



Policy Submission

**Working Group on Poverty and
the Arts**

Proposal to the Arts Council

September 1994

REF/CPA

Combat Poverty Agency
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POVERTY WORKING GROUP PROPOSAL

COMBAT POVERTY AGENCY

SEPTEMBER 1994.

POVERTY WORKING GROUP.

As already outlined in its submission to the Arts Council, the Combat Poverty Agency is proposing that the Council establish a working party to draft a detailed policy paper which will set an agenda for developing arts and poverty issues over the coming years. Such a paper would form the basis of a framework for action and inform the Arts Council's overall policy making in relation to poverty and disadvantage.

Further, it is proposed that the working group be served by an executive officer with shared costs between the Agency and the Council.

In drafting this proposal it is accepted that the perspective of the Combat Poverty Agency is primarily concerned with poverty and that of the Arts Council with the arts. Therefore the agendas of both organisations should inform the terms of reference. This document outlines, from the Agency's perspective, how this proposal could be implemented.

1. THE WORKING GROUP:

1.1 COMPOSITION:

The working group should be approximately 10 in number and include a mix of those with experience of policy, practice and those who live in poverty. An agreed chairperson should be appointed by both organisations as should other members of the group. Membership could be drawn from the following:

The Arts Council: individual arts disciplines, education, community arts and regional representation. The working group, in order to be effective, should be structured to link in with the Arts Council as much as possible. A member of the Council itself on the working group might be useful in this respect.

The Combat Poverty Agency

CAFE

The Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht.

The Department of the Environment.

The Department of Social Welfare.

The Department of Education.

Local authorities/County Arts Officers.

IMMA.

Theatre and Art Gallery representation.

Representatives from the Voluntary and Community sector with direct experience of poverty and arts based projects such as the Horizon Projects. Organisations like the Community Workers Co-op, INOU, EAPN and IRL could be considered.

Individuals who have had a close association with the issues involved including arts workers who have experience in the use of the arts or creative action in community development.

Representatives from the Inter departmental committee on the local development programme.

1.2. DURATION:

It is recommended that the group meet every four weeks for at least one year.

1.3. TERMS OF REFERENCE:

To examine how the different disciplines of the Arts Council relate to issues of the practice and consumption of the arts by those who live in poverty and experience disadvantage. To recommend how the disciplines should contribute to addressing the issues including poverty proofing the funding practices of the Council.

To examine the contribution that community arts can make to addressing issues of poverty and disadvantage and what structures are needed to sustain it. This to be considered within a context of poverty issues embracing the whole of the Council's arts policies. To draw on the experience of the Horizon Community Arts, and other, programmes in the process.

To examine the contribution of other funders to the issues and recommend what adjustments need to be made in funding, practice and standards.

1.4 TASKS:

The working group needs to agree a framework for consultation, draft a first document, and, after discussion, produce a final document to the Arts Council which will inform the policy and practice of the Council.

2. STAFFING:

2.1 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As already discussed with officers of the Council, the working group should be served by an executive jointly funded by the Agency and the Council. This position should be filled by someone who has policy experience and is familiar with poverty, arts, community arts and community development issues. Also with expertise in heading up a research project with a short time span yet needs to be effective. The position should be full time for one year, the equivalent of a Civil Service HEO and with a line management to be agreed by both organisations.

The tasks involved could be:

Convening the Working Group and providing administrative back-up.

Establishing a framework which deals with cost and distance in terms of consultation which can be realistically met.

Establishing a mechanism for, and consulting with:

- major arts and poverty organisations:
- representatives of those living in poverty and suffering disadvantage who are on the receiving end of arts administrators and professional artists, (including Travellers):
- those without any contact with either:
- those, not necessarily professional or paid workers, who are relevant to the issue in hand such as voluntary groups (amateur photographers, theatre, art etc).

Collating information/drawing up the report.

2.2 SECRETARIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE BACK-UP

It is envisaged that such back up would be less than a half time post and might be carried out in blocks.

3. COST:

3.1 COSTS WILL INCLUDE:

- the approx salary/PRSI of the Executive	24,500
- travel expenses for same	3,000
- travel costs of the working party	3,500
- communication with interested/relevant parties, travel, questionnaires and administrative backup	5,000
- publication	4,000
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	40,000
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4. FUNDING:

4.1

As already discussed with the Council's officers both organisations will fund the work.