

Inspiring Prospects

Arts Council Strategic Review 2014

REPORT OF THE STEERING GROUP

*Inspiring Prospects*¹

The Arts Council should...

- 1. Be a development agency for the arts focussed on the public good...*
- 2. Make policies and strategies that are explicit and connected...*
- 3. Change its investment strategies and behaviours...*
- 4. Be well-informed and evidence-based...*
- 5. Strengthen its own capability and that of the arts sector...*
- 6. Engage widely and communicate openly...*

¹ from Act One Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett

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BACKGROUND TO STRATEGIC REVIEW 2014

In 2013 the Arts Council took the decision to initiate a strategic review of its work. The decision came at the end of arguably the most significant decade in the history of the Arts Council. Beginning with the 2003 Arts Act, the decade saw five years of unprecedented public investment in the arts and unparalleled development and achievement. Much of that development became severely stressed and some of it was lost in the ensuing five years of sudden, severe and sustained contraction in public investment (from a range of sources) as well as in private giving, corporate sponsorship and in other earned income.

The steering group noted how the outgoing Arts Council chairman expressed clearly what needed to be done in the 2013 Arts Council Strategic Statement: *I am now firmly of the view that it is crucial that the Arts Council engages in a fundamental examination of how it addresses its remit. A fault-line has developed between the model of arts provision that was created a decade ago and the resources that are currently available.*

The turbulence surrounding the arts and the Arts Council since 2008 is part of the wider social and economic instability that characterised most aspects of Irish life and especially our public services. In the world of the arts especially, nothing stands still, so there were other cultural and especially technological changes at work to alter the way in which the arts were made and experienced. All of these factors influenced the environment within which the Arts Council determined that simply managing its funding relationships on a year-to-year basis was not an option. Instead it declared that it was *both responsible and necessary that the Arts Council should undertake a review of how it plans, partners, promotes and provides for the arts in Ireland.*

Key to the strategic review and to this report was the Arts Council's decision to invite independent expertise to help steer the review process. That was reflected in the composition of the steering group, seven of whose twelve members were external to the Arts Council. The remaining five (three Council members, the Director, and a Senior Manager) brought different knowledge and expertise as well as ensuring that the strategic review was connected to, if not circumscribed by, the 'lived reality' of the Arts Council.

PROCESS OF STRATEGIC REVIEW 2014

1. Announcement of Review and Terms of Reference

Strategic Review 2014 was formally announced in November 2013. The terms of reference (see Appendix 1) set by the Arts Council were formally adopted by the steering group at its first meeting in January 2014. Short notes on each of the steering group's members are available in Appendix 2.

2. Analysis

The process of 'detailed deliberation and analysis' referred to in the terms of reference was conducted chiefly through six formal meetings of the steering group, supported by the Arts Council's strategic development department *via* a wide range of information, analysis and documentation, some internal to the Arts Council and some published (see Appendix 3).

3. Dialogue and Communications

In April the steering group issued a discussion document for the dialogue and communications process which was the main focus of its work that month. That process was led by the public affairs and communications department of the Arts Council. The document contained five propositions and 16 prompts or questions concerning the Arts Council's remit, how it was currently addressed, and alternative emphases or directions for how it might be addressed. That document was the focus of three facilitated meetings with the arts sector in Cork, Dublin and Sligo (attended by nearly 250 people) and for 13 'key informant' meetings with 40 individuals and representatives of organisations in the arts, education, community development, tourism, broadcasting, business and other relevant sectors. It was also the focus for the online submissions. 109 responses were received from a wide range of stakeholders both individuals and organisations, with a correspondingly wide range of perspectives on how the Arts Council should address its remit.

4. Research Actions

To broaden its perspectives and deepen its knowledge, the steering group undertook three research tasks. It convened a PESTLE² analysis meeting to support exploration and analysis of the arts and of the Arts Council through the prism of the wider informing environment taking account of current and anticipated trends (see Appendix 4). It commissioned a study comparing the Arts Council and how it fulfils its remit with eight equivalent international agencies³. It also procured the undertaking of qualitative research through focused public discussion sessions, with these yielding key insights about the role of the arts in the lives of people in different socio-economic groups and in a number of locations across Ireland. These discrete research actions and the insights gained from the dialogue and communications process extended and enriched the understanding of the steering group. They assisted it in analysing the many challenges facing the arts and the Arts Council, as the body charged with their support and development.

5. Findings and Proposals

The final weeks of the steering group's work were taken up with considering and agreeing on the main findings and key proposals it wished to include in its report to the Arts Council.

² PESTLE stands for: **P** for Political / **E** for Economic / **S** for Social / **T** for Technological / **L** for Legal / **E** for Environmental

³ The 8 agencies examined in the study by Dr Tara Byrne were: Arts Council England; Arts Council Wales; Arts Promotion Centre Finland; Creative New Zealand; Creative Scotland; Danish Arts Council; Ontario Arts Council; Pro Helvetia.

INTRODUCTION TO FINDINGS AND PROPOSALS

Our findings and proposals originate in the Arts Council's own call for *a major review designed to inform [its] strategic planning for the medium to long-term development of the arts*⁴. In commissioning this review the Arts Council addressed *the need to find ways to facilitate fundamental thinking about new ways of working*⁵ that is at the heart of public service reform in Ireland.

We have observed that at various stages in its 60-year history the Arts Council has demonstrated a capacity for change. In the wake of the 2003 Arts Act the Arts Council began a significant phase of expansion, re-organising its structures and processes to that end. Ten years later – in much altered circumstances – its 2013 Strategic Statement indicated that it had decided its existing model might no longer be feasible or appropriate. That was the impulse for this strategic review and for our work as steering group.

By its nature the findings of a report like this focus on shortcomings and on desirable improvements. They do not dwell on the strengths, and especially the knowledge, experience and commitment of Council members and executive. Most importantly it is clear that the judgment of the Arts Council has been shown to be expert in the way it has identified and supported so many artists and so much excellent art over many decades.

The Arts Council has its critics. Many of them made it their business to let the steering group know their views. Some trenchant criticism came from within the organisation itself – always a good sign. The findings of the review are searching and the report's proposals are challenging, with significant implications for how the Arts Council does its work. But that was the purpose of this review: to engage with the Arts Council's statutory remit in contemporary circumstances and propose new and better ways of fulfilling it.

Realising what is our first and over-arching proposal – the transformation of the Arts Council into a *development agency for the arts focussed on the public good* – will require strong leadership and determination. There will be cultural, organisational and resource challenges both within and without the Arts Council. The financial implications would require a re-deployment of existing resources to give effect to a new strategy. In absolute terms the investment in artists and arts organisations would remain close to current levels, though allocated within an altered framework set out in the proposals that follow. To become the agency envisaged by the steering group, the Arts Council will have to invest human and financial resources to address aspects of its remit that are currently under-resourced, so impeding it from being the promotion and development agency it needs to be. The steering group appreciates that some of the 'hard choices' it advocates have difficulties attaching to them. But we are clear in our conviction that the choices proposed are for the public good and for the long-term good of the arts. The immediate challenge – and opportunity – is to begin now to undertake the proposed transformation so that momentum is not lost and the necessary reforms do not get diluted. The first step is to make a strategic road map that will guide the Arts Council in 2015 and beyond in the journey to realise its remit fully.

