

Culture and Communities Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 5 October 2023

Third Party Cultural Grants – Strategic Partnerships Funding Programme Review

Executive/Routine
Wards

Executive
All

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Culture and Communities Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Approve the continuation of the three-year in principle Strategic Partnerships Funding programme;
 - 1.1.2 Approve the application process timeline;
 - 1.1.3 Approve the introduction of a new funding programme strand, established from within the existing revenue grants fund, to provide resources to the city's creative community hubs (specifically to develop and own community-based projects in partnership with established city-based Council funded cultural organisations);
 - 1.1.4 Approve an additional transition year, if required, to support applicant change management requirements, recognising that this will mean that the programme would therefore run for four years; and
 - 1.1.5 Note that a report will be presented on 29 February 2024 on the recommended Strategic Partnerships grants programme to commence on 1 April 2024.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Lindsay A Robertson

E-mail: lindsay.robertson@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 6719

Third Party Cultural Grants – Strategic Partnerships Funding Programme Review

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the programme review of the third party cultural grants strategic partnerships, and recommends next steps for grant funding from 1 April 2024 onwards.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council continues to play an essential partnership and facilitation role with stakeholders, Strategic Partners, communities and creative practitioners in the city's cultural ecosystem. This is reflected in the [Culture Strategy 2023/30](#).
- 3.2 In [June 2019](#), Committee approved the introduction of a fully revised third party cultural grants model known as Strategic Partnerships (revenue funding) programme. This represented the culmination and outcomes of an extensive consultation and review process of the Council's third party cultural grants programme.
- 3.3 As part of that model, it was agreed that Strategic Partnerships would be in place, in principle, for three years and that the programme would be reviewed during the final year (year 3 of 3), and any revisions subsequently implemented for a further three-year programme of revenue funding.
- 3.4 A key cross-sector ask from the original review process was the introduction of Flexible Funding to provide grassroots essential access to project funding, as well as diversity and inclusion, development funding citywide to enrich the city's creative, networking, collaboration and participatory ladder of opportunity.
- 3.5 This had not been in place previously and has subsequently been widely acknowledged as a very positive and welcomed element of the Council's role in supporting the sector's practitioners in the city, particularly during COVID-19, as well as fulfilling its original remit described at 3.3.
- 3.6 Given the on-going impact of COVID-19 on the sector, Committee agreed on [1 February 2022](#) that the three-year Strategic Partnerships programme would be extended by one year to maintain stability and contribute to broader sector recovery

and to conclude the current Partnerships programme at the end of financial year 2023/24.

- 3.7 Since 2019, 27 organisations across the city have been funded via the Strategic Partnerships programme. The current revenue budget, funding allocations and most recent update were [presented](#) to Committee in May 2023.

4. Main report

- 4.1 To support the funding programme review, 29 consultation meetings have taken place with partners and stakeholders. A list of those organisations consulted is included at Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The feedback from the current strategic partners highlighted that Council funding support is fundamental to the success of the city's cultural ecosystem and provides vital leverage supporting the success of other funding applications, sponsorship, and resource partnerships. The Council's funding also ensures a continued focus on citywide year-round resident benefit and access to opportunities for creative practitioners, participants, and audiences. The feedback also highlighted that a simplified process would be welcome.
- 4.3 In addition, to further strengthen collaborative project development opportunities between the strategic partners and creative community hubs, the recommendations also include a proposal to set aside some funding towards this.
- 4.4 The Strategic Partnerships funding programme review recommendations include the reduction of the Culture Grants revenue budget by £150,000 agreed as part of the Council's budget setting process in February 2023. It is important to acknowledge within the context of this report that the available budget has also been at a standstill for several years. Therefore, the budget value has reduced annually in real terms.

Recommendations from the review

- 4.5 As noted above, the feedback has highlighted the importance of the Council's financial support for Strategic Partners.
- 4.6 To further support collaborative partnership projects, it is proposed to ring-fence a maximum of 3% of the budget from 2024/25 onwards for creative community hubs. While this will mean a reduction in the funding directly available to Strategic Partners, it is intended to progress the aim of a more balanced partnership model supporting projects and activities developed with Strategic Partners and communities across the city.
- 4.7 There is a possibility that not everyone who applies will receive the level of resources requested and that a transition year may be required to accommodate and adjust to any change. Should this be needed, the funding programme could be implemented over a four-year period.

