

arts@leeds funding recommendations 2023/24

Date: 1 March 2023

Report of: Head of Culture Programmes

Report to: Chief Officer Culture and Economy

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

Leeds City Council invests in the development and growth of the city's creative sector through cultural funding programmes – arts@leeds and Leeds Inspired – with key outcomes aligned with the Best City Ambition objectives.

The arts@leeds funding programme is open to cultural, voluntary and community organisations to apply for core funding to deliver cultural and creative engagement opportunities for the benefit of residents across the city to enable engagement as a participant, artist or audience member.

In July 2022, Executive Board approved the delivery of a one-year arts@leeds programme for 2023/24, supporting the transition toward a refreshed cultural funding programme and delegated authority to the Director City Development to approve funding decisions for the one-year programme, 2023/24.

This report sets out the funding recommendations for the arts@leeds programme in 2023/24 and seeks approval to enter into grant agreements with the organisations, as specified.

Recommendations

- a) Subject to compliance with the provisions of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (as set out in this report) the Chief Officer, Culture and Economy is asked to approve the funding recommendations for the arts@leeds funding programme for 2023/24, as set out in this report to the total value of £1,662,490
- b) The Chief Officer, Culture and Economy is asked to note that the core budget for arts@leeds (£1,616,720) is boosted by an injection of funds from Culture Programmes' allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). £50,770 of the UKSPF allocation is provided to enhance cultural and community engagement during LEEDS 2023, the city's Year of Culture.

What is this report about?

- 1 On 27 July 2022, Executive Board gave approval for the delivery of the one-year arts@leeds programme for 2023/24. This included approval to review the current funding schemes (arts@leeds & Leeds Inspired) and support the transition toward a refreshed joint cultural investment programme from FY 24/25

The 1 year scheme was open to applicants between Wednesday 24 August 2022 and closed Thursday 10 November 2022. The assessment of the applications took place from Monday 14 November 2022 to Tuesday 31 January 2023 with the aim for awards to be announced at the beginning of March after the confirmation of the council budget for 2023/24.

This report sets out the outcome of that process making funding recommendations to the Chief Officer, Culture and Economy for the arts@leeds grants programme for FY23/24

- 2 The Funding programme supports the three pillars of the Best City Ambition by enabling organisations to deliver activity to increase health and wellbeing, support inclusive growth through grant aid to stabilise and grow the sector, and enable organisations to address the challenges faced to reach carbon neutrality. Organisations were asked to specify how they contributed to the following areas

Leeds Culture Strategy 2022/25 pillars

- 1: People, Communities and Place: Connecting and engaging people and communities through creativity. Promoting the benefits of culture including health and wellbeing, community cohesion, learning and education, diversity and inclusion
- 2: LEEDS 2023: Contributing to the city's Year of Culture and promoting Leeds as a prominent cultural destination and a great place to live, work and visit
- 3: A hive of creative innovation: Supporting the city's cultural and creative industries to thrive
- 4: Children, families and young people: Promoting Leeds as a national centre for creative and cultural excellence
- 5: International and internationalism: Recognising and promoting Leeds as a global, collaborative city

Cross cutting themes:

- Equality and inclusion
- Environmental sustainability
- Maximising our impact

- 3 arts@leeds aims to fund a varied portfolio of organisations from grass roots activity through to large scale programmes across the city, empowering them to deliver activity to all ages and demographics whilst supporting and promoting the sustainability of the creative sector in the city.
- 4 Funding is allocated across two levels:
 - Development strand: duration: 1 year; financial investment from £5,000 to £25,000. Engage and inspire local people, attract visitors to the city and contribute to the Leeds economy
 - Investment: duration: 1 year; financial investment from £43,000 to £500,000 achieve a balance of creative opportunity across the city for the benefit of communities, encourage a hive of creative innovation by supporting the city's cultural and creative

industries to thrive, promoting Leeds as a national centre for creative and cultural excellence and as a global, collaborative city

- 5 55 applications were received for the programme. 47 applied for development and 8 applicants for investment across a spread of artforms: combined arts, music, theatre, dance, visual arts, literature, live art and festival/carnival. 17 organisations were new applicants and 21 requested an uplift in grant aid from their 2022/23 award.
- 6 Investment organisations were invited to re-apply at the same level of funding (stand-still). For the development level the minimum value for applications was raised from £4,000 to £5,000 to help mitigate increase overhead costs in the current economic climate.
- 7 The total financial ask was £1,775,500 (this includes the proposed standstill award to Leeds West Indian Carnival, Black Music Festival from the city events programme 2023/24).
- 8 Of the 55 applicants, 3 did not meet the eligibility criteria. 6 applications were recommended not to fund following the assessment stage.
- 9 This proposal is to fund 46 applicants, 38 development and 8 investment (plus the 2 organisations within the city events programme).

What impact will this proposal have?

- 10 The aim of the arts@leeds grant programme is to support the sector to deliver arts and cultural activity for the benefit of Leeds residents. Grant aid is awarded based on the applicant's ability to deliver on the Leeds Culture Strategy's priorities which expand on the Best City Ambitions.
- 11 By delivering a 1-year scheme, it has given the team time to complete the cultural investment review as proposed in July 2022 whilst continuing to deliver and support the sector. The final impact would be the completion of a triumphant year of culture for Leeds, a newly devised grants programme and legacy plan co-created with the creative sector following LEEDS 2023.
- 12 A key impact of the proposed one-year cultural grants programme will be greater city-wide cultural engagement by Leeds' creative sector and residents aligned with the LEEDS 2023 Year of Culture. The measure of increased impact will be delivered with additional funding through LCC's UKSPF allocation. A key decision (D55735) was taken in October 2022 authorising UKSPF activity which supports the regional West Yorkshire Local Investment Plan managed by WYCA.
- 13 Of the applications proposed to be funded, they aim to reach 3,465,696 people through 41,609 sessions, engaging with 86,494 participants and 3,379,202 audience members, delivering activity to participants and audiences of all ages.¹
- 14 They will deliver activity across these key targeted areas: Culturally diverse, Gender, Disability, LGBT+, Older people (over 55) and Younger people (under 25).
- 15 The funding recommendations include grant aid for a number of organisations programming work outside the city centre. These include Space2, based at the Old Gipton Fire Station, Otley Courthouse and Interplay Theatre in Armley. Organisations will deliver sessions in every ward in the city with the most activity taking place in Little London and Woodhouse, Burmantofts and Richmond Hill, and Middleton Park balancing benefit across the wider city.

¹ Data collected from original arts@leeds development & investment applications, as the proposal is to fund some organisations at a lower level than requested the final output may be reduced. The data does not include information from the proposed city events organisations (Leeds West Indian Carnival & Black Health Initiative).

