



Press release – Tuesday 11th October 2016

- **NCF A welcomes modest uplift in allocations for cultural agencies and institutions**
- **€48m commemorations funding should have been fully retained for arts, film, culture and heritage instead of 16% year on year cut**
- **€5m for Commemorations Legacy initiative should be directly invested in Arts Council and other agencies**

~~The~~ National Campaign for the Arts today welcomed the modest increases in funding in Budget 2017 to the Arts Council, Culture Ireland, the National Cultural Institutions and the Irish Film Board.

Dismay was expressed by members however, that in a budget that saw an additional €1 billion approx. allocated in expenditure, the Arts, Culture & Film budget, which was increased from €156.5m in 2015 to €188.5m in 2016, reduced to €158.3m for 2017 - a 16% cut.

Given the enormous value and impact of the State's additional investment in arts and culture for the commemorations programme this year, the NCF A believes that this increased level of cultural investment for 2016 should have been fully retained, rather than redirecting some of that funding from the cultural sector to other sectors, as the Government has done in this budget.

With regard to the €5m reserved for a “Culture 2025/Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme legacy initiative”, the NCFA feels that rather than creating a separate new fund of this kind, these resources would make a greater impact if invested directly into the Arts Council, which would have doubled the increase for that agency, which has the core remit in this area.

Regrettably, Ireland's unenviable position at the bottom of the EU league in terms of average GDP spending on the arts looks set to continue for the foreseeable future, given government commitment to the Department into 2017.

NCFA Chairperson Jo Mangan said: "We recognise all the efforts made by Minister Humphreys to maximize the outcome for her department. While recognising the positive impact of the steps taken, we are disappointed that the outcome was not more positive for the sector. In our pre-Budget submission the NCFA stressed the need to work urgently toward restoring the €30 million stripped from the Arts Council funding since 2008 and the devastating cuts to the National Cultural Institutions. This would have provided some much needed stability for artists and arts organisations. There is strong disappointment coming from members who expected a significant increase from Budget 2017, in order to make extraordinary art happen for the citizens of Ireland. At 0.1% of GDP, Ireland's expenditure on Arts and Culture is at the bottom of the list of EU countries compared with an average of 0.6%, surely something no country can condone. The NCFA calls on the Government to rethink their ongoing strategy for the arts and work actively with the arts community to raise arts funding to the EU average as a matter of urgency."

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE ARTS

Established in 2009 as a response to the McCarthy Report, The National Campaign for the Arts is a nationwide, volunteer-led, grass roots movement that makes the case for the arts in Ireland. It seeks to ensure that the arts are on local and national government agendas and are recognised as a vital part of contemporary Irish life.

The NCFA's ambitious but inclusive proposition is to work with the Government and the sector to ensure Ireland is a “Republic of Culture” in 2016 and beyond: to recognise the centrality of the arts to the future, as well as the history, of our

nation, and to achieve an appropriate and functional level of state investment in the arts and culture.

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