

**A response from Arts & Business Northern Ireland to the Committee for Culture,
Arts and Leisure Inquiry into Inclusion in the Arts of Working Class Communities
March 2014**

Purpose of Inquiry

To examine the accessibility and outreach activity of arts venues and bodies. The inquiry will further seek to establish the impact of these on the inclusion in the arts of working class communities. Overall, the aim of the inquiry is to pinpoint and understand barriers to inclusion in the arts faced by members of working class communities and to make recommendations as to how these might be overcome.

Introduction

1. Arts & Business Northern Ireland (A&B NI) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee Inquiry into Inclusion in the Arts of Working Class Communities. A&B NI recognises the diversity of the arts activity that takes place across communities in Northern Ireland and the value of a vibrant arts and cultural sector to the social and economic fabric of Northern Ireland.

Arts & Business NI will respond to this Inquiry from our position of knowledge and expertise in regard to forging partnerships between the cultural and private sectors in Northern Ireland. We will highlight a number of key points in this area that are of relevance to this Inquiry.

Background on A&B NI

2. Arts & Business (A&B), formerly known as The Association of Business Sponsorship of the Arts (ABSA), was set up 30 years ago as a UK wide creative network that advocates and facilitates creative partnerships between the private and cultural sectors. Its Northern Ireland office was set up in 1987. Prior to April 2008, A&B NI was funded by the Department of Culture Arts & Leisure. In 2008 it moved under direct report to Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) and is one of its strategic partners. In 2011 A&B NI became a registered NI company and charity and has a NI board chaired by Dr Joanne Stuart OBE.
3. A&B NI's arts remit covers the performing arts, literature, visual arts and crafts, museums, libraries, heritage and film. At the heart of its work is the belief that creativity has the power to drive performance and prosperity. Arts & Business NI's core work includes:
 - Working with private sector businesses to develop a deeper relationship and partnership with the arts.
 - Training, advice and support to the arts in the area of income generation from sponsorship, Trusts & Foundations and Individual Giving
 - Board & governance training to arts and cultural organisations to strengthen and sustain the sector
 - Facilitating the exchange of business skills and in-kind resources to the cultural sector via the placement of business professionals onto arts and cultural boards via board matching programmes Board Bank and Young Professionals.

- Advise private sector businesses on arts and cultural engagement strategies to deliver business results and increase business partnership with the arts.
- Host a series of networking and advocacy events to inspire increased arts and business partnerships in Northern Ireland.
- Managing the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Investment Programme fund which seeks to strengthen and ignite partnerships between businesses and the arts in Northern Ireland. The fund supports projects submitted jointly by the arts and business partners that adds something new or deepens the sponsorship further within the businesses strategy. First time sponsorships are matched £1: £1 and other partnerships can apply for £1 for every £2 of the business investment. In-kind support is also recognised by the Investment Programme fund.

A&B NI Key Points in Response to the Inquiry Terms of Reference

4. Arts & Business NI works with many leading Northern Ireland businesses that partner and invest in the arts for sound business reasons, but also because they see the broader benefits to our creative economy and are a measure of the society in which we live.
5. Many of the private sector businesses that support and invest in the arts do so because they see that the arts are deeply rooted within communities and can offer businesses an ideal vehicle for reaching and connecting with communities across Northern Ireland.

This is evidenced by a quote made by Brendan Murphy, CEO of Allianz in a recent Arts & Business NI and Allianz supplement in the Business Telegraph (on 11 February 2014) showcasing arts and business partnerships shortlisted in the Allianz Arts & Business Awards :

“Companies are using the arts to communicate with existing and potential customers. Through the arts, they are providing entertainment, joy and very often a voice and a deepening sense of identity and place to communities.”

“Arts organisations and businesses are coming together more and more to reach out to communities and engage senior citizens, young people, those with disabilities, minority groups, persons from various socio-economic backgrounds, and individuals who would never have had access to the arts previously.”

Brendan Murphy, CEO Allianz

A copy of the printed Belfast Telegraph Allianz Arts & Business NI 2014 Awards supplement is attached and the 96 page digital version is available from:

<http://supplements.independent.ie/?xml=AllianzV3&iid=86791>

6. It is also worth highlighting that this business sector investment in the arts is also enabling and extending the outreach work that many arts organisations do in working class communities.

7. Many of the business and arts projects funded under the Arts & Business NI Investment programme offer useful examples of accessibility and outreach activity that are helping meet social and community challenges.
8. In 2013-2014, 27 of the 38 projects supported under the Investment Programme were for specific outreach and accessibility activity with arts and business organisations in NI in the year. This represented £123,125 of the total £182,975 awarded in the year, and was against a business investment of £760,695 (82% of the total business investment leveraged against the Investment Programme fund for the year).
9. See below some examples of the accessibility and outreach activity from NI arts organisations supported by private sector sponsorship and the A&B NI Investment programme:

City Cabs & Millennium Forum

City Cabs have been serving the community in Derry-Londonderry for over four decades and saw their partnership with the Millennium Forum as way of signalling their commitment to the city and its inhabitants. An investment from Arts & Business NI enabled both partners to produce an exciting new education project entitled 'City Cabs - City Life.' The project brought together 200 drivers and 40 local teenagers to create a short play inspired by the true stories shared by City Cabs staff. The final play was performed in the Millennium Forum for parents and families. To support the project these stories were collated into a graphic novel and distributed throughout the city.

WheelWorks & Stratagem – Winner of the Allianz Arts & Business NI Young People Award 2014

A ground-breaking programme by Stratagem and WheelWorks that engaged young teenagers from cultural and minority communities. The partnership came about when WheelWorks was looking for new ways to engage 14 to 18 year olds, especially those who had limited access to the arts. It sat down with some older teenagers who indicated they would like to have the skills to allow them to lobby, address community issues and ultimately implement change. WheelWorks and Stratagem came together to see what they could do, with the support from Arts & Business NI. The result was two hugely successful projects: the first with teenagers from minority ethnic communities through Craigavon InterCultural Programme Oasis Youth Forum, the second with young people with disabilities through the Goal Line Youth Trust in Portadown. Both projects featured a new approach to exploring issues with young people. Before any artistic workshops took place, participants worked with a drama facilitator and professionals in the areas of diversity and disability awareness to discuss issues that mattered to them. The initial workshops also provided the teenagers with information on effecting change in their areas. A number of artistic workshops were then held, and the young people created art that highlighted their important messages. The Craigavon group produced 3D masks, while Goal Line produced a series of visual arts pieces. That artwork was then launched at the Millennium Court Arts Centre in Portadown before eventually being displayed at Stormont – allowing politicians to see just how the youth felt about issues such as disability, racism and community safety.

KPMG & Royal Ulster Academy – Winner of Allianz Arts & Business NI Community Award 2013

Central to KPMG's corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy is the desire to make a positive contribution to the wider community and to involve their employees in this endeavour. This was achieved through a project devised with the Royal Ulster Academy 'One day in the life of'. This innovative photography project was aimed at Primary 7 pupils in schools in areas of high deprivation in Belfast. Pupils were offered a series of workshops after which every child received their own disposable camera and a simple brief: go out and take photographs of their area, friends and family - the places and people they called home. When the films were developed each pupil selected their best image with the support of Paul Seawright which was enlarged, professionally framed and presented for exhibition at the RUA's premises.

Airporter & Waterside Theatre

Raising their profile within the local community was the catalyst for Airporter, a leading transportation company in the North West to become a first-time sponsor of the Waterside Theatre's PEEK-A-BOOK, Children's Literature Festival. The festival featured a host of stimulating children's events bringing a range of fantastic children's characters to the stage. The partners wanted to be able to welcome children of all backgrounds to participate in the festival. An Arts & Business NI investment enabled Airporter and the Waterside to offer a community ticketing programme to schools in the surrounding area ensuring that all children could experience the magic of live theatre.

Belfast Harbour Commission & Young at Art

Belfast Harbour is committed, through its Corporate Responsibility programme to reaching out and engaging with communities across Belfast. As a key partner of the Belfast Children's Festival, staged annually by Young At Art, Belfast Harbour can improve access to the arts for children from across the city. An investment from Arts & Business NI enabled the partners to create an education programme to accompany the festival that extended the company's impact in communities experiencing high deprivation. The programme offered support to schools and included teacher training, transport assistance, teacher resource packs and a ticketing scheme to attend the Belfast Children Festival 2014.

J Brown & S Ltd/ Property Project Ltd & Creative Exchange

Creative Exchange brought James Brown & Sons and BDA Properties on board once again as sponsors of their 'Art in the Eastside' billboard project. Both businesses wanted to engage more with their local community in East Belfast and show their commitment to the area. An Arts & Business NI investment enabled Creative Exchange to work with their sponsors and local schools and community groups to create the 'Art Flags Bunting' project. Workshops with the groups and the two partnership businesses produced bright and celebratory art flags reflecting the cultural diversity of East Belfast. The flags created were brought together and displayed on the railings and buildings of the participating organisations.

Herbert Smith Freehills LLP & The National Trust – Winner of Allianz Arts & Business NI Community Award 2014

On the back of a successful first outing, Herbert Smith Freehills and the National Trust decided to be even more ambitious for their second project together. The Trust had identified the need for seating at The Pleasure Grounds of their Rowallane property and HSF not only sponsored the design and creation of sculptured seating, but their staff also cleared and prepared the grounds for their installation. An Arts & Business NI investment enabled HSF staff to animate the refurbished gardens with the creation of site specific theatre performances. HSF staff went out into the community meeting local senior citizens and hearing their memories and recollections of Rowallane. These stories formed the basis of the 'Rowallane Plays' which were performed on site for staff and visitors.

WheelWorks & Translink

Translink constantly looks for innovative vehicles to deliver their rail safety message and identified MT4Uth as the ideal partner. An Arts & Business NI investment enabled MT4Uth to create a new project to communicate rail safety to young people in high risk areas by engaging them in performance. MT4Uth and Translink devised a Rail Safety competition challenging to schools to create a short performance piece based on rail safety. The winning school had their piece work shopped with the MT4Uth team before performing it in public. The final performance was filmed for a DVD and uploaded to the Translink website.

Bank of Ireland & The Playhouse

Investment in the Bank of Ireland's partnership with the Playhouse extended their sponsorship of two of the Theatre's performances to give the bank valuable involvement in the annual Children's Arts Festival. A ticket scheme created 15 free places for children who could not otherwise attend selecting from a range of individuals and groups from areas of significant deprivation. The ticket scheme not only provided valuable profile for the bank but aligned with its strategy to invest in the communities in which it operates.

