

Decision Pathway – Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 05 December 2023

TITLE	Cultural Investment Programme 2023 to 2027 (Recommendations for Funding)		
Ward(s)	City-wide		
Author: Patsy Mellor	Job title: Director Management of Place		
Cabinet lead: Mayor Marvin Rees	Executive Director lead: John Smith, Interim Executive Director Growth and Regeneration		
Proposal origin: BCC Staff			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report: To seek approval for the allocation of Imagination and Openness grant funding for 2023-25 and 2024-27 respectively based on the recommendations by an external, independent panel.			
Evidence Base: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Cultural Investment Programme (CIP) is the key vehicle through which Bristol City Council distributes public money to support arts and culture across the city. CIP includes three funding strands: Openness (4 year), Imagination (2 year), and Originators (1 year). Originators is not the subject of this paper.2. Funding through CIP continues the council's ambition, commitment, and vision 'to make arts and culture accessible for all' and is designed to be both flexible and responsive within a framework that measures impact linked directly to council and city priorities.3. The aims for the CIP 2023-27 programme (approved by Cabinet in December Dec 2021) have been intentionally aligned to key priorities around diversity, inclusion and equity in the Bristol Council Cultural Strategy, the Corporate Strategy 2022-27 (Good Growth: page 24) and the One City Plan. Alongside this strategic shift, the level of investment available to arts and cultural organisations through the CIP programme has reduced by 40% over the last 5 years (from £1,015,960 in 2017/18 to £635,960 in 2022/23). The combination of these factors has meant that recommendations have required the intention of achieving a step change in diversifying the programme at the same time as adapting to reduced budgets.4. On the 22 December 2021 Cabinet agreed the budget allocation of £2,543,840 for the Cultural Investment Programme 23-27. This paper is requesting £1,406,576 of that allocation for Openness 24-27 and Imagination 23-25 funding. The remainder of the budget (£749,514) will cover Originator's funding over the next four years and for the second round of Imagination funding 2025-27 and 4 years of evaluation and access cost.			

• Funding available 2023-27	• £2,543,840
• Openness 23-24	• £387,750
• Openness 24-27	• £1,093,375
• Imagination 24-26	• £313,201
• Revenue cost	• £1,406,576
• Remaining budget	• £749,514

5. The Imagination Fund is a 2-year fund for organisations who want to deliver a specific project over a 2-year period or for organisations looking for unrestricted funding for 2 years. Bristol-based arts and cultural organisations can apply to the Imagination Fund 2023-25 for:
 - a. Arts or culture projects, events or festivals that will take place between April 2023-March 2025
 - b. Unrestricted funding for 2 years (April 2023-March 2025). Unrestricted grants can be used towards anything that will help deliver the organisation’s mission.
6. A total of 34 Imagination applications were received totalling £927,040 for the two-year period.
7. The Openness Fund is the 4-year core fund for established organisations that have a year-round programme. Openness will fund organisations in the city which support the cultural ecology, contribute to Bristol’s cultural identity and demonstrate leadership and generosity for the wider sector.
8. A total of 30 Openness applications were received requesting a total of £2,156,311 over the three years.
9. The original recommendations based on the applications received were made as a result of a process that was not in accordance with the decision previously agreed by Cabinet. As the mayor and Cabinet have a responsibility to allocate public money in a transparent way the decision was made in January 2023 to pause the current method of making recommendations. This was to allow for the creation of a new process. The new process was co-designed so it could be ensured the decisions made were based on recommendations that were independent, could stand up to scrutiny and put in place a process that will last.
10. An independent, entirely external panel was created with invited members of the One City Culture Board with additional representation from Black South West Network. The group was collectively facilitated by an independent consultant with extensive experience in grant giving.
11. Applications were assessed by the panel during several sessions and scored using a rigorous, transparent process against clear criteria relating to the vision, aims and environmental guiding principle to ensure proportionality, efficiency, and a targeted approach to support the City’s arts and cultural sector and its reach across the city. See: **Appendix A1 Cultural Investment Programme Overview**
12. During the deliberation process for both strands of funding, the panel had access to the activity plans, budgets, balancing information, and applications. The panel considered applications against the balancing criteria; geographical location (with a particular focus on Bristol City Council’s priority areas); range of art forms (visual art, music, dance, theatre, festivals etc.) and opportunities for people from groups with protected characteristics. The panel did not have access to the previous recommendations from the earlier process.
13. The panel recommended 11 awards for Imagination totalling £313,201. Details are contained within **Appendix A2 Imagination 2024-26 Funding Requests and Recommendations**
14. The panel recommended 15 awards for Openness totalling £1,093,375. Details are contained within **Appendix A3 Openness 2024-27 Funding Requests and Recommendation**
15. Bristol City Council’s investment in the recommended organisations and activities has an important added value as evidence of the city’s support to the arts and cultural sector to other strategic funders. In 2018/19 investment through Openness and Imagination totalling £754,000 supported funded

