

1 A policy for touring

The Arts Council has adopted a new policy for touring, to be delivered over the six year period 2010-2015.

While recognising that a number of benefits will flow from a well resourced policy for touring, the Council wishes to prioritise addressing the needs of regional audiences. The primary purpose of the Arts Council's touring policy will therefore be to ensure that regional audiences have access to high quality arts experiences in a number of art forms.

The principal focus of the policy is that the Arts Council will provide specific supports for audience focused touring. In this context, audience focused touring is described as constituting the extent to which those involved accept responsibility for ensuring an audience for the touring work. This responsibility includes a prerequisite that all involved agree their respective roles with regard to artistic and marketing issues and the essential requirement to share commercial risk.

The delivery of this policy will be based on four elements:

1. *touring schemes*: offering once off funding for individual touring projects in specified art forms;
2. *technical supports*: providing for a range of additional supports designed to improve the touring practice of producers and presenters;
3. *core funding of production*: ensuring touring activity is undertaken by selected producing companies as an integral part of their funding relationship with the Arts Council;
4. *core funding of presentation*: ensuring a proportion of the Arts Council funding offered to regional venues is used to present a programme of professional touring work.

In practice, the delivery of the policy via these four elements will be nuanced to reflect the extent to which touring is regarded as a priority within each art form. The detail of this will be described at the outset and developed over the course of the six year initiative through criteria setting, where appropriate, and in dialogue with funded organisations, artists, practitioners and other stakeholders.

The Council will allocate financial resources to support delivery of the policy for touring in relation to its overall resources.

Goal 3 of the Arts Council's strategy, *Partnership for the Arts*, states the Council's commitment to: *make it possible for people to extend and enhance their experiences of the arts.*

Flowing from this goal, the Arts Council recognises the importance of providing access to high quality arts experiences.

Acknowledging the potential of touring to play a key role in this provision across a range of art forms, the Arts Council undertook a major action research initiative in 2006, 'The Touring Experiment'. The ensuing report became available in September 2008 and, following that, the Council considered carefully how best to respond to its findings and recommendations within the broader context of the full range of Arts Council policy priorities. The new policy for touring is a direct outcome of this detailed and exhaustive process.

2 Implementation plan

An implementation plan will be developed for each art-form under each of the headings agreed by Council:

1. Touring schemes
2. Technical supports
3. Core funding of production
4. Core funding of presentation

This work is currently underway.