Hughes Insurance/Navigator Blue & Strand Arts Centre

Hughes Insurance wanted to build their engagement with the community in East Belfast and saw a partnership with the iconic Strand Arts Centre as the perfect vehicle. But in addition to the sponsorship, the partners wanted to make a real impact on the young people from the local area. An Investment from Arts & Business NI enabled The Strand and Hughes to offer an after school media programme to young people in the local community. Working with experienced industry professionals over a series of practical workshops, the young people planned, scripted and edited their own short films. The finished films were given a special premier at The Strand Arts Centre

JTI & Ulster Orchestra

The Ulster Orchestra has developed a strong partnership with JTI. This support has enabled the Orchestra to increase accessibility to its concerts for elderly people in regional areas, provide a safe environment for women of domestic violence to express their stories through music, and to bring the disabled and elderly together in a special cross-partnership music workshop project culminating in a special Christmas performance in Ballymena.

AES & Cinemagic

AES have become first time sponsors of Cinemagic. Through this new partnership AES employees were encouraged to participate in Cinemagic's annual festival through volunteering opportunities and attendance at screenings. AES also wanted to also draw on Cinemagic's experience in creating films to engage their employees in a bespoke staff development opportunity. An A&B NI Investment enabled Cinemagic to engage up to 20 AES employees to work with local young people on a unique filmmaking project that produced a short piece about their organisation. The film has been screened at not only the two AES plants in Northern Ireland but also at their plants internationally.

Bombardier and National Trust

Bombardier Aerospace has a strong reputation for engaging in Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives with a range of environmental organisations and other partners. They were particularly keen to develop their relationship with the National Trust. An Arts & Business NI investment enabled the National Trust in partnership with Bombardier Aerospace to engage their staff and young people from a range of schools from across Northern Ireland in a series of workshops with local artist Marilyn Stanford to create a feature mosaic wall at the Lookout within the Mount Stewart estate.

Ulster Bank and Kabosh

As principal sponsors, the Ulster Bank already had a significant presence at the Balmoral show, but they wanted to raise their brand awareness and affinity with the agricultural community even further and a partnership with theatre company Kabosh provided the perfect opportunity. The world premiere of Kabosh's *Inventors* ran over the seven days of the Balmoral show in a pop-up barn. An investment from Arts & Business NI enabled Kabosh and The Ulster Bank to create an inventive community outreach programme offering drama and design workshops to young people from rural communities and young farmers. The *Inventors* programme enabled the Ulster Bank to reach out to new audiences demonstrating their commitment to the agricultural community beyond their business activities.

North Down Marquees & ArtsEkta

ArtsEkta are producers of Belfast Mela, Northern Ireland's largest intercultural arts festival. Having been production partners for over ten years, North Down Marquees wanted to develop that relationship and became a sponsor of this key event in the city. They saw the Mela as the perfect opportunity to platform their range of products and services and access new markets. Having created a new Maharaja Tent, an investment from Arts & Business NI enabled ArtsEkta to fill this retreat with a programme of Classical Indian Arts and a new interactive exhibition.

Replay Theatre & Brennans Bread

In 2011 Brennans Bread was seeking to consolidate and grow its position in NI, raising its profile and achieve certain CSR objectives. It partnered with Replay Theatre Company, a theatre company aimed at younger audiences, entering a three-year deal with Replay across its programme of work for 0 to 11 year olds. The objectives of the sponsorship were to promote the brand and raise awareness but also to deliver a healthy eating/lifestyle message to at least 10,000 Northern

Ireland families per year. This has been a success for both parties and is helping address the issue of promoting healthy eating to children and families in NI.

10. **U105 & Audiences NI** - In regard to widening access to the arts, few arts organisations would have the resources to commit to the marketing budgets enjoyed by larger commercial businesses, and therefore profile generated in the media is hugely valuable in helping them reach these new and diverse audiences. A&B NI worked with U105 on project that offered Audiences NI and arts organisations free airtime to promote arts activity and promote Audiences NI's Test Drive the Arts initiative. An investment from Arts & Business NI's Investment Programme enabled Audiences NI and u105 to develop a new Test Drive the Arts feedback terminal which was stationed in various major arts venues. This new u105 and Test Drive branded facility increased listeners and potential listener's awareness of the station's commitment to the arts in Northern Ireland. In addition, the investment enabled u105 to create and broadcast a free advertising campaign for ten arts organisations.
11. **Allianz Community Art Prize** - In addition sponsoring the Allianz Arts & Business Awards, funding the Belfast Telegraph printed Awards supplement and the associated 96 page digital Imag, Allianz also this year introduced the new Allianz Community Art Prize which supports local arts community projects. All of the companies were nominated by Allianz employees. The winner for 2014 was Big Telly Theatre Company. The project 'Big Sunday' will feature an ambitious range of arts activity and events, animating empty shops in Portstewart and working directly with local traders and community groups.
12. In April 2013, A&B NI hosted a business breakfast in conjunction with Arts Council of NI to engage private sector businesses in the Arts Council's Five Year Strategic Plan 'Ambitions for the Arts'. One of the key strategic themes within this plan is to promote access to the arts and deepen the value of the arts to individuals and wider society. At the consultation breakfast the private sector businesses attending cited their support for the arts and its value socially and economically to Northern Ireland. Under the topic of 'Promoting Access to the Arts' a number of recommendations were agreed that A&B NI are working on that are relevant to this Inquiry:
 - It is important the we continue to leverage private sector partnerships with the arts to help support artistic excellence and support increased access for disadvantaged and minority groups
 - Business is ideally placed to help promote access and grow audiences for the arts through their customer bases and employees. Arts & Business NI have a vital role to play in proactively communicating the role of the arts in fulfilling corporate social responsibility objectives which in turn contribute to increased access to the arts.

Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards



www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/allianz-arts-business

Photo of DU Dance (NI) by Joe Fox Photography

Belfast
Telegraph

A supplement on business and the arts in conjunction with the Belfast Telegraph,
Allianz and Arts & Business NI

Allianz

A brave new world

A decade into the company's relationship with Arts & Business NI, Allianz CEO Brendan Murphy reminds us just how far the concept of arts-business collaboration has come

IT'S been 10 years since Allianz commenced its association with Arts & Business NI, as the firm sought to honour arts and business collaborations throughout Northern Ireland.

Our two organisations came together at a time when Northern Ireland's economy was in the first bloom of fiscal growth, on the back of which the arts sector was benefiting from increased investment and growing tourism numbers.

The decade has brought with it much change: peaks and troughs that can come only with a boom and subsequent global economic recession. The business community was forced to tighten its proverbial belt and the arts sector compelled to become more creative than ever.

But in every challenge there is opportunity, and as indicated in the shortlisted entries at this year's Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards, the two sectors have grasped that opportunity and often created something spectacular.

What has emerged is a clear sign that investment by business in the arts is no longer purely philanthropic, but part of a corporate strategy that recognises the bottom-line benefits.

The traditional sponsorship model has become a thing of the past. In its place is a holistic approach, an acknowledgement that supporting the arts adds real business value. From employee engagement to business development and cultural branding, the outcomes are tangible and in many cases measurable.

In addition, we see that, progressively, firms are placing a greater emphasis on the inclusion of the arts in their business strategies. They see the arts as a veritable enabler of achieving business objectives.

As the great Albert Einstein said, "to raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, requires creative imagination and marks real advance in science". Arts organisations can shine new light on business issues and help push businesses forward.

Likewise, a partnership with an arts organisation can act as a fantastic marketing, branding and employee engagement tool for firms.

The bottom line

In a survey of 29,000 consumers in 58 countries, information and measurement company Nielsen found that 43 per cent of consumers say they have spent more on a product from a socially responsible company. The message to the CEO is clear - support your community in its creative efforts and your bottom line will be rewarded.

But at Allianz we have learned over the period that achievements should not be measured by arts or business objectives alone. Recognition also needs to be given to the substantial economic benefits derived by local communities.

Arts organisations and businesses are coming together more and more to reach out to communities and engage senior citizens, young people, those with disabilities, minority groups, persons from various socio-economic backgrounds, and individuals who would never have had access to the arts previously.

Companies are using the arts to communicate with existing and potential customers. Through the arts, they are providing entertainment, joy, and very often a voice and deepening sense of identity and place to communities.

When arts and business organisations put their heads together to create, the benefits - whether intentional or accidental - are far-reaching and often wonderful.

Allianz has had a presence in Northern Ireland since the mid-1930s, and as CEO of the company I take great pride in our association with the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards. The awards continue to evolve under the clear direction of



Brendan Murphy, CEO, Allianz calls on businesses and arts organisations to collaborate Top: Guests gather in the Ulster Hall for the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards 2014

Arts & Business NI chief executive Mary Trainor-Nagele and her dedicated and passionate staff.

Accordingly, at last week's awards ceremony we announced our continued commitment to the event through a title sponsorship that will last for at least the next two years.

Our partnership has stood the test of time because we take great pleasure in seeing first hand how business, artists and arts bodies throughout Northern Ireland use their creativity, wonderful ability and different perspectives to come up with solutions to deliver objectives.

Impressed

So impressed have we been by the creativity and actions of the businesses celebrated by

6699
ARTS ORGANISATIONS
CAN SHINE NEW
LIGHT ON BUSINESS
ISSUES AND HELP PUSH
BUSINESSES FORWARD

the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards in recent years, that we too are collaborating with artists to help us meet our exacting business goals.

I am delighted to announce that the enormously talented and graceful ballerina Melissa Hamilton, first soloist with the Royal Ballet, has agreed to become Allianz's cultural ambassador in Northern Ireland.

A native of Drogheda

in County Down, Melissa joined The Royal Ballet in 2007 and was promoted to soloist in 2010. She has received plaudits for her roles and wowed audiences over and over again.

Through Allianz's association with Melissa Hamilton, we hope to build on our support of communities and cultural initiatives across the island of Ireland and internationally.

In 2013, the world-renowned pianist Lang Lang

became a global Allianz cultural ambassador. Through the Lang Lang International Music Foundation, Allianz is helping to run a dedicated youth programme to inspire the next generation of classical musicians and encourage music performance as a means of social development.

Allianz is not only an admirer of the fantastic collaborations that are recognised in this year's Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards, but is committed to carving out our own place among venerable arts supporters in Northern Ireland. We are determined to communicate and support communities and society through all art forums.

Throughout the course of his life, the late great Seamus Heaney knew a thing or two about the importance of the arts and the countless possibilities they presented. This remark he made about poetry could easily extend across all art forms:

"I can't think of a case where poems changed the world, but what they do is they change people's understanding of what's going on in the world."

Allianz

Allianz



Top, from left: DU Dance (NI) performers; Dr Joe McKee plays the Ulster Hall Mullholland grand organ; DU Dance (NI); Ulster Orchestra Brass Quintet entertain the crowd, and more of DU Dance (NI)'s stunning performance. Bottom, from left: Bikers from Square Pit, Sinead Morrissey, poet laureate and NI Opera

And the winners were:

Allianz Arts & Business NI Community Engagement Award
Winner: Herbert Smith Freshills LLP & The National Trust
Highly commended: Richmond Centre & Millennium Forum Theatre & Conference Centre

Allianz Arts & Business NI Cultural Branding Award
Winner: Sunflower Public House & Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival
Highly commended: Ulster Bank & Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queen's

Allianz Arts & Business NI Sustained Partnership Award
Winner: Danske Bank & Cahoots NI

Allianz Arts & Business NI Young People Award
Winner: Stratagem & WheelWorks
Highly commended: Burke Shipping Group & c21 Theatre Company Ltd

Allianz Arts & Business NI Employee Engagement Award
Winner: Caffé Fresco & Alley Arts and Conference Centre

Allianz Arts & Business NI Arts Individual of the Year Award
Winner: Sean Kelly, Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival

Allianz Arts & Business NI Business Individual of the Year Award
Winner: Dennis Monaghan, Ballyvesey Recycling Solutions & The Talent Tribe

Allianz Arts & Business NI Special Award
Winner: AES

Allianz Arts & Business NI Community Art Prize
Winner: Big Telly Theatre Company

Allianz Arts & Business NI Business of the Year Award
Winner: Edwards & Co. Solicitors

Allianz Arts & Business NI Arts Award
Winner: Millennium Forum Theatre & Conference Centre

A glittering affair

The Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards ceremony on 6 February was a fantastic celebration of some of the best partnerships between the cultural and the corporate sector in Northern Ireland

IN the first 50 years of its existence Belfast's Ulster Hall hosted artistic greats such as Charles Dickens and Ellen Terry. On 6 February last, that tradition of hosting the best continued as Northern Ireland's finest acts took to the stage at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards 2014.

Representatives of the shortlisted acts enjoyed a reception at the start of the evening as they were entertained by the Ulster Orchestra Brass Quintet, before taking their place in the stunningly beautiful Grand Hall for the main event, the awards presentation.

The show was opened by Belfast Lord Mayor Máirtín Ó Muilleoir who introduced the first act of the evening, the eloquent Sinead Morrissey, poet laureate and recent winner of the prestigious TS Eliot Prize.

Talkback presenter with BBC Radio Ulster Dr Wendy Austin MBE lent her support to act as master of ceremonies, introducing Brendan Murphy, chief executive of Allianz Ireland. He encouraged businesses to get involved with the arts to create something great.

"It is always exciting to see how business, artists and arts bodies use their creativity and sometimes, their very different perspectives, to work with each other towards the

delivery of frequently diverse objectives. All of the nominations and winners featured here tonight are outstanding examples of innovative collaborations, which demonstrate exactly just what can be achieved in both a business and artistic context when creative engagement begins," he said.

Next up on the stage were two young Northern Irish singers from NI Opera, soprano Andrea Delaney and baritone Aaron O'Hare, who gave an awe-inspiring performance.

The importance of continued private sector support for the arts was reinforced by Roisin McDonough, chief executive, Arts Council of Northern Ireland. "Developing the bonds between the worlds of art and commerce is particularly important in the current financial climate, where both sectors have much to gain from combining strengths," she said.

Congratulating the award winners, Enterprise, Trade and Investment Minister Arlene Foster said: "The Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards celebrate the most outstanding and creative partnerships between business and arts organisations in Northern Ireland.

"I believe that creativity and innovative thinking are vital to business success and I

also fully recognise the importance of the creative industries in the development and growth of our economy. To build on our success to date, it is imperative that we all play our part in encouraging continued collaboration between the arts and business sectors."

Finally, the waiting was over, with the recipients of the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards announced. In total 11 awards were presented on the evening with the winners collecting the wonderful sculptures by local artist Mark Revels.

The awards presentation was brought to a close by Arts & Business NI chief executive Mary Trainor-Nagele who said her organisation would continue to endeavour to bring the arts and corporate sector together. She then announced the final act of the night professional dance development company DU Dance (NI), who wowed the audience with a breathtaking routine.

Guests then wound down the evening with a drinks reception and great conversation in the historic surroundings of the spectacular Ulster Hall.

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Passion & Prosperity

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Peeling back the layers

The judges at this year's Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards saw obvious benefits for both business and arts organisations in each of the shortlisted projects. They say there's an increasing recognition that arts-based projects can be multi-layered and far-reaching

RELATIONSHIPS between arts and business are beginning to evolve into a 360-degree partnership, according to long-serving judge at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards Jackie Entwistle, Strata Marketing.

Entwistle has been judging the awards for the past eight years, and has noted a particular shift to multi-layered projects in this year's submissions.

"Some of the projects submitted were so clever and so well executed that they extended across the categories," she says.

The categories at the awards comprise community engagement, cultural branding, sustained partnership, young people and employee engagement. Examples of projects shortlisted in more than one category include those of National Trust and Herbert Smith Freehills, shortlisted for the Community Engagement and Employee Engagement Awards. Ulster Orchestra and JTI were shortlisted in the Sustainable Partnership and Community Engagement categories.

Actor, playwright and Arts & Business NI board member Dan Gordon says that while both the business and art sectors benefit, there is a third strand which gains from their partnerships: the community.

"The Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards demonstrate processes that are ongoing, lasting and tangible, where young people come out better people, and where communities are improved because there's an engagement with local businesses. There has been a real progression," he says.

Come one, come all

Companies can benefit from involvement in the arts whether they are small or large, rural or city-based, according to Gordon, who has been judging the awards for the past five years. He says companies and arts organisations can form partnerships regardless of their size and business. "I come at it very much as an arts practitioner. In our business, we are creative but we often



Judges of the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards are, from left, Wayne Nickels, Cunningham Coates; Dan Gordon, actor and chair of the panel; Gillian Shields, Coca-Cola HBC; Jackie Entwistle, Strata Marketing; Gavin Walker, Business First; Mary Trainor-Nagle, Arts & Business NI, and Colletta Smith, BBC

neglect the business side of the arts, and that's the downfall of a lot of creative work because it has to be underpinned by business. In the past five years, I've seen communities waking up through Arts & Business NI." Entwistle agrees. "There's an increased recognition that the arts really need to link into the business agenda. They are coming

from a business perspective themselves, creating a framework, and matching artistic activity with bottom-line deliverables."

As arts bodies become cleverer in how they engage, businesses are also becoming arts-savvy, according to Wayne Nickels, partner in Investment Management at Cunningham Coates Stockbrokers and

SOME OF THE PROJECTS SUBMITTED WERE SO CLEVER AND WELL EXECUTED THAT THEY EXTENDED ACROSS THE CATEGORIES

first-time judge at this year's awards.

"Increasingly, companies are acknowledging that bringing the arts on board can mean a lot more rewards for the business, and even give the employees themselves a boost in expanding their experience, knowledge and contacts," he says.

Nickels knows first-hand the benefits of combining the arts and business as his firm Cunningham Coates becomes more involved in Arts & Business NI. He says judging the awards gave him an insight into just how extensive projects can be.

"The range of arts organisations and businesses and how they engage with each other has been fantastic to see, sometimes unbelievable. Often you don't hear of these partnerships going on. It was excellent to get a feel for what is happening in Northern Ireland and how the two sectors can marry up with each other."



Piece by piece

Local artist Mark Revels has created a range of individually sculpted, intricate pieces for this year's Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

SCULPTOR Mark Revels has described his commission of 17 pieces for the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards as extremely important. It was Revels' first major business commission.

"Working in sculpture and fine art can be quite difficult because you're sitting in your studio with life whizzing by and nobody knows who you are. The fact that I got a commission like this, which merges business and the arts, and sees my work being critiqued, is an integral part of the process of being an artist.

"It has been a nice introduction to business. The commission has given me an insight into what the business world is like but allowed me the creative freedom to sculpt the pieces," he says of the commission, which is supported by JTI.

Free rein

The County Down native was given artistic licence to create what he thought would

represent the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards and the coming together of the arts and business. He has created the pieces out of smooth black ceramic clay, with glazes chosen to emphasise the classic/contemporary theme. Bronze, golden colours highlight older, more classical architecture, while silver and pewter glazes hint at the contemporary.

"The award's overall structure and form is based on architectural building styles and techniques. The drills of roof tops on the lower half of the piece, uniform in their positioning, are a comment on the 'classic' Romanesque style of town planning and their grid systems, which combined straight roads and uniform rows of housing and dwellings," says Revels.

"The dodecagon, which is the 12-sided central top half of the award (representing the 12 months of the year leading up to the awards), is based upon the more modern ways of creating



From left, Mary Trainor-Nagle, chief executive, Arts & Business NI; Mark Revels, artist, and Karen Orchin, head of Community Relations, JTI

EACH PROJECT IS INDIVIDUAL SO I WANTED TO ENSURE THE AWARDS WEREN'T MASS PRODUCED

'contemporary' architectural forms, aided in their conception with the use of modern 21st century technologies such as the computer. This is hinted at by the fine lines which move from top to bottom on the upper half of the award, a subtle nod towards computer circuit boards and their road map-like appearance."

The process involved a great deal of work, and Revels made a conscious decision to make each award separately. "Each project is individual so I wanted to ensure the awards weren't mass produced or even moulded. I wanted them to look similar, as they're all the same size, but upon inspection you can see just how different they are."

In his mid-thirties, Revels studied at the University of Ulster Belfast and the Wimbledon School of Art in London. He worked as a set designer for the BBC and Channel 4, and with local production companies in Northern Ireland, before returning to his sculptural/fine art background.

Revels has gone on to exhibit with the Royal Ulster Academy of Arts at the Ulster Museum and the FE McWilliam Gallery in Banbridge. This year, he will travel to the United States for three exhibitions.

Revels is hoping to get further work from the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards commission. "The exposure alone has been amazing so it's been a great experience."



Heads together

The creative collaborations celebrated at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards highlight the amazing things that are possible when commerce and culture collide. Here, the chief executive and chairman of Arts & Business NI, along with the chief executive of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, give their take on the outcomes

THE 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards bring exciting times, a time to celebrate and a time to envisage new opportunities and the awakening of fresh ideas as the year unfolds. For Arts & Business NI, they give us the opportunity to reflect upon our achievements over the past couple of years.

It has been a busy time for our organisation. It is astonishing what the team has accomplished since celebrating its 25th anniversary and moving away from the security of a parent organisation to become an independent NI company and charity.

We at A&B NI have embraced the development and change enjoyed through our independence, and through working with our new board of 11 strong individuals from the worlds of both business and arts, led by chair Dr Joanne Stuart OBE.

Responding to the changing economic environment, we have developed our programmes

and offering for the cultural and private sector partners we support. To help sustain the arts and refine fundraising and entrepreneurship of current and future cultural leaders, we launched a new strategic business planning programme Creating Futures, run in association with the Ulster Business School. Through our own fundraising, we launched a new Creative Internship programme that offers arts graduates a paid internship in a cultural fundraising role.

Arts master classes such as: 'Making the Ask - Philanthropy' from a Global Perspective and a Trusts and Foundations symposium, where arts fundraisers had the opportunity of one-to-one surgeries with Trusts, seek to deepen the knowledge of the sector and build skills in looking for new potential funding streams.

As all businesses need to boost competitiveness and think innovatively about how they address business challenges, increasingly, private sector companies are making a

corporate shift and turning to the arts for creative business solutions. Many of these inspiring partnerships are showcased at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards and in this supplement. We would like to thank Allianz for its support in making these become a reality.

Partnerships are also showcased at A&B NI events such as the recent Business Thinking Rewired breakfast series held at James Street South, Belfast and supported by AES and Invest NI.

One key area where the arts are delivering for business is around human capital, helping with leadership development and the motivation of teams and individuals. A&B NI's board matching programmes such as Young Professionals and Board Bank - where business people are trained in governance and placed onto a cultural board - can go a long way to developing business skills such as governance, strategic business planning, negotiation and building your network.

We will continue to evolve our programmes in line with the changing needs of arts and business organisations. Partnerships between the sectors continue to merge to create transformational change and impressive results. A&B NI has a valuable role to play in developing these partnerships and we are excited about the many new partnerships, connections and opportunities that lie ahead in 2014.

Mary Trainor-Nagele,
chief executive of Arts & Business NI

When we bring businesses and arts organisations together, remarkable things happen. The outcomes, just like the partnerships acknowledged at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards, are often unexpected but always welcome.

We thank Allianz for its continued support for these awards which are so important in showcasing what can be achieved through these creative collaborations. I hope the examples celebrated at the awards and highlighted in this supplement can inspire businesses to make a cultural or corporate shift through partnership with the arts, and in doing so increase performance, sustainability and community engagement.

Arts & Business NI is proud to play its part in forging and sustaining these relationships. Our work would not be possible without our principal funder, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them and all our arts and business members and sponsors for their support throughout the year.

For businesses already supporting the arts, I commend and thank you. For those curious about the possibilities, please talk to the team at Arts & Business NI; let's create something amazing together.

Dr Joanne Stuart OBE,
chairman, Arts & Business NI

Developing the bonds between the worlds of arts and commerce is particularly important in the current financial climate, where both sectors have much to gain from combining strengths. A growing number of local enterprises that are connecting with arts organisations are building business strength into the arts sector. In turn, they are benefiting from the enhanced creative and communication skill sets associated with the arts.

We are delighted that the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards recognise these achievements and highlight, for other enterprising companies that may now be encouraged to partner with the arts, the many mutual advantages of closing the distance between arts and business.

Róisín McDonough,
chief executive, Arts Council of Northern Ireland



Mary Trainor-Nagele, chief executive, Arts & Business NI and Dr Joanne Stuart OBE, chair, Arts & Business NI at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards 2014

Building a case for the arts

Law firm Edwards & Co has placed the arts at the heart of its business strategy, not only sponsoring projects but allowing the arts to permeate the entire company. As a result, it has been named Business of the Year at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

A PROGRESSIVE legal firm in Belfast, Edwards & Co Solicitors has taken a holistic approach to the arts over the past five years.

After its initial sponsorship foray in 2007, it joined up with Happenstance Theatre Company in 2008 and quickly recognised the ability of the arts to help the company move forward commercially.

Edwards & Co wanted to go beyond sponsoring the arts on an altruistic level to integrate them into all aspects of the organisation. It saw the arts as a means of differentiating itself from its many competitors in Northern Ireland.

Initially the company enlisted Happenstance to provide basic presentation skills training to its staff. The theatre company worked one-on-one with Edwards & Co's employees to help develop new skills when it came to dealing with clients.

Dorcas Crawford, senior partner with Edwards & Co, says many of the firm's solicitors, whilst very confident on their feet in front of a judge, were not well trained in doing presentations.

As part of the firm's continual professional development commitment, each year it takes its staff to Slieve Donard in County Down for a training weekend. It enlisted the services of Happenstance to provide a programme that would help staff present to clients. Then, over a period of one year, as the solicitors were scheduled to present to clients, Happenstance would come in and work with each person individually before the presentation.

"They helped them to present the legal content in a way that was understandable and came across well," says Crawford.

In 2013, the company decided to bring the partnership to another level with the development of a media training programme, which again has gone a long way in developing Edwards & Co's business.

Happenstance was also involved in the development of a corporate video at Edwards & Co, which has been used as one of its main sales tools to explain what it does for clients.

Employee engagement

Employee engagement has also been boosted, with many staff totally immersing themselves in training and arts events.

"We all ooze enthusiasm for Arts & Business NI because it's done a lot for the business but it also takes you away from the intensity of the work we do," says Crawford. "Edwards & Co is a better place to work because of the partnership."

Crawford says Happenstance contributed to the firm achieving a 100 per cent employee satisfaction rate on an ISO 9001 assessment of the firm.

"Each year we make a very definite plan, and as a business we get so much out of it, some of which is very measurable. It has presented endless opportunities."

The law firm has measured the impact of the partnership using four criteria - the activity



Actors Michael Condron and Dan Gordon star in *The Boat Factory*, a Happenstance Theatre Company production, which was supported by Edwards & Co Solicitors, winner of Business of the Year Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards



Edwards & Co's offices in Belfast. The company won Business of the Year Award at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards. Picture: Phil Smyth Photography

carried out, whom it reached, how effectively it resonated with them and what the return on investment was in financial terms.

It can directly link the partnership to 14 events that have led to a discrete improvement in business performance over the measured period. Through those events it reached 200 clients.

The promotional film has been screened for over 1,500 potential clients, and there have been significant increases in targeted business areas.

Revenues increased by almost 20 per cent in the charities department and by almost 50 per cent in the private client section of the business, according to Crawford. Some 50 specific new business leads were established as a direct result of the firm's "reinvigorated presentation approach".

Over 200 new business links were made, and traffic to the company's website has reached over 8,400 people, inspiring the firm to create a new app promoting its services.

"The partnership has enabled us to reach out to many existing clients, rekindling old relationships."

Two-way street

So far, so beneficial for Edwards & Co, but Philip Crawford, artistic director of Happenstance (and brother to Dorcas), says it's been a "wonderfully mutually beneficial relationship", which arose from needs on both sides.

"We needed the sponsorship and they needed the training. It's too easy for an arts organisation to say we need money, to take that money and for the business to tick its corporate social responsibility box. What we love is the fact that they know what we're doing, we know what they're doing and that makes the whole thing much more satisfactory," he says.



Edwards & Co Solicitors, from left: Teresa Curran, Dennis Hamill, Dorcas Crawford, Michael May and Jenny Ebbage

Edwards & Co staff members have also become involved with Happenstance projects, and Teresa Curran, partner at the law firm, sits on the Happenstance board.

The company also provided financial sponsorship for Happenstance's production and international tour of *The Boat Factory* in 2013. Partners at the firm travelled to Belgium and New York for the international arms of the tour, helping to raise the profile of the company.

In conjunction with the play, Edwards & Co also held a night for clients at the Grand Opera House, and had virtually its entire staff attend.

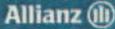
Alongside its partnership with Happenstance, Edwards & Co has also sponsored a number of other arts events, and held an event on culture night for the past two years.

Dorcas Crawford says the company is integrated with the arts now and will continue to be so into the future.

"The work that we have already done has proven invaluable - enabling us to carry out CSR activity that is specific, measurable and relevant to our core business purposes. We are actively discussing the extension of this partnership and future theatre events that would benefit Edwards & Co and Happenstance."

Edwards & Co was also shortlisted in the Employee Engagement Award category for its partnership with Happenstance Theatre.

EDWARDS & CO IS A
BETTER PLACE TO
WORK BECAUSE OF
THE PARTNERSHIP



A command performance

The Millennium Forum has received the ultimate gong at this year's Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards, picking up the Arts Award and winning £3,000 in the process – for its commitment to providing quality programming while seeking out mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses

DERRY-LONDONDERRY's Millennium Forum Theatre and Conference Centre has become a true bastion for the arts in the North West since its launch in 2001. As the theatre has grown and developed, it has formed strategic relationships with a range of business partners across Northern Ireland. The aim, it says, is to forge symbiotic partnerships that are creative in nature.

William Ferry, sponsorship and cultural development officer, says the forum can reach out to the community in ways that other businesses may not. Therefore, he says, it is important to offer more than just direct advertising to partners.

The Millennium Forum has around 300,000 visitors each year, and as such Ferry says innovation within the partnerships is important.

"We never want our sponsors to be unhappy with what they're getting. We'll always find ways for the relationship to evolve. If the same thing happens every year, it does become stale, and the public won't pay as much attention to it."

The partnerships with businesses are numerous, so Ferry and the team must work hard to ensure that both the artistic needs of the forum and the sponsorship needs of businesses are met.

Show time

At Christmas, the theatre performed the annual pantomime to around 28,000 people and teamed up with Dunnes Stores for the event. In the run up to the show, pantomime cast members visited local Dunnes outlets and entertained staff and shoppers.

Danske Bank has been the forum's principal sponsor since 2010, and when it renewed its sponsorship for a further two years last year, it invited local school children and their parents to attend a special viewing of the pantomime. Danske Bank's Shipquay Place, Altnageavin and Limavady branches got involved, inviting 100 local school children and parents to the event.

"Their continued support is a testament to their commitment to shaping local arts. With funding such as Danske Bank's, the Millennium Forum can continue to bring top class acts to perform in Derry-Londonderry," says Ferry.

The key to sustained partnerships is creativity, and the theatre has that in spades.

Through a partnership with City Cabs, it provided professional drama classes to pupils in various schools around Derry-Londonderry last year.

The students worked with City Cabs staff to create the project 'City Cabs - City Life', a play that explored the dangers facing taxi drivers, and captured the funny moments they often experience in their everyday working life. A light-hearted comic book was also made available to download as part of the initiative.

At the time Cara McCartney, sponsorship and development officer for the forum, said:

"This project is another example of how a commercial sponsorship with the Millennium Forum can develop into a more creative partnership that is mutually beneficial for all involved. This sponsorship was not only about corporate branding but also about helping City Cabs reach into their local communities and engage their staff in a creative way."



Singer Dan Kelly helps shopper Miriam Boyle 'push the button' at the Millennium Forum and Richmond's Centre Creative Explosions event. Picture by Martin McKeown, Inpresspics.com

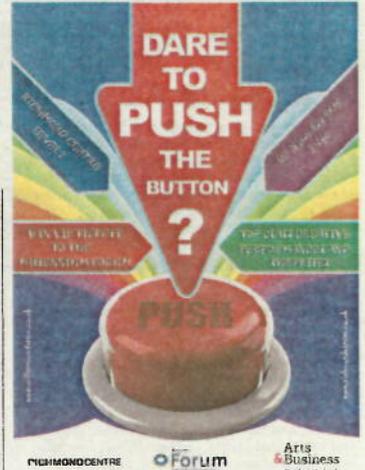
“A COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP WITH THE FORUM CAN DEVELOP INTO A MORE CREATIVE PARTNERSHIP THAT IS BENEFICIAL FOR ALL INVOLVED”

The Millennium Forum works with a range of organisations - both in the arts and the business world. For example, in 2013, it teamed up with the Nerve Centre to produce the punk musical Teenage Kicks. During Oktoberfest, the theatre joined forces with NI Opera to put on lunchtime recitals in the theatre's piazza.

The InterAct Youth Arts Festival, a joint venture with the Youth Forum, sees inclusive youth arts activities including workshops,



Millennium Forum, winner of the Arts Award at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards



performances and master classes take place throughout the summer. The festival is created by youth for youth, with a group of teens working on the plan and programming. The forum's Undiscovered Art exhibitions see local artists display their art in the piazza. As part of an inspiring employee engagement programme in 2013, local company Firstsource showcased its employees' talents in the exhibition.

Talking shop

The theatre has also formed relationships with FoyleSide and Richmond Centre shopping centres. In April, it teamed up with Easons at FoyleSide to perform a reading of James and the Giant Peach and run a 'Spot the Peach' competition. Shoppers had to find the peaches dotted around FoyleSide to win books, tickets and more, creating a great level of excitement in the centre on the day.

Richmond Centre has an annual sponsorship deal with the forum, and in October 2012 the two carried out Creative Explosions, an exciting event that aimed to attract new audiences to the arts and to the Richmond Centre, while sustaining and developing the pair's existing partnership (see page 12).

The theatre is also one of 86 organisations involved in the Audiences NI's Test Drive initiative. Around 16,000 people have attended new artistic events through the project, which offers complimentary tickets for arts events across Northern Ireland.

While the partnerships are varied in nature, and come with different goals for the organisations - across employee engagement, branding and corporate social responsibility - Millennium Forum approaches each with the same amount of vigour and passion. With each and every partnership, it strives to ensure that the maximum results are achieved.

"It's a case of working together to find out what's going to have the best impact and will work out best for the forum as well as the business. My attitude is to always say yes to what they're looking for and try to help them out in whatever way we can," says Ferry.

The Millennium Forum was also highly commended in the Community Engagement Award category for its work with Richmond Centre.



Innovation & Impact

Arts & Business
Northern Ireland

Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

A supplement on business and the arts in conjunction with the Belfast Telegraph, Allianz and Arts & Business NI

Arts
& Business
Northern Ireland

Trusting in the arts

A partnership between law firm Herbert Smith Freehills and the National Trust took a giant step forward in 2013, culminating in an extraordinary engagement with locals in Down. It has won the Community Engagement Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

THE relationship between law firm Herbert Smith Freehills and the National Trust was formed in 2011 when the company was involved in the provision of wooden chainsaw sculptures at the Trust's south Belfast Minnowburn property.

On the back of a successful first outing, the partners decided to do something more ambitious in 2013. The Pleasure Grounds area of the Rowallane Garden property in Saintfield, County Down, was chosen as the project location. Visitors had indicated that they would like to stay longer in this section of the garden if seating was provided. The Trust didn't want to settle on just any old seating, instead hoping to provide something that would enhance the spirit of the garden.

It enlisted the help of art students from the University of Ulster, who were asked to submit designs, and the winning designs were sculpted and turned into seats. Herbert Smith Freehills' involvement came when a truly impressive one-third of its Belfast workforce (50 employees) volunteered at the property over six weekly sessions. Not only did they prepare the Pleasure Grounds site for the seating, they also helped the Trust staff maintain and improve the gardens.

Talking to the stage

A second element of the partnership, and certainly one that saw both the company and the Trust truly engage with Rowallane visitors and local senior citizens, was the Rowallane Plays. In mid-2013, Herbert Smith Freehills staff sat with Rowallane locals to discover their

memories of the garden as a privately-owned estate. After many hours of research, the lawyers worked together to write scripts.

Four scripts were chosen, professional actors were hired, and on 31 August and 1 September 2013, the sun shone down on 32 performances held in four specific locations around Rowallane Garden - much to the delight of visitors.

Lyn Harris, deputy quality manager at Herbert Smith Freehills Belfast and artistic director and founder of the Belfast-based theatre company Rawliffe directed the plays.

She says the company ramped up an entire team to manage the production. "We wanted it to be as professional as possible, to give the team a flavour of what it was like to produce professional theatre. Also, we wanted the final piece to be of really good artistic quality for the audience."

"We wanted to be completely respectful of the stories we were telling and to have some really good resonance," she adds.

Herbert Smith Freehills staff had taken on the roles of press officer, photographer, videographer and wardrobe assistant for the event. Posters and flyers were created and displayed at the law firm, the gardens and in local businesses around Down. The press officer released details of the event to local and national newspapers, resulting in sizeable press coverage. The plays even got a hugely positive mention on TripAdvisor afterwards.

Averil Milligan, head gardener at Rowallane, says she was particularly impressed by the huge level of commitment of time and



resources from Herbert Smith Freehills. "I was really bowled over by how generous they were. Being able to link up with the company has given us the chance to move the garden forward. Not only did they engage with the public, and we had that fantastic weekend, but on the back of that we have the lasting legacy of the sculptured seating." Andrew Neill, team leader with Herbert Smith Freehills, says the project had a number of business benefits, the most obvious being employee engagement and community engagement. "While we are a global brand and a global firm, we're here in the midst of the Belfast community."



Top: An actress performs as part of the Rowallane Plays. Left: Rowallane Garden, the chosen location for a project between Herbert Smith Freehills and the National Trust, winners at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards. Picture: Paul Canning

We employ local people and want to be part of that local community. We can form a really important partnership that is so relevant to Northern Ireland in terms of the National Trust properties that are here. It's something that our staff can touch and feel that relates so inherently here to the culture in Northern Ireland."

The project was also shortlisted for the Employee Engagement Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

Allianz



Some of the art created by young people in the Stratagem and WheelWorks project, winner of the Young People Award at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

Voice training

Lobbying agency Stratagem's business is about helping organisations navigate the political terrain. However, in 2013 it went outside its brief when it teamed up with youth arts organisation WheelWorks

A GROUNDBREAKING programme by Stratagem and WheelWorks that engaged young teenagers from cultural and minority communities has won the Young People Award at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

The partnership came about when WheelWorks was looking for new ways to engage 14 to 18 year olds, especially those who had limited access to the arts. It sat down with some older teenagers who indicated they would like to have the skills

to allow them to lobby, address community issues and ultimately implement change.

WheelWorks and Stratagem came together to see what they could do, with the support from Arts & Business NI. The result was two hugely successful projects: the first with teenagers from minority ethnic communities through Craigavon InterCultural Programme Oasis Youth Forum, the second with young people with disabilities through the Goal Line Youth Trust in Portadown. Both projects featured a new approach

THE PROJECT OFFERED REAL LONG-TERM BENEFIT TO THE STRATAGEM TEAM AND BRAND

to exploring issues with young people. Before any artistic workshops took place, participants worked with a drama facilitator and professionals in the areas of diversity and disability awareness to discuss issues that mattered to them. The initial workshops also provided the teenagers with information on effecting change in their areas.

A number of artistic workshops were then held, and the young people created art that highlighted their important messages. The Craigavon group produced 3D masks, while Goal Line produced a series of visual arts pieces. That artwork was then launched at the Millennium Court Arts Centre in Portadown before eventually being displayed at Stormont - allowing politicians to see just how the youth felt about issues such as disability, racism and community safety.

Strategic fit

Gráinne Walsh, head of consultancy with Stratagem, says the strategic fit with the project was clear to the company from the beginning. All members of Stratagem had to agree to allocate money from their profit share towards the programme, and they did.

"The project offered us the chance to support young people to communicate with politicians in an interesting and creative

way. It offered real long-term benefit to the Stratagem team and brand. Team members worked to see how the project could be extended beyond the local, increasing its visibility and bringing it to a political and public policy audience in Stormont," says Walsh.

Stratagem provided financial support for the sessions but also gave strategic advice to WheelWorks and put it in contact with local politicians and experts.

"Up until now we had kept our CSR activities local to either south Belfast where we are based, or Belfast city. We took the decision with the WheelWorks project to go beyond Belfast, where children wouldn't get the same level of access to arts. That was very important for us. That coincided very nicely with WheelWorks and its aim to target organisations it normally wouldn't access," says Walsh.

Karen McIlvenny, multiple realities programme coordinator with WheelWorks, says the projects inspired the arts organisation to work in a different way.

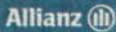
"A lot of the work we do, especially through the multiple realities programme, is about dealing with issues young people want to talk about, and conveying that in their artwork. But we had never really taken it to the next level - to contacting and lobbying decision makers."

McIlvenny says working with Stratagem allowed the organisation to borrow the company's expertise, and vice versa.

"It has also encouraged and inspired us to do more high-profile events and to work in a different way. We will work like this again, maybe helping young people in taking these projects to the next level. We are really keen and open to doing something with Stratagem in the future, and have already been in touch."

WheelWorks and Stratagem were also shortlisted in the Community Engagement Award category at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

Allianz



In full bloom

Foresight and vision saw a start-up in the Cathedral Quarter in Belfast sponsor the arts while developing its brand and growing its business in the process. What transpired exceeded all expectations

THE partnership between the Sunflower Public House and the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival has won the Cultural Branding Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards. The relationship, which commenced in early 2013, highlights the ability of both arts organisations and businesses to reap mutual benefits from their alliances.

Sunflower Public House, a trendy public house just off the Cathedral Quarter's main thoroughfare, had opened in December 2012. Its main business strategy was to become "an arts bar with an entertainment programme of folk, traditional, jazz, literature, theatre and visual arts events". The owner, Pedro Donald, had managed a bar in the Cathedral Quarter previously and was known to Sean Kelly, director of the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival. Kelly says he knew immediately that he could work with the Sunflower. "Right from the off, the bar was very focused on the arts and music, and had a particular atmosphere about it that was attractive to people who work in the arts in the area. It was very quickly developing a reputation of being a very progressive bar."

By spring 2013, talks had opened between the pub and the festival. The aim was to explore areas of mutual benefit between the two entities. The Sunflower agreed to sponsor the festival.

Kelly and Donald stress it wasn't pure philanthropy on the business's part.

"For us, the cash sponsorship wasn't insignificant. In a time of austerity Pedro is bringing money to the table, but a great synergy developed," says Kelly.



Performers launch the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival, which has been recognised, along with the Sunflower Public House, at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards



Sunflower Public House has become a great destination for arts lovers since its collaboration with the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival, a worthy winner at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards. Picture: Phil Smyth Photography

"We knew our audience would enjoy Pedro's bar, and Pedro realised that our demographic was one that he wanted to attract to his bar. It was a great symbiotic relationship from the start."

"Getting our name out there to the right audience was incredibly important to us, and beneficial. Any relationship has to make business sense, and the relationship with the festival does," says Donald.

Key venue

In return for its funding, which included discounted drinks, the Sunflower gained pourage rights in the busy Festival Marquee. The festival agreed to use the bar as a key venue during the event, including for the press launch. The main benefit for the Sunflower, however, was that it strengthened its reputation as an arts-friendly bar.

A strong emphasis was placed on the Sunflower's branding within the festival programme, with its logo carried in 40,000

colour programmes. The bar also benefited from the festival's strong social media presence, with the business prominently featured on the festival's website and promoted on its Facebook page, which has almost 8,500 likes.

Donald says the relationship had the added bonus of engaging the bar's staff. "The relationship is much more than the signing of a cheque. My staff and the festival volunteers worked with each other, and it helped boost staff morale during the festival."

He hopes the relationship will continue going forward; it has already been extended into the festival's recent Out to Lunch Festival, held in January.

"As long as it keeps working for both sides, which it has to, the relationship will get even stronger and maybe we can look to growing it further," says Donald.



Tastes like success

When Caffé Fresco decided to undertake an employee engagement exercise, the restaurant threw itself completely into the arts, boosting staff morale and winning the Employee Engagement Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards in the process



Staff at Caffé Fresco after the hugely successful employee engagement and arts event

IN late 2011, Caffé Fresco was looking to improve business by creating brand awareness and developing staff motivation. So the Strabane restaurant turned to the arts to achieve its goal.

Caffé Fresco had developed a pre-show menu in order to capture part of the audience base attending the Alley Arts & Conference Centre on weekday and weekend evenings. The restaurant wanted to promote that menu, and owner Trevor Mealiff wanted to focus on community involvement, brand awareness and staff development.

To explore the possibility of providing its own entertainment, the company approached the Alley Arts & Conference Centre and asked it to help develop a cabaret night. Caffé Fresco employees would perform the show.

Caffé Fresco says it is very aware of good team leadership and staff involvement and training, and felt

the arts could help provide all three.

In September 2012, most of the restaurant's staff took part in a number of workshops over four weeks at the Alley Arts & Conference Centre, under the facilitation of children's theatre company Cahoots NI. The sessions were packed full of teaching and fun. Staff created a theme for the evening, learned about lighting and technical techniques, took part in singing and writing activities and learned and developed magic tricks, which they would perform on the cabaret night in front of their customers.

The organisations filmed each of the workshops and put them up on the Alley Arts & Conference Centre's YouTube channel, shared them on both organisations' Facebook pages, and screened them using an outside advertising screen in front of Caffé Fresco.

Sell-out

What resulted was a fantastic night of entertainment, packed with dance, magic and music - to a sell-out crowd.

Emma Devine, marketing officer, the Alley Arts & Conference Centre, says the arts organisation was delighted to secure Caffé Fresco as a sponsorship partner.

"The benefits of partnership demonstrated the potential of the theatre in contributing to the evening economy of Strabane town centre.

"The project was very successful as a team-building exercise and a brand awareness tool. It promoted

both Caffé Fresco and the Alley Arts & Conference Centre."

She says this project was the perfect example of how the arts help engage employees.

"From Caffé Fresco, over 20 staff took part including managers, chefs and waiting staff. Many of them had never performed before and were quite shy at the beginning but by the end they all loved it, and those who hadn't taken part said they wished they had. The staff got really involved and wrote their own songs and even took part in radio interviews. The project was a huge success from a staff perspective as everyone worked together," says Devine.

From the Alley's perspective, there was increased brand awareness of the sponsorship links between Caffé Fresco and the theatre through extensive press coverage and the social networking sites.

"The films generated new interest on Facebook for both organisations. Through the project the Alley was able to reach Caffé Fresco customers who had not yet experienced some of the acts on show at the theatre. This was an opportunity to attract new audiences."

The relationship between the Alley Arts & Conference Centre and Caffé Fresco didn't end with that first project. The latest venture - a unique music event - took place in January 2014.



Engagement & Pride

Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

A supplement on business and the arts in conjunction with the Belfast Telegraph, Allianz and Arts & Business NI

Arts & Business
Northern Ireland

THERE'S A REAL OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR LOCAL BRANCH STAFF TO GET INVOLVED, THUS INCREASING STAFF ENGAGEMENT LEVELS

Magic numbers

Six years and seven tours since its conception, the partnership between Danske Bank and Cahoots NI has seen its magical maths performance reach a staggering 23,000 students. Along the way the relationship has strengthened, earning it the Sustained Partnership Award at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

THE relationship between Cahoots NI and Danske Bank, formerly Northern Bank, began in 2008 at a time when the world's spotlight shone firmly on financial institutions.

Danske Bank recognised the need to reach out to communities around Northern Ireland and improve the numeracy of children. Meanwhile, arts organisation Cahoots NI had an interest in developing a production for schools.

So the two joined forces, and Math 'a' Magic – a programme that sought to bring maths to life in an entertaining and engaging way through the medium of magic – was born.

Since then, the partnership has completed seven tours to 362 primary schools, reaching 23,000 pupils across Northern Ireland. Throughout it all, the objectives of both partners have remained steadfast – to develop relationships with local schools, maintain a high quality programme and foster brand synergy.

Neither has rested on its laurels in the past six years, as indicated by the 2012 re-jig of the programme, which saw a name change to Lights Camera Math 'a' Magic, and added a new digital dimension, thus increasing audience numbers and participation.

Danske Bank supports the programme as part of its corporate responsibility strategy but Maria Sheehan, head of communications with the bank, says the benefits extend beyond that. "Our innovative partnership with Cahoots NI is something that supports teachers in terms of the programme they're doing, and provides us with an opportunity to connect with the community at a very local level. Also, because of



Cahoots NI performers put fun into maths, with the help of Danske Bank. The project won the Sustained Partnership Award at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

the way it's structured, there's a real opportunity for our local branch staff to get involved, thus increasing staff engagement levels."

The feedback from audiences has been impressive, with teachers reporting a greater enthusiasm among students for maths.

Evolution

With such success under their belt, the partners could be forgiven if they chose to stick with the status quo. But both partners have recognised the importance of continued

creativity and evolution of the programme. This year, they are extending it even further by bringing it to parents through proposed evening sessions. It is hoped that such a move will allow children to improve their numeracy skills at home as well as school.

Paul Bosco McEneaney, founder of Cahoots NI, says the partnership continues to be driven by a shared passion for providing children with additional numeracy and financial skills. "I believe passionately that professional theatre for children is essential. Theatre as an art form encourages and teaches empathy, and can be used as a tool in education. The project fitted so well that when we both saw our contribution to it develop, and be appreciated by the audience, we allowed our relationship to grow, and thankfully it continues to."

Ongoing communication between the partners has been an essential tool in developing such a strong relationship, according to McEneaney.

Sheehan adds: "Cahoots has been terrific to work with. As an arts organisation it has a very clear understanding of how to bring finances to life. It is very strong at taking its core skills and competencies in the arts area and bringing them together into a very real and tangible programme for children."

Cahoots NI and Danske Bank were also shortlisted in the Young People category at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

Allianz

Staying power

For a long time energy company AES's association with the arts was in a philanthropic manner but that all changed in 2011, and it has been reaping the benefits since

ENERGY company AES has picked up a special award at this year's Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards in recognition of the remarkable and extensive journey it has made with the arts in a period of just two years.

Up until 2011 the firm's involvement with the arts was minimal, but a niche networking event organised by Arts & Business NI changed all that, introducing AES to new ideas and ultimately leading to innovative partnerships.

AES soon linked up with Ulster Orchestra, which visited two AES power station sites and spent the day teaching staff how to play percussion instruments.

Davy Elliott, compliance officer and insured risk manager with AES, says the event was a huge success.

"From a business point of view it was a fantastic employee engagement and personal development exercise, and great for audience building. Most of all it was fun. It was our first venture with an arts organisation and we weren't sure how it would turn out. At the outset we really didn't see any beneficial links between arts and businesses but certainly that first project inspired us to develop the relationships further."

Ulster Orchestra teamed up with AES again, this time to provide a series of music workshops in local primary schools on the theme of renewable energy and recycling. The workshops received media coverage, boosted brand awareness, engaged employees and the local community.

"AES is a global electricity company with operations in over 20 countries, and 25,000 employees. In Northern Ireland, we employ about 250 people locally. Engaging with the community is very important for us. We can't operate in a vacuum. We're keen to invest in projects especially where education is involved because the schoolchildren of today are the workforce of tomorrow," says Elliott.

Sustainability

The key strategy for the company's involvement with artistic organisations is sustainability.

"We want to enter into projects where the relationships are sustainable for both parties. We're now firmly of the belief that engagement with the arts is a tremendous vehicle for achieving some of our business objectives in terms of personal development,



Top: Members of Ulster Orchestra and local schoolchildren launch Planet Earth. Bottom: KS2 pupils enjoy the event, which was sponsored by AES, winner at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards. Picture: Aaron McCracken Harrison Photography

brand awareness, CSR and communications."

Indeed, the firm has had a fantastic journey into the arts world. After the initial Ulster Orchestra engagement, it linked up with Cahoots NI for a magic workshop. Fifteen AES employees

got together off-site, and Cahoots explained the fundamentals of conjuring and how to analyse and see things for what they are. They then taught each participant a magic trick. Elliott says the workshop aided the personal development of the participants, built confidence and boosted analytical and presentation skills.

"We also found that taking people from the business environment into the arts environment is a fantastic leveler. It doesn't matter if you're a manager, clerical worker or mechanical worker, when you're out of your comfort zone everything levels."

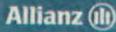
Cinemagic is the company's most recent project; the firm engaged with it via sponsors of its children's film festival. Cinemagic personally visited the power station sites over a two day period, and brought schoolchildren with them. They created a short film explaining their electricity generation process and interviewed various members of staff. The film aired in cinemas throughout the festival and was shared globally around the AES corporation.

AES's foray into the arts is nothing if not inspirational. Elliott insists it's much more rewarding than writing a cheque, and says the firm is planning more projects.

"Our experience of working with the arts over the past year has really opened our eye to the benefits the relationship brings in terms of employee personal development, networking skills enhancement and just having some fun. This is a journey that has been made possible by the enthusiastic and always professional people at Arts & Business NI," he says.

AES was also shortlisted in the Young People Award category for its work with Ulster Orchestra

Allianz



Fostering talent

Businessman Dennis Monaghan has helped completely change the fortunes of The Talent Tribe, the arts organisation he chairs – though if you speak to him he'll likely downplay just how significant his role has been

THE Business Individual of the Year Award at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards went to the very modest Dennis Monaghan, managing director of Ballyvesey Recycling Solutions and chair of The Talent Tribe.
Through his commitment and unfaltering dedication to the youth arts organisation over the past three years, Dennis has

brought the entity forward in leaps and bounds, and made a lasting impact.

A registered charity, The Talent Tribe provides practical training to young people in the area of creative management, production, performance skills, technologies and crafts. The aim of the organisation is to empower young people, many of whom remain disenfranchised and disenfranchised

within communities. Through developing the various skills, they are empowered to move forward in their lives and in future careers.

For a long time before linking with The Talent Tribe, Dennis felt very fortunate to be born into a supportive family, but was acutely aware that others weren't so lucky. He wanted to do his part to help those who didn't have the same family support.

Dennis was initially drafted in as a board member to help The Talent Tribe secure premises. Up until that point the organisation had been carrying out activities on an outreach basis, sometimes testing project models in unsuitable and expensive venues. The lack of premises, it felt, was preventing it from developing further.

Dennis pulled out all the stops, and used all of his contacts, to secure premises for The Talent Tribe on the edge of the Cathedral Quarter – just a single bus ride out, and therefore easily accessible to young people.

Single-handed

Fedelma Harkin, CEO of The Talent Tribe, says Dennis's arrival at the organisation had an immediate impact. Not only did he secure a building but he also single-handedly furnished it.

"There's no doubt [securing the premises] has changed the whole course of our organisation and our ambitions. It had an incredible impact on our company," she says.

"By nature a very self-effacing man, Dennis obviously brings a wealth of both

business experience and negotiation skills to The Talent Tribe. He has an understanding of 'start-up' challenges and creating opportunities. Dennis also sees value in materials that others label as 'scrap'."

Over his time with The Talent Tribe, Dennis has gone way beyond the role of volunteer and has always been at the end of the phone for the organisation, helping out in emergencies and giving 100pc commitment.

At all times he has shown huge respect for The Talent Tribe's service-users – making them feel valued members of the organisation and society as a whole. Harkin says he is liked by all.

She describes Dennis as a player in the world of the arts today, whereas before he was purely an observer.

In September last year, his commitment to The Talent Tribe was recognised when the board voted him chairman of the organisation. He has taken to the role with as much commitment and enthusiasm as he did board member, and continues to dedicate a huge amount of time and resources to the company.

The only person who doesn't know how amazing Dennis Monaghan is, is Dennis Monaghan, says Harkin.

"He has a wonderful sense of humour.

When the pressure is on he always puts things into context. His can-do attitude inspires and motivates staff, and he truly plays his part in helping to change lives.

"He has given his time, energy and expertise in myriad ways; from mentoring young people, to helping with finance. No job is too big or too small and without him The Talent Tribe would not be the flourishing organisation it is today."



Dennis Monaghan, winner of the Business Individual of the Year Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards, with some Talent Tribe members

A man for all seasons

As director and co-founder of the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival, Sean Kelly has displayed real vision and passion in developing the festival into one of Belfast's key cultural events – in the process helping to transform Belfast's north city centre. He is the 2014 Arts Individual of the Year at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

SEAN Kelly didn't always work in the arts. In fact, he trained and worked as a teacher in Belfast before quitting and moving to Derry-Londonderry to take up a job in the Verbal Arts Centre.

As the saying goes, 'find a job you love, and you'll never work a day in your life', and for Sean, that's exactly what happened.

By late 1999, a group of people on Belfast's arts scene came together to start up a new festival for the city, which would encourage the arts sector to really connect with fringe audiences. Sean was chosen as the director of what was to become the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival.

"There was a move to regenerate the north city centre, which is now known as the Cathedral Quarter. Timing was everything, and it would probably be more difficult to start the festival in the current climate," he says.

Despite Sean's modesty about the festival's beginnings, the organisers did show genuine foresight in what they proposed. Under his leadership the festival has become a key event in Northern Ireland's cultural calendar and is celebrated for combining the very best international performers with the cream of home-

grown talent, consistently providing a genuinely inclusive, eclectic and quality programme.

Sean has been instrumental in growing the festival from an event that attracted 5,000 in the first year to one that attracted 60,000 attendees to over 150 events in 2013.

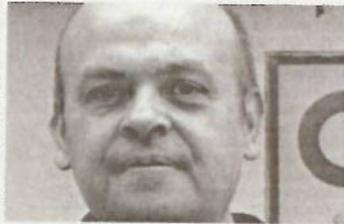
Lunch, anyone?

Sean also launched a second festival, Out to Lunch, which takes place in January, and which has become a very significant festival in its own right. January is traditionally a very quiet time for the arts and hospitality sectors, and Out to Lunch allows people to grab lunch and a show for as little as £6, placing bums on theatre seats in the process. This year's festival ran at 90pc capacity, with the majority of shows selling out.

"It has had a major economic impact, and the business community in the area has responded particularly strongly to the festival."

Sean has built key partnerships with businesses of all sizes across the city to support the development of the festival.

There is a high degree of bureaucracy in the arts today, but any improvement in professionalism is to



Sean Kelly, co-founder and director of the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival was named Arts Individual of the Year at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

be welcomed, according to Sean.

"The arts sector has become a lot more professional in recent times and we have to be a lot more accountable to our funders, and must have strong governance. You should be accountable and operate to the highest levels of efficiency," he says.

The festival has always striven for

quality customer care and taken a creative approach to marketing.

"We exude a friendly kind of efficiency and we care about our audiences. Every single audience member is hard fought for and hard won," says Sean.

The most pleasurable part of Sean's job is the programming, he says.

"I consider myself very lucky to have been able to turn my passions into work. I've got to meet some of my heroes and work with comedic and theatrical greats. It's certainly hard work at times, there can be long hours spent completing funding applications, and it can be frustrating, but it's worth it."

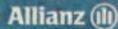
He is optimistic about the future of the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival and the general arts scene in Northern Ireland.

"The festival has managed to ride out, hopefully, the worst aspects of the recession, and now we're hoping to thrive with the much-promised upswing. I think we're in a really good place to benefit."



Creativity & Change

Arts & Business
Northern Ireland



Fully engaged

The finalists in the Community Engagement Award category at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards have demonstrated immense creativity in their approach to connecting with the community

COMMUNITY engagement is an important objective for arts and business organisations today. Very often, when they come together they can reach engagement levels beyond all expectations, as the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards' shortlisted projects show.

Millennium Forum and Richmond Centre
One day in November 2012, various visitors to the Richmond Centre in Derry-Londonderry took a leap of faith by pushing a gigantic button that lay outside three empty retail units. A slogan asked the question "Who will dare to push the button?" and when some brave souls did, they were rewarded by a raising shutter that revealed some of the best talent in the North West. Among the acts were Ben Kelly, finalist of The Voice UK, dance company Assault Events, and the cast of the Millennium Forum Theatre & Conference Centre pantomime. Shoppers were also given complimentary tickets to the theatre.

The event - 'Creative Explosions' - created a huge buzz in the Richmond Centre on the day and increased footfall by 4 per cent on the previous year. A video of the experience also went viral, with the surprise element of the project leaving a lasting impression on visitors.

It also cemented the success of the relationship between the Millennium Forum and Richmond Centre, which has grown over the past few years and includes an annual sponsorship deal along with various marketing projects.

However, William Ferry, sponsorship and cultural development officer, Millennium Forum, puts the true success of Creative Explosions down to the fact that it went way beyond a pure marketing initiative.

"It did start out as a marketing initiative but it turned into a big party with great community engagement, and everyone had a good time," he says.

Bobby Nicholson, centre manager, says that while the event helped to enhance the brand of the Richmond Centre, it also encouraged social interaction with customers, something he feels is essential for the survival of retail centres in the future.

"We need to look at the way ahead for city centres, and the way ahead is social interaction. Working with the Millennium Forum is a prime example of that. We're bringing something different to the city centre."

Nicholson says he expects the relationship with the Millennium Forum to strengthen.

"Very often with marketing, we're always paying money out, but with the Millennium Forum we have got an awful lot back from it. It encourages us to team up with the theatre again and again."

The partnership between the Millennium Forum and the Richmond Centre has been highly commended in the community engagement category at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

Ulster Orchestra and JTI

Japan Tobacco International (JTI) and Ulster Orchestra's relationship is a long-standing one, which started in JTI's previous incarnation as Gallaher and lasted throughout the 1980s, 1990s and much of the early 2000s. After a brief hiatus when international firm JTI came on the scene, the relationship was reignited in 2008 with a three-year partnership deal, and has gone on to reach out to communities around Northern Ireland through the magic of orchestral music.

JTI and Ulster Orchestra wanted to encourage disadvantaged people, particularly the elderly, to reach the arts more. In an effort to do this the organisations launched a series of lunchtime



Above, top left and right: Performers of Kabosh's Inventors, which was supported by Ulster Bank and shortlisted at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

concerts in Belfast, aimed at older people who couldn't make it out at night. After five seasons, 25,000 plus people have attended the concerts.

JTI also supported Ulster Orchestra to put on Christmas concerts. Low-cost tickets helped over 2,200 people to attend during the 2012/2013 season.

Noting that sometimes it can be difficult for older people to travel to the concerts, the partners created Move to the Music, a scheme that provides buses to transport elderly people to and from shows. Around 2,100 people from Armagh, Down and Ballymena have availed of the scheme since it began. JTI's employees also got involved, with some staff members acting as helpers in their own time.

Karen Orchin, JTI's head of community relations for the UK, says the various initiatives have helped fulfil JTI's philosophy of supporting people and the arts.

"Having a shared vision and a shared aim with Ulster Orchestra is so critical. If that foundation is strong, and you're both moving in the same direction and wanting to achieve the same results, that's the key to success."

JTI has also introduced Ulster Orchestra to its other partners, including Alternative Angles, an organisation dedicated to helping people with learning difficulties; Women's Aid; Age NI, North Belfast Senior Citizens Forum and Harryville Partnership, which work with the elderly. As a result, nearly 200 people are taking part in a project which offers music workshops.

Veronica Morris, head of external relations at Ulster Orchestra, says the introduction has helped Ulster Orchestra reach further into the community.

"We're constantly striving to be relevant



Cynthia Foster, Age NI Skains day centre attendee, with violinist Claire Blake from the Ulster Orchestra at a JTI-supported Cross Partner Project workshop. JTI and Ulster Orchestra's partnership was shortlisted in the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards



Kabosh put on seven free shows each day for seven days, playing to full capacity audiences, many of whom had never been to the theatre before.

The pair delved deeper into the community through an inventive community engagement programme held with young people from rural communities, young farmers and young people from Belfast Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

Kabosh made contact with three new community groups with outstanding results. In Ballykinler, young teenagers developed their own pedal-powered flying machines. Others enjoyed drama workshops and attended the Balmoral show. In Denmark Street, 12 young people made a short film based on their own invention. In Antrim six teenage girls attended drama workshops and put on their own theatre performance in the Kabosh Barn at the Balmoral Show, followed by a Q&A and feedback session with the director and actors.

Kabosh also held a digital media workshop in Rathbone, where seven young people learned Wordpress and digital design. Meanwhile, 160 young farmers from the Young Farmer Group attended a day-long circus and performance workshop.

Carol McMahon, head of sponsorship and events for Ulster Bank, says: "By combining a unique and relevant performance that appealed to the agricultural community, the collaboration not only extended the reach of the arts, it also helped us to raise brand awareness and affinity. Building on our existing presence at the show, the Inventors programme enabled us to reach new audiences and demonstrate our commitment to communities beyond business activities."

WheelWorks and Stratagem were also shortlisted in this category but won the Allianz Arts & Business NI Young People Award. See page 8.

and to be part of the cultural life of Northern Ireland. That relevance is really important. There is a real potential for the type of work we do to inspire people and help them reach up out of whatever circumstances they're in."

The partnership's ability to reach out to a wide community means it has earned its place on the shortlist for the Community Engagement Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

Kabosh and Ulster Bank

A principal sponsor of the Balmoral Show, Ulster Bank brought two of its partners together in 2013 when it worked with Kabosh for a series of workshops and unique theatre production staged at Northern Ireland's biggest agricultural show.

The world premiere of Kabosh's Inventors, celebrating local inventions, ran over the seven days of the show in a pop-up barn but it was the whole package that earned it its place in this year's shortlist for the Community Engagement Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

Paula McPetridge, artistic director with Kabosh, says Ulster Bank's support was incredible.

"Without Ulster Bank, the show wouldn't have happened. There's no way we would have got on to the site of the Balmoral Show. There's no way we would have made the connections with the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society that we needed to make. They supported us from the beginning. They completely believed in the potential and the quality of the show."

"Ulster Bank liaised between Kabosh and the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society. They secured a site beside the cattle shed, paid for the barn, branding on the barn, support location, and allowed us to offer the show for free."





The Andy Warhol exhibition at the MAC, which was supported by Ulster Bank, Deloitte and ABSOLUT, and shortlisted at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards



Shining a light on some of the world-class local talent celebrated at the 2013 Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queens. Picture: Matt Mackey/Presseye.com



Ghosts perform at a Distillation event, held by Oh Yeah Music Centre in association with Bushmills. The partnership was shortlisted at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards



From left, Lorraine Brett, Arts & Business NI, and Alana Henderson, Edwin Longbottom, Festival pop-up performers. Picture: Darren KIDD / Press Eye

No limits

Sponsorship of the arts can allow businesses to promote their brands by aligning themselves with interesting and engaging projects

THE more creative the partnership, the greater the rewards, as the shortlisted entries in the Cultural Branding Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards demonstrate.

Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queen's IN 2008, as the global recession began to take hold, Belfast Festival at Queen's found that it was more difficult to thrive without sponsorship. On the one hand the festival had the difficult task of sourcing a sponsor in a harsh economic climate, but on the other its strong ethos and background made it an attractive proposition. Ulster Bank recognised the shared values of the two organisations, and decided to sponsor the event. It has since taken title sponsorship, and today the Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queen's is Northern Ireland's leading contemporary international arts festival, and a finalist at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards to boot.

Carol McMahon, head of sponsorship and events for Ulster Bank, says the partnership has helped raise the bank's profile and brand identity with all stakeholders. "It provides an excellent base to build positive affinity for our business while bringing 'helpful banking' to life for our staff and customers, both potential and existing," she says.

Increased brand awareness has been achieved for both partners by opening up new communication and marketing channels such as the use of live ads, pop-up taster events and messages on Ulster Bank ATMs. As the festival has grown, it has created employment opportunities and delivered a significant economic return, encouraging tourism and boosting the night-time economy, according to McMahon. She adds that the festival has helped to do

more than promote Ulster Bank. The partners have created a community tickets scheme, which has enabled more than 150 community groups to obtain free tickets and, where necessary, transport to a range of festival performances. The festival's Night for Belfast scheme has seen it provide over 1,000 tickets to people from Belfast.

"From a business perspective our partnership with the festival has enabled us to offer incentive initiatives to existing and potential customers such as ticket promotions and enhanced experiences through cast and director meet and greets. "We also encourage our employees to take an active role, and have 30 employee arts ambassadors who take part in a range of arts activities to help promote the festival internally and further extend its reach through our employee network," she says.

Susan McCleary, marketing manager, Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queen's, says the festival has become firmly embedded in the heart of cultural life in Northern Ireland, as audience figures grow year on year.

"The sponsorship with Ulster Bank... promotes an active and leading role in securing a sustainable future for the culture and arts sector, demonstrating that access to the arts matters."

The Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queen's was highly commended for the Allianz Arts & Business NI Cultural Branding Award.

The MAC, Ulster Bank, Deloitte, ABSOLUT Vodka

After a successful first year of business, arts venue the MAC wanted to round events off by doing something special. Andy Warhol, the most recognised artist in the world, challenged

traditional boundaries between art and everything else - including business. Since its launch in 2012, the MAC had hoped to replicate that, and so felt a Warhol exhibition would be a very apt way to end its opening year.

Bringing such a huge exhibition to Belfast needed support, however, so the MAC assembled a team of sponsors: Ulster Bank, Deloitte and ABSOLUT. Shortlisted in the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards 2014, the Warhol exhibition ran from February until the end of April 2013, and attracted over 100,000 visitors.

Maeve Hawkins, marketing manager at the MAC, says it was the first time the gallery worked on a project involving three sponsors. "It meant more than just financial support; it meant getting a world-class exhibition like this to Belfast for the first time. We offered a platform, and each sponsor came up with creative ideas, helping to put in place a whole programme of comedy, theatre and dance around the exhibition. It was three months of Warhol mania at the MAC, and making a big splash like that was only possible with the support of the sponsors."

The three-month programme of live events held alongside the exhibition included everything from Warhol-inspired family workshops to immersive theatre by Gob Squad's Kitchen, music by Dean and Britta, a DJ weekend with Phil Kieran and a sell-out Studio 54 club night.

As existing supporters of the MAC, Ulster Bank saw this as a great opportunity. Carol McMahon, head of sponsorship and events, says the benefits went beyond branding. "One of our corporate social responsibilities is being active in the arts because of their important role in creating an imaginative, creative and innovative workforce.

"A successful arts and business relationship

allows for the sharing of insights and expertise across both areas - unlocking creative business solutions as business and the arts come together," says McMahon.

Over the three-month period, in return for their financial commitment, each sponsor used the partnership in their own ways. ABSOLUT, for example, capitalised on the Studio 54 event, using it as a brand sampling opportunity and linking the heritage of the brand with the creativity that Warhol represented.

Ulster Bank and Deloitte used the exhibition to create some fantastic networking opportunities, which included a dinner in the MAC's gallery attended by a Tate Gallery expert.

Kathy Kenny, senior marketing manager, Deloitte, says the event helped the organisation build on its reputation for sponsoring the arts throughout the UK, Ireland and globally.

"Our association with the event helped us boost creativity within our staff, change perceptions, bring the company into the community, build networks, position our brand and boost brand awareness. The PR exposure was fantastic. It makes us pioneering to be involved with something like this," says Kenny.

Oh Yeah Music Centre and Bushmills

When Northern Ireland's biggest musical export Snow Patrol decided to play a special concert at the Bushmills distillery in June 2012, the convergence of the Oh Yeah Music Centre and the Bushmills brand seemed ideal.

The Oh Yeah venue was originally a Bushmills bonded whiskey warehouse, and during Belfast Music Week in 2011, friends of the centre, including photographer Bradley Quinn and musician-promoter Mark Ashbridge, were involved in the Bushmills Brothers - Since Way Back campaign. Incidentally, Gary Lightbody, lead singer of Snow Patrol, just happened to be a co-founder of Oh Yeah and the charity's first president.

Oh Yeah and Bushmills formed a unique feature in Belfast, the Bush Garden, a rooftop development that offers fantastic views of the city, from the docks to the Cathedral Quarter across to the Black Mountains.

As part of the project, a series of monthly events known as Distillation showcased the best of Northern Irish bands and artists, with workshops and seminars running alongside them.

Jonny Tiernan, general manager, Oh Yeah Music Centre, says the ultimate aim was to generate more revenue for the centre and make it more sustainable.

"It's been really great, especially this link-up through Arts & Business NI. From the actual creative events side itself, we've been able to bring a great range of artists to Northern Ireland that we wouldn't have been able to get otherwise. It's great to have the support from Arts & Business NI and Bushmills in running the events.

"It gives us a budget to work from, and pay talent properly. That's really important for us. A lot of the time musicians get a raw deal and are asked to play for free. It's fantastic to be able to do things on a professional level with the bands."

Gemma Bell, corporate relations manager for Diageo Northern Ireland, says the association with Oh Yeah has placed music and arts at the heart of the Bushmills strategy.

"In terms of tangible benefits, we have had an increase in visitors to our distillery and it's generated great PR and employee engagement."

She says the project's nomination at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards was an added bonus.

"We've been involved with Arts & Business NI for nearly 15 years. We've a really strong foothold in Northern Ireland, employing over 400 people in four sites. The arts are great because they bring to life what we do."



Partnership & Progress

artsandbusinessni.org.uk

Showing the way

Sustaining relationships between arts and business can demand a lot of commitment, but very often inspiring things happen as a result

THE shortlisted partnerships in the Sustained Partnership category at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards demonstrate just how both sides can benefit from continued commitment.

Joseph Brennan Bakeries and Replay Theatre Company

Despite being a leading brand in the Republic of Ireland for a number of generations, Brennans Bread is a brand challenger in the Northern Ireland market, entering it just seven or eight years ago.

As such, in 2011, the company was seeking to consolidate and grow its position here, raising its profile and achieving certain CSR objectives in the process.

Through a mutual contact it was suggested that an arts partnership might be an ideal way to achieve this, and the company was introduced to Replay Theatre Company, a theatre company aimed at younger audiences.

Ivan Hammond, head of marketing, Brennans, says the firm thought the idea of the partnership very interesting.

"It allows us to create awareness of both our brand and our range, but to do it in a very creative way. It's inspiring, educational and, importantly, fun," he says.

"It's about getting the right fit and having values in common with each other. You have to set objectives you want to deliver upon," he adds.

And objectives were certainly set by the two companies. After a number of months in contact, Brennans made its first foray into arts sponsorship, entering a three-year deal with Replay across its programme of work for 0 to 11 year olds.

The objectives of the sponsorship were clearly defined: to promote the brand and raise awareness through a series of marketing and PR activities; to deliver a healthy eating/lifestyle message; to access at least 10,000 Northern Ireland families per year, and to explore the wider benefits of a business and arts partnership.

Added value

The financial investment made by Brennans was critical in helping Replay to extend its reach to even wider audiences. This brought added value to Replay's artistic programming, according to Ruth Cooper, executive director with the theatre company.

"This partnership has enabled Replay to expand its school, community and family audiences in cities, towns and villages across Northern Ireland," she says.

In 2012 and 2013, Replay brought a series of workshops and productions to over 10,282 young people. The partnership operated across Replay's annual artistic programmes, with various engagement projects and large-scale productions held throughout the year. Each of

these has offered its own opportunities for Brennans to raise awareness.

While Replay has brought added value and profiling opportunities to Brennans, the business has shared its expertise and resources by helping Replay leverage PR and media platforms.

Throughout the partnership there have been many examples of the two organisations working creatively and collaboratively, according to

Cