







#### Case Study

### **Canolfan Rhys Arts Centre, Penrhys, Rhondda, South Wales**

Canolfan Rhys Arts Centre, Penrhys, Rhondda, South Wales. An award of £326,000 from the Arts Council of Wales helped to convert a derelict housing block into a community arts centre. Further funding of £62,249 from the Arts Council of Wales allowed the project to establish out-of-school activities alongside their regular programme of high-quality music, design, visual arts and carnival arts workshops. In addition, the Canolfan Rhys Arts Centre was adopted as a new revenue client of the Council in February 2000 and now receives an annual award of £22,000.



## Improving the capital infrastructure of the arts

During the early years of the Lottery, the focus of arts funding was chiefly on major capital projects. New theatres, arts centres, concert halls and galleries have opened, bringing the arts closer to communities across the country. Previously run-down venues in a poor state of repair have at last been refurbished and brought up to 21st century standards, designed for contemporary, and ever more sophisticated, audiences. Examples of buildings funded by the Arts Council of England include the Manchester Royal Exchange and the New Art Gallery in Walsall, while the Arts Council of Wales has funded numerous capital projects including a redevelopment, with increased physical access, of the Aberystwyth Arts Centre. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has funded 10 brand new buildings dedicated to the arts and culture, worth £16.6 million, bringing a major arts venue of quality to within 20 miles of each citizen in the region.

Lottery investment has also opened up new opportunities for talented architects and designers to create or modify spaces which inspire artists and audiences. The quality and excellence of Lottery-funded building projects has been widely recognised and many buildings have won architectural awards, including Dundee Contemporary Arts, the Scottish Poetry Library in Edinburgh and the Peckham Library and Media Centre in London.

## Funding a diverse range of arts projects

A massive range of projects have been supported by Lottery money. For example, the Scottish Arts Council has supported a mobile cinema in the Highlands, a book bus, the national poetry library, local radio and script-writing classes. Pipe, brass and silver bands across Scotland have been re-energised by the provision of new equipment which will encourage new generations of players. Similarly, the Arts Council of Wales funds a wide range of arts activities, including local eisteddfodau, opera, visual arts and contemporary Welsh crafts.

Lottery funding has also meant that more drama, music, dance, visual art, literature and arts involving new media are now reaching more people across the country. For example, the Northern Arts region Arts are Ours project, supported by the Arts Council of England, reached over 200 schools and 16,000 young people with a programme of region-wide artists' residencies. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has funded 142 new works of art, worth £4 million, including major new plays, public sculpture and work for children and young people, exploring issues of cultural identity and community feeling right across the region.

## Recovery and stabilisation of the arts sector

Lottery money from the Arts Councils has had a huge positive effect on arts organisations. The Arts Council of England's Recovery programme helps arts organisations faced with imminent insolvency to develop recovery plans, in conjunction with their key stakeholders, so they can secure their operational stability in the medium term. So far 32 strategically important arts organisations with awards totalling £26 million have been assisted.

The Arts Council of England's Stabilisation programme helps arts organisations that provide substantial public benefit to review and change their artistic missions and business operations to achieve long-term creativity and financial stability. So far 20 organisations have received awards totalling £24 million. Without this funding, many of these organisations could have survived only by reducing artistic activity and cutting jobs, thus becoming less effective in playing a full part in the cultural life of their region.

## Increasing public support for the arts

Recent research conducted by MORI for the Arts Council of England revealed that there is widespread public support for the arts. 78% of people believe the arts play a valuable role in the life of the country and 95% believe children should have more experience of the arts at school.<sup>1</sup> The extent of these favourable attitudes can surely, in part, be attributed to the fact that nearly £1.8 billion of Lottery funds has been invested in the arts to date, enabling many millions of people to experience the arts first-hand. An obvious example is Gateshead MBC's *Angel of the North*, which received a grant of £584,000 from the Arts Council of England. This structure has had a great influence in changing public perception of the arts and increased access through enormous community engagement.

## Film

On 1 April 2000 the Government set up the Film Council, following an extensive film policy review, and the Comprehensive Spending Review. The Film Council was a new Lottery distributor, and also brought together a number of agencies to act as a lead body for the industry with the aim of building a sustainable British film industry.

The Film Council immediately set about restructuring the way that Lottery funding is invested in film. It identified weaknesses in the development of films, particularly script-writing, and also a need for a climate in which British companies look to make more major commercial productions. To address these needs the Council's new development and production funds 'went live' on 1 October 2000. The production funds are for major feature productions (the Premiere Fund) and for innovative low-budget films (the New Cinema Fund) which will help the development of new technology and bringing on new talent. A new Regional Investment Fund for Film in the English regions (part-funded by the Lottery) was launched in June 2001, and over the summer months the Council has rolled out First Light, its £1 million initiative to encourage young people to make digital short films and a range of training initiatives, all funded by the Lottery.

Lottery cash has also had a major impact on film production in other parts of the United Kingdom. Since April 2000 Scottish Screen has been the national agency responsible for all aspects of the screen industries in Scotland. It develops, encourages and promotes every aspect of film, television and new media, working across the areas of production and development by taking projects from script to screen. Through partnering short film schemes such as the long-running Tartan Shorts, New Found Land, Cineworks and 8½, Scottish Screen provides wide opportunities for film-makers. The Arts Council of Wales has awarded funding for film projects of over £6 million in Wales. Projects have included the Oscar-nominated feature, *Solomon a Gaenor* and *Happy Now*, premiered at Edinburgh Film Festival 2001. More recently a growing emphasis has been placed on script development and training through the production of short films, including *Edith's Finger*, which received a Welsh BAFTA in 1999.

1. Awareness of Attitude towards the arts, MORI research, conducted May 2000.

Case Study

**Monster Theatre, North Tyneside**

Monster Theatre is an exciting and innovative music and theatre based initiative involving 600 four to seven year olds from 20 schools within Newcastle and North Tyneside. A grant of £78,000 from the Arts Council of England will enable the development of a new play, with the production of a further two new plays to be performed in schools.

## Case Study

### Janet Gray, a world class competitor

Janet Gray, a world class competitor in blind water skiing, first received Lottery support from the Sports Council for Northern Ireland in March 1999, under the Talented Athlete programme. This funding enabled her to prepare, over two years, for the World Championships in Australia in March 2001. At the actual World Championships, Janet more than exceeded her expectations by winning three gold medals. Victories in the disciplines of slalom, tricks and jump were further complemented by several European and Irish records.