organisations to leverage a further estimated £4 million in Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund grants alone and helped catalyse a combined turnover for these organisations of over £22 million, driving an increased and enhanced quality of cultural offer for the citizens of Bristol.

Increased diversity and equity

1. The recommendations made represent a shift in the organisations the Culture Investment Programme funds.
2. In the 2018-23 portfolio of organisations, 12% of organisations receiving Openness funding were Black and minority ethnic-led or LGBTQ+ led and no organisations were disabled-led.
3. In 2023-27, 40% of organisations recommended for Openness funding are diverse led (33% define themselves as being Black and minority ethnic-led or LGBTQ+ led and 7% are Disabled-led).
4. 63% of organisations recommended for Imagination 2024-26 funding have identified that they will be working with audiences/participants from equalities groups including people with disabilities, refugees and asylum seekers and BAME women.
5. 67% of organisations recommended for Openness funding and 64% of organisations recommended for Imagination funding have stated that over 50% of their trustees, workforces and members come from an equalities group. Bristol City's Council's investment into these organisations over the next four years will help to reach communities who currently do not have equitable access to arts and culture.

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the recommendations for the award of Imagination grant funding as set out in this report and appendix A2 for 2024-26.
2. Approves the recommendations for the award of Openness grant funding as set out in this report and appendix A3 for 2024-2027
3. Authorises the Executive Director of Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Mayor to take all steps required to award the funding to those successful applicants.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

The Cultural Investment Programme 2023-27 contributes to all seven themes of the corporate strategy. The vision for the CIP aligns to the corporate vision 'In which everyone benefits from the city's success, and no-one is left behind' and strategic 5-year commitment: 'we will be a leading cultural city, making culture and sport accessible to all'. Organisations recommended for funding have demonstrated that they are reaching into priority areas, have embedded community partnerships, health, and wellbeing partners, and are investing into building a sustainable sector.

City Benefits:

The Cultural Investment Programme (CIP) is the mechanism for investing in the development of Bristol's cultural organisations, festivals and events, and artists and the citizens they work with. Operating the CIP is an important means by which the council builds relationships across the sector, with key stakeholders and funders, as well as how it can understand and support the needs of the city and its citizens. With a vision to make culture accessible for all, the CIP is underpinned by the council's priorities for inclusivity and growing a green and sustainable cultural economy. Key priorities for the fund are to support organisations and enterprises that are led by, or benefit, under-represented groups, projects and activities that are delivered by, for and with communities in Bristol City Council's priority areas and organisations that use culture to help improve the health and wellbeing of people of all ages and backgrounds.

A guiding principle was introduced for CIP 23-27 to help Bristol address the threat of the global climate and ecological emergency. All Cultural Investment Programme grant seekers were asked to demonstrate a commitment to raising awareness of the climate and ecological emergencies and reducing/mitigating the environmental impact of their activities.

Consultation Details:

We consulted on the aims and objectives for the fund in Autumn 2021.

Details of the consultation are in **Appendix A5** – a summary of key changes are stated below.

1. Details of consultation as follows:
 - Sector wide surveys [including currently funded organisations]: 43 respondents
 - Meetings with current recipients of Openness and Imagination funding. 6 meetings
 - 2 Online focus groups: 40 attendees
 - 1 In person focus group: 15 attendees.