4 Developing the Arts: Arts Council Strategic Statement (November 2013)

5 Progress on Public Sector Reform (Institute of Public Administration, June 2013)

FINDINGS OF STRATEGIC REVIEW 2014

1. NATIONAL ARTS POLICY

The Arts Council operates within the context of a national arts policy that, in the course of this review, was described variously as being a vacuum, as being in stasis, and as being unhelpfully fragmented. The arts themselves and the public which funds them are poorly served by the absence of an overarching policy. There are two layers of policy deficit. One is poor ‘connectivity’ between the arts and many aspects of wider civil society and public policy and provision. Among several examples there is a clear need to clarify joint and several responsibilities in fields like education and tourism. There is significant need and potential for collaboration between senior arts policy makers and their counterparts in the domains of local government, enterprise, and health. The second layer of policy deficit is internal to the world of arts and culture and refers to a lack of coherence between different agencies, institutions and services all engaged in distinct but broadly similar work. The lack of coherence in the planning of arts centres countrywide (which continues to this day) is one example of direct relevance to the Arts Council, with inadequate consideration being given in many cases to the ongoing current costs of these venues, once built. Another example is the fractured way in which domestic and international responsibilities (mis)align. This is especially detrimental in the arts. By its nature art flies the nets of borders and often leads in opening up wider culture and communication. Much contemporary arts practice is global and operates naturally in an ‘open economy’ framework. This is especially important in Ireland because international ‘markets’ can help to offset the obvious limitations of domestic scale.

2. PUBLIC FINANCES

Given the wider economic context and ongoing pressures on the public finances, we agreed that it would be sensible and realistic to take as a given that the current level of public funding of the Arts Council is likely to remain broadly the same for the foreseeable future⁶. The Arts Council should plan and make policy and strategic decisions on that basis. Change cannot be contingent on ‘more money’ becoming available, but we hope and note that in time change is likely to leverage ‘more money’.

3. FUNDING THE PROFESSIONAL ARTS

The Arts Council is primarily focussed on its financial support of the professional arts sector. Its strategic focus and most of its corporate effort are directed not so much at ‘supporting the arts’ as at ‘funding the professional arts sector’. Its own logo is accurate in branding the agency as: ‘The Arts Council Funding the Arts’, thus emphasising Section 24 of the Arts Act (the dispersal of monies). Aspects of Section 9 where its remit is outlined – in particular some key functions to do with promoting and developing the arts – are much less attended to.

4. THE PUBLIC

‘The public’ and ‘the citizen’ appear to be secondary concerns of Arts Council policy. The public are largely conceived of as audiences for the professional arts, with the following consequences:

- A. There is an almost exclusive emphasis on the production / consumption model of the arts. Within that model most Arts Council attention is paid to the ‘supply side’ with relatively little focus on the ‘demand side’.
- B. There seems little emphasis on engagement and participation as a fundamental and valued aspect of the arts in Irish society. The amateur arts – one important such aspect – do not appear to register in Arts Council policy and strategy.
- C. People who are not part of the audience for the subsidised arts largely fall outside of the compass of the Arts Council and its actions and investments.⁷

⁶ This is both the perspective of the steering group and the advice of the PESTLE meeting (see Appendix 4)

⁷ “...there is a strong argument for policy changes to promote ‘cultural inclusion’ (p.16) and ‘the issue

- D. There is little evidence of attention to the potential of digital technology to extend the reach of the arts within Ireland and internationally.⁸ Complementary to the matter of ‘reach’ is that of standards (specifically mentioned in the Arts Council’s statutory remit) and the challenge and opportunity bound up with the effect that digital dissemination has on audience expectations of production values and performance standards.
- E. There is limited evidence of demographic understanding informing arts planning.⁹
- F. Relative to the size of the population cohort, their developmental significance, their economic dependency, and the stated public preference for spending on them¹⁰, the current investment by the Arts Council in provision for children and young people in out-of-school settings (where the Arts Council has primary responsibility) is low.
- G. There is an increasing risk of the Arts Council presiding over a growing ‘disconnect’ between the arts (as it defines and funds them) and significant cohorts of the population (who define and engage with them in quite different ways)¹¹.
- H. Most Arts Council communication is sector-facing.

5. HOW THE ARTS COUNCIL FUNDS

Reviewing how the Arts Council funds the professional arts, the steering group found:

- A. The organisational culture and management model of the Arts Council are largely focussed on individual art forms and practices. This is evident in how it deploys its human and financial resources and designs its operational systems. There is an absence of cross-cutting planning and policy. For example, though there is some retrospective analysis on spatial grounds, this is done through the single filter of local authority areas. There is no overarching spatial strategy to inform planning, policy and provision as might be expected of a national agency.
- B. There is an absence of explicit published policies and strategies for the individual arts areas notwithstanding that expertise and careful judgment are exercised in funding decisions. The individual arts areas do not appear to be well aligned and mutually reinforcing. The relationship between provision for multi-disciplinary venues and that for individual artforms is a case in point.
- C. The current Strategic Statement and its predecessor (Strategic Overview 2011–2013) signal that the current paradigm is not sustainable. But they do not provide a clear or detailed basis for being selective, for making the necessary ‘hard choices’.
- D. Despite losing a third of its staff and a third of its funding in six years, the Arts Council

of justifying ‘regressive’ public support for the arts – the public subsidy of activities that benefit the disproportionately better off – has a more substantial pedigree in arts policy than in sports policy...” (p.63) – both quotations from *In The Frame or Out of the Picture: A Statistical Analysis of Public Involvement in the Arts* (National Economic and Social Forum, 2008)

- 8 It is acknowledged that the implications of digital technology exceed the matter of public access. They affect the production dissemination and reception of art and represent a challenge and opportunity as to what constitutes ‘an arts experience’. This point was underlined in the course of the PESTLE analysis meeting (see Appendix 4)
- 9 Referencing only age-related demographic concerns, the scale of the cohort and the developmental significance of children and young people recommend them for particular attention; at the other end of the life cycle there is the ‘new life stage’ of older people who represent a significant cultural asset as practitioners, mentors, volunteers, and audiences.
- 10 *The Public and the Arts* (The Arts Council, 2006)
A clear first preference of the public for spending on the arts was ‘Arts programmes and facilities dedicated to working for and with children and young people’. Table 4.7 shows that 54% of people chose this as either their first or second priority, significantly ahead of any of the seven other options offered. This represents a marked increase on a 1994 figure that was already high. While it might be argued that ‘children and young people’ will always attract an automatic weighting of public preference, it is worth underlining, especially in the context of legislation and provision around children’s rights (see Section 3.7.8), that this question was not asked of those who would be most likely to benefit from such a response, as no one under the age of 15 was surveyed. (p.108)
- 11 Both the PESTLE and analysis and some of the learnings from the qualitative research with public groups underlined the challenges and opportunities associated with this risk.

continues to address a very wide spectrum of work across all art forms, in a broad range of contexts, and throughout the country. ‘Breadth and Balance’ – its guiding principle for the past five years – may no longer represent a democratic impulse so much as an inability to be strategically selective. This may well be linked to the number and longevity of embedded funding relationships. The sectoral meetings held as part of the strategic review underlined the expectation and even some sense of entitlement with which artists and arts organisations regard the Arts Council and its financial resources. This renders the task of making ‘hard choices’ very difficult but no less necessary.

- E. Much Arts Council funding tends to be reactive and relatively passive in nature, notwithstanding the range of excellent work that is supported. The Arts Council’s main funding programmes account for the vast majority of its expenditure and operate by a model wherein the Arts Council responds to applications seeking support for annual programmes of work. There are few examples of alternative investment models such as are practised in other sectors.
- F. While the broad purpose of the main funding programmes are clear, they do not usually or in any detail relate to Arts Council goals and objectives (even as broadly outlined in its strategic documents). Conditions of funding focus in the main on compliance with a range of measures. They are not, in effect, contracts or agreements for the use of (often high levels of) public subsidy to advance strategic objectives for the arts as set by the statutory public body for the arts.
- G. All aspects of financial management are rigorous and there is evidence of attention to certain outputs, especially attendance by audiences. However there is a marked absence of formal setting, monitoring and evaluation of outcomes and impacts.
- H. There appears to be greater scope for collaboration and cooperation across arts organisations in both the programming sphere and in aspects of the management of the arts. Existing evidence of good practice in terms of resource organisations, networks, *de facto* hubs, and other joint initiatives suggests that the public good might be well served by more artistic collaboration / co-production as well as by the achievement of efficiencies arising from more cooperation in operational matters.

6. PROFILE AND PATTERN OF FUNDING

When the overall profile and pattern of Arts Council funding were considered, several features revealed themselves:

- A. Some Arts Council funding relationships appear to be quite determined by precedent and history and not to take sufficient account of recent or current developments. This can result in investment decisions which, when viewed comparatively, seem inconsistent and even at odds with the developmental role of the Arts Council.
- B. By custom and practice (underpinned by the expectation of the Department of Arts) the Arts Council provides ongoing annual funding (sometimes for fixed costs) to 47 multi-disciplinary arts centres and venues which typically were not built from its capital resources nor resulted from any Arts Council ‘housing the arts’ strategy.
- C. Given the severe contraction in the Arts Council’s budget in recent years, it is probable – if not verifiable – that there is proportionately less Arts Council expenditure on arts programmes and activities and proportionately more on fixed costs, given the scale and exigency of the latter.
- D. 80% of the Arts Council’s direct arts expenditure is invested in established funding relationships with a wide range of organisations¹² leaving 20% available in a more open fashion for expenditure on individual artists, non-aligned practitioners, or new and experimental project proposals including inter-disciplinary work.
- E. 91% of Arts Council grant-in-aid from government is spent on grants and awards to

¹² This figure includes Aosdána. Though an affiliation and not a formal organisation, the financial provision to it for the *cnuas* benefits individual artists in a largely recurring fashion distinct to that obtaining in bursaries, awards and projects.

artists and arts organisations; when staff and establishment costs are removed from the balance, the level of expenditure on actions to address the development, promotion and advisory functions of the Arts Council is extremely low. There is limited investment in data and information systems. This impedes accountability, advice, advocacy, and promotion.

- F. Occasionally the Arts Council commissions research or undertakes action research projects but there is an absence of a consistent and coherent commitment to research including the leveraging of available research resources nationally and internationally.

7. QUALITY

The current definition of quality which the Arts Council uses in its funding programmes meets with general approval¹³. The systems and processes by which the Arts Council assesses quality in awards (e.g. bursaries and projects) involve the international norm of peer assessment in panels. However the international study shows that the practice is used more widely than in Ireland where it does not apply in the grant programmes which represent by far the greatest proportion of Arts Council funding. The best way of ensuring quality is to extend such assessment processes of peer judgment to all funding programmes, always within the framework of explicit policy and strategy set by the Arts Council. The implications of this finding may overlap with the following finding in respect of wider Arts Council structures and processes.

8. CORPORATE EFFECTIVENESS

Notwithstanding regard expressed for many aspects of the Arts Council's funding programmes, the steering group heard critical commentary from a range of sources and stakeholders about aspects of Council decision-making, of uncertainty as to the policy basis or strategic rationale for funding decisions, of issues to do with conflicts of interest, of confusion about some of the procedures used in determining decisions, and of excessive corporate effort being expended on the detail of the funding function at the expense of strategic planning and policy formulation.

9. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The dialogue and communications process of the strategic review (notwithstanding acknowledged limitations) revealed a need and appetite for ongoing engagement and communication about the arts. This needs to involve the Arts Council, the arts sector (widely defined), partners and stakeholders, and a range of other individuals and organisations with an allegiance to public good and to the development of creative communities and a culture of innovation in which the arts are seen to have a unique and important role.

¹³ "technically-excellent work which is both ambitious and original, connects to people and their concerns and leaves audiences changed in some lasting way" [from *Weighing Poetry* by Francois Matarasso (Arts Council, 2000)].

PROPOSALS OF STRATEGIC REVIEW 2014

The Arts Council should.....

1. *Be the development agency for the arts focussed on the public good...*
2. *Make policies and strategies that are explicit and connected...*
3. *Change its investment strategies and behaviours...*
4. *Be well-informed and evidence-based...*
5. *Strengthen its own capability and that of the arts sector...*
6. *Engage widely and communicate openly...*

PROPOSAL NO. 1:

Be the development agency for the arts focussed on the public good...

The Arts Council should

- A. Set out a vision for the arts in Ireland which highlights
 - the intrinsic value of good art
 - the entitlement of everyone to engagement in the arts
 - the distinctive role of the artist in society
- B. Place the public at the centre of a new Arts Council mission statement
- C. Develop a new strategy which sets out
 - The goals and objectives of the Arts Council as development agency for the arts
 - A limited number of priority areas for long-term strategic action among which should be provision for children and young people
- D. Ensure all its actions, decisions and work programmes are driven by its strategic objectives and priorities.

PROPOSAL NO. 2:

Make policies and strategies that are explicit and connected...

The Arts Council should

- A. Have clear policy positions on key areas within the whole arts environment:
 - those areas which it has responsibility to support and develop
 - areas in the arts and cultural field beyond its immediate responsibility
 - areas of overlap between the arts and wider public policy and provision
- B. Develop a spatial strategy that defines the nature and extent of Arts Council supports for national, regional and local arts provision
- C. Develop precise policies and detailed strategies for each arts area and for key areas affecting many artforms (e.g. living and working conditions of artists; digital production and dissemination). These should be reviewed regularly and should indicate why, how, and to what extent the Arts Council will engage in supporting artists and arts organisations within:
 - artforms
 - multidisciplinary arts and arts practices
 - public provision relevant to the arts (e.g. local government; education; tourism)
- D. Ensure that all its strategies (corporate, spatial and arts) reinforce one another and align with wider public policy and provision
- E. Ensure all strategies have identified priorities, specific objectives and defined outputs and outcomes
- F. Make clear to all stakeholders that being strategic and selective requires ‘hard choices’ to be made
- G. Underline that it values and supports the whole arts environment and not just those aspects requiring financial support

PROPOSAL NO. 3:*Change its investment strategies and behaviours...*

The Arts Council should

- A. Publish and implement an investment strategy to show exactly how its overall budget and individual arts area allocations support the delivery of its strategy
- B. Make clear the budgetary effects of the required re-balancing between
 - (a) infrastructure / fixed costs and (b) arts programme activity
 - (c) national and (d) local/regional arts provision
 - (e) established arts organisations and (f) new artists / new work
 - (g) direct investment in the arts sector and (h) actions to develop the arts
- C. Strengthen its strategic partnership with local government and change joint funding arrangements with individual local authorities in line with new strategy and its spatial approach in particular
- D. Revise the range of its investment models and funding supports so as to encourage new financial behaviours and sources of investment
- E. Make its strategic priorities and objectives central to all funding agreements made with arts organisations and partners
- F. Ensure all funding agreements and relationships target identified outputs and outcomes, and include commitments to monitor and measure
- G. Extend the system of panels and peer assessment which secures quality in the making of bursary, project and other awards to the main grant programmes. Create explicit criteria and processes for defining and assessing quality of artistic achievement and across a range of indicators appropriate to the nature of the work being assessed, the purpose of the funding programme and the remit of arts organisations applying.

PROPOSAL NO. 4:*Be well-informed and evidence-based...*

The Arts Council should

- A. Invest in a data and information programme to improve how it
 - plans strategically
 - evaluates and reports on its investment and other actions
- B. Increase its commitment to research so as to
 - underpin its role as lead agency
 - ensure its advice is evidence-based and its promotion well-informed
- C. Encourage the Irish research community to develop expertise in the arts and develop national and international partnerships to undertake research (including action research)

PROPOSAL NO. 5:***Strengthen its own capability and that of the arts sector...***

The Arts Council should

- A. Focus the commitment and expertise of Council members on the policy, strategy and planning functions of the Arts Council, while also maintaining effective oversight of all programmes – including investment – devolved to the executive
- B. Ensure that its staff and advisers provide it with the range of expertise and depth of knowledge required for it to be an effective development agency
- C. Advise the Minister for the Arts that to fulfil its remit well, the Arts Council could benefit from a membership profile representing a broader set of perspectives and expertise than has been the norm
- D. Make the arts sector more resilient and resourceful by supporting professional development, strategic partnerships, joint actions and shared services

PROPOSAL NO. 6:***Engage widely and communicate openly...***

The Arts Council should

- A. Make the dialogue process undertaken as part of Strategic Review 2014 an ongoing feature of its work
- B. Ensure the circle of conversation includes those outside ‘the arts world’ whose interests and experiences would enrich the dialogue
- C. Work to fold the arts into appropriate forums and events – especially those ‘outside’ the arts – where public benefit is a particular focus
- D. Ensure that all its communications represent the Arts Council as the development agency for the arts with a primary concern to serve the public

FURTHER DETAIL ON PROPOSALS

Further Detail on Proposal 1

Be the development agency for the arts focussed on the public good...

Remit Vision Mission Strategy

Informed by its statutory remit the Arts Council should articulate its vision for the arts in Ireland. The vision should highlight the intrinsic value of good art, its capacity to challenge and its power to transform. It should underline the many public benefits arising from investment in the arts. The important and distinctive role of the artist in society should be underlined. So too should the entitlement of everyone to enjoy and engage in the arts. The Arts Council should confidently assert the unique importance of the arts in Ireland and their contribution to individual well-being, to creative communities, to a culture of innovation, to a vibrant economy, and to international profile. The Arts Council should then proceed to devise a new mission statement which declares that 'public good' is central to Arts Council policy, strategy and resource allocation. The mission should inform an overall strategy for the Arts Council which should be public-facing, developmental, and steadfast about the vital role professional arts practice plays in society. The strategy should identify over-arching priorities and should outline how the Arts Council will enact its commitment to champion and support excellence in a wide range of contexts.

Section 9 of the 2003 Arts Act sets out the functions of the Arts Council as being to:

- Stimulate public interest in the arts;
- Promote knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts;
- Assist in improving standards in the arts.

[Five further points follow on the Arts Council's advisory function]

Development Agency: Attributes, Actions and Priorities

The new overall strategy should give effect to the mission of the Arts Council as development agency for the arts. As such, the Arts Council would:

- (i) Be knowledgeable on the whole arts environment and not just on the professional arts sector and those areas of practice where it is a key funder
- (ii) Be informed on a wide range of policy and practice-based developments in the arts and related fields in Ireland and internationally
- (iii) Report annually but plan strategically for the mid-to-long term
- (iv) Develop well-researched profiles and needs analyses of all the arts areas for which it has responsibility as the evidence base for identifying strategic priorities for investment and a range of appropriate developmental actions
- (v) Have a range of strategic investment programmes (grants, awards, bursaries etc) to support and develop the work of artists, arts organisations and others so as to give effect to the policies and strategic priorities of the Arts Council (see Proposal 3 on Investment Strategy)
- (vi) Have a limited number of priority areas for long-term strategic action among which should be provision for children and young people
- (vii) Invest resources and develop programmes to influence the environment that surrounds the arts and which significantly determines their condition
- (viii) Act strategically with local government and with key agencies and organisations in and outside the arts *via* joint initiatives, partnerships and funding agreements
- (ix) Invest human and financial resources in research, development and promotional actions
- (x) Ensure that all its actions and decisions are developmental in intent and that the rationale for partnerships, the criteria for investment, and the basis for funding agreements are explicitly linked to Arts Council goals and strategic objectives.

The international comparative study undertaken as part of the strategic review showed that most equivalent agencies surveyed act more as development agencies than does the Arts Council. As such, those agencies organise and resource themselves to undertake the actions like those listed in this section and which are now proposed to the Arts Council as the features and working concerns of an arts development agency.

Further Detail on Proposal 2

Make policies and strategies that are explicit and connected...

Leadership and Strategic Direction

The Arts Council is the lead agency for the arts. The Arts Act confers that responsibility. The Arts Council can demonstrate leadership by developing clear policies and detailed strategies, with a limited number of priorities identified unambiguously. This should be done within two frameworks:

- (i) The first framework has to do with public interest, engagement and participation in the arts and the relationship between the arts and wider cultural, social and economic life in Ireland. Within this framework some key demographic issues (places and people) must be resolved. The role of the Arts Council as *national* development agency must be clarified, especially with regard to local and regional arts provision. The development of a spatial strategy is critical to this.
- (ii) The second framework consists of clear policies and detailed strategies in each art form, in the multidisciplinary arts, and in the arts practices. Each of these requires a distinct response given that each has a distinct environment with features including:
 - the needs of the public as participants and audience
 - amateur, community, and professional practice
 - education, training and professional development
 - production and dissemination of work
 - relationship to commercial practice (where applicable)
- (iii) As a public agency with a specialist remit, the Arts Council must demonstrate how these two frameworks intersect and reinforce one another. One example among many is the need for the Arts Council to resolve how its visual arts policy (especially how the public have access to quality exhibitions) intersects with its policy of supporting some 45 multi-disciplinary arts centres and venues countrywide.

...people from disadvantaged groups are less likely to be involved in the arts...

In particular, educational attainment appears to have the most consistent impact on involvement.

[In the Frame or Out of the Picture p.13]

A Key Strategic Priority

In addition to spatial provision two issues to do with particular cohorts of the population emerged during the review. These were:

- large sections of the population, chiefly defined by socio-economic circumstances, but critically related to educational attainment, do not engage in the arts (as supported by public funds through the Arts Council)
- formal arts education in the Irish school system remains poor and public arts provision for children and young people is uneven in distribution,

The steering group (acknowledging existing initiatives and programmes) submits that the Arts Council should identify children and young people as a primary strategic priority. This proposal is informed by a number of factors: the scale and developmental significance of this cohort of the population; the statutory remit of the Arts Council to promote knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts; the likelihood of such an approach broadening the socio-economic profile of those engaging with the arts; and the congruence of such a priority with long-term strategic planning as befits a development agency.

Supporting even if not Funding

The Arts Council should clarify its strategic position on aspects of the arts that, while central to its remit, for the most part do not receive (nor necessarily require) direct funding. Currently the relationship between the publicly funded arts and other critical elements of the arts environment (e.g. amateur / community / youth arts / training and professional development) is confused and their 'status' in the eyes of the Arts Council is unclear. As part of a revised

Grassroots arts groups may be amateur, but they are certainly not amateurish. They cut across divides of class, ethnicity, generation, gender and culture. There are thriving groups in both urban and rural communities. They exist in poor as well as affluent areas and are characterised by their diversity.
[Third Sector Research Centre (UK, 2011)]

investment strategy the Arts Council should articulate how areas not in receipt of funding are still critical to the development of the arts, and are valued and supported (if not always financially) because of their critical role in public engagement and participation, and often in offering key pathways to the professional domain.

Further Detail on Proposal 3

Change its investment strategies and behaviours...

Investment Decisions Rooted in Strategy

Because the Arts Council is charged with investing public monies, it has responsibility to ensure that policy, strategy, selection criteria, and the whole investment process from call or invitation through to the monitoring and evaluation of outputs and outcomes are clear, consistent and well-communicated. It was consistently represented to the steering group that the Council needs to be much clearer about the policy and strategy basis for many of its judgments, choices and investment decisions.

Beyond 'Breadth and Balance'

'Breadth and Balance' is no longer credible as a principle for guiding sustainable strategic investment. Being the lead agency in this field requires the Arts Council to make choices. The risks attached to maintaining an investment model similar to that of 2008 (even if the number and level of investments have reduced) outweigh the deficits likely to arise from a more selective approach. Being selective is not only about reducing the number of investments but also exploring how changes in the nature, level and strategic purpose of grants may lead to new outcomes including new behaviours by some organisations which may have become overly dependent on the Arts Council.

◀ *"A fault-line has developed between the model of arts provision that was created a decade ago and the resources that are currently available".*
[Arts Council Strategic Statement 2013 p.3]

Investment Strategy and Budget Allocation

There needs to be an explicit prioritisation of resource allocation. This should not be an 'after-the-fact' interpretation of funding decisions when announced, but a 'before-the fact' profiling of policy priorities and budget strategies for resource distribution so that (leaving aside the obvious matter of scarcity of funds) the rationale is clear as to how the different budgetary allocations between and within areas of the Arts Council's work are arrived at and why one arts area, organisation, scheme, action, or programme is awarded resources and another is not. This point applies to the overall Arts Council budget strategy where proportions of spend between areas are determined as well as to the investment strategy within individual arts areas.

Different Investment Models and Funding Relationships

The Arts Council needs to develop and apply a greater variety of investment models and clarify:

- (i) the policy rationale, strategic basis, and financial model that underpins certain organisations being funded constantly and how often and in what way the artistic basis and business premise for such recurring investment is examined from first principles
- (ii) why (for spatial, demographic, artform development, or some other strategically significant reason consistent with declared Arts Council policy) some organisations are identified as meriting proportionately high levels of investment while others – perhaps similar in many ways – merit, in the judgment of the Arts Council, lower levels of funding and that restricted to identified aspects of their work
- (iii) why some organisations might be funded as a strategic intervention for a period in their life-cycle and with the expectation that they will reduce or lose entirely their dependency on the Arts Council
- (iv) why other aspects of Arts Council investment strategy are in effect 'open-calls' for new ideas.

The Arts Council currently defines artistic quality as 'technically-excellent work which is both ambitious and original, connects to people and their concerns and leaves audiences changed in some lasting way.' [from Weighing Poetry by Francois Matarasso (Arts Council, 2000)].

Defining Quality

Notwithstanding general affirmation for the definition of artistic quality currently used by the Arts Council there appears to be a need for greater clarity around how the Arts Council assesses quality and the range of criteria (in addition to 'artistic') across which it measures excellence. This issue is linked to the decision-making processes in place to ensure that, across all its funding programmes, the judgment of the Arts Council is informed by a range of perspectives (including peer assessment) and by objective measures against published criteria. In respect of the performance of companies and arts organisations, the measurement of quality is closely linked to agreed outputs and outcomes as set out below.

Funding Agreements

Extending some existing practices, the Arts Council should introduce explicit funding agreements with the organisations it funds. Such funding agreements allow for an intersection between the policy and programme of the organisation and the policy goals and strategic objectives (overall and arts area-specific) of the Arts Council. Investing *via* funding agreements allows the Arts Council join up its twin roles of funding and development agency. Funding agreements will clarify the outputs and outcomes the Arts Council expects from its investments of public money. These will differ from one organisation, scheme or programme to another but they should always be referenced back to Arts Council goals and objectives. They should be specific, clearly articulated, monitored, and reviewed regularly to determine the basis for any future investment.

National / Regional / Local Responsibilities

The strategic review engaged with a number of key funding dilemmas that ultimately only the Arts Council can resolve. The steering group urges such resolution on the basis of its being determined by clear policies and strategic priorities and by the investment principles set out in this section. It is the view of the steering group that:

- (i) Too much Arts Council investment is spread too thinly across local arts infrastructure which did not arise from Arts Council policy or strategy. There is a clear related need to address historically-embedded dependencies that have given rise to contemporary inequities. In the main the Arts Council should target its investment at arts activity.
- (ii) There will never be consensus around what constitutes local/regional/ national significance. The Arts Council must lead and exercise its judgment and then communicate clearly the basis on which it differentiates between what may seem like broadly similar organisations or projects. Arts Council judgment should be informed by a range of factors: artistic, spatial, and demographic among them. Dialogue with local government will be important as the judgments are formed and the investment strategies implemented.

The international comparative study showed that most arts councils engage at this strategic partnership level with local authorities rather than through direct funding.

Securing What's Established and Encouraging What's New

A key part of an investment strategy for the arts is achieving a balance between expenditure on organisations with long-standing funding relationships (and expectations) and the money invested in non-aligned practitioners, individuals, projects and once-off programmes of work. The conventional wisdom is that the current ratio is 80:20 but it is not possible to determine this definitively. The steering group suggests:

- (i) the critical issue is less the ratio of investment than the need to ensure that experiment and innovation which are fundamental to the rationale for public subsidy are indeed being supported by the Arts Council
- (ii) at face value the 80:20 ratio does appear to be too high and to be weighted in favour of those with an Arts Council 'track-record', underlining the need to revisit regularly the premise of funding relationships

- (iii) the issue is related to the wider one of organisations' overall quality of performance and, in this instance, what they are doing to support new and emerging artists and experimental practice, a matter that could be central to many of the funding agreements outlined above.

Further Detail on Proposal 4

Be well-informed and evidence-based...

Arts policy is...at a considerable disadvantage compared to other policy areas, where a much greater pool of useful data exists. [In the Frame or Out of the Picture p.65]

Taking the Arts Seriously

The Arts Council is responsible for advising government and for ensuring value for its investment of scarce public resources in the arts. In economic and diplomatic contexts the arts are Ireland's signature and hallmark – not alone of artistic achievement but of wider creative endeavour. Political, diplomatic and business events are often occasions where artistic achievement is referenced as evidence of wider creative attributes. Such endorsement needs to be underpinned by research if there is to be the evidence base required to ensure lasting gains for the arts. The way in which Ireland's reputation for quality food is underpinned by research, development and promotional actions undertaken by Bord Bia might inform the Arts Council.

Taking Research Seriously

The effectiveness and impact of the Arts Council (like all such agencies) depends greatly on its information and knowledge. The Arts Council needs to develop a research and information programme immediately and become the repository for the gathering and management of data and information about its own direct areas of responsibility and investment. It needs then to broaden the scope of its research to address the wider arts environment and set the agenda with other arts, culture and research entities.

Research to Underpin Policy-Making, Promotion and Advice

To clarify the nature and purpose of some of the research envisaged in this proposal the steering group outlines some key issues and questions requiring research rooted in a range of disciplines. The outputs of such research would assist the Arts Council in addressing all aspects of its remit, most especially those to do with promotion and advice and, more generally, in fulfilling its leadership role.

The significance of questions (i) and (ii) was underlined by the qualitative research undertaken with groups of the public as part of the strategic review .

- (i) What are the influences and pathways towards (and what are the barriers against) individuals making the arts an important part of their lives?
- (ii) What are the conditions that lead to certain places developing a 'core competence' in the arts such that it is part of community life and a contributor to both quality of life and the local economy?
- (iii) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the arts in Ireland and what are the challenges and opportunities, taking account of local, regional, national and international perspectives?
- (iv) How do each of the arts areas stand in terms of current provision and practice and taking account of future needs?
- (v) How might the links between a vibrant arts environment and wider innovation as well as with the creative and cultural industries be demonstrated?
- (vi) How can public benefit arising from state investment be best demonstrated quantitatively and qualitatively?
- (vii) How do the (publicly funded) arts contribute to wider government and public policy? And how do departments and agencies responsible for the delivery of public policy contribute to the arts?

Ireland's worldwide reputation for creativity and communication skills finds contemporary outlets in the developing fields of entertainment and media. The sector comprises a number of fast-growing sub-sectors including: Digital Media, Social Networking, Search Engines, Integrated Telecommunications, Electronic Games, Film & TV and Intellectual Property Management [Ireland: Where Else? IDA Brochure (2013)]

Building Research Capacity

The Arts Council should encourage the academic and wider research community and agenda in Ireland so as to grow interest in arts and culture as an important field and to develop research (including action research) capacity in the arts. The Arts Council should make common cause with equivalent agencies overseas to advance the research agenda and to harness research and development opportunities available through international programmes.

Further Detail on Proposal 5

Strengthen its own capability and that of the arts sector...

Leading an Effective Development Agency

This report envisages the Arts Council – its members and management – leading the development and promotion of the arts. In this revised conception it is important that the capability of the Council (members, management, staff, and advisers) is harnessed to best effect. The Council should ensure that all its processes and structures (including its committee structures) are designed to give effect to its leadership function and to stewardship of the organisation's mission. It should ensure effective governance and oversight by deciding the strategic direction and the related goals and objectives for the organisation and by approving the implementation plans to deliver these. There should be appropriate devolution of authority and accountability for delivery, within policy guidelines set by the Council. Council should exercise its statutory responsibility through regular reporting, effective oversight and validation based on results. The Arts Council executive should ensure that the organisation's decision-making and other processes ensure objectivity, effectiveness and value for money and that information is collected and provided to the Council to support effective oversight.

◀ *The Board is collectively responsible for promoting the success of the State Body by leading and directing the Body's activities. It should provide strategic guidance to the State Body and monitor the activities and effectiveness of management.*

[Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2009)]

Profile of Arts Council membership

Section 11(1) (b) of the Arts Act allows considerable scope for interpreting the profile of Arts Council membership. A broader expertise than that available from within the arts sector (however widely interpreted) and a wider range of perspectives (from fields like local government; education; enterprise; technology; tourism; community development; broadcasting) could add value to policy-making, strategic planning and oversight of the promotion and development of the arts.

◀ The Council shall consist of the following members, that is to say –
(a) a chairperson, and
(b) 12 ordinary members, each of whom shall, in the opinion of the Minister, have a special interest or knowledge in relation to the arts or matters connected with the functions of the Minister or the Council under this Act.

Arts Council Executive

The profile and skill-set of the executive may need to alter to reflect the knowledge and expertise required for the Arts Council to become effective as the arts development agency envisaged in this review report. In the short-term this may have implications for professional development and for the contracting of support and advisory services and in the longer term for Arts Council recruitment policies

Arts Sector Capability

As a development agency the Arts Council should ensure that the arts sector (widely defined) is resilient, flexible and has the capability to develop. Working with the sector and other stakeholders such as the Department of Arts and local authorities, the Arts Council should identify the needs (e.g. training; technological; business) of the arts and should also identify partnerships and other support structures such as hubs where those needs might be addressed on a collective basis.

◀ Hubs are very important for a range of reasons; they offer (part) solutions to the dilemma of offering project funding for the new/innovative and the sustainability challenge arising from such investment and incentivising; hubs offer a range of supports and skill/expertise/resource sharing; hubs are critical to networking and networking is crucial to the viability ... of an idea or project. [Notes from PESTLE meeting during strategic review]

Further Detail on Proposal 6

Engage widely and communicate openly...

Need for Ongoing Dialogue and Communications

Notwithstanding reservations about aspects of the dialogue and communications process during Strategic Review 2014, there is a clear desire among established stakeholders of the Arts Council and others for ongoing debate and exchange on many of the issues raised in the review documentation and wider process. One source of the disappointment at meetings was how seldom such opportunities arise and how constrained they usually are. The steering group suggests that there is need as well as appetite for such dialogue. One aim of such an approach should be that a wider constituency of interests could thereby be drawn into ongoing debate and analysis of public arts policy and provision in Ireland.

Purposeful Engagement

For the communications to be purposeful they must be timely (opportunistic even), well-organised, employ technology appropriately, involve a range of parties, and be linked to distinct if overlapping topics including Arts Council policy, strategy and work programmes and wider arts policy and provision including social and economic issues. There are clear links between such dialogue and the research and promotion actions proposed in earlier sections of this report. The principle of partners for research and development actions would apply also to a programme of debate on particular topics (e.g. 'assessing excellence' with partners in science, sport etc) or on broader topics like the value of the arts; the need for public subsidy of the arts and priorities within such public subsidy.

Arts and Non-arts Networking

As part of a wider commitment to improving and displaying 'thought leadership' in the arts, it is suggested that the Arts Council should initiate a network or otherwise create opportunities where leaders in the Irish arts world could meet with their equivalents in other fields of public and corporate life in Ireland. The intention would be to 'raise the bar' in terms of the networks that arts leaders might be part of, as well as deepening awareness about arts policy issues, harnessing the goodwill towards the arts that is evident in many sectors, and generating connections of mutual interest and benefit.

APPENDIX I

Strategic Review 2014 Terms of Reference

General Statement of Purpose

- *The Arts Council is undertaking a review of how it addresses its remit so as to inform future policy and strategy.*
- *This Strategic Review is being undertaken ten years after the 2003 Arts Act in a rapidly changing cultural context and at a time of significant constraint on the public finances.*
- *The Arts Council has instituted this review so as to benefit from a process of detailed deliberation and analysis.*
- *The process – overseen by a Steering Group chaired independently and including external experts – will include an examination of key aspects of the Arts Council's work and will be informed by dialogue with stakeholders, partners and those in the arts sector.*
- *The findings of the review will inform Arts Council thinking about how it interprets and implements its remit to support and develop the arts.*
- *The findings will help to shape future Arts Council actions and decisions across all of its work.*

Terms of Reference

1. To conduct a review of key aspects of the work of the Arts Council and of their outcomes.
2. Taking account of the economic and public sector context in which the Arts Council operates and in particular of the impacts since 2008 of that significantly altered environment, to consider the challenges likely to arise in the medium-term; and to make suggestions as to how the Arts Council might best plan undertake its work in the future.
3. Taking account of likely resources (human and financial) in the medium-term and of the dependency on the Arts Council that characterises much present provision, to examine the viability and sustainability of current models of support and to propose possible actions to maximise the benefits of likely available resources, including attending to flexible and scalable models of provision.
4. To give consideration in its analysis and proposals to the possibilities that lie in models of cultural practice (production / dissemination / reception) linked to digital technology
5. To consider new strategic actions which might complement or replace existing actions and so assist the Arts Council in addressing its statutory functions.
6. To provide a focus and process for dialogue with stakeholders and partners in the arts and other relevant fields to address issues of common concern.
7. To undertake such research (including comparative study from other fields in Ireland or from the arts abroad) as would inform the review.
8. To report to the Arts Council on its findings and to propose options or otherwise make suggestions as to existing strategies, actions and models of provision it might (a) maintain; (b) alter; (c) cease; and new strategies, actions and models it might undertake whether unilaterally or in partnership.

APPENDIX 2

Biographical notes on members of Strategic Review 2014 Steering Group

Lenny Abrahamson was born in Dublin and in his twenties won a scholarship to study for a PhD in Philosophy in Stanford University. He decided not to complete this however and returned to Ireland to take up filmmaking, initially directing commercials, filming a popular series of adverts for Carlsberg. Abrahamson's first film was *Adam and Paul*, a black comedy that featured a pair of heroin addicts as they made their way around Dublin in search of a fix. The follow up film to this was 2007's *Garage*, starring Pat Short as a lonely petrol station attendant in rural Ireland. Both films won the IFTA award for best film. Also in 2007, RTE screened Abrahamson's four-part TV mini-series *Prosperity*, which was written in collaboration with Mark O'Halloran, the co-writer of *Adam and Paul* and *Garage*. Like these two films, *Prosperity* focused on people on the fringes of Irish society, with each one-hour episode focusing on a specific character, including an alcoholic, a single mother, and an asylum seeker. In 2012 Abrahamson won his third IFTA for best film with *What Richard Did*, the most successful Irish film of 2012. Abrahamson has just released *Frank*, a film about an eccentric musician. The film stars Michael Fassbender, Domhnall Gleeson and Maggie Gyllenhall. In 2013 it was announced that he was to adapt Emma Donoghue's best-selling novel *Room*.

Anne Connolly has been the Executive Director of Ageing Well Network, an independent network of senior policy makers and managers from government departments and agencies, private sector companies, NGOs and academics from 2006 to end 2013. Its objective was to engage a wide range of senior decision makers in developing and implementing new approaches to population ageing and improving the quality of life of older adults. Prior to that she ran her own management consultancy practice for 12 years, working with public, private and voluntary organisations developing their strategic plans and implementing change programmes. Clients ranged from MNCs such as Siemens Aviva, Waterford Crystal to Irish companies such as Kingspan, Building Societies as well to NGOs like SVP. During that period she worked with the Arts Council, supporting the development of two Arts Plans and facilitating the development of strategies for different art forms. Non Executive board positions currently include SEAI (Sustainable Energy Agency Ireland) and the Fabulous Beast Dance Company. Previous board positions included An Post, Chair of Simon Community Ireland, ICC Bank, APSO.

John Fanning is a member of the Arts Council. He is a specialist in advertising, branding, marketing and communication and currently lectures on these areas at UCD's Smurfit School of Business. He was Managing Director of McConnell's Advertising for more than 30 years, is the author of *The Importance of Being Branded: An Irish Perspective* (Liffey Press, 2006) and many articles in the press. He has a long-standing commitment to the arts, and has served on the boards of the Abbey Theatre and Rough Magic Theatre Company. He has recently completed a PhD in the English Department in UCD on the cultural connections between Thomas Kinsella, Sean Ó Riada and T.K. Whitaker in the 1950s and 1960s.

Brid Horan Currently Deputy CEO of ESB, Brid Horan oversees ESB's strategy development, corporate communications and compliance, as well as NIE Networks, providing electricity network services for Northern Ireland. She also has overall responsibility for ESB's sponsorship and related activities. In recent years, as Executive Director she led the transformation of ESB's retail businesses from a regulated model to a fully competitive and newly branded business, Electric Ireland. Before joining ESB in 1997 as Group Pensions Manager, Brid headed KPMG Pension & Actuarial Consulting. An Actuary and a Chartered Director, Brid was a Commissioner of the National Pensions Reserve Fund from 2001 to 2009 and a Board member of IDA Ireland from 1996 to 2006. She is also currently a Non Executive Director FBD Holdings plc, the Chair of Investment Committee of Novus Modus, ESB's cleantech investment fund, and a Director of Chamber Choir Ireland.

Orlaith McBride is the Director of the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. Prior to this appointment, she worked in the arts across a broad range of arts organisations including Local Authorities, arts-in-education, youth arts and theatre. She worked for many years in South Dublin County Council developing and co-ordinating arts projects and programmes before becoming Arts Officer at the National Youth Council of Ireland where she developed the first National Strategy for Young People and the Arts. She was Director of NAYD, the development organisation for youth theatre in Ireland from 2003 – 2011. She produced the National Youth Theatre at the Peacock Theatre from 2007 – 2011. She served as a member of the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon from 2003–2011, was a member of Dublin City Council Strategic Policy Committee (Arts and Youth) from 2004–2009 and was a member of the Special Committee on the Arts and Education. She was President of the National Youth Council of Ireland, 2010–2011 and is a member of the Governing Authority of Dublin City University.

Aibhlín McCrann was reappointed Deputy Chairman of the Arts Council in October 2011 and has been an Arts Council member since February 2006. A graduate of University College Dublin, she is a director of Communiqué International, one of Ireland’s leading communications consultancies where she specialises in facilitation and stakeholder engagement with a wide range of organisations in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. She has a long standing association with both classical and traditional music as a solo harper and ensemble musician, with extensive radio, television and recording experience. As a former director of the internationally acclaimed Festival for Irish harp, *An Chúirt Chruitireachta*, and secretary of *Cairde na Cruite* (Friends of the Harp) for more than twenty years, she has successfully worked to integrate and promote the Irish harp in mainstream Irish traditional music. A fluent Irish speaker, she has written, performed, and lectured extensively on the Irish harp in Ireland, Europe and the US. She served on the board of the Irish Traditional Music Archive 2002–2005.

Michael McLoone is Chairman of the Prison Service Implementation Body, a former member of board of Enterprise Ireland, and Chairman of Donegal airport. He spent 44 years in the public service including 25 years with the North Western Health Board. He is a former Manager of Donegal County Council; former CEO of Beaumont Hospital; former board member of the Health Service Executive; former Chairman of the Irish Blood Transfusion Service. He began his career in health administration as Personnel Officer at Midland Health Board and Programme Manager at NW Health Board.

Sir Brian McMaster was born in Hitchin in Hertfordshire. He read law at the University of Bristol and Comparative Law at the University of Strasbourg. In 1968 Sir Brian joined EMI Records as a member of their International Classical Division. In 1973 he went to English National Opera as Controller of Opera Planning and three years later joined Welsh National Opera as Managing Director, where he remained until 1991. During the period 1984–89 he was also Artistic Director of Vancouver Opera. Sir Brian was Director of the Edinburgh International Festival from 1991 to 2006. He is a Governor of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. In July 2007, the Secretary of State for Culture in the UK, asked Sir Brian to undertake a review to report on:

- how artistic excellence can encourage wider and deeper engagement with the arts by audiences
- how to establish a light touch and non-bureaucratic method to judge the quality of the arts in the future.

The McMaster Review resulted in the report *Supporting Excellence in the Arts – from Measurement to Judgment*, which was published in January 2008.

Shane Molloy is currently Chair of the Children’s Medical and Research Foundation and a member of the Council of the National Children’s Research Centre, Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital, Crumlin. He was formerly Chair of the European Movement Ireland and a member

of its North-South committee. He has served on the boards of Community Dialogue, Belfast and the Alzheimer Society of Ireland. Previously, he was chair of Unilever Ireland and Senior Vice President, Unilever Home and Personal Care, Europe. Other involvements included membership of the National Executive of IBEC (Irish Business and Employers Confederation) and of the Joint North-South IBEC-CBI Council.

John O’Kane (until May 2014) was one of two Arts Directors at the Arts Council and had responsibility for the performing art forms (music, opera, theatre, dance, circus, street arts and spectacle), multi-disciplinary venues and festivals, and Local Authority Arts Services. Prior to joining the Arts Council in 2003, he was CEO of Music Network which is itself in receipt of Arts Council funding. He previously worked as a professional orchestral musician, including positions in the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Ulster Orchestra. In addition, he founded and ran the contemporary music ensemble Sequenza. In June 2014 John joined RTÉ as executive director of its Orchestras, Quartet and Choirs.

Terence O’Rourke (Independent Chair) was appointed Chairman of Enterprise Ireland in August 2013 and was previously Managing Partner of KPMG Ireland until his retirement from the firm in April 2013. He is also a director of Hibernia REIT plc, and joined the board of the Irish Times Limited in May 2013. Terence joined KPMG Ireland in 1975, became an audit partner in 1988 and was elected Managing Partner in 2006. He was also a member of KPMG’s Global Board, Global Executive Team and EMA Board, from 2007 to 2013. Terence is a Fellow, and was President in 2004/05, of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland. He is currently Chairman of Enactus Ireland, a member of the Council of the Irish Management Institute, the Governing Authority of Dublin City University, the boards of the Dublin Theatre Festival, Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane, and the Institute of International & European Affairs. Terence graduated from University College Dublin with a BA in Economics and History.

Monica Spencer is a member of the Arts Council. She is a freelance producer, festival organiser and performance related facilitator based in Limerick. She has extensive experience of arts management and delivery including roles as Executive Director of Daghda Dance Company, Artistic Director of Everyman Palace, Cork and a number of administrative and curatorial roles in the former Belltable Arts Centre in Limerick. She was an actor and founder member of Island Theatre Company in the 1980s. She is a member of Creative Communities Limerick and was a founder member of Limerick’s Hip Hop festival, Make a Move. She is an active member of PLAN, the Limerick artists’ network and was a contributor to the Limerick Arts Encounter programme in 2013. Currently, she is working on a number of projects for Limerick 2014, City of Culture and is undertaking a Masters in Festive Arts at the Irish World Academy in the University of Limerick.

APPENDIX 3

Information and documents made available to the steering group

1. The steering group had access to a number of internal Arts Council documents on valuing the arts and on the Council's current approach to what it terms the four pillars of its work: Advice, Advocacy, Investment and Partnership
2. Presentations were made to the Steering Group by the Arts Council's strategic development department offering analysis in particular of investment patterns and especially how those had changed in the period 2008–2012 (the last year for which there are formally audited Arts Council financial data)
3. Reports were prepared from all elements of the Dialogue and Communications process including:
 - (i) Sectoral meetings in Cork, Dublin and Sligo
 - (ii) Key Informant meetings (x 13)
 - (iii) PESTLE meeting (see Appendix 4)
 - (iv) Reports and analyses of the 109 online submissions
4. Presentations were made and information provided to the steering group by Dr. Tara Byrne who won the tender to undertake the international agency comparative study and by Pathfinder which undertook the qualitative research public discussion groups.
5. Other material made available to the steering group included:
 - (a) Arts Act 2003 (The Stationery Office , Government Publications, 2003)
 - (b) Developing the Arts in Ireland: Arts Council Strategic Overview (2011–2013) (Arts Council, 2010)
 - (c) Developing the Arts: Arts Council Strategic Statement (Arts Council, 2013)
 - (d) Arts Council Annual Report (2012)
 - (e) Arts Attendance in Ireland: Key Statistics & Sources 2009–2012 (Arts Audiences, 2014)
 - (f) The Public and the Arts (The Arts Council, 2006)
 - (g) In the Frame or Out of the Picture: A Statistical Analysis of Public Involvement in the Arts (National Economic and Social Forum, 2008)
 - (h) Submission to the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism by the Council of National Cultural Institutions in the context of the preparation of a new National Development Plan (unpublished, May 2006)
 - (i) Supporting Excellence in the Arts: From Measurement to Judgment by Brian McMaster (Dept for Culture, Media and Sport, London, 2008)
 - (j) Weighing Poetry: Exploring Funding Criteria for Assessing Artistic Quality by Francois Matarasso (Arts Council, 2000)
 - (k) Assessment of Economic Impact of the Arts (Indecon Economic Consultants, 2009)

APPENDIX 4

PESTLE

As part of Strategic Review 2014 the steering group convened a meeting within the framework of a PESTLE analysis of the Arts Council. A PESTLE analysis is the analysis of the environment as a whole in which an enterprise or agency operates. These are systematic factors that are beyond the agency's control and yet which can be highly influential on its capacity to conduct its business or fulfil its remit. The PESTLE acronym stands for:

P for Political

E for Economic

S for Social

T for Technological

L for Legal

E for Environmental

The PESTLE Meeting which was professionally facilitated took place in the Arts Council on 29 April 2014 and was attended by: Owen Keegan, Dublin City Manager; Dr Pete Lunn, Economic and Social Research Institute; Donal De Buitléir, Director, Public Policy.ie; Prof Mary Corcoran, Head of Sociology at NUIM; Clare Duignan, Consultant & Independent Director; Grace Smith, IP Adviser; Deborah Dignam, Research Communication Manager, UCD and ex Digital Adviser/ Broker at the British Council; Damien Mulley www.mulley.ie, Social Media; as well as three members of the Strategic Review Steering Group (Anne Connolly, Aibhlín McCrann, and Orlaith McBride)

The wide-ranging discussion covered many topics and chiefly explored the following themes:

- The Economic Environment
- Jobs / Employment
- Investment Models for the Arts and Related Areas
- Value of the Arts / Advocacy
- Accountability
- Partnership
- Regionalisation
- Demographics
- Social Trends and Patterns
- Technology and the Nature of Cultural Experience

