

Committee(s)	Dated: 23/11/2020
Culture, Heritage and Libraries – For Decision	
Subject: Central Grants Programme – <i>Inspiring London through Culture</i> : recommendations to the Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£0
What is the source of Funding?	City’s Cash
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Y
Report of: Director of Major Projects	For Decision
Report author: Jack Joslin, Head of Central Grant Unit	

Summary

The *Inspiring London through Culture* funding theme, which forms part of the Central Grants Programme (CGP), had a closing date for applications on 26 July 2020. Applications were assessed by a panel of expert officers, your Deputy Chairman and external assessors on 15 October 2020 following due diligence checks by the City’s Central Grants Unit (CGU) which also oversees the scheme. This report recommends grant decisions following that meeting.

Recommendations

Members are asked:

- To note the grants approved by the panel under the *Inspiring London through Culture* funding stream, a part of the City Corporation’s Central Grants Programme.
- To approve the panel recommendation to reject the application for the Beckett Pageant which applied for £15,000.
- To note the grants rejected and pending by the panel under the *Inspiring London through Culture* funding stream.

Main Report

Background

1. On 7 March 2016, your Committee delegated authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with your Chairman and Deputy Chairman to agree the sub themes and eligibility criteria (see appendix 1) for the proposed grant giving theme of *Inspiring London through Culture*, subject to your Policy and

Resources Committee approving that theme, which they agreed at their meeting on 19 May 2016.

2. Overseen by the City's Central Grants Unit (CGU), the grant assessment process for this and other themes in the programme draws on the Unit's expertise in the field of grant-making and demonstrates good practice.
3. On 14 May 2018 your Committee approved to delegate grant decisions for awards of £10,000 or less to the Director of Major Projects in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee.
4. The panel met on 15 October 2020 comprising City Corporation officers, the Cultural and Visitor Development Director (chairman), your Deputy Chairman and external assessors. Panel members unable to attend were invited to send comments which were then considered as part of the assessment process at the meeting.
5. For this *Inspiring London through Culture* funding application round, the Central Grants Unit received 16 applications totalling £149,741. This was one of the most popular July rounds since the programme opened in 2016 and likely reflects the financial hardship faced by many City cultural and creative sector operatives.
6. The budget for *Inspiring London through Culture* is £84,000 for 2020/21.
7. The panel agreed to apply additional scrutiny to each application at this session reviewing value for money and the viability of the proposal in light of the Coronavirus Pandemic, prioritising the City communities most affected by it including if support would benefit:
 - i. Artists facing financial crises
 - ii. Community groups facing digital and/or educational poverty, or isolation and well-being issues
8. Apart from officer time handling enquiries, all resource implications are budgeted for within the *Inspiring London through Culture* grant fund.

Current Position

9. Summary assessment reports of all recommended applications to the *Inspiring London through Culture* grant scheme are given in the appendices with details of all available on request from the Director of Major Projects.
10. Grant totalling £48,325 have been approved as per the reports outlined in the appendices. This leaves £35,675 from this year's allocation for the next funding round which closes on 4 January 2021.
11. One application to deliver a Beckett Pageant in the Guildhall Yard in July 2020 applied for £15,000. The panel did not believe that this application should be supported at this time as it did not demonstrate value for money

considering the budget for this programme and the number of people the project could engage, especially if social distancing requirements reduced the Yard's capacity even further than current limits. Members are asked to approve the panel's decision. Further detail of the application can be found at Appendix 2.

12. Members should also note that two applications were put forward to the January round as the panel felt they had merit but could not be prioritised in this round. Both applicants have been informed and will submit updated information in due course.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

13. The Central Grants Programme *Inspiring London through Culture* funding stream was created to promote a fair system of grant giving by the City Corporation in the cultural context.
14. The approved grants of the panel support the funding criteria and, in turn, the City Corporation's Corporate Plan by "maximising the opportunities and benefits afforded by our role in supporting London's communities" as well as the delivery of the City's Cultural and Visitor Strategies.

Conclusion

15. This report summarises the discussions of the *Inspiring London through Culture* grants assessment panel and presents recommendations in relation to the applications considered on 15 October 2020.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – *Inspiring London through Culture*: project outline of Decisions to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee
- Appendix 2 - *Inspiring London through Culture*: project recommended for rejection, for approval
- Appendix 3 - *Inspiring London through Culture*: table of grants rejected, deferred or withdrawn

Background Papers

Full details of all applications to the *Inspiring London through Culture* grant scheme are available on request from the Cultural and Visitor Development Director.

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