
Leicester NPO

Heritage, Culture, Leisure & Tourism Commission

Date of meeting: 28 February 2023

Lead director/officer: Mike Dalzell

1. Summary

This note is in response to a request by HCLS commission members for information about how Leicester based arts and cultural organisations have benefited from Arts Council England support in recent years. It has a specific focus on the National Portfolio (NPO).

The NPO is a set of organisations who Arts Council England fund, typically for 3–4 years for defined programmes of activity. For many arts and cultural organisations this represents critical core funding that supports their financial sustainability.

2. Information

Leicester has done particularly well in recent years. The table in the Appendix lists the organisations now in receipt of NPO support.

In the period 2015-2018 the value of NPO funding to Leicester based organisations was £2.467m pr year across 7 organisations. The single largest recipient was Curve at circa £1.9m pr yr.

In 2018 a new four year NPO round was announced to run from 2018/19 to 2021/22. The Arts Council England team actually came to Leicester to make the national announcement from Curve. In that round a further 6 Leicester based organisations were added and the value of funding increased to £4.449m pr yr. In the appendix these organisations are highlighted in green and include the city council's museum service.

Due to the COVID pandemic the next NPO programme was delayed, with organisations funded for a transition year to March 2023. During 2022 organisations applied again for core funding and the latest NPO decisions were announced in late 2022. New allocations start from April 2023 and will run until March 2026 i.e. for three financial years. In the latest round of decisions a further 6 Leicester based organisations were supported and the value of funding increased to £6.626m pr yr.

In the latest round The Mighty Creatives, a significant regional organisation based in the city, lost funding and is no longer part of the NPO. It is based at LCB Depot but operated across the east midlands. It has had to make cut backs but will survive.

The most recent round has seen most organisations supported with a stand still budget which at a time of high inflation is challenging as it is in effect a real terms cut. Several organisations however have achieved a real increase in resource including Serendipity and Darbar which have had a virtual doubling of funds and Bamboozle which has gone up by about a half.

The latest round is also notable in that all 6 organisations new to the NPO in the city are diverse-led, with activities that have a focus on Asian and Black communities. They are 2 Funky Arts, Cosmopolitan, Inspirate, Nupur Arts, Opal 22 and Phizzical. This has at a stroke considerably enhanced the diversity of the NPO group and creates more opportunities to engage less represented communities with the cultural offer of the city.

Applicant Name	2018-22 Average Annual Funding (Figure accurate at April 2018)	2022/23 Annual Funding (Extension year)	2023-26 Annual Funding (Offered 4 Nov 2022)	Main Discipline
2Funky Arts	£ -	£ -	£ 250,000	Music
ArtReach (Trust) Ltd	£ 350,000	£ 356,440	£ 356,440	Combined arts
Bamboozle Theatre Company	£ 200,000	£ 203,680	£ 303,675	Theatre
Cosmopolitan Arts	£ -	£ -	£ 200,000	Combined arts
Darbar Arts Culture Heritage Trust	£ 245,000	£ 249,508	£ 582,512	Music
People Dancing	£ 190,095	£ 193,593	£ 193,593	Dance
Inspirate	£ -	£ -	£ 250,000	Combined arts
Leicester Arts Centre Limited	£ 80,464	£ 81,945	£ 81,945	Visual arts
Leicester City Council	£ 400,000	£ 407,360	£ 407,360	Museums
Leicester Dance Theatre Limited (Aakash)	£ 365,000	£ 371,716	£ 371,716	Dance
Leicester Print Workshop	£ 70,290	£ 71,583	£ 70,290	Visual arts
Leicester Theatre Trust Ltd	£ 1,914,029	£ 1,949,247	£ 1,949,247	Theatre
Metro-Boulot-Dodo Limited	£ 140,000	£ 142,576	£ 142,576	Combined arts
National Student Drama Festival	£ 56,543	£ 57,583	£ 57,583	Theatre
Nupur Arts Dance Academy	£ -	£ -	£ 120,000	Dance
Opal22 Arts	£ -	£ -	£ 153,000	Combined arts
Phizzical Productions	£ -	£ -	£ 197,431	Theatre
Serendipity	£ 210,000	£ 213,864	£ 427,728	Dance
Soft Touch Arts Ltd	£ 88,510	£ 90,139	£ 90,139	Not discipline specific
The Spark Arts for Children	£ 172,866	£ 176,047	£ 176,047	Combined arts
University of Leicester, Attenborough Arts Centre	£ 207,000	£ 210,809	£ 210,800	Combined arts
The Mighty Creatives	£862,477	£862,477	nil	Not discipline specific