

Committee(s)	Dated:
Education Board	3 December 2015
Subject: City of London Scholarship – Progress Report	Public
Report of: The City Remembrancer	For Information

Summary

This report is to update Members on progress with the City of London Scholarship launched following the State Visit of the President of Ireland in April 2014.

Recommendation(s)

Members are invited to note the contents of the report.

Main Report

Background

1. In April 2014, Michael Higgins the President of Ireland, became the first Irish Head of State to make a State Visit to the UK. As part of the Visit, the City of London Corporation hosted a banquet in honour of President Higgins and, at the Banquet, the then Lord Mayor announced the City of London Corporation would fund an annual scholarship (“the City of London Scholarship”) in the field of Anglo Irish Literature. Graduate students who had been accepted by a UK university to undertake further study or research in the field of Anglo-Irish Literature would be eligible for the award.
2. In July 2014, the Policy and Resources Committee formally agreed to establish the scholarship to commence in the 2015/16 academic year. The report to the Policy and Resources Committee (appended to this report) gives further detail of eligibility of the award and selection criteria.
3. The Scholarship was to be awarded on the basis of outstanding academic merit and potential to students who are either a Citizen of Ireland or of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with a close association with Northern Ireland. Students starting a Master’s degree or doctoral study at a UK university in the field of Anglo-Irish Literature, or those currently engaged on such a course with at least one academic year still to run, were eligible to apply.

Advertising the Scholarship and the Application Process

4. Following the formal agreement by the Policy and Resources Committee last Summer, the City Remembrancer contacted the Northern Ireland Office on

refining the criteria for the award. Letters were then sent to universities in Ireland and Northern Ireland alerting them to the scholarship.

5. Dr Frank Shovlin, Director of the Institute for Irish Studies based at the University of Liverpool agreed to provide expert advice on the selection of candidates for the award. The University has a London Campus in Finsbury Circus (and therefore in the City) and a Masters programme in Irish Studies is taught there. The Institute for Irish Studies was recognised by the Irish Government in 2007 through the funding of a Chair in Irish Studies.
6. An application form for the scholarship went live on the City of London website towards the end of June 2015 and on the same date letters were sent to higher education institutions offering relevant courses notifying them that the application period was open. Dr Shovlin also provided details of 2 networks of Irish studies academics to which he thought details of the Scholarship should also be sent.
7. The application period closed at the end of July 2015 and five completed applications were received. The applications were sent to Dr Shovlin to review and, separately, sent to the Officer Scholarship Panel comprising the Remembrancer, the Private Secretary and Chief of Staff to the Lord Mayor, the Director of Community and Children's Service, the Assistant Town Clerk and the Head of the Town Clerk's Office. The panel and Dr Shovlin all alighted on the same candidate, a second year PhD student studying at the University of Glasgow and it was agreed that she be awarded £10,000. The views of the Chairman of the Education Board were also obtained as to the candidature and level of the award.

Future Development of the Scholarship

8. From 2016/17, it is proposed that the £25,000 set aside for the scholarship annually be divided among a number of students as a contribution to their tuition fees rather than go to a single student.
9. The Remembrancer, in consultation with your Chairman and Dr Shovlin will explore how best to do this and ensure that the scholarship is advertised to the widest possible audience.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. The City of London Scholarship further strengthens the already close ties between the City and with Northern Ireland as well as complimenting the Corporation's commitment to education.

Implications

11. As set out in the report to the Policy and Resources Committee, funding for the City of London Scholarship has been agreed for the first three years of the programme after which there will be a review of its effectiveness.

Conclusion

12. Members are invited to note the current position and the level of the award for the Scholarship for the academic year 2015/16.

Background Paper(s)

- Report to Policy and Resources Committee on *City of London Scholarship to Commemorate the Irish State Visit 2014*, 3 July 2014

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