2. Following the consultation, we implemented the following amendments to the proposal:
 - a. Language: we refined the language used within the aims and objectives based on the feedback received, and clarified the terminology used to help ensure greater accessibility.
 - b. Objectives of the fund: we reviewed the grouping of objectives set against specific aims.

Background Documents:

Previous cabinet papers from 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=135&Mid=2560&Ver=4> 2017 – Item 15

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=135&Mid=3691&Ver=4> 2019 – Item 13

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=135&Mid=8831> - 2020 – Item 10

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=135&Mid=8836&Ver=4> 2021 - Item 21

[Decision Pathway Report CIP December v4 MO.pdf \(bristol.gov.uk\)](#) – 2023 January 24th – Item

Link to Arts funding page where you will find the Cultural Investment Programme Overview, guidance notes and previously funded and currently funded applicants:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/museums-parks-sports-culture/arts-and-culture-funding>

Previously funded organisations map:

<https://bcc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=d31acfceb0114fcd899a9b10a8918999>

Revenue Cost	£1,406,576	Source of Revenue Funding	Culture and Creative Industries
Capital Cost	n/a	Source of Capital Funding	n/a
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

1 Finance Advice:

This report sets out the latest stage of the funding for the Cultural Investment Programme. Cabinet has previously approved total funding of £2.544m for the current funding cycle of 23/24 to 26/27. It also previously agreed funding for the 23/24 Openness grants of £0.388m.

The report seeks approval of the funding for the next stage of the Openness as well as the Imagination Grant schemes. A total of £0.313m and £1.093m totalling £1.407m is to be allocated to these initiatives.

This will leave a total of £0.75m to be allocated for Originator’s funding over the next four years and for the second round of Imagination funding 2025-27 and 4 years of evaluation and access cost.

This is set out in the table below.

DETAILS	Previously Approved 23-24	New Approval Requested				To be Allocated in the future	TOTAL Funding
		24-25	25-26	26-27	Sub Total		
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	
Imagination Grants		0.157	0.157		0.313		0.313
Openness Grants	0.388	0.364	0.364	0.364	1.093		1.481
Balance						0.750	0.750
Total	0.388	0.521	0.521	0.364	1.407	0.000	2.544

This costs set out above can be funded fully from the revenue budget already allocated by members within Culture Services 23/24 base budget for this purpose. Grants are to be awarded only following the completion of the due diligence process to ensure all grantees not only the meet the requirements of the CIP programme under which the grant is awarded but also that the organisation has the financial fitness to undertake the targets agreed for the grant awarded.

Finance Business Partner: Ben Hegarty, Finance Business Partner Growth and Regeneration, 15 November 2023

2. Legal Advice:

Procurement

Provided these are genuine grants and not contracts for services, they will not give rise to procurement issues under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Client officers will need to seek legal assistance to ensure the arrangements are grant agreements.

Equalities

The Council must comply with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality duty when making any decisions. The duty requires the decision maker to consider the need to promote equality for persons with “protected characteristics” and to have due regard to the need to i) eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; ii) advance equality of opportunity; and iii) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

In order to do this the decision maker must have sufficient information about the effects of the proposed decision on the aims of the Duty. The Equalities Impact Assessment is designed to assist with compliance with this duty. Its purpose is to assess whether there are any barriers in place that may prevent people with a protected characteristic using a service or benefiting from a policy.

Legal Team Leader: Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor 10 November 2023

3. Implications on IT: I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity.

IT Team Leader: Alex Simpson – Lead Enterprise Architect, need date

4. HR Advice: ‘There are no HR implications evident’

HR Partner: Celia Williams, HR Business Partner 14 November 2023

EDM Sign-off	John Smith, Interim Executive Director Growth and Regeneration	15 November 2023
Cabinet Member sign-off	Mayor’s Office	9 November 2023
For Key Decisions - Mayor’s Office sign-off	Mayor’s Office	6 November 2023

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A1 Cultural Investment Programme Overview 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A2 Imagination 2024-26 Requests and Recommendations • A3 Openness 2024-27 Funding Requests and Recommendations 	
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	YES
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO