



CRAFTS COUNCIL REMAINS A NATIONAL PORTFOLIO ORGANISATION

7 November 2022

We are pleased to announce that the Crafts Council will continue to be an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) and will receive funding of £2,222,889 a year from 2023 - 2026. This is 13% less than we had applied for, however it still enables the delivery of a wide-ranging and impactful programme of activity to support contemporary craft in the UK.

It was acknowledged that our bid made a strong contribution to all three Let's Create outcomes. Our focus on priority audiences (local families and community groups in Islington, young people aged 16-30, adults from lower socio-economic backgrounds and communities with protected characteristics including Global Majority, LGBTQIA+ and people with lived experience of disability) the strength of our partnerships, and our collaborative approach were all commended. These will remain key priorities as we now assess how the reduction in our funding will impact our delivery plans.

There was good news for the craft sector with British Ceramics Biennial (BCB) receiving a generous uplift of 44%. Claire Woods, artistic director and chief executive commented "It's hugely encouraging to see this investment in the work of BCB and into the city of Stoke-on-Trent - one of 54 areas designated by Arts Council England as a Priority Place due to recognition that local arts investment and engagement is currently too low."

In addition, The National Festival of Making and the British Textile Biennial have both entered the National Portfolio for the first time, receiving £250,000 and £220,000 a year, respectively. Jamie Holman, chair of the board of the National Festival of Making, commented "This decision is testament to the collective ambition and hard work of the team, directors and board at The National Festival of Making."

The Crafts Council works collaboratively with both organisations. The Crafts Council Gallery is currently hosting Cotton: labour, land and body, an exhibition produced in partnership with Super Slow Way and the British Textiles Biennial. And the Crafts Council's programme for young people - Young Craft Citizens - travelled to the 2022 Festival of Making to explore how programming by young people could be established as part of the festival's future. We will look forward to strengthening ties with both organisations.

Congratulations also to Intoart who have also seen an increase in support. Intoart challenge the under-representation of people with learning disabilities practicing

as artists and designers. They presented work at Collect in 2020 and 2022, with artist Christian Ovonen receiving the Brookfield Properties Craft Award. Craft remains one of the most popular artforms amongst the public. From the most recent report into arts and culture participation (DCMS Participation Survey April to June 2022) of the twenty-four categories of arts engagement monitored, craft is the sixth most popular activity, more popular than visiting art exhibitions and making art.

The new investment in large-scale celebratory and participatory events in Priority Places highlights that craft is a truly inclusive, engaging and democratic art form. As the national charity for craft, we will continue to advocate for the power of craft and its ability to engage a wide cross section of people in creativity.

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For more information on the Crafts Council visit www.craftscouncil.org.uk and follow @craftscouncil on Instagram and @CraftsCouncilUK on Twitter and Facebook.

Notes to Editors

The Crafts Council is the national charity for craft. We believe craft skills and knowledge enrich and uplift us as individuals and can change our world for the better. Through our activities we inspire making, empower learning and nurture craft businesses.

We do this by:

- championing craft and its positive impact on society by showing diverse examples of craft and making, and by reaching new communities who have previously felt excluded from our activity.
- increasing levels of craft education and participation by equipping and connecting craft educators, and by campaigning for craft on the curriculum.
- growing the market for craft by supporting craft businesses and providing leadership to the craft sector.
- building a sustainable and inclusive craft sector by providing support, and by listening to new and existing stakeholders to co-create relevant and impactful activity.

We want to share our power, work with others, and increase the agency of our communities to create an inclusive and thriving craft sector.

Since opening in July 2021, we have been collaborating closely with our local community to create an engaging programme of artist-led events. Across our family programme we have welcomed over 700 participants, prioritising tickets for families who are tenants in social housing through our work with Islington Council's Community Development team.