



Arts Council of Northern Ireland

annual review

07:08

Front cover: Brendan Jamison,
Yellow Helicopter (detail).

Our Vision

Our vision is to 'place the arts at the heart of our social, economic and creative life'.

In Creative Connections*, our five-year development plan for the arts, 2007-2012, we identify four main themes covering what we believe needs to be done to achieve this vision - promoting the value of the arts; strengthening the arts; increasing audiences and improving our organisation's performance.

In this Annual Review 2007-08, you will see the progress that has been made in these areas, from increased international profiling of the arts from Northern Ireland and expansion of arts-led local community regeneration projects, to securing additional funding for the arts from the Northern Ireland Assembly and opening new purpose-built arts facilities across the region.

Welcome

Welcome to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Annual Review 2007-2008.

We've taken a fresh approach this year to how we present our annual review of the arts, which we hope you will find timely and enjoyable. This calendar-style review of our combined Exchequer and National Lottery-funded activities covers many of the artistic highlights of the last (financial) year, expanding in greater detail on several of the most important events.

A brief summary of our Accounts for the financial year is included at the end of the report. The complete sets of audited accounts for our Exchequer and National Lottery funds are made available on our website, www.artscouncil-ni.org

What we do

The Arts Council is the development agency for the arts in Northern Ireland, providing the main support for artists and arts organisations throughout the region through a range of funding opportunities.

We distribute public money and National Lottery funds to organisations and people who develop and deliver arts programmes across all of society.

Our Arts Officers offer specialist guidance on funding and project development to artists and organisations working across the spectrum of arts activities in Northern Ireland.

- Architecture
- Arts and Disability
- Arts and Health
- Circus Arts
- Carnival Arts
- Community Arts
- Crafts
- Dance
- Drama
- International Arts
- Language Arts
- Literature
- Music
- Public Art
- Traditional Arts
- Visual Arts
- Voluntary Arts
- Youth Arts

A young boy in a light blue school shirt and striped tie is conducting an orchestra. He is holding a baton in his right hand and gesturing with his left. The background is filled with other children, some in red sweaters, sitting in bleachers and watching the performance. The scene is set in a large hall with wooden floors and walls.

£741,800

*enabled hundreds of arts-based
activities for children and young people
throughout Northern Ireland*

Music around the world
project. Ulster Orchestra.

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Chairman's foreword

New Assembly, New Beginning

The year 2007- 08 proved to be a turbulent year for arts funding in Northern Ireland, with National Lottery cutbacks and the Northern Ireland Budget 2008-2011 dominating the headlines.

At the end of the previous financial year, the Treasury announced its proposal to redirect substantial Lottery funds from the UK arts councils to support the 2012 London Olympic Games.

The imperative to convince the Northern Ireland Assembly of the need to increase public funding for the arts grew ever stronger. In 'The Time for the Arts' report, the Arts Council presented a detailed picture of how the arts and the presence of working artists enrich a society. We also demonstrated the way in which they are woven into the fabric of Northern Ireland society and how they contribute specifically to the stated goals of the forthcoming budget regarding health, social inclusion and

education. We also set out to demonstrate how we could, with additional resources, capitalise on the rich economic potential of Cultural Tourism and the Creative Industries.

We were able to amass a convincing body of supportive evidence, from international experience that shows that arts and culture can be prime catalysts in transforming the social, creative and economic regeneration of cities and regions.

We asked the Assembly to respect the fact that the people of Northern Ireland deserve the same level of cultural entitlement as our neighbours on these islands, and to raise the level of arts funding to the United Kingdom average.

You in the arts communities energised the campaign for increased arts funding and it gathered momentum in the run up to the budget, prompting a private member's motion calling on parity of arts funding, which secured the support of the main political parties. The arts sector became the dominant voice at each of the regional consultation meetings and held a much-publicised rally at Stormont. The campaign culminated in a strong response to the budget consultation process, a third of which was in support of the arts.



In his budget speech in January, the then Finance Minister singled out for special mention the success of the arts campaign as well as acknowledging the contribution of the arts to Northern Ireland's economic growth.

The Northern Ireland Executive responded positively to the campaign, within the constraints of a tight spending round, and granted the Arts Council an uplift of £7.55 million over the 2008-2011 funding period.

This uplift, although short of what the sector requires if it is to prosper, leaves us in a stronger position to begin building some stability into our core arts organisations, where it is most needed. Within just two months of Northern Ireland's Budget announcement in January, the Arts Council was able to pass the 2008-09 uplift directly on to 96 core organisations and to safeguard the immediate future of a further 32 major organisations whose future had been at serious risk.

However there is no doubt that we face challenging times, particularly against the backdrop of the economic downturn and the ongoing diminution of Lottery resources.

That said, the first budget for many years to be decided by locally elected representatives may signal a turning point in attitudes to the arts in Northern Ireland. We look forward to building on this healthy start to our relationship with the Northern Ireland Assembly, and the unity of purpose we now have in the sector, as we work towards a brighter future for Northern Ireland.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Rosemary Kelly".

Rosemary Kelly
Chairman

Chief Executive's Introduction

International Inroads

The year has been unparalleled in terms of positive international re-profiling of Northern Ireland's image through its arts and culture.

In June, the Arts Council, Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), and the British Council Northern Ireland launched Northern Ireland's second presentation at the world's most prestigious showcase of contemporary visual arts, the Venice Biennale 2007. Northern Ireland's highest profile international artist and twice Turner Prize nominee, Willie Doherty, presented 'Ghost Story', a new video work specially commissioned for Venice by the show's curator, Hugh Mulholland. Amidst the leading artists representing 75 nations at the Biennale, Doherty's exhibition proved a great critical and popular success, attracting more than 40,000 visitors and demonstrating that Northern Ireland's visual arts compete comfortably on the world stage.

The 2007 Rediscover Northern Ireland programme of events at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington DC, running throughout March to July, was the most ambitious and successful international arts and cultural programme ever undertaken by Northern Ireland. The programme, with principal funding from DCAL and the Arts Council, comprised a series of more than 66 arts and cultural events, demonstrating the transformation that has taken place in recent times in Northern Ireland.

The success of our artists and arts organisations representing the cream of Northern Ireland's arts and culture in Washington, helped to promote Northern Ireland for all the right reasons, as a confident and creative place in which to live, work and do business. Our political representatives and a range of leading local businesses joined us in the United States to help cement the new cultural, business and trade relationships created through the Rediscover programme, and they have since capitalised further on a range of new investment opportunities for the region.

At the end of the financial year, in March 2008, the Arts Council and DCAL continued to strengthen these cultural links when we hosted the 'Over Here' mini-festival, bringing over several North American arts organisations to develop their contacts with artists and arts organisations working in Northern Ireland.



Successful artists have the potential to make a difference outside Northern Ireland, to the way in which the rest of the world regards us. As we enter a new, more positive era in our history, we need to build on the growing reputation of our arts and on their capacity to encourage cultural tourism. The Arts Council is committed over the period of our current five year strategy to developing national and international opportunities to showcase and celebrate artists' work.

We continue to argue strongly for the intrinsic cultural value of the arts to society - in enriching lives, as a source of renewal and growth, and in providing inspiration for the young and stimulating their imagination, all of which is essential if we are to move towards the development of an informed, inclusive, prosperous and stable society.

Arts-led urban renewal has transformed the image and prospects of many of the world's cities, and those initiatives not only changed how the world perceived them but, just as importantly, how they felt about themselves. Here in Northern Ireland, the arts are proving to be vitally important to our regeneration process.

In addition to welcoming the opening of new landmark arts facilities in Strabane, Omagh and Ballymena, which will make a real difference to the cultural life and status of those places, this year saw the first allocations made through the Re-imaging Communities Programme.

This three-year, £3.3 million programme is now playing a key role in promoting community cohesion throughout Northern Ireland, placing artists at the heart of communities to work with local people to tackle the visible signs of sectarianism and racism, creating a more welcoming environment for everyone. By the end of the year in review, the first £1 million of the Re-imaging Communities Programme's funds had been allocated to 52 community-based projects.

We look forward in the coming year to seeing more of the fruits of this important regeneration programme at home, and to continuing to build upon the international profiling for our arts, which has progressed so successfully this year.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Roisín McDonough'.

Roisín McDonough
Chief Executive

Martin Heron 'Where Dreams Go', 2008, Alley Arts Centre, Strabane.

£3.1 million
of National
Lottery
money in
2007/08
supported
the full
range of arts
projects

The Creative Industries now employ 33,500
people, more than many of the traditional
mainstays of employment in Northern Ireland

A YEAR IN THE ARTS 2007-2008

A flavour of the year's activities by the hundreds of artists, arts organisations and venues that are supported by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland through our Exchequer and National Lottery Funds.

April 2007

Students from the School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering at Queen's University team up with 289 pupils from five Belfast primary schools to help youngsters explore the links between the built environment and a number of curriculum subjects.

Maria Eagle MP, then Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure, makes a special visit to the Northern Ireland Press Photographers Association exhibition, 'Out of the Darkness' at the Ormeau Baths Gallery. The exhibition celebrating 40 years of press photography attracts more than 6,000 visitors to the gallery.

Announcing the allocation of National Lottery grants to 54 arts organisations throughout Northern Ireland, Arts Council Chief Executive warns of difficult times ahead, as National Lottery resources are diverted from the arts to the 2012 London Olympic Games.

The Golden Thread Gallery of contemporary art moved to larger and more accessible premises at The Switch Room, Great Patrick Street, Belfast.

The Arts Council transfers management of the Ormeau Baths Gallery, Northern Ireland's premier contemporary art gallery, to its newly elected independent board.



Actor Dan Gordon at the launch of 'Invest in Inspiration'

The Arts Council publishes 'A Time for the Arts', a portfolio of evidence in support of the case for increased funding for the arts.

Members of the arts sector launch the 'Invest in Inspiration' campaign for more funding for the arts with a rally in Belfast City Centre.

£17.8 million of Arts Council Exchequer public funds in 2007/08 supported artists and arts organisations throughout Northern Ireland

May 2007

Arts Council and An Chomhairle Ealaíon launch Turas/Journey, a funding initiative to foster collaborative projects between Traditional Artists in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.



Strabane gets a brand new, state-of-the-art theatre and art gallery with the opening of the Alley Arts and Conference Centre.

Local arts and healthcare charity ArtsCare receives the top award at the prestigious Blair L. Sadler International Healing Arts Competition in Nashville for its Art and Health evaluation project, Dreams.

New visual art from Northern Ireland is showcased at the Katzen Art Centre as part of the Rediscover Northern Ireland programme in Washington DC.

The music collection of local folk aficionado, the late Geoff Harden, is added to the Northern Ireland Music Archive at Belfast Central Library. This public archive, funded by the Arts Council, also contains 400 irreplaceable classical music recordings from the BBC NI archives.

REDISCOVER NORTHERN IRELAND ARTS AND CULTURAL PROGRAMME IN WASHINGTON DC

The 2007 Rediscover Northern Ireland programme of events at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington DC, running throughout March to July, was the most ambitious and successful international arts and cultural programme ever undertaken by Northern Ireland. The programme, assisted by public and private organisations, with principal funding from DCAL and the Arts Council, showcased a series of more than 66 arts and cultural events, demonstrating the transformation that has taken place in recent times in Northern Ireland.

One of Northern Ireland's leading children's theatre companies, Cahoots NI, performing at Edge Fest Children's Imagination Stage in Washington as part of the Rediscover NI programme.



Every £1 invested by the Arts Council
returns £3.62 into the local economy



Brendan Jamison, Yellow Helicopter exhibited
at the Katzen Art Centre, Washington DC.

The first artists are selected for a new North-South Curated Visual Arts Award run by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. Brendan Earley, Bea MacMahon, Conor McFeely and Factotum get the opportunity to develop pivotal work that will advance their careers.

June 2007

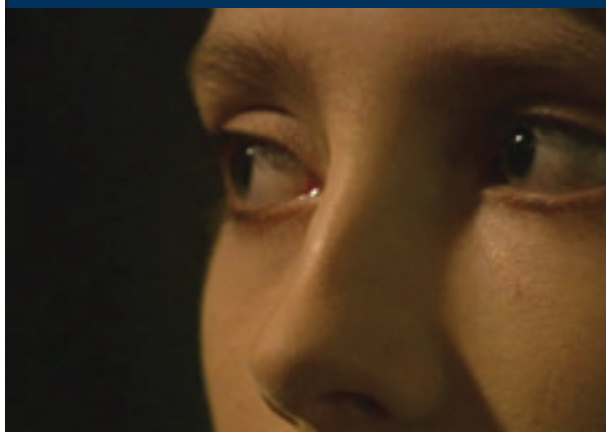
Omagh's new £10.5 million Strule Arts Centre opens its doors to the public, offering a 398 seat auditorium, 125 seat studio theatre and conference room, workshop spaces, gallery, Tourist Information Centre, bar and cafe bar. The arts centre is part of a major urban regeneration scheme to transform the area.



Strule Arts Centre

VENICE BIENNALE OF VISUAL ARTS 2007

With funding from the Arts Council, British Council and DCAL, twice Turner Prize nominated artist from Derry City, Willie Doherty, represented Northern Ireland at the 2007 Venice Biennale. The world's most prestigious showcase for the visual arts takes place over a five month period, every two years, and attracts the world's top artists representing over 75 nations. Sharing the stage with the leading lights of the contemporary art world such as Tracey Emin, Willie Doherty's exhibition was a resounding popular as well as critical success. This was one of the most visited Biennales in the 113 year history of the showcase event, attracting 320,000 visitors. More than 40,000 people visited Doherty's exhibition, helping to draw the world's attention to the quality of contemporary visual arts currently coming out of Northern Ireland.



Video Still from Willie Doherty's 'Ghost Story', specially
commissioned by curator Hugh Mulholland for the 52nd
Venice Biennale

Six arts organisations in the North West receive substantial support through the Challenge Fund as part of the Ilex Regeneration Strategy for Derry City. The fund, totalling £4m, will also fund the commissioning of iconic artwork to mark the restoration of the city.

Belfast City Council launches its Integrated Cultural Strategy jointly with the Arts Council.

Ten year old Bradley Parker, 2006 Young Piper of the Year, becomes youngest ever recipient of a Support for the Individual Artist award from the Arts Council. The grant helps him to buy new set of pipes.

WheelWorks, an arts organisation working with children from disadvantaged communities, wins a NICVA Scope Award for their 'Respect' publication, celebrating the creativity of young people in Belfast.

Arts Council, British Council and An Chomhairle Ealaíon launch www.artsinfodesk.com, a new website promoting international arts opportunities for artists and arts organisations from Northern Ireland.



Talented pipers Robert Watt and Bradley Parker (right)

In a competitive international marketplace, business leaders cite the presence of a rich cultural environment as one of the major incentives for locating their businesses

July 2007

34 community-based projects across Northern Ireland receive the first £500,000 Re-imaging Communities Programme funds. The programme, designed to tackle the visible signs of sectarianism and racism, has a total fund of £3m to be allocated over a three-year period.

Raymond Piper, one of Northern Ireland's most popular artists, dies aged 84. Best known for his delicate watercolour studies of orchids, Piper's works are to be found in Belfast City Hall, the Ulster Museum and Queen's University, Belfast.

The Open Arts Choir performs for Nobel Peace Prize winner, Desmond Tutu, during the Archbishop's pastoral visit to Belfast.

Two thirds of arts activity in Northern Ireland supports cross-community participation

RE-IMAGING COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME

2007 saw the first fruits of the Re-imaging Communities Programme, run by the Arts Council on behalf of the Shared Communities Consortium. This three year, arts-led community regeneration programme places artists in the heart of communities to work with local people to tackle the visible signs of sectarianism and racism and to create a more welcoming environment for everyone. The response has been overwhelming from local councils, community and voluntary groups throughout Northern Ireland. The widespread uptake of the pilot programme shows that communities throughout Northern Ireland are embracing change and this programme is helping them to bring about the positive transformation of their neighbourhoods.

Broughshane and District Community Association (Ballymena) 'Broughshane Butterfly Garden Re-imaging Project' allowed the community and local children to reclaim an area of land by creating a butterfly garden, with 300-400 metal painted butterflies attached to an adjacent gable-end wall. Artists: Kris Copeland and Ross Wilson



*The arts economy is worth
almost £30 million to
Northern Ireland every year*

£6.75 million

*from the Arts Council helped to build new arts
facilities in Strabane, Omagh and Ballymena*

The arts make the world talk about Northern Ireland for all the right reasons and promote an image of a confident and creative place in which to live, work and do business

August 2007

Belfast cellist, Jonathan Byers with his Quartet, the Badke Quartet, receives the top prize and the audience prize at the Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition.



Jonathan Byers

Tommy Makem, the 'Bard of Armagh', dies aged 74. A singer and musician, Makem was best known for his association with the Clancy Brothers, the group which helped to put traditional Irish folk music into the international spotlight.

HOLLYWOOD STAR LENDS SUPPORT

Hollywood star Meryl Streep lent her support to fundraising for the £16.5m Old Museum Arts Centre development in Belfast.

"I believe in the strength and the power of art to transform communities. Northern Ireland's artistic reputation had been overshadowed by its troubled history but it now stuns the world with its creative talent. I was proud to visit Northern Ireland in August 2007. I have enormous respect for all the artists who have made and who are continuing to make a difference to the region's changing society as it enters into a new era. Artists impact on so many areas of our lives and it is now time that this must be fully recognised and properly valued" – Meryl Streep December 2007.



Meryl Streep at the Old Museum arts centre fundraiser.
Photo: Press Eye

Three-quarters of the adult population
and 93% of young people attend arts
and cultural events

September 2007

Celebrating the 10th annual European Heritage Open Days, 220 buildings in Northern Ireland, including the Arts Council HQ at MacNeice House, open their doors to the public.



MacNeice House, Belfast.

October 2007

The Arts Council lobbies for a private members motion raised by South Belfast Alliance MLA, Anna Lo, asking the NI Assembly to raise the level of public funding for the arts in Northern Ireland. The motion receives support of the Assembly.

The Community Development and Health Network launches 'Arts and Health: A Community Development and Action Research Project', a major report on the benefits of involvement in the arts to the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

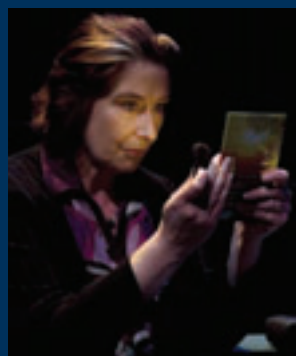
Belfast playwright, Rosemary Jenkinson, is runner-up from a field of 800 entrants at the Verity Bargate Award 2007 for best new play by an emerging writer, for her work, 'Outcast'.

The Draft Budget for Northern Ireland 2008-2011 indicates a possible increase of £4.25m over the three year funding period; short on matching the

SCENES FROM THE BIG PICTURE

Belfast production company, Prime Cut, received two Irish Times Theatre Award nominations (Best Production and Best Lighting Design) for their production of Owen McCafferty's Belfast-set play, 'Scenes from the Big Picture' at Belfast's Waterfront Hall.

This was the first opportunity for local audiences to see this multi-award winning modern classic, which has been staged to great critical and popular acclaim in London, America, Australia, Macedonia and Germany. The play, featuring one of the largest professional casts in local theatre in recent decades, was awarded £78,750 by the Arts Council, the largest grant ever awarded to a single theatre production in Northern Ireland.



Eleanor Methven. Prime Cut Productions' Irish premiere of 'Scenes from the Big Picture', by Owen McCafferty. Photo Chris Hill

projected £4.5m loss of Lottery funds for the arts to the Olympics.

Craft Northern Ireland launches 'A Future in the Making', the first major survey in a decade providing information on the size of the craft sector in NI and its contribution to the regional economy.

Mark Mulholland, one of Northern Ireland's leading character actors, dies aged 70. Mulholland is perhaps best known for his portrayal of Uncle Andy alongside Kenneth Branagh in the BBC's 'Billy Plays' from the early 1980s.

Strangford poet, Maria McManus, is shortlisted for the Glen Dimplex New Writers Awards, for her collection of poetry, 'Reading the Dog', published by Lagan Press.

There is a strong approval rating for public funding of arts and culture (78%)

November 2007

Lobbying for increased funding for the arts is stepped up with the launch of the 'Keep our Arts Alive' campaign by Arts Council and the arts sector.



Feargal Sharkey at the Arts Council's annual conference

The Arts Council launches STart UP, a new initiative to provide support, including grant aid, to organisations not previously engaged with the arts, to encourage community development through the arts.

The Community Development and Health Network publishes 'Arts and Health' research publication, showing that involvement in arts activities brought about increased self-esteem in 98% of socially disadvantaged and vulnerable people involved in the research programme.

ART AT THE HEART CONFERENCE

Legendary Irish novelist, Edna O'Brien, was among a strong line-up of international artists who addressed the theme of socially and politically engaged art at the Arts Council's 'Art at the Heart' conference. She was joined by Feargal Sharkey, musician and former Chairman of the Live Music Forum; political playwright David Edgar; and Turner Prize nominee, Nathan Coley. Local actor and director, Dan Gordon and American educationalist Dr Lawrence Riccio, held workshops exploring the benefits of prison arts and educating young minds through the arts.



Glenn Patterson in conversation with novelist Edna O'Brien at the Arts Council's annual conference.

The public overwhelmingly supports school children having the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument or participate in other arts activities.

December 2007

Northern Ireland's arts sector, supported by the Arts Council, rallies at Stormont to highlight the inequitable funding situation for the arts in Northern Ireland, and to call for an increase in the arts allocation through the NI draft Budget 2008-2011 consultation.

Marking International Day of Disabled People, the Arts Council publishes its Disability Baseline Survey, the largest such research study in Northern Ireland into disabled people's participation in and access to the arts.

International Day of Disabled People also marks the launch of www.artsanddisability.com, the first all-Ireland website containing information, resources and facts about Arts and Disability, initiated by the Arts Council and An Chomhairle Ealaíon.



The Arts Council publishes 'Arts and Culture in Northern Ireland 2007', the second dedicated study undertaken in recent times to collect and analyse information on consumption, behaviour and public attitudes towards the arts.

OUT OF THE DARKNESS AT STORMONT

Northern Ireland's transformation was showcased in January at the 'Out of the Darkness' photographic exhibition hosted by Arts Minister Poots at the Long Gallery at Stormont. The exhibition by the Northern Ireland Press Photographers' Association and supported by the Arts Council, celebrated 40 years of press photography in Northern Ireland. The photographs captured an extraordinary passage in the history of Northern Ireland, including its political journey out of conflict, making Stormont a particularly appropriate and potent setting for the exhibition.

'Out of the Darkness' enjoyed huge success on home ground and internationally, attracting 6,226 visitors when it first opened at the Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast, and 10,000 visitors when shown during the Rediscover Northern Ireland arts showcase in Washington DC.



Crispin Rodwell, 'Carefree Moment', August 1994. Northern Ireland Press Photographers Association.

January 2008

Arts Council publishes recommendations for a new Drama strategy for Northern Ireland.

The Linenhall Library, Belfast and Ulster Journals Ltd win the Brand Identity Prize at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards 2008. The prize is awarded for the effective use of arts sponsorship to raise corporate profile.

Ulster poet, Alan Gillis, is runner-up for the UK's richest cash prize in poetry, the TS Eliot Prize for Poetry 2007, for his book 'Hawks and Doves', published by Gallery Press.

Over two-thirds of young people under the age of 25 experience improved self-confidence through participation in the arts

KEEP OUR ARTS ALIVE CAMPAIGN

Following a successful campaign, the Arts Council received an uplift of £7.55 million over the three-year funding period of the Northern Ireland Budget 2008-2011. Then Finance Minister, Peter Robinson, singled out for special mention the success of the arts campaign, saying:

"Of all the issues, funding for the Arts was the main theme in terms of the quantity of responses, reflecting the well organised effort by the arts sector to highlight its concerns. I pay tribute to them for their efforts."

Mr Robinson also acknowledged the benefits of the arts to Northern Ireland:

"Turning to the issue of funding for the Arts, the Executive recognises the importance of the sector, not just in terms of entertainment and relaxation but also because of the significant potential contribution it can make to our tourist sector and to wider economic growth."



Arts Council Chief Executive, Roisín McDonough with Gerry Lynch, Executive Director, Alliance Party of Northern Ireland (centre left) and Barry McElduff MLA, Chair, Committee for Culture Arts and Leisure (centre right) at the 'Keep Our Arts Alive' rally at Stormont in December.

The arts are acknowledged world-wide as prime catalysts for creating social cohesion, improving local image, civic pride and community empowerment

February 2008

The striking £16.8m Braid arts, civic centre and museum complex opens its doors to the public in Ballymena. The 400 seat auditorium, gallery and workshop spaces offer a major boost to the cultural development of the area.

Craft Northern Ireland, the development agency for design-led contemporary craft and applied arts holds its first conference, 'A future in the making – champions and partners'.

The Welsh Academi, the leading agency promoting literature and authors from Wales, holds its three-day conference for the first time outside of Wales, when it arrives in Belfast to explore contemporary issues within Welsh and Northern Irish cultures.



Glenn Patterson and Patricia Craig, two of the speakers at the Welsh Academi conference.

MAJOR ARTS COUNCIL AWARDS FOR ARTISTS

The Arts Council honoured one of Northern Ireland's leading playwrights, Owen McCafferty, and 'British Music Commemoration' and 'RTE Composer' award winning composer, Elaine Agnew with £15,000 each through its 'Major Individual Artist Awards'. The awards recognise the contribution made by artists, writers and musicians to the arts in Northern Ireland and make it possible for artists to develop new and ambitious work which will make a significant contribution to the development of their careers. McCafferty will use the award to develop an original and challenging new play, whilst Agnew plans to research and write an extensive chamber opera based on the story, 'The Night of the Big Wind'.

McCafferty and Agnew join the ranks of local artists whose careers have already benefited markedly through the support of these Major awards, including writers Carlo Gébler, Damian Gorman, Glenn Patterson and Patricia Craig; visual artists Rita Duffy and Susan MacWilliam; and Brian Irvine, who won a British Composer Award in 2006.



Playwright Owen McCafferty, winner of a £15,000 Major Individual Artist Award

More than £1m helped to create more welcoming environments in local communities through 49 Re-imaging Communities projects



The Braid Arts Centre, Ballymena.

Ulster Bank announces a new three-year sponsorship deal worth more than £1 million with the Belfast Festival at Queen's. The partnership sends out a clear message to the business community that the arts sector represents good investment.

March 2008

The Golden Thread Gallery brings 'Drawing a Line – A contemporary survey of art from Northern Ireland' to the Harbin Winter Cultural Festival at the Museum of the Heilongjiang Daily in China. The exhibition is part of a cultural exchange, giving international showcase opportunities to emerging Northern Ireland artists.

The Arts Council achieves the Bronze Award in the Northern Ireland Quality Awards, 'Steps to Excellence', which is based on the European Foundation for Quality Management model of excellence.

Following the unparalleled success of the Rediscover NI programme in Washington DC, the 'Over Here' minifest continues to strengthen relations by welcoming to Northern Ireland several of the

best arts connections established in Washington and the US.

Portadown-born poet, Sinéad Morrissey wins the UK's biggest poetry competition, the 2007 National Poetry Competition.

The Arts Council fulfills its pledge to plough 2008's uplift of £1.7m secured through the NI Budget 2008-11 straight back into the arts in Northern Ireland. 96 organisations benefit from the increase through the 2008-09 round of annual Arts Council grants, totalling £9.6m.



Musician, Chris Blake, taking part in the 'Over Here' festival



Financial Summary 2007-08

The Arts Council provides the main support for artists and arts organisations working in Northern Ireland, offering a broad range of funding opportunities through our Exchequer and National Lottery funds. Our funding programmes reflect the aims and objectives of our five year strategic plan, Creative Connections, as well as our series of art form funding policies.*

The complete sets of audited accounts for our Exchequer and National Lottery funds are made available on the Arts Council's website, www.artscouncil-ni.org

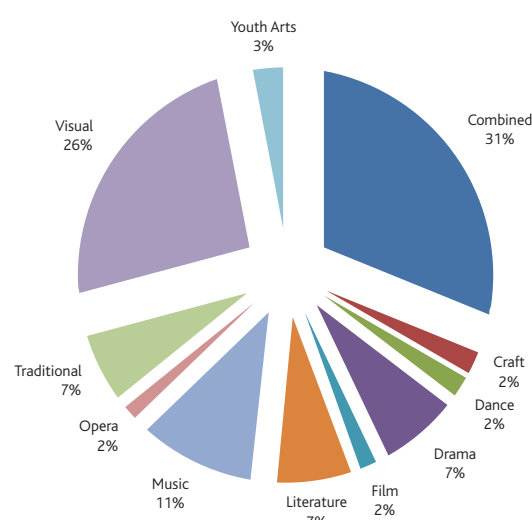
Arts Council Exchequer funding 2007-08

The Arts Council awarded public funding of £17.8 million through its Exchequer Fund. These funds were awarded through a set of programmes developed to support the full range of activities of artists and arts organisations across Northern Ireland, including:

- Annual Support for Organisations Programme (ASOP)
- Support for the Individual Artist Programme (SIAP)
- Major Individual Artist Awards
- Travel Awards
- International Residencies

Local Authority Area	Number of Awards	Value of Awards
Antrim	6	23,990
Ards	10	43,756
Armagh	6	168,550
Ballymena	1	9,943
Banbridge	5	8,010
Belfast	178	12,896,626
Carrickfergus	2	7,218
Coleraine	2	105,590
Cookstown	4	15,600
Craigavon	3	76,400
Derry	36	2,296,825
Down	4	65,800
Dungannon	8	97,664
Fermanagh	3	25,880
Larne	3	20,300
Limavady	3	20,157
Lisburn	7	324,739
Magherafelt	1	5,000
Moyle	2	5,500
Newry and Mourne	11	117,437
Newtownabbey	2	37,340
North Down	11	233,751
Omagh	1	2,500

Exchequer awards by Artform



* Creative Connections and art form policies are available at www.artscouncil-ni.org



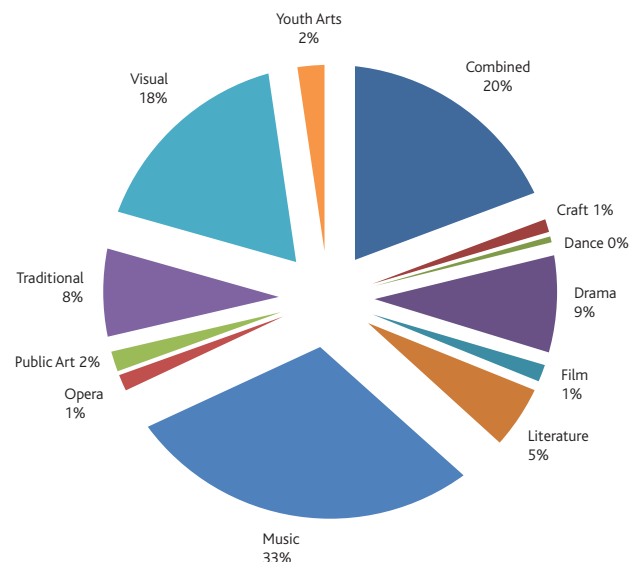
Arts Council Lottery funding 2007-08

The Arts Council awarded funding of £3.09 million through its National Lottery Fund. Lottery funds supported arts projects throughout Northern Ireland. Funding programmes included:

- Project Funding
- Multi-Annual Funding Programme (MAP)
- Re-imaging Communities Programme
- Equipment grants
- Musical Instruments for Bands
- Support for the Individual Artist
- Public Art
- Awards for All

Local Authority Area	Number of Awards	Value of Awards
Antrim	2	11,010
Ards	8	54,428
Armagh	12	118,688
Ballymena	9	40,973
Ballymoney	5	59,169
Banbridge	3	9,505
Belfast	117	1,853,616
Castlereagh	2	4,338
Coleraine	4	122,887
Cookstown	5	68,960
Craigavon	5	23,560
Derry	22	415,055
Down	10	136,921
Dungannon	8	44,669
Fermanagh	9	100,398
Larne	2	15,700
Lisburn	14	80,555
Magherafelt	7	41,156
Moyle	2	7,306
Newry and Mourne	6	106,764
Newtownabbey	2	10,000
North Down	7	51,741
Omagh	6	128,551
Strabane	2	27,000

Lottery awards by Artform



Note on funding patterns:

Funding patterns in Belfast and Derry reflect the high concentrations of artists and arts organisations living and working in these areas, as well as the location of several major 'umbrella' arts organisations whose services extend to Northern Ireland as a whole.

The Council

The Council provides leadership for the executive body, in particular in defining and developing its strategic direction. It monitors performance in order to ensure that the Arts Council fully meets its aims, objectives and performance targets, and acts in a way that promotes the highest standards of public finance.

Ms Rosemary Kelly was appointed Chairman of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland in 2003. The fourteen members of Council, including the Vice-Chairman, Damien Coyle, are drawn from a broad cross-section of representatives from the arts and cultural sector.

Council Members of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland 2007-08



Ms Rosemary Kelly,
Chairman



Damien Coyle,
Vice Chairman



Mrs Eithne Benson



Ms Sharon O'Connor



Ms Kate Bond



Mr Raymond Fullerton



Mr David Irvine



Mr Joseph Rice



Mr Anthony Kennedy



Prof Ian Montgomery



Mr William Montgomery



Mr Paul Seawright



Karl Harron, Glass Artist. Craft NI 'Making Changes' exhibition.
Photo: Arthur Allison, Pacemaker 2007.



Ms Janine Walker



Mr Peter Spratt



Mr Brian Sore

Term of office ended 30th November 2007:



Mr Martin Bradley,
Vice Chairman



Mr Tim Kerr



Ms Jill McEneaney



Mr Gearóid Ó'hEara



Ms Lucy Finnegan
(Resigned January 2008)

The Arts Council wishes to acknowledge, with thanks, the contribution made by former Council members who completed their terms of office in 2007-2008.

The Executive

Roisín McDonough, Chief Executive



Corporate Services Department

Paul Burns, Director of
Corporate Services



Edel Bonar, Finance Manager
Ken Bartley, IT Manager

Strategic Development Department

Nick Livingston, Director of
Strategic Development



Graeme Stevenson & Amanda
Leighton, Research and Policy Officers

Arts Development Department

Noirín McKinney, Director of Arts Development
Philip Hammond, Director of Arts Support
Lorraine McDowell, Head of Operations



Lorraine Calderwood, Capital Projects Officer
Grainne McCann, Communications Manager
Jane McKee, Media Relations Officer
Matthew Hendry, Communications Officer
Fiona MacMillan, Public Affairs Officer
Andrea Rea, 'Troubles' Archivist

Arts Development Officers

Gilly Campbell, Drama and Dance
Robert Collins, Music, Opera and Bands
Iain Davidson, Visual Arts & Craft
Paul Harron, Architecture & Public Art
Chris Ledger, Health, Voluntary and Disability Arts
Suzanne Lyle, Visual Arts & Collection
Edel Murphy, Community Arts
Gavin O'Connor, Youth Arts
Damian Smyth, Literature

Re-imaging Communities Programme

Joan Dempster, Project Manager

Full staff list is available on www.artscouncil-ni.org



Maiden Voyage, 'The Match'. Photo: Joe Fox

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I apply for funding?

The Arts Council offers a range of grant programmes that you can apply to for funding. Some programmes are specifically for organisations and others are for individual artists. For information on all the programmes that we offer, the criteria for each programme and how to apply, see www.artscouncil-ni.org/subpages/funding.htm

When can I apply?

Most grant programmes take place in funding rounds with specific dates when we will accept applications. Some programmes are open for applications all year round. For information on funding deadlines see www.artscouncil-ni.org/award/deadlines.html

How long will it take to reach a decision?

We aim to make a decision on applications from individuals within two months, and applications from organisations within three months. The assessment process is explained in the programme guidance notes.

Where can I get help with my application?

The guidance notes for each programme provide information on the assessment criteria, eligibility and application process. The Arts Development Officers at the Arts Council can also offer advice and assistance before you submit an application. Contact details are available at www.artscouncil-ni.org/us/staff.htm or you can contact the switchboard and you will be directed to the most appropriate person, Tel: 028 9038 5200.

Can I apply online?

You can submit an application online through links on our website, www.artscouncil-ni.org

What art classes are available for me to attend in my local area?

We would recommend that you contact the Arts Officer in your local Council or contact your local Arts Centre to get further information on the arts activities available in your area. For information on events for young people by specific organisations follow the web links at www.artscouncil-ni.org/useful/youtharts.htm

How can a school or voluntary organisation arrange for an artist to deliver a workshop?

The Creative Youth Partnership Programme offers arts programmes for children and young people throughout Northern Ireland. Contact your local CYP Development Officer for further information www.cypni.org.uk/

Does the Arts Council provide artists' contact details?

The provisions of the Data Protection Act prohibit us from releasing Third Party information. However, information on artists can often be obtained through a simple web search.

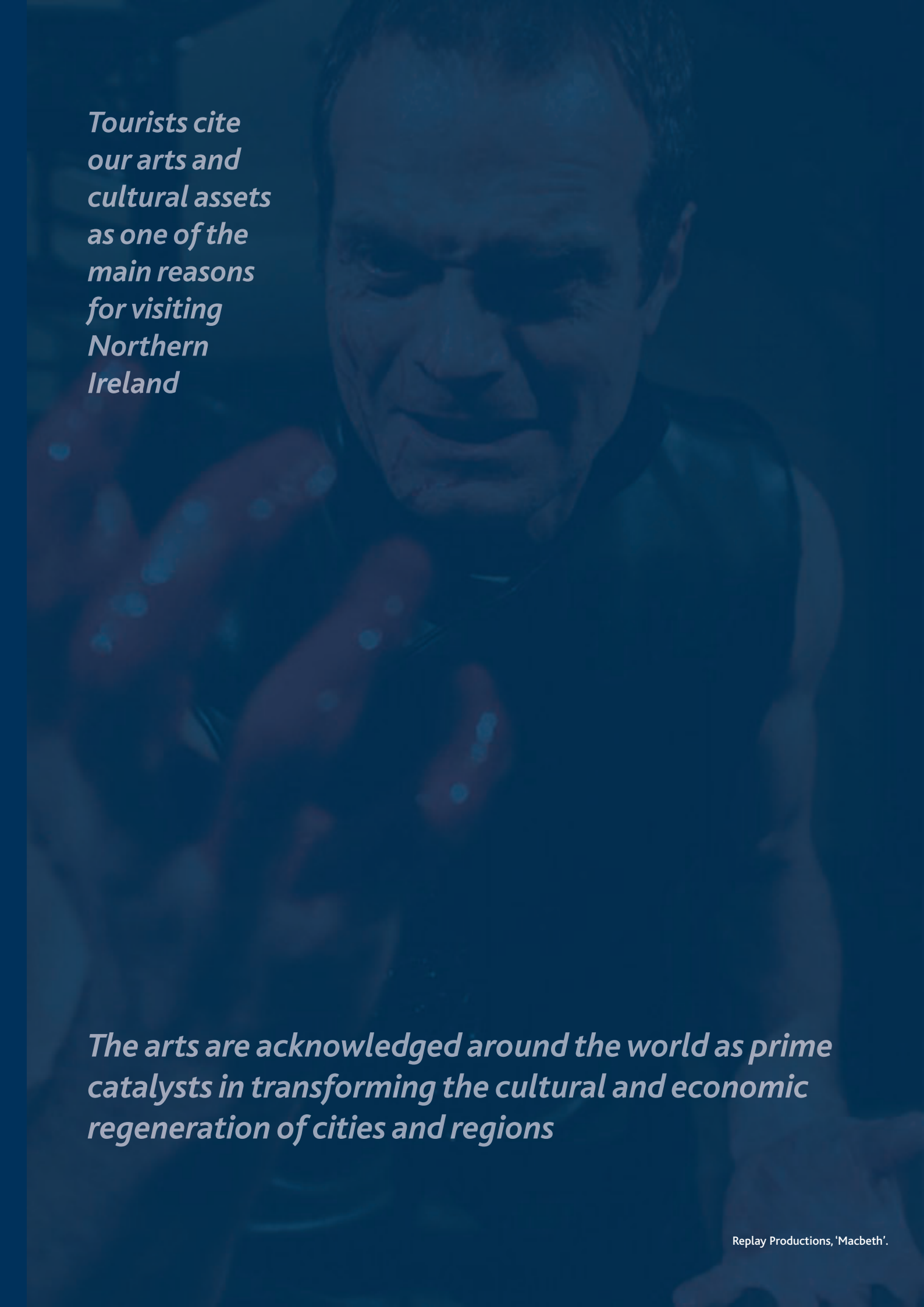
How do I complain to the Arts Council?

The Arts Council has a Service Charter which outlines the standard of service our clients should expect from us. We operate a Service Complaints Procedure to handle general complaints about our service (www.artscouncil-ni.org/other/complaints.htm). In addition, we operate a Funding Review Procedure for those who want to appeal a decision about a grant application (www.artscouncil-ni.org/other/FundingReviewProcedure.htm)

Alternative formats of this publication may be available on request.

For further information: Tel: 028 9038 5210

email: mhendry@artscouncil-ni.org



*Tourists cite
our arts and
cultural assets
as one of the
main reasons
for visiting
Northern
Ireland*

*The arts are acknowledged around the world as prime
catalysts in transforming the cultural and economic
regeneration of cities and regions*



For further information please contact:

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