- 4.8 Based on the feedback from all the current Strategic Partners, it is proposed to implement a simpler application, reporting model and funding agreement format aligned, where practicable, to other public funders' grant management formats

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If Committee approve the recommendations in this report, the guidance for applications will be updated and published for current Strategic Partners to apply and an Independent Panel, facilitated by Council Officers, will assess the applications. It is anticipated that the application process will be concluded by mid-December 2023, with the outcome reported to Committee on 29 February 2024 for approval. This will enable grants to be in place from 1 April 2024.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The budget available to the Strategic Partnerships Funding Programme will be £4,108,900. This includes a reduction of £150,000 which was agreed as part of the Council's budget setting process in February 2023. This impact was temporarily mitigated to maintain the programme budget for the final year (2023/24).
- 6.2 Therefore, the projected available, in principle, budget total 2024/25 is currently £4,108,900. The overall cultural grants budget will be £4,439,279.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 All organisations are expected to have relevant employment, equalities, rights and sustainability policies in place as set out in the Council Conditions of Grant.
- 7.2 All organisations must have a commitment to mainstream equalities and rights in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Both in terms of its practices employing staff and volunteers and in providing services, they should be able to show how their organisation advances equality of opportunity; fosters good relations; and eliminates any unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- 7.3 The funding relationship with the Strategic Partners also offers to engage the organisations in its Diversity Programme which better connects ethnically diverse artists to the associate organisations through communications platforms, networking events and funding opportunities hence contributing positively to shifting the culture of the organisations to better embed equality in their activities.
- 7.4 All Strategic Partners are expected to contribute to the annual Community Engagement Report which outlines the activities designed and developed for the benefit of groups and communities listed under the protected characteristics, including those affected by socio-economic disadvantages, per the Integrated Impact Assessment guidelines. The report allows the Service to monitor, assess

and share the positive impacts on individuals and communities engaged in those activities.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 As a public body, the Council has statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity. The Council

“must, in exercising its functions, act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets”

(Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019), and

“in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions”

(Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004)

- 8.2 The City of Edinburgh Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to work towards a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for both city and corporate emissions and embedded this as a core priority of the Council Business Plan 2023-27. The Council also declared a Nature Emergency in 2023.

Environmental Impacts

- 8.3 The Council’s funding agreement conditions include carbon impact reduction action and planning requirements. Progress reports are collected annually and shared with the Council’s Policy and Strategy Service for information, and potential inclusion in the Council’s public bodies reporting processes.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 The citywide Strategic Partnerships Funding programme is well established.
- 9.2 The fund decision-making panel is comprised of external expertise and the process is managed by Council Officers.
- 9.3 The report recommendations are designed to maximise the positive impact, and further progress the widest feasible dissemination, of cultural development funding opportunities citywide, and in particular to the network of creative community hubs.
- 9.4 The continuation of the funding programme would have no further risk, policy, compliance, governance, or community impact.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Committee reports and relevant Council Strategy document links are provided throughout the report.

11. Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 – List of Consultation Meetings, June to August 2023

List of Consultation Meetings June-August 2023

1. Creative Scotland CE & artform managers
2. Scottish Government Culture
3. EVOG
4. Capital Theatres
5. Lung Ha
6. Royal Lyceum
7. North Edinburgh Arts
8. Queens Hall
9. Sculpture Workshop
10. Edinburgh International Festival
11. Festivals Edinburgh
12. Edinburgh Art Festival
13. Scottish Chamber Orchestra
14. TRACS (Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland)
15. UNESCO City of Literature
16. Dance Base
17. Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival
18. Fringe
19. Imagine
20. Artlink
21. Edinburgh Performing Arts Development (EPAD)
22. Edinburgh Multi-cultural Festival
23. Edinburgh Printmakers
24. Edinburgh Science
25. Scottish Book Trust
26. Scottish Poetry Library
27. Edinburgh International Book Festival
28. Stills Gallery
29. Traverse