

AGENDA ITEM No. 3 (b)

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: LEISURE SERVICES GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE	Subject: CRITERIA FOR AWARDING PROJECT GRANTS FOR FUNDING CULTURAL ACTIVITIES
From: DIRECTOR OF LEISURE SERVICES	
Date: 16 SEPTEMBER 1996	Ref: AM/KT

1 Introduction

The Leisure Services Committee at the August 1996 meeting approved the following criteria for awarding project grants for funding cultural activities.

2 Approved Criteria and Conditions for Project Funding

- 2.1 Applications will be open to any interested organisation or individual.
- 2.2 Applications will be clearly identifiable as project based and not for core funding.
- 2.3 Project funding will be available to all art and cultural forms.
- 2.4 The project will be of direct benefit to North Lanarkshire residents.
- 2.5 The project will normally be located within North Lanarkshire boundaries.
- 2.6 The project will accord with the Council's Leisure Plan objectives.
- 2.7 Applications should be targetted at general community use in line with the Leisure Services remit and responsibilities. This specifically excludes projects or grants for educational and social work purposes.
- 2.8 The project should not duplicate Council services already provided but should be additional and should enhance the artistic life of the community.
- 2.9 The project proposal will be initially assessed in line with the Scottish Arts Council Guidelines (see Appendix 1).
- 2.10 The project must clearly identify the programme of work to be undertaken, its specific activities and targets in return for the grant.
- 2.11 The benefits of the project should be identifiable measurable and quantifiable.
- 2.12 The project will require to demonstrate value for money.
- 2.13 Applications must be received in the proper format.
- 2.14 The project must be capable of completion within a specific financial year.
- 2.15 Any proposals for charging and charging structures in relation to the project will require approval
- 2.16 The project will be monitored and assessed during its existence (see Appendix 1) and full access to all areas of the project and its documentation and to the organisation will be made available on request.
- 2.17 The project will acknowledge any project funding received from the Council and the form content of this shall be agreed by the Council.

- 2.18 The Council will approve all relevant publicity and promotional materials in relation to the project. Any reference to the Council or its activities in the press must be approved by the Council.
- 2.19 Complimentary attendance at performances or other appropriate events will be specified as required by the Council.
- 2.20 At the conclusion of the project a full report will require to be submitted by the applicants.
- 2.21 Arrangements for financial payments will be determined by the nature of the project, but will not normally be made in advance.
- 2.22 Failure to comply with any of the above criteria may void the project approval and may result in withdrawal of the grant.
- 2.23 Any alteration to the project must be agreed formally with the Council.

3 Current Position

Application forms and information leaflets are currently being printed to forward to the various cultural organisations within North Lanarkshire to enable equal opportunity to apply for grants. Notwithstanding these applications received to date have been referred to the Leisure Services Grants Sub-Committee and there has been communications with various other organisations currently at different stages of the application process.

4 Recommendations

This report is for information only.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

SCOTTISH ARTS COUNCIL GUIDELINES

1. Why Assess?

- 1.1 Several reasons have been identified for the development of a process for assessing the quality of artistic work: the most important being that without some kind of measure of quality, decisions tend to be made on the basis of purely quantitative measures. Of course, funding bodies and arts organisations themselves need to be confident that the arts event is well run and for that, quantitative measures are important. But for the artist, the audience and indeed, all of us who have a stake in this, it is the quality of the experience which primarily determines success or otherwise.
- 1.2 But why assess at all? The principal reasons which came from our discussions are:
- to acknowledge achievement, build on success and identify problems of reaching achievement
 - to determine if the organisation has done what it said it was going to do
 - to raise standards through critical debate
 - to make the case for funding
 - to satisfy the funding body
- 1.3 Assessment is about:
- how far an arts organisation has achieved what it set out to do. It is important for arts organisations themselves to assess as it is for funding organisations.
- 1.4 Assessment forms the basis of funding agreements with arts organisations. Funding agreements state clearly the programme of work which will be undertaken by the arts organisations, specific activities and targets in return for the subsidy.
- 1.5 Assessment is not a way of making everything the same. The funding body should create a consistency in its approach to assessing the arts, not to make all arts organisations the same.
- 1.6 Nor is it a means of stifling new ideas / creativity.
- 1.7 Assessment assists the funding body in making decisions about levels of funding and will provide the basis for funding agreements.

2. What is to be Assessed?

- 2.1 In simple terms, the arts organisation or event is assessed against what it sets out to do; its "fitness for purpose". Assessment for each organisation will vary and depends on its artistic aims and objectives.

2.2 The following criteria for assessment have been adopted:

- Artistic criteria:
- Visions and Imagination
- Ability to Communicate
- Quality of Production
- Context / strategic criteria
- Managerial criteria

2.3 Artistic Criteria

2.3.1 Vision and Imagination

The most difficult part of assessment is looking at the work itself and assessing its impact as a work of art. The key questions raised in this area are:

- does it (the event / experience) look at something differently or in a new way?
- does it communicate something new?
- does it touch / move?
- has it altered perception in any way?

There is a part of this exercise which cannot be closely defined and which depends on individual reaction or judgement.

2.3.2 Ability to Communicate

The relationship with the audience, the attender or the participant is crucial to artistic success. Some key questions here:

- how effective is the organisation's attempts to reach and communicate with the audience?
- how relevant is the organisation's artistic programme in message, context or presentation to the audience it wishes to attract?
- what processes does the organisation adopt to ensure that the form and content of its work is informed by the communities it seeks to attract?
- how flexible is the approach to programming?

2.3.3 Quality of Production

The presentation of the work itself is an important artistic criteria. For example, many of the organisations have a role in presenting the work of creative artists as well as creating the work itself, e.g. art gallery or arts centre. In the presentation the relationship between the artist and audience is enhanced and developed.

The kind of issues explored here are:

- the programme of work and its coherence
- technical standards
- commitment to originality
- encouragement of opportunity for artists

2.3.4 There are, therefore, artistic criteria common to all organisations:

- Vision and Imagination
- Ability to Communicate
- Quality of Production

2.3.5 However, not all the questions raised are relevant in every case. For example, in workshop based work, the process is as important as the final production / presentation; a service organisation has very different objectives to a programming organisation; not all arts organisations are committed to presenting new work although all seek to look at work in a new way; the role of an organisation presenting a programme of work (e.g. an arts centre) is different from an organisation which is committed to creating a new piece of work or a new production of an existing piece of work (e.g. a theatre or orchestra).

2.3.6 The artistic context of the work is also important. Is it a new, complex and challenging piece? Is it a re-interpretation of a classical work? If a participatory piece, what are the expectations of those taking part and have those expectations been met? Again, it is important to emphasis that assessment is related to what the organisation sets out to do, its stated artistic vision.

2.3.7 The interpretation of the criteria depend on the organisation and on its aims and objectives and the assessment process has to reflect that.

2.4 Context

2.4.1 The context or strategic role of an arts organisation is an important part of the assessment both for the arts organisation and the funding body.

- the role of the organisations in terms of:
 - local provision
 - regional provision

- national provision
- international provision
- for the funding body, how far the organisation meets the funding body's priorities
- the levels of support received from other funders
- the steps the organisation takes in broadening its audience
- the organisation's development of an Equal Opportunities policy for its work

2.5 Managerial Criteria

2.5.1 Finally, in this section, organisations are assessed on how well they are run. While there are quantitative measure which can be set in this area, it is also one in which creative and quantitative assessment is also important.

There are two criteria in this area:

- creativity of approach
- effectiveness in operations

2.5.2 Creativity of Approach

- Flexibility in the management of resources
- Skills in problem solving
- New approaches to raising funds and managing the organisation

2.5.3 Effectiveness in Operation

- Marketing strategy and plans
- Management of staff

2.5.4 Assessment in this area is generally clearly understood and it involves looking at the way the organisation is managed: its financial management; its marketing strategy; its personnel policy.

2.6 Summary

2.6.1 What is to be Assessed?

- Artistic criteria:
- Vision and Imagination

- Ability to Communicate
- Quality of Production
- Context / strategic criteria
- Managerial criteria
- creativity of approach
- effectiveness in operations

2.6.2 The details will vary depending on the organisations, its own aims and objectives, its size, its position in the overall arts provision for Scotland. However, these are the core criteria for assessment.