- 16 As well as delivering activity in the city, 28 organisations propose to deliver work outside of Leeds, extending their reach both nationally and internationally.
- 17 17 organisations are Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) for 23/24 receiving £19,272,510 in total and 22 organisations indicate they will apply for other funding from Arts Council England totalling £1,025,427. With the total match funding expected by the 23/24 funded organisation as £3,327,946
- 18 Of our proposed funded organisations
- 29 are micro (1 to 9 employees (incl. voluntary led))
 - 13 are small (10 to 49 employees)
 - 3 are medium (50 to 249 employees)
 - 1 is large (250 employees or more)
- 19 The proposed portfolio of funded organisations indicate they will provide employment for 2,321 freelance artists and receive 53,116 hours of volunteer support.
- 20 This one-year scheme aligns with the Communities and Places Outcomes within the UKSPF programme, particularly the interventions which seek to:
- Enhance existing cultural, historic & heritage institutions offer
 - Support local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 21 **Health and Wellbeing:** The aim of the scheme was to focus on People, Communities and Place: celebrating and engaging with our people and places across the city as we celebrate LEEDS 2023. Organisations propose to support male suicide prevention groups, NHS mental health wards, address grief through creativity and leave Leeds more death literate and tackle obesity through dance and physical activity
- 22 The aim of the scheme is to encourage **Inclusive Growth** - the organisations put forward for funding will support independent artists, deliver participatory workshops, and offer training and volunteering opportunities. Organisations aim to work with independent artists & young people from the global majority as well as prisoners from HM Prison Leeds, young people in Pupil Referral Units and the care system.
- 23 **Zero Carbon:** As a requirement for the scheme each applicant had to have a sustainability plan and list the areas they were addressing as an organisation, through the delivery of their work and educating the audiences and participants. These included membership to Sustainable Arts in Leeds (SAIL), carbon literacy training for staff & sustainable programming and outreach work.
- 24 Expected outputs for 2023/24 monitoring include:
- the number of sessions delivered
 - activity in all wards
 - match funding leveraged
- 25 These proposed awards will deliver significant benefits including:
- Enabling more people across the city to engage with culture during the Year of Culture in 2023
 - Creating opportunities for organisations that are not currently funded to apply and allow the Council to refresh the portfolio

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

26 In preparation for this 1-year scheme consultation and informal briefings took place with external stakeholders including:

- Arts Council England
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority
- West Yorkshire local authorities – Wakefield, Calderdale and Kirklees
- Members of the creative sector
- Leeds Community Foundation
- Voluntary Action Leeds

27 As part of the engagement of this programme, the team offered 108 1-2-1 sessions of which 64 were booked. The purpose was to ensure accessibility; to learn more about the programme, enable an organisation to assess their suitability to the scheme, meet the grant administrator and to ask advice on the programme and their application.

What are the resource implications?

28 The grants aid allocation of £1,662,490 is within the available budget (£1,611,720 allocation from the agreed arts@leeds budget and £50,770 through the council's UKSPF award)

29 It is proposed to award grants to the following organisations

Arts Organisation	Artform	The majority of activity will take place in	Amount of Award
Artlink West Yorkshire	Combined Arts	Inner North West	£9,120
Assembly House CIC	Visual Arts	Inner West	£5,000
Balbir Singh Dance Company	Dance	Outer North East	£5,000
Black Health Initiative: Black Music Festival (city events programme)	Festival/ Carnival	Inner North East	£43,000
Cloth Cat Studios	Music	Inner South	£5,000
Compass Live Art Ltd	Live Art	Inner East	£5,000
Dance Action Zone Leeds	Dance	Inner South	£8,500
East Leeds Project C.I.C.	Visual Arts	Inner East	£5,000
East Street Arts Ltd	Visual Arts	Inner East	£45,000
Geraldine Connor Foundation	Combined Arts	Inner North West	£5,000
Heads Together Productions Limited	Combined Arts	Inner East	£11,000
imagine if theatre company	Theatre	Inner West	£5,000
Interplay Theatre Trust	Theatre	Inner West	£12,000
JazzLeeds	Music	Inner North East	£5,000
Leeds Grand Theatre & Opera House Ltd	Combined Arts	Inner North West	£43,000
Leeds International Pianoforte Competition	Music	Inner North West	£7,000
Leeds Irish Arts Foundation	Music	Inner East	£5,000
Leeds Lieder	Music	Inner North West	£5,000
Leeds Theatre Trust	Theatre	Inner North West	£500,370
Leeds West Indian Carnival (city events programme)	Festival/ Carnival	Inner North East	£59,000
Left Bank Leeds CIC	Combined Arts	Inner North West	£5,000
Live Art Bistro Ltd (AKA CLAY)	Live Art	Inner North West	£5,000
Made with Music	Music	Inner North West	£5,000

Mafwa Theatre CIC	Combined Arts	Inner East	£5,000
Milim CIC	Literature	Inner North East	£5,000
Morley Arts Festival	Festival/ Carnival	Outer South	£5,000
Music and Arts Production Leeds	Combined Arts	Inner East	£5,000
Music Leeds	Music	Inner North West	£6,000
Northern Ballet Limited	Dance	Inner North West	£170,000
Northern Opera Group	Theatre	Inner North West	£5,000
Open Source Arts	Combined Arts	Inner West	£5,000
Opera North Ltd	Music	Inner South	£395,250
Phoenix Dance Theatre	Dance	Inner North West	£61,750
Polite Rebellion LTD	Combined Arts	Inner North West	£5,000
Project Space Leeds	Visual Arts	Inner South	£45,000
Pyramid of Arts	Combined Arts	Inner South	£10,000
RJC Productions Ltd	Dance	Inner North East	£11,500
Skipkko Arts Team	Visual Arts	Inner South	£5,500
Slung Low Ltd	Theatre	Inner South	£9,000
South Asian Arts-uk (SAA-uk)	Music	Inner North East	£16,500
Space2 Leeds	Combined Arts	Inner East	£9,000
The Courthouse Project (Otley) Ltd	Combined Arts	Outer North West	£9,000
The Leeds Library	Literature	Inner North West	£5,000
The Performance Ensemble CIC	Theatre	Inner East	£5,000
The Red Ladder Theatre Company Ltd	Theatre	Inner North West	£5,000
Transform Theatre Projects	Theatre	Inner South	£5,000
tutti frutti productions	Theatre	Inner East	£5,000
Yorkshire Dance Centre Trust	Dance	Inner East	£51,000

TOTAL: £1,662,490

30 Activity will take place in all wards, the table highlights the primary geographical area that the organisation has identified for the delivery of their activity.

31 The awards align with the Communities and Places Outcomes within the UKSPF programme, particularly the interventions which seek to:

- Enhance existing cultural, historic & heritage institutions offer
- Support local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

32 The Arts Development Manager will oversee the administration of the grants and all applicants and awards will be assessed for compliance with the provisions of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 before funding agreements are issued. Each organisation will sign and adhere to the council's funding agreement and will be required to complete activity monitoring forms on their progress and programme. See also the section on 'legal implications' below.

33 All applications were assessed by the Culture Programmes team and recommendations for funding were made by the Head of Culture Programmes, Arts Development Manager and in consultation with the Chief Officer for Culture and Economy.

34 Applicants were assessed based on the programme's eligibility criteria, the applicant's proposal against the funding priorities (as detailed in 2 above) for the provision of funding their financial standing and on previous delivery of activity and track record.

35 Of the unsuccessful applications, 3 applicants are currently funded in the 2018/23 scheme. Whilst it is recognised that each scheme is a new round and no assurance is given to any organisation that continuous funding is guaranteed. It is acknowledged after 5 years of grant aid these organisations might require support to transition from this 1 year scheme.

36 As a funding body, the Council reserves the right to attend Board meetings in relation to activities being funded. Officers will also attend funded activity, where possible. For large organisations, the Council will maintain the right to nominate one elected member to sit on their Board.

What are the legal implications?

- 37 The report is not subject to call in as the budget was approved in the Refreshing Leeds' Cultural Investment Programme report to Executive Board (July 2022) where delegated authority was given to the Director of City Development to approve funding decisions for this programme.
- 38 All awardees will be required to adhere to Leeds City Council's terms and conditions set out in the funding agreement.
- 39 All recipients will be required to produce and adhere to key policies, obtain relevant insurance, and complete annual monitoring of the scheme in line with Council and UKSPF requirements.
- 40 Where necessary, all awards will be made in accordance with the provisions of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 which came into force in January 2023.
- 41 Subsidies occur where public resources are used to provide financial assistance in a selective manner to one or more entities engaged in commercial activities in a way which benefits them over other enterprises engaged in the same or similar activities, and which is capable of distorting competition or investment.
- 42 Under the Subsidy Control Act 2022, subsidies are permitted to be given provided that either they comply with a number of principles, or they fall within certain exemptions. Otherwise, if a subsidy is provided it will be unlawful.
- 43 Before they can be formally awarded, all of the grants recommended by this report will be assessed as to whether they are compliant with the provisions of the Subsidy Control Act.
- 44 Advice has been received from Legal Services that some of the proposed grants may not be subsidies (e.g. where they are being given to recipients who will be providing the general public with goods or services free of charge). Where that is the case then it is proposed that the grants should simply be awarded subject to the recipient entering into an agreement governing the use of the grant.
- 45 Otherwise, Legal Services have advised that the majority of the proposed grants (those with a gross value of up to £315,000) could potentially be given under the rules relating to the provision of Minimal Financial Assistance, but that any grant of over £315,000 will have to be assessed for compliance with the provisions of the Subsidy Control Act.
- 46 The rules relating to the provision of Minimal Financial Assistance allow an entity to receive subsidies up to a total value of £315,000 within a rolling three-year period but are subject to the awarding authority checking the amount of any subsidies that the intended recipient has already received under the rules in the previous three years and that they are eligible to receive further subsidies. In the event they are not entitled to receive further subsidies under the rules then an assessment of the proposed grant will be completed.
- 47 It is therefore proposed that where a grant recommended by this report is a subsidy it should, where possible, be given under the rules relating to the provision of Minimal Financial Assistance, but that otherwise it should only be given where it is compliant with the provisions of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. It should also be noted that there are two proposed grants where the gross amount of the grant exceeds £315,000 and that those grants are recommended subject to an assessment being carried out that they are compliant with the provisions of the Act.

- 48 It should also be noted that the Subsidy Control Act 2022 imposes transparency reporting requirements on public authorities providing subsidies. In the case of the grants recommended by this report this means that details of any grant of more than £100,000 will have to be published on the Government's subsidy control database within three months of being awarded. This will be dealt with by the Arts Development Manager.
- 49 In addition to subsidy control, the Council also has a duty to conduct the administration of public funds with reasonable skill, care and caution and with due regard to the interests of the Council Tax and Business Rates payers of Leeds. All necessary due diligence is being and will be carried out in relation to the proposals outlined in this report so as to ensure the fiduciary duties of the Council are complied with.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

50 The options appraised for the July report were:

- a) Business as usual – Launch the next round of arts@leeds grant scheme in 2022 based on the existing model for funding in 2023-2027
- b) Extend the arts@leeds grant scheme by an additional year (year 6)
- c) Create a 1-year scheme to ensure continuity of investment whilst allowing time to review and refresh the funding programme for 2024-27
- d) Do nothing, stop cultural investment

51 Option c was agreed and this proposal is a key outcome of the one-year programme approved at Executive Board. The 'review and refresh' of the grants programmes for 2024-27 is currently underway and will culminate in a report to Executive Board in April 2023.

How will success be measured?

52 Grants are awarded with all recipients required to deliver outputs and complete detailed monitoring.

53 Success will be measured by increased output across the city and sector, and a rise in engagement in arts and culture by residents and visitors to the city.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

54 Applicants will be informed of their respective outcomes following Full Council meeting on 22 February. Grant agreements, including provision for the Subsidy Control Act 2022 are currently in development, in consultation with legal services.

55 It is intended that subsidy control checks and assessments will be carried out as soon as possible and that grant agreements will be entered into with recipients by the end of March 2023, with funded activities commencing from 1 April 2023.

56 This will be actioned by the Arts Development Manager with assistance from Legal Services and Procurement and Commercial Services as necessary.

57 The funding period will cover 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and recipients will be asked to submit monitoring data for the scheme in May 2023, followed by a programme evaluation completed & presented in June 2024.

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- None.

Related Documents

- Executive report: Refreshing Leeds' Cultural Investment Programme 27 July 2022.