

OFFICER DECISION RECORD

Decision Title: Culture and Creative Recovery Fund grant allocations

Decision reference number: 05.07.21

Decision date: 1 July 2021

Background / reason for decision:

The Culture and Creative Recovery Fund created a programme of support for the sector consisting of three streams: two grant programmes, £200k for Creative Freelancers and £300k for Creative Businesses, and a £500k support programme. Demand for the grants was anticipated to be high and this proved to be the case.

In total 512 applications were received, 214 for business grants and 298 for creative freelancers. Both streams were significantly oversubscribed, with approximately £2m of funding sought by businesses and approaching £1m sought by freelancers. As a result of this demand, the West of England Combined Authority Committee agreed on 25 June 2021 to award a further £1m to the Small Business Resilience Grant Programme and the Culture and Creative Economy Recovery Fund and to delegate the split of the funding between these programmes to the Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Executives of the constituent councils. Following a review of both the Small Business Resilience Grant (funding awards already made) and the Culture and Creative Economy Recovery Fund (funding awards pending) it was concluded that the greatest value and impact would be achieved by directing the additional £1m of funding towards the Culture and Creative Economy Recovery Fund.

Apportioning the additional £1m across the three workstreams of the Cultural and Creative Recovery Fund will allow more supportable applications to be grant funded and to expand the business support offer. The additional £1m in funding allows the two grant programmes to increase from a combined £500k to £1,302,637 and enables a further 106 applicants to be supported (total grants increasing from 127 to 233). 101 creative businesses (44% of applicants) are recommended to receive grants to a value of £927,526 – an increase from the original 21. 132 freelancers (and 44% of applicants) are recommended to receive grants to a value of £375,111 – an increase from 106. The business support programme will be expanded to an additional 30 businesses.

The Business and Skills lead officers and Chief Executives of the West of England constituent councils were consulted on this proposal and were in agreement with the decision.

Options considered:

Not applicable in relation to this specific decision, i.e. this was the option considered.

Decision:

To approve the recommended Creative Business Grant awards as per Appendix A and the recommended Creative Freelancer Grant awards as per Appendix B.

Consultation:

The Chief Executives of the West of England unitary authorities were consulted on these proposals.

Officer making decision: Patricia Greer

Position: Chief Executive

Report / appendices / background documents:

Appendix A - Recommended Creative Business Grant awards

Appendix B - Recommended Creative Freelancer Grant awards