), residencies and commissioning are larger (£7,000-£12,000 average). That generalisations can be made across art forms suggests that combining schemes, in categories such as these, would be feasible. Northern Ireland already operates its bursaries on this basis.

The average upper limit across all the programmes is £5,000. This is relatively low for a grant programme.

Grants are subject to general and specific conditions. The standard conditions in the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon are:

- All awards are offered subject to the availability of funds.
- Applicants must be of Irish birth, or resident in Ireland or Northern Ireland.
- Standard application forms should be used.
- Awards are paid in instalments on written request.

In addition different programmes are subject to a range of special conditions. We analysed the range of special conditions that occur across the portfolio:

- Age or experience of the applicant.
- Entry requirements (qualifications etc).
- Nature of expenditure allowed.
- Whether repeat applications are allowed.
- Whether grants can be combined with other programmes.
- Matched funding required.
- Whether other programmes should be applied to first (funder of last resort).
- How the grant is calculated (day rates etc).
- Process of application.
- Standard of participating institution (e.g. college) required.
- Monitoring to be provided.
- Criteria on which decisions are made.
- Work to be completed.
- Preparation carried out (e.g. approval on course, obtaining of travel visas).

Only a small number of these are listed for any one programme. This begs the question of whether the conditions should be listed for other programmes (but are implicit), or whether programmes really have different conditions. The first implies an inconsistency in communication, the second an inconsistency in practice. The explanation for either of these lies in the Arts Councils' desire to be flexible so that they can meet the needs of the applicant. However, in matters of procedure rather than content, information probably is relevant for all programmes and some form of further information might be useful to the applicant, and helpful to the Arts Councils in reducing abortive applications. It might be useful for officers to look through the list of conditions above and see if individual programmes do have, or should have conditions, which are not currently stated.

A second omission, is that of criteria on which decisions are based. Only a couple of programmes state these precisely. This is in part a reflection of the general phrasing of objectives for programmes.

Application Deadlines

The vast majority of programmes have one deadline. A couple have two or four deadlines. Five of the programmes – travel awards and residencies – operate on a rolling programme.

Bursaries: Literature

Background	Set up in the early 1980s.
Status	Ongoing. Plans to increase the amount and reduce the number of awards.
Objectives	To enable the artist to buy time to make work.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £4,000-£8,000 pa (£10,000-£16,000 pa for two year bursaries). ➤ 1-2 year bursaries for specific projects in drama, fiction, poetry, biography or literary criticism. ➤ In Irish or English. ➤ Priority to writers who have been published.
Application deadlines	1

Bursaries: Visual Arts

Status	Ongoing
Objectives	To enable an artist to buy time to make work. To assist development and growth in the artist's work or professional skills.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £1,000-£7,000. ➤ 1-2 years. ➤ Priority to artists with 3+ years experience. ➤ One bursary is earmarked for recent graduates or artists who have been practising for less than three years. ➤ Report on work is produced.
Application deadlines	1

Bursaries: Visual Arts – Artwork Access Awards

Background	Started in 1999.
Status	Ongoing
Objectives	To enable visual artists to make their work accessible to people with disabilities; to encourage artists to come up with creative ways of making their work accessible; to encourage artists to consult with people with disabilities.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Includes catalogues, invitations to openings, in alternative format; sign interpretation for openings, audio description of artworks etc. ➤ Up to £1,000.
Application deadlines	1

Bursaries: Visual Arts – Contemporary Visual Arts Criticism

Background	Joint initiative with CIRCA Arts Magazine. Started in 1997.
Status	Ongoing
Objectives	To encourage high standards in writing on the contemporary visual arts in Ireland.
Area	All Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Approximately £6,000. ➤ Project of approximately six months to produce a substantial body of writing which will be published serially in Circa Magazine. ➤ Covers any administrative or research costs incurred by the project.
Application deadlines	1

Bursaries: Music – Advanced Instrumentalists and Singers

Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To facilitate high level development and training in performance in all forms of music.
Area	Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Up to £5,000. ➤ One or two years. ➤ Applicants should have completed formal performance studies to at least post graduate level, or have attained a comparable standard in performance by other documented means. ➤ Auditions and awards are held.
Application deadlines	1

Bursaries: Music – Composers' Bursaries

Status	Under review: planned consolidation into one Music Award.
Objectives	To assist established composers in the development and growth of their work or professional skills.
Area	Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Up to £7,500. ➤ For a period of sabbatical leave for a specific composition project or course of study or development. ➤ One to six months. ➤ Ideally involve a recognised educational or cultural institution outside Ireland, or one chosen with the Arts Council. ➤ Provisional plans need to be set in place with the institution before the application can be accepted.
Application deadlines	1

Bursaries: General Arts Awards in Performing and Creative Arts

Background	Set up in the late 1970s, early 1980s.
Status	Ongoing.

Objectives	To support artistic development of the artist, and welfare of the whole community.
Area	Northern Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Up to £12,000. ➤ Repeat applications allowed. ➤ No age limit. ➤ Must have lived in Northern Ireland for at least a year. ➤ Not available for prolonged study at further education leading to professional qualifications. ➤ Registered students are excluded in the visual arts.
Application deadlines	1

Professional Awards: Apprentice Scheme for Artists and Architects

Background	1997.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To enable people to work together – artists with architects, or younger artists with older artists. To encourage cross-fertilisation between the visual arts and architecture.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Up to £5,000. ➤ Can be for a specific project or for continuous regular studio practice. ➤ Should be mutually beneficial. ➤ Both parties should be committed to the exchange of information and skills. ➤ Applications are made jointly.
Application deadlines	1

Professional Awards: Film and Video

Status	Reviewed in 1998.
Objectives	To support the transition from young film maker to independent professional. To encourage innovation and experiment as the core of high quality film making.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established and emergent artists. ➤ Film and related media. ➤ Also open to visual artists. ➤ £200-£15,000. ➤ 1997 categories: short dramas, experimental film/video, community film/video.
Application deadlines	1

Professional Awards: Visual Arts – Martin Toonder Award

Background	Funded by the Dutch artist Marten Toonder.
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Objectives	To honour an artist of established reputation.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ One award of approximately £4,000 (this is a trust fund so the amount varies). ➤ Alternates between visual arts, literature and music.
Application deadlines	1

Professional Awards: Visual Arts – Mary Farl Powers Award to Printmakers.

Objectives	To give money to an Irish printmaker.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Biennial. ➤ One award of approximately £1,000 (this is a trust fund so the amount varies).
Application deadlines	1

Professional Awards: Literature - The Writer

Background	Well established scheme.
Status	Under review. Amount might be increased and the number of awards decreased.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Up to £1,000. ➤ For writers' weekends, etc.

Professional Awards: Drama - Play Directors

Background	Dates back to the 1970s.
Status	Ongoing. Might link it to theatre management to provide placements rather than academic training.
Objectives	To support people wishing to pursue careers as professional play directors.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £1,000-£2,000. ➤ Calculated as number of weeks work times Equity minimum. ➤ To undertake appropriate courses or accept placements in Ireland or overseas. ➤ Applicants must have some professional experience or training.
Application deadlines	4

Professional Awards: Drama –Designers for the Stage

Background	1990.
Status	Ongoing, hoping to expand it.
Objectives	To enable artists already working in design to gain more specialist training or experience. Stage design has become more structured and sophisticated. Might encourage a designer to move into stage work. There is a shortage of stage designers.

Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £500-£5,000. ➤ To undertake appropriate courses or accept placements in Ireland or overseas. ➤ Applicants must have some professional experience or training.
Application deadlines	1

Professional Awards: Professional Dancers

Background	Originally intended for advanced dancers but ended up for qualifying dancers because of the gap in provision.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To allow dancers to develop their performance skills, extend their techniques on a validated course.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £300-£1,000. ➤ For study visits or short/intensive courses in dance. ➤ Candidates have at least two year's professional performance experience. ➤ Funding covers fees and accommodation.
Application deadlines	1

Professional Awards: Dance - Choreographers

Objectives	To enable choreographers to follow a course of study or to set up formal or informal apprentice arrangements with an established choreographer abroad.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £500-£2,000. ➤ Candidates should be experienced choreographers.
Application deadlines	1

Training Awards: Drama – Training in Acting

Background	1993.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	Originally devised to redress the lack of training opportunities for drama in Ireland. Stayed after two institutions opened their courses.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £1,000-£3,500. ➤ Should have had at least one year's training. ➤ Audition or interview. ➤ Can make repeat applications. ➤ Aged at least 16.
Application deadlines	1

Training Awards: Opera Training Awards

Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To enable practitioners to gain specialist experience in opera.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creative and/technical personnel, other than singers, who wish to further their professional training in opera in Ireland or abroad. ➤ Applications from artists or from professional opera companies based in Ireland who wish to offer opportunities to individual practitioners.
Application deadlines	2

Education Awards: Visual Arts – Visual Arts and Architecture Postgraduate Scholarships

Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To enable visual artists to attend a colleges abroad.
Area	Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £2,000-£3,000. ➤ For colleges abroad. ➤ Applications must identify the chosen college, give prospectus details, and indicate their acceptance onto the chosen course, when known.
Application deadlines	1

Education Awards: Music – Margaret Arnold Scholarship

Background	Established in 1997.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To facilitate high level development and training for instrumentalists and singers.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Must have completed formal performance studies to an advanced level or attained a comparable standard in performance by other required documented means. ➤ Offered in rotation to instrumentalists and singers.

Education Awards: Music – Composers Postgraduate Study

Status	Under review: planned consolidation into one Music Award.
Objectives	The purpose is to make enable young Irish composers to develop their talent through exposure to influences outside (1997 Annual Report).
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Average of £2,500. ➤ For a course of study either at a recognised institution abroad or one chosen in consultation with the Arts Council. ➤ Good honours primary degree in Music. ➤ Track record of commitment to composition.
Application deadlines	1

Education Awards: Music – Conductors’ Study

Status	Under review: planned consolidation into one Music Award.
Objectives	To assist and support Irish conductors who wish to pursue studies either in Ireland or abroad.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £4,500. ➤ Full or part –time study including attendance at summer schools, seminars or masterclasses. ➤ Applications with video recording and possible interview/audition.
Application deadlines	1

Education Awards: Music – Doris Keogh Award

Background	Set up in 1993.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To assist the training and development of young flute and recorder players.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Award is made every two years. ➤ Approximately £700. ➤ Applicants must be under 23. ➤ Ideally for full time or occasional study abroad. ➤ Applications with audio cassette. ➤ Possible interview/audition.
Application deadlines	1

Education Awards: Dance – Undergraduate Dance Students

Objectives	To support training at an advanced level in preparation for a career as a professional dancer.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £1,000-£4,000. ➤ Undergraduate students aged 16 years or over. ➤ Attainment of RAD Elementary Certificate or its equivalent. ➤ Classical or contemporary styles. ➤ Selection by audition to an independent panel. ➤ Travel, living or professional expenses. ➤ Place already secured in school. ➤ Courses nationally recognised.
Application deadlines	1

Education Awards: Music - Skidmore College Jazz Studentship

Status	Ongoing.
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Objectives	To enable a jazz musician to attend a summer course at Skidmore College in New York.
Area	All Ireland basis.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Place at the Summer Jazz Institute of Skidmore College, USA, usually June to July each year. ➤ Emphasis of the course is on ensemble or “in combo” playing. ➤ Application with video recording, and/or audio cassette, possible interview/audition.

Residencies: Literature - Writers in Residence

Background	Partnership with local authorities, universities etc.
Status	Becoming more focused.
Objectives	To enable writers to develop their work while at the same time engaging with a community which might not otherwise have the opportunity to read, write and discuss its own work and that of the writer.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Usually 6 months duration.
Application deadlines	Continuous.

Residencies: Literature - Writers in Libraries

Status	Reviewed in 1996.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ One days workshop or reading.

Residencies: Drama – Play Directors

Background	Started in 1997.
Objectives	An extended bursary. To give a director an extended period of working with a repertory company.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 3-12 months.
Application deadlines	4

Residencies: Schools

Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To encourage intensive collaboration between schools and artists.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collaboration on a specific project. ➤ Innovative approaches to participation are encouraged. ➤ Artist as animateur/maker not teacher. ➤ Normally 6 weeks to 6 months. ➤ Applications submitted by schools. ➤ Criteria include artistic merit and viability, commitment to standards of

	<p>excellence, imagination and innovation, integration, availability of suitable facilities and admin. support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Up to £1,500. ➤ Written report required.
Application deadlines	2

Residencies: Writers in Schools

Status	Delegated to Poetry Ireland.
Objectives	To encourage children to read and write.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1-2 hours visit. ➤ Applications must be received at least 3 weeks prior to the proposed date of the visit. ➤ Up to £150.
Application deadlines	Continuous.

Residencies: Community Arts

Background	Delivered in partnership with local organisations such as area based partnerships or hospitals.
Objectives	The artist helps the host organisation to prepare an area based plan for the arts.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consultative process. ➤ £10,000-£20,000. ➤ Matched by host organisation. ➤ One year. ➤ Three progress reports submitted.

Residencies: Multidisciplinary – Artist in the Community

Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To encourage intensive collaboration between community groups and artists.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £1,000-£2,000. ➤ Artists to work with community groups. ➤ Must be joint bid/group ownership. ➤ Artists must be of professional standard. ➤ All art forms. ➤ Collaboration on a specific project. ➤ Artist as maker not facilitator. ➤ 6 weeks – 6 months.
Application deadlines	2

Residencies: Artist in the Community Scheme

Background	Set up in the late 1980s and reviewed four years ago.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To raise the profile of the arts and create opportunities for development in areas which have been under-served. To encourage communities to become engaged with the creative process with highly qualified artists.
Area	Northern Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Targeted outside the urban areas. ➤ Residencies by artists as individuals, companies or cross art form groupings. ➤ Artists must have professional status and appropriate training. ➤ Application is made by the host organisation rather than the artist. ➤ Up to 50% of funding. ➤ £500-£2,000.
Application deadlines	1

Residencies: Artist in Schools

Background	Set up in 1979.
Status	Under review. Changes being considered include: encouraging specialisation from artists, providing training to artists, targeting on appropriate schools, guidance on good practice, and keeping the directory up to date on a web site.
Objectives	To enable young people to meet artists in the classroom and to experience their creative skills.
Area	Northern Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supported by the Young Arts Directory, which is currently being updated. ➤ Schools have a quota of 3 full or 6 half days. ➤ Each artist is limited to 12 full days.

Residencies: US/Ireland Residency Exchange Programme

Background	With Americans for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.
Status	Ongoing.
Area	All Ireland basis.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Education, community arts residency. ➤ May to December each year. ➤ Four week exchanges. ➤ Includes return flights, health insurance, and a stipend of £1,250.
Application deadlines	1

Residencies: Tyrone Guthrie Centre

Status	Ongoing.
Area	All Ireland basis.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Artists make a financial contribution according to what they can afford.

	➤ Space for 12 artists.
Application deadlines	Ongoing.

Residencies: Visual Arts - PS1 Studio Fellowship New York

Background	Set up in the late 1980s.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To support a visual artist to develop their art and their career.
Area	All Ireland basis.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Administered by the Irish American Cultural Institute. ➤ Two studio spaces are available for Irish artists (one from the Northern Ireland and one from the Republic of Ireland). ➤ Duration is one year, usually October to September. ➤ Includes an apartment plus stipend of \$1,500 per month and return fare. ➤ Decision is a two stage process. ➤ Final selection is made by a PS1 jury in New York on the basis of a shortlist produced by the Arts Councils. ➤ Artists are expected to hold one scheduled open-studio exhibition during their term at PS1.
Application deadlines	1

Residencies: Visual Arts - The British School, Rome

Status	Ongoing.
Area	Northern Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fellowship from October to September. ➤ Covers board and lodging, and a living and travel allowance of £4,500.
Application deadlines	1

Travel Awards

Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	For professional development. To gain experience or carry out research.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maximum value of £1,500. ➤ For visual artists, architects, writers, playwrights, play directors, set designers, critics, choreographers and creative artists in music. ➤ Not intended for education. ➤ Not intended for people organising events. ➤ 2 rounds per year.
Application deadlines	3

Travel Awards: George Campbell Memorial Travel Grant

Background	Established by the two Arts Councils with the Spanish Cultural Institute in memory of the Irish painter George Campbell. Dates back to the early 1980s.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To enable artists to go to Spain to study. To celebrate the strong cultural contact which the Irish artist George Campbell developed with Spain.
Area	All Ireland basis.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £1,500 up to £4,500. ➤ The winner comes from Northern Ireland and the Republic, on alternate years.
Application deadlines	1

Travel Awards: Thomas Dammann Junior Memorial Trust

Background	Started by an American couple.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To support students wanting to travel to visit exhibitions, museums, galleries and buildings of architectural importance.
Area	Northern Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Must be registered for a postgraduate or undergraduate study at a third level institution in Ireland. ➤ Reapplication allowed. ➤ Groups or individual applications. ➤ £2,000 up to £24,000.
Application deadlines	1

Travel Awards: Visual Arts - Alice Berger Hammerschlag Trust Award

Status	Ongoing.
Area	All Ireland basis.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Travel award up to £1,000. ➤ Visual or plastic arts.
Application deadlines	1

Travel Awards: Artflight

Background	Run with the support of Aer Lingus. Set up in 1991.
Status	Ongoing. Will be relaunched in 1999. The aim is that funding would extend to travel from people abroad wanting to come to Ireland. There is also the possibility of bringing in another airline, which would extend the travelling options.
Objectives	To allow artists to gain experience, broaden their horizons, make contacts. The aim of travel is broadly professional development.
Area	All Ireland basis.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Artists travelling outside Ireland. ➤ Benefit to artistic practice or career (rather than one-off speculative visits).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Funder of last resort (not cultural exchanges or representations, which are funded elsewhere). ➤ Applications at least 1 month (but no more than 3 months) in advance of departure date. ➤ Must be in possession of valid travel documentation. ➤ One award per individual per year. ➤ Only available for return journeys on Aer Lingus. ➤ Short report submitted on return. ➤ Northern Ireland does not fund groups. ➤ Northern Ireland does not fund pop/rock groups. ➤ Northern Ireland does not fund students.
Application deadlines	Continuous.

Travel Awards: Go See

Background	Run with the support of The British Council and Bord na Gaeilge. Started in 1997.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To help people broaden their horizons, make contacts for collaboration, share experiences with groups abroad. Also enables artists and arts practitioners working in the Irish language to establish professional contact with colleagues working in Celtic languages. The aim of travel is broadly networking.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First time meetings in the UK and Ireland leading to the development of professional and artistic contacts or other productive experiences. ➤ Some matched funding required (usually). ➤ Aimed at planning tours, exhibitions, exchanges etc. ➤ Applications at least 4 weeks in advance of travel date. ➤ Open to creative, interpretative, artists, arts managers, organisers and technicians in all fields. Tends to be used more by administrators. ➤ One award per individual per year. ➤ Can be combined with an Artflight award. ➤ 75% paid before travel and the balance on presentation of a short report. ➤ Up to £750.
Application deadlines	Continuous.

Equipment Awards: Visual Arts - Materials, Equipment or Documentation

Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To allow working artists to purchase materials or equipment, or to document work in slide, video or photographic form.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £250-£750. ➤ To purchase materials or equipment, or document work in slides, video or

	<p>photographic form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Documentation grants cannot be used to fund the publication of catalogues. ➤ Individuals can apply for materials/equipment or documentation.
Application deadlines	1

Equipment Awards: Visual Arts - Milliken Bros Award

Background	Started in 1999.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To support and develop a body of work prior to an exhibition which may be of significance to the applicant's career.
Area	All Ireland basis.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £1,000 for the purchase of fine art materials from Milliken Brothers. ➤ Students are not eligible.
Application deadlines	1

Premises Awards: Visual Arts and Drama - Studio Rental Assistance

Status	Ongoing. Amounts have been increased.
Objectives	To enable an artist to produce work. To assist set, costume and other designers for the stage with the cost of rental of studio space in Ireland.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £500-£2,000. ➤ Located in Ireland. ➤ Larger amount is for expansion or relocation. ➤ Not for studios groups which are already funded.
Application deadlines	1

Commissioning: Drama – Playwrights Commission

Background	1990.
Status	Ongoing. Under review.
Objectives	To encourage new work to be created and brought to the repertory. To encourage more productions to commission new work.
	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Application from a professional production company. ➤ Playwrights born or resident in Ireland. ➤ Up to 50% of proposed fee.
Application deadlines	1

Commissioning: Music - Jazz Development

Background	Established in 1993.
Status	Under review: planned consolidation into one Music Award.
Objectives	To help jazz musicians develop their work.

Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £1,000-£4,000. ➤ Award made every two years. ➤ Applicants must be under 23 years of age. ➤ Ideally full-time or occasional study abroad. ➤ Applications with an audio cassette and possible interview/audition.
Application deadlines	1

Commissioning: Music – Opera Commissioning

Background	Established in 1997.
Status	Ongoing. Under review.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Up to 50% of the proposed fee. ➤ Applicant does not have to have produced new operas previously. ➤ Includes works for children and young people, community groups or other target groups.
Application deadlines	2

Commissioning: Music – New Music

Background	This is run in conjunction with the Contemporary Music Centre.
Status	Ongoing. Under review.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Application from performers or organisers.
Application deadlines	2

Commissioning: Dance – Dance Commission Scheme

Background	Established in 1997.
Status	Ongoing. Under review.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £3,000-£9,500. ➤ Revenue funded dance companies are not eligible.
Application deadlines	1

Commissioning: Film and Video – Framework Awards

Background	Co-funded by RTE, and Bord Scannan na hEireann.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To fund six animated shorts. To raise the quality of Irish animation.
Area	The Republic of Ireland.
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ £20,000-£25,000. ➤ Animation which makes creative use of the medium and is primarily aimed

	<p>at an adult audience.</p> <p>➤ Open to all forms of animation, can be made on any format but should be delivered on 35mm or Beta SP.</p>
Application deadlines	1

Aosdana

Background	Established in 1983 by the Arts Council. Currently limited to a membership of 200, with a maximum five additional artists elected each year by existing members.
Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To support and honour artists whose work has made an outstanding contribution to the arts in Ireland and to encourage and assist its members in devoting their energies fully to their art.
Area	All Ireland basis.
Character	<p>➤ Members of Aosdana are eligible to apply for the Cnuas. This is a sum of £8,000 untaxed for a term of five years. Application is means-tested.</p> <p>➤ Membership of Aosdana is by nomination from two existing members.</p> <p>➤ Membership is limited to approximately 200 people with roughly 7 places added per year.</p> <p>➤ Recipients of Cnuas cannot apply for other Arts Council awards.</p>
Application deadlines	Continuous

Bass Ireland Arts Award

Status	Ongoing.
Objectives	To encourage the enrichment of the cultural scene of Northern Ireland. A community affairs programme from Bass.
Area	Northern Ireland.
Character	➤ £5,000 each year, according to a theme set by Bass.
Application deadlines	1

APPENDIX FIVE: A STRUCTURAL MODEL OF PUBLIC SECTOR PROGRAMMES

Introduction

Public sector organisations often complain that evaluators expect so much of programmes that, in essence, they fail to capture the inherent compromise that is at the heart of public sector intervention. We have devised a Structural Model that draws attention to the trade-offs required in programmes. Our model is rooted in the learning school of evaluation. This argues that all programmes have strengths and weaknesses; all are relevant in some contexts but not in others; there is no perfect programme. Evaluation has a central role in providing feedback to enable programmes to continually adjust in tune with the changing pressures placed upon them. The Structural Model has several benefits:

- The model places evaluation within the field of organisational decision-making. Findings become more useful when related to the practical choices open to programme organisers.
- The model teases out dimensions of the programme to be analysed independently. This widens the range of choices for the practitioner, since different dimensions can be fine-tuned in different directions.
- Framing the different dimensions as scales emphasises that there are a whole range of changes possible along a spectrum. This avoids the problem of programmes ricocheting from one extreme of a dimension to the other. Once the current structure is plotted the practitioner can see whether the required change is a minor or a major one.
- The model highlights the consequences of programme choices, in particular the existence of structural problems. We define structural problems as “predictable side effects of structural choices and trade-offs made in establishing programmes.” Structural problems are only those which can be directly traced to the structural dimensions of the programme. They can be distinguished from implementation problems, which are problems reflecting the way the programme has been organised and delivered. Structural problems are to some extent predictable and more difficult, but not impossible, to alleviate. There are two types of structural problems: those concerned with the effectiveness of the programme; and those concerned with the justification of the programme within performance measurement language.
- The model draws attention to the strengths as well as the weaknesses of different options. In our experience public sector organisations often take their strengths for granted and make choices that place these strengths in jeopardy. It is important not to underestimate what has already been achieved.

The aim of the model is to contextualise evaluation of a programme. It distinguishes deeply rooted problems from more superficial problems. It then presents the arts administrator with a whole range of options for change: moving along the structural dimensions, changing the balance between different dimensions, or finding new approaches to implementation.

This appendix describes the Structural Model in theory. The model is composed of a number of dimensions, partly overlapping and not mutually exclusive, which can be used to describe the character of public sector programmes.

Client-led versus Policy-led

Client-led programmes are those that are designed around the perceived needs of the client group rather than the policy needs of the funding organisation. An example of a policy-led programme would be an environmental programme targeted at small firms, administered by civil servants with no business background, and heavily curtailed by conditions such as leverage and additionality that mean nothing to the private sector (or in the case of leverage, mean something entirely different); environment is a priority to Government but is not usually a priority to small businesses, or if it is, it will be part of cost control, not an issue in itself.

Signs of client-led programmes are:

- Naming programmes according to types of clients or identifiable client activities.
- Defining eligibility criteria in terms that are familiar and meaningful to the client group.
- Integrating different elements of the programme to reflect real-life activities or processes in the client.
- Administering the programme by employing people from the client group rather than public servants.
- A culture that identifies strongly with the client group.

These characteristics often (but not always) lead to the following elements in client-led programmes:

- Customisation of the programme to meet different client needs.
- Flexibility in the conditions of individual grants, so that the role of the grant depends on the circumstances of the client.
- Involvement of the clients in the design or management of the programme.

Each of these three elements has potential structural problems. Customisation can result in fragmentation. Through time, the programme frays at the edges: development results in a proliferation of programmes rather than a strengthening and refinement of one central programme. Lack of standardisation can be time consuming to administer, so higher processing costs are to be expected from client-led programmes.

Customisation often relies on giving a high level of discretion to programme staff, which can be effective, but can also reduce equity between clients.

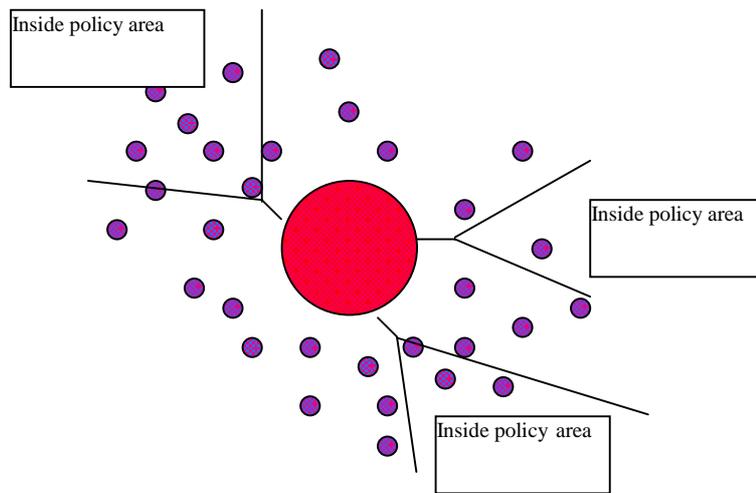
Flexibility in defining programmes can make boundaries unclear to outside organisations. This can lead to problems in managing the expectations of clients, and criticisms of subjectivity in decision-making. The diversity of experience that

flexibility produces is a major problem for evaluation because common aims or achievements are difficult to identify.

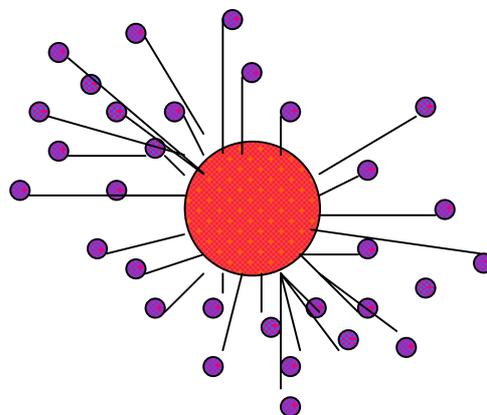
Involvement of the client group in the programme exposes the funder to public debate and can result in wider conflict and criticism than would be the case for a more aloof, bureaucratic approach.

Figure 2: Representation of policy-led and client-led programmes

Policy-led programme



Client-led programme



Client-led programmes are relatively rare in Government bodies. Their flexibility can appear chaotic and therefore unstrategic, even financially unviable. Client-led programmes are more difficult to justify using standard evaluation language: firstly because of the difficulty in producing aggregate performance indicators; secondly because closer contact with the client is often reflected in greater public criticism, higher expectations, and lower satisfaction.

Client-led versus policy-led is an important dimension. The next four dimensions are related to it.

Long Term versus Short Term

Long term programmes are those which focus attention on the large, central problems of their client group. They can be difficult to defend because progress is often very slow and incremental. Short term programmes set less ambitious goals, which can be ticked off once achieved. Short term programmes are often criticised for being marginal, and for losing sight of the central (and often intractable) problems.

In practice, long term funding often equates to core funding, and short term funding is often means project funding. Taking the specific case of core funding versus project funding illustrates the problems of this dimension vividly. Core funding is difficult to justify to funders because grants cannot easily show the outputs achieved. The ideology of performance management requires that funding can meet specific objectives beyond those of keeping organisations alive, or supporting a steady state. This requirement for clear targets and outputs is likely to push an organisation towards project funding. Project funding is assumed to be simply a more strategic and thought through version of long term funding, but in practice the two are likely to fund different organisational activities. Not all core costs can be dressed up as projects. In many sectors, including the arts, some funder still needs to cover core costs. Project funders can be seen to some extent as free riders, creaming off the project outputs while underpinned by the core funder.

Project work is assumed to improve strategic planning but the opposite is often the case, in as much as a project based approach reduces long term planning and commitment.

Targeted versus Responsive

Targeted programmes are those that set priorities derived from strategy. Targeting can be in terms of client characteristics, project activities, spatial area or other variables. Responsive programmes are those which set priorities according to the emerging demands placed upon them.

Targeting is often seen as better value for money because it aligns funding with strategy. The weakness of heavily targeted programmes is that they can be difficult to communicate and can suffer from faddishness. Clients often experience targeted programmes as a series of hoops through which they must jump to justify support, which can be frustrating. Large amounts of the funder's time can be spent in trying to locate the specific individuals which fall within targeting.

Integrated versus Partial

Integration covers a number of related concepts:

- Integration through time. Clients progress from one programme onto another, in a ladder of support.
- Integration through product. Complementary elements of support are packaged together.
- Integration across funders. Clients are presented with a seamless system, where funders' priorities and processes are not at the forefront.

Integration is a way of re-engineering policy-led programmes around client needs – to overcome the partiality of targeting. The advantage of integration is that it can be easier to explain to clients, and can be more effective, especially where the different elements generate synergy. The disadvantage is that it can lead to benefits being concentrated on a smaller number of clients.

Output versus Process Driven

Output driven programmes often arise where agencies are working on a contract basis at arms length from the main funder. Defining the nature and level of targets helps to clarify expectations and therefore to channel effort and reward achievement. Output related funding can also have the advantage of steering organisations without interfering in their day-to-day operations. Potential weaknesses of output driven programmes, mainly reflecting rigidity in their application, are a disincentive to investment or experimentation, and lack of attention to quality and sustainability.

Matched versus Independent

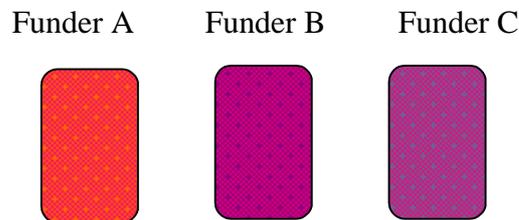
Matched programmes are those which pay only a per centage of project costs and expect applicants to find additional money from other funders, private sector banks, or their own resources. Matched programmes can be better value for money because the funder is leveraging their grant with money from elsewhere. This benefit is at the cost of the time and effort (and uncertainty) to the applicant of attempting to package funds.

The financial benefit from matched programmes depends on whether they bring new funding into the system or only re-distribute expenditure so that funding is shared. The latter case, where the effect is mainly to demand multiple rather than single funding for each project, has little overall impact on the system other than to increase administrative costs, and add an element of uncertainty while funding packages are being put into place. This uncertainty can reduce the scope for long term planning. A performance measurement culture rewards matched funding, whether effective or ineffective, because of the scope for double counting of outputs.

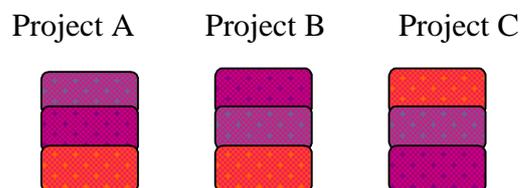
In practice, partnership is not judged solely in terms of its financial benefits, but also through its effect of introducing artists and artistic objectives to a wider group of potential funders. This can help to reduce the marginalisation of the arts.

Figure 3: Representation of choices around matched funding

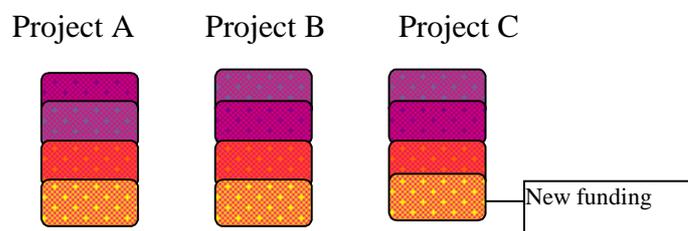
Unmatched funding



Matched funding without added value



Matched funding with added value



Depth versus Breadth

This is a relatively simple dimension. An example would be the trade off between a large number of small grants, and a small number of large grants. Depth gives greater scope for development, progression, and integration. Processing of a smaller number of large applications can be expected to have lower unit costs of administration. The weakness of depth is that it calls for more sophisticated expectations management to avoid a higher refusal rate.

Breadth has the advantage of spreading the benefit of support. It attracts criticisms of tokenism and diluting the effect.

Objective versus Subjective Criteria

Subjective criteria are those that imply a value judgement, for instance, where they relate to quality or potential. Objective criteria are descriptive, and include applicant

characteristics (often an element of targeting), track record, project characteristics, ability to complete the application form appropriately, and compliance with pre-set criteria. Predicted outputs from a grant (e.g. artwork created, jobs created) are generally assumed in the public sector to be objective criteria, but as they are speculative this is not the case.

Objective systems tend to break applications down into their elements. Subjective systems tend to judge the whole application on its merits. Subjective criteria can be made more objective by attempting to unpack terms and make them more explicit.

In-house versus Delegated

This dimension concerns the extent to which the public sector body administers programmes directly rather than contracting them out to other delivery agencies. In practice this choice will reflect the size of the body, the scale of its programmes, and the availability of suitable agencies to whom delivery can be delegated.

In-house delivery can have these strengths:

- Direct involvement in delivery gives a critical mass which increases the credibility of the organisation and provides a platform for lobbying.
- Direct contact with clients provides a learning experience which is relatively difficult to replace.
- A centralised structure usually gives administrators higher salaries, status, and career progression, all of which increase the ability to attract and retain higher calibre staff.

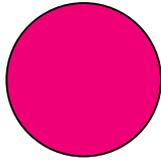
The weaknesses associated with an in-house structure are:

- Administration of programmes is time consuming. Immersion in the detail can distract the organisation from strategic issues.
- Direct involvement in delivery renders the organisation more vulnerable to criticism arising out of grant decisions.
- Where the organisation does not value delivery, officers associated with it can be marginalised.

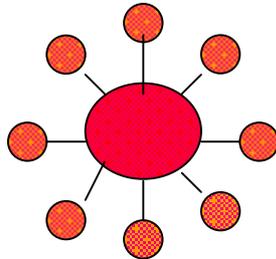
The strengths and weaknesses of delegated programmes depend on the form of delegation chosen. There are roughly two structures of delegation: delegation to a number of smaller client bodies; delegation to another large government body or system of government bodies which manages related programmes.

Figure 4: Representation of choices around delegation

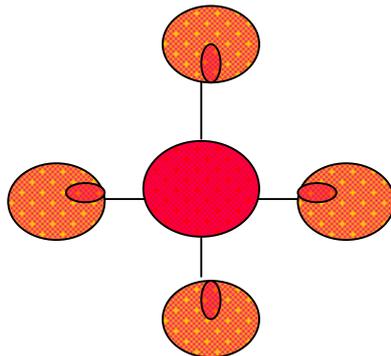
Centralisation



Decentralised to small agencies



Decentralised to larger agencies



Delegation to small organisations can reap the following rewards:

- Smaller organisations might be closer to the client. They might have greater specialist knowledge of the client and be able to give greater assistance in drafting applications.
- Administration costs can be cheaper. This is not because of economic factors (smaller organisations will lack economies of scale) so much as because of the lower wages paid to staff and the scope to pull in volunteers.

- The decentralisation associated with delegation to smaller organisations gives multiple access points and can be more convenient for the client.
- Organisations might have an established client list which would put them in a stronger position to market and promote programmes.

Delegation to smaller organisations can suffer from the following weaknesses:

- Fragmentation between different client organisations can reduce the scope for integration or learning between programme elements.
- The small size of the delivery bodies means that they do not benefit from economies of scale and are likely to be undercapitalised. This might affect the quality of delivery.
- Aligning programmes with organisational boundaries can reduce their flexibility, as organisations are likely to fight for their own existence and the retention of their workload. This survival instinct can also act against referral to other organisations, which further weakens integration and can lead to duplication.
- Closeness to the client can result in partisan decision-making, or external perception of bias.
- There is a real danger that the parent organisation is not given the credit for the achievements of its programmes.

Delegation to large organisations can retain economies of scale, objectivity, and integration but this might be at the expense of client-focus.

Need versus Opportunity

This scale compares the investment and return of a programme. The distinction is between focussing on the more difficult cases most in need of support, or focusing on the further advanced cases where additional funding will allow a case or individual to reach their potential. In the arts this could equate with a scale of support to entry level versus mature artists.

Focus on need offers the following potential benefits:

- Small amounts can often achieve a large impact.
- There are therefore likely to be a large number of potential beneficiaries. The grant funder is spreading the risk of investment, any instance of which could result in success.
- Appraisal criteria are usually relatively simple. Need is usually easier to quantify than potential.
- Marketing and referral are relatively easy. Those in need are more likely to be thinking about applying for grants.

Potential weaknesses include the following:

- Support can encourage excess supply.

- The need might not be specific to the arts. For instance, unemployed people trained in the arts might benefit personally but choose to apply this learning outside the sector.
- Organisations can become identified with the lower level, higher need clients, which can reduce their status for advocacy and lobbying.

An opportunity approach offers the following strengths:

- The association with excellence will be greater.
- Scope to develop the art form might be greater.

Potential weaknesses include:

- Criteria for assessing merit are likely to be subjective.
- Target applicants might not naturally think of applying for a grant.
- There is the danger of low additionality: that the grant programme is helping individuals who would have succeeded anyway.

Competition versus by Eligibility

A competitive approach is one where bids are assessed against each other rather than against pre-set objective criteria. Examples of competitive approaches include City Challenge, Rural Challenge, Regional Challenge in economic development, many of the EU programmes etc..

The strengths of a competitive approach are that:

- Competitions can encourage enthusiasm and raise awareness of programmes and therefore increase the overall standard of application. They can shake up a complacent or tired grant system.
- They can bring new players into the system, who would not have met the previous eligibility conditions.
- They can be high profile and good for marketing the funder.
- They can pick up topical issues or themes rapidly.

The weaknesses of a competitive approach are that:

- They implicitly involve a realignment from need to opportunity.
- They absorb substantial time and effort in preparing and presenting bids.
- There is a risk of bias in decision-making, because of the lack of objective criteria.
- They can reduce the scope for long term planning.
- Their rapid delivery can limit application or success to those linked into the system, which can shut some parties out of support. They need to be well marketed if application deadlines are tight.

Delivery by eligibility can be fairer and more equitable. The disadvantages of a programme defined by eligibility is that it often evolves organically by accretion, which can lead to a disassociation from strategic priorities. Applicants can assume an entitlement to support.

APPENDIX SIX: SUMMARY OF INDIRECT SUPPORT

Introduction

This appendix provides information on the 22 resource organisations interviewed, including:

- Federation of Music Collectives.
- Studios.
- Film Makers Ireland.
- Comhaltas.
- Association of Artists in Ireland.
- Irish Writers Centre.
- Equity.
- Contemporary Music Centre.
- Sculpture Society.
- Irish Museum of Modern Art Community and Education Programme.
- Association of Professional Dancers in Ireland.
- CAFÉ.
- Firkin Crane.
- Studios.
- Galleries.
- Photoworks North.
- Belfast Print Workshop.
- Circa Arts.
- Community Art Forum.
- Verbal Arts Centre.

Activities of the Resource Organisations

The activity of the organisations interviewed is very broad. We categorised work into six general areas:

1. Shared space and equipment, for example:

- Studio space.
- Shared computers, printers, scanners.
- Slide copiers, video cameras, editing suites.
- Internet access, web site.
- Dark rooms.

2. Information, advice and training, for example:

- Support with filling in grant application forms.
- Advice on technical matters like tax or the law.
- Training in skills such as selling or presentation.
- A library with publications and unprinted reference material.

- Conferences, seminars, workshops.
3. Networking, for example:
- Databases of members.
 - Directory of members.
 - Social events.
4. Collective marketing and exhibitions, for example:
- Portfolio days, where artists meet curators or purchasers.
 - Readings or other methods for bringing artists together with potential purchasers or audiences.
 - Educational projects with schools.
 - Magazines.
 - Mail outs to potential purchasers.
 - Criticism and reviews are in this category, although they could be identified as a separate heading.
5. Documentation and archiving, for example:
- Slide libraries.
 - Copies of music scores, CDs and other reference material.
6. Advocacy, for example:
- Work to encourage public interest in the art form.
 - Trade union type activity.
 - Lobbying for further funding to the art form.
 - Lobbying government on specific issues such as tax.

More detailed examination of services suggests that information, advice and training are the core activities of most organisations. Shared space and equipment provides the rationale for a different group of organisations. Collective marketing, promotion and exhibitions provide another central area of work. Networking and advocacy, documentation and archiving are secondary activities arising out of the information function. Interviews suggest that the later two areas – documentation/archiving and advocacy are of increasing interest but resource organisations are unable to carry out the work they would like because of resource constraints. Resource constraints lead to gaps in provision for some art forms and some areas.

Table 55: Support to the Individual Artist from Funded Agencies

Name: Republic	Shared space and equipment	Information, advice and training	Networking	Collective marketing and exhibitions	Documentation and archiving	Advocacy

1. Federation of Music Collectives	√	√	√			
2. Studios	√	√	√	√	√	√
3. Film Makers Ireland		√				√
4. Comhaltis		√	√	√	√	√
5. Association of Artists in Ireland		√	√			√
6. Irish Writers Centre		√		√		
7. Equity		√				√
8. Contemporary Music Centre	√	√		√	√	√
9. Sculpture Society	√	√	√	√	√	√
10. Irish Museum of Modern Art Community and Education Programme	√			√		
11. Association of Professional Dancers in Ireland	√	√	√			√
12. CAFÉ		√	√	√	√	√
13. Firkin Crane						
Northern Ireland						
14. Studios	√	√	√	√	√	√
15. Galleries		√		√	√	
16. Photoworks North		√		√	√	
17. Belfast Print Workshop	√		√			
18. Circa Arts		√		√		
19. Community Art Forum		√	√	√		√
20. Verbal Arts Centre		√	√	√		√

It is worth looking at the cost of indirect support but the interpretation is not straightforward:

- Resource organisations often have considerable help in kind (including goodwill from staff and funders) that is not captured by financial figures.
- It is arguable that resource organisations that rely on over-stretched staff are not sustainable.
- A substantial – and in some cases unquantifiable - element of funding is paid back to artists. This could be subsidies for studio space or fees for readings, residencies or performances. This income transfer should be excluded in calculating the unit cost of services provided to artists.

- Low unit costs could be good or bad. They could demonstrate that a large number of artists benefit from a central resource but could also indicate a relatively shallow level of support. Different organisations vary widely in the depth of support they provide to individual artists.
- The figures below are calculated on the Arts Council funding only, but where other funding is substantial, this will not give a true picture of the units costs of support (only on the return to the Arts Councils' funding).

Table 56: Cost of Indirect Support

Name: Republic	Arts Council Budget '98	Approximate total turnover '98	Total number of artists benefiting	Cost per artist, AC grant only
Federation of Music Collectives	£30,000	£200,000	113,000	£0.27
Fire Station Artists Studios	£125,000	£260,000 including rent	13 residents plus 100 clients of the resources per year	£9,600 per unit per year
Film Makers Ireland	0	Varies from year to year, membership is £100/year, plus levy. £80,000 last year	138 production companies	0 (Roughly £600 per production company for other income)
Comhaltis	0	Roughly £750,000	35,000 (10% professional, 90% amateur)	0 (Roughly £22)
Association of Artists in Ireland	£75,000	£110,000	900 members	£83
Irish Writers Centre	Roughly £140,000	Roughly £140,000	NA	60% of income goes out to writers in fees (i.e. £85,000)
Equity	0		NA	NA
Contemporary Music Centre	£170,000	£185,000	5,000, x composers	
Sculpture Society			400 members	
Irish Museum of Modern Art Community and Education Programme	£50,000	£180,000	40-50 artists	£11,000, much paid to the artist in fees.
Association of Professional Dancers in Ireland	£45,000		101	£445
CAFÉ	£100,000	£200,000	100	£1,000
Firkin Crane		£430,000		
Northern Ireland				
Queen Street Studios	£14,000	£30,000	23 artists	£600 per tenant
Flax Art Studios	£	£10,000 revenue	12 studios	
Ormeau Baths Gallery	£230,000	£285,000	200 artists	£1,150 per artist.
Orchard Gallery	£75,000	£300,000	12 directly	Roughly £20,000 goes back to artists.
Fenderesky Gallery	£6,000	£24,000	16-18 exhibitions per year	Roughly £350 per exhibition.
Photoworks North				

Belfast Print Workshop	£75,000	£77,000	48 members	£1,560 per member
Circa Arts				
Community Art Forum			100 artists	
Verbal Arts Centre	£16,000	Varies depending on projects, can be £100,000	60-80 artists	Roughly £41,000 paid back to artists for readings. Excluding this gives a unit cost of £228.

APPENDIX SEVEN: LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Introduction

Annabel Jackson commissioned the International Arts Bureau to produce an outline of on the situation of artists in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland with regard to: copyright, royalties, taxation and social security

This research is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of the situation.

For the purposes of this small piece of research the International Arts Bureau has drawn on its own library resources and on discussions or contact with the following:

- Tara Byrne – Artists’ Support Executive, Arts Council of Ireland
- Paula Campbell – Visual Arts Officer, Arts Council of Northern Ireland
- Tim Eastop – Senior Visual Arts Officer, Arts Council of England
- Artists Association of Ireland
- The Association of Irish Composers
- The Irish Music Rights Organisation
- The Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Ireland
- The Design & Copyright Society
- The Public Lending Rights Office

Republic of Ireland

Copyright

The current legislation in this area dates back to 1963, and is similar in scope to the UK’s 1956 Copyright Act. The Copyright Amendment Act of 1987 primarily brought the previous legislation up to date in terms of film distribution. A new Copyright and Related Rights bill was put forward by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, and is currently under consultation. The new Bill modernises the 1963 Act and brings it in line with the UK’s 1988 Act in terms of Performance rights and Moral rights (see Northern Ireland). The new Bill will also implement all outstanding EU Copyright Directives, as well as bringing Ireland up to date with other copyright conventions, such as the Berne Convention and WIPO. It is envisaged that it will be passed by the end of 1999.

Royalties

There is no comprehensive system of artists’ collecting societies in Ireland, and therefore many artists have to rely on individual (as opposed to collective) collection of copyright fees. The existing collecting societies are Irish Music Rights Organisation (for composers, writers and publishers) and the Irish Copyright Licensing Agency (reprography fees on copyright material).

Artists’ Resale Rights – Ireland does not apply Droit de Suite.

Taxation

Artists' Exemption Relief - under Clause 1 or 2, Section 2 (2) of the Finance Act 1969, artists may get tax exemption on income from the sale of any '*original and creative*' pieces of work. The Act defines this as any unique work that is brought into existence for the first time as an independent entity by the exercise of its creators imagination. In 1994 new guidelines were published regarding eligibility for Tax Exempt Status. These state that in order to secure Tax Exempt Status a work has to be both original and creative and must have either cultural or artistic merit. Eligible works are: a book or other writing; a play; a musical composition; a painting or picture; a sculpture. The 1994 revisions to the Finance Act also introduced changes in the rules determining the residence of an individual for tax purposes. An individual will be regarded as being resident in the State for a tax year if he or she either spends 183 days or more in the State that tax year, or spends 280 days in the State, combining the number of days spent in the State that tax year and the preceding tax year. Artists must apply to the Revenue Commissioners who then grant exemption on income from the sales and copyright fees for works falling into the categories listed above.

The Irish Arts Council administers two types of tax free support for individuals which, if not unique, are certainly unusual. First it has established a financial relationship with the national carrier, Aer Lingus, in which the Council provides travel vouchers for free flights to and from destinations on the airline's network. Up to 200 awards a year are made through the **Artflight** scheme, which is also organised in association with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

The second scheme, **Aosdana** (literally 'the wise' or 'the chosen') is variously described as an academy or parliament of artists and it provides an annual tax-free stipend for individuals established in their field. It was created in 1981 with a view to discouraging the serious loss of artistic talent through emigration. The Arts Council appointed the first 79 members, but the membership is now obtained through nomination by existing members (which has to be approved by an executive committee) and then endorsement by ballot among members of a similar discipline and, finally, approved by a majority of the whole membership. Approval qualifies the individual for a tax-free grant of IR8,000 per annum for five years. This is means-tested. Up to 200 artists can hold membership at any one time.

Social Security

The **Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) Class S** scheme is designed to give cover for self-employed people including artists, without a means test. The contribution includes a social insurance element, and provides cover for:

- Widow's and Widower's contributory pension
- Orphan's contributory pension
- Old age contributory pension
- Maternity benefit
- Adoptive benefit

What is commonly termed PRSI is in fact a combination of three separate schemes: PRSI (5% of assessable income), Health Contribution levy (2%) and the Employment

& Training Contribution Levy (1%) – however this last Levy was abolished in April 1999. Under the 1988 Social Welfare Act all self-employed individuals, including artists, over the age of 16 and under the age of 66 and with a reckonable income of more than £2500 are liable to pay PRSI Class S and are responsible for their own PRSI returns. This includes artists who are exempt from tax under Section 2 of the Finance Act 1969.

Artists are also able to receive **Unemployment Assistance** (UA), which is means tested and linked to not having previously paid PRSI contributions. To qualify for UA one must be available for, and actively seeking work, and this has in the past been problematic for artists, who may, under the current criteria, be pressured into looking for work outside of their creative field.

Northern Ireland

The law of the United Kingdom applies to Northern Ireland generally, though the Northern Ireland Assembly has legislative responsibility for transferred matters, as set out in the Northern Ireland Act, 1998. Therefore the position of artists in relation to the four areas under discussion is as follows:

Copyright

The Copyright Designs & Patents Act (1988) protects works in nine categories: original **literary, dramatic, musical and artistic** works; **sound recordings, films, broadcasts and cable** programmes; and the **typographical arrangement** of published editions. Once an original work is recorded in writing or in some other form copyright arises automatically – there is no need to register formally. Performance art is not protected unless recorded on video or described in writing. Generally copyright lasts for the life of the author, plus seventy years after his/her death. This was extended from 50 years in July 1995, as a result of the European Commission Directive *harmonising the term of protection of copyright and certain related rights*. The EC Directive also introduced a 25 year period of protection for the benefit of the first person to publish or communicate to the public a previously unpublished literary, dramatic, musical or artistic work or film in which copyright has expired. The Directive further required a 50 year period of protection for ‘related’ rights (eg. sound recordings, broadcasts and cable programme and the rights of performers). Authorship is not synonymous with ownership – the author can transfer it in whole or in part to another person or agency such as, for example, a collecting society.

The 1988 Act includes Design rights, protecting three-dimensional designs from being commercially copied, lasting ten years from when the design is first marketed. The Act also makes provision for Moral rights, which aim to protect the artistic, intrinsic value of a piece of artwork and the reputation of its author/creator.

Royalties

Royalties are paid for the use or reproduction of copyrighted works. These are collected through societies such as the Performing Rights Society.

Under the **Public Lending Right** (PLR) system, payment is made from government funds to authors whose books are borrowed from public libraries. The amount payable is proportional to the estimated number of times that an author's books are borrowed

nationally during the PLR year (July – June). The maximum anyone may receive in a year is currently £6,000; earnings that total less than £5 a year are not paid (this money is returned to the Fund and redistributed). Authors must apply to have their books registered. To be entitled to PLR (or a per centage of it) you must be named on the title page of the book under discussion (this can include illustrators/photographer, translators, originators, adaptors, ghost writers, editors/compilers).

Exhibition Payment Right acknowledges the service artists provide when their work is exhibited at a public venue, by paying them a fee. In Northern Ireland (and the UK as a whole) it is applied on a voluntary basis and is encouraged by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland as a principle, but it is not enforced. There is no fixed per centage and in the case of exhibitions directly promoted by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the level of payment will depend on the number of artists involved in an exhibition (obviously artists involved in one person exhibitions would receive more as a general rule). It is worth mentioning that the Arts Council of England is considering tightening up its arrangements to make its grants to galleries conditional on the application of the principle. If this occurs it is possible that the ACNI may follow the same path.

Artists' Resale Rights (Droit de Suite) – Droit de Suite (renumeration in the form of a royalty for an artist or his/her heirs or other beneficiaries, calculated as a per centage of the resale price of a work sold by public auction or through an agent) does not apply in Northern Ireland. However the European Commission has prepared a Directive on Droit de Suite which seeks to apply such a right across EU countries, including those that do not currently have a mechanism such as the UK and the Republic of Ireland. The UK government has opposed the Directive but is in the minority of member states.

Taxation

Under a 1979 'judgement' from the Inland Revenue grants given to artists to produce work (eg. commissions) are taxable, whereas grants which are given to support artistic development (eg. to 'buy time' for residencies or training) and do not result in an 'end product' are not taxable. Freelance artists are normally treated as self-employed for tax purposes under Schedule D of the tax regulations.

Social Security

There are no special arrangements for artists in the UK under current legislation.

Impact of the Northern Ireland Assembly

It is currently outside the legislative competence of the Northern Ireland Assembly to vary taxation and the same broadly applies to social security provision. Both of these are reserved matters, requiring the consent of the Secretary of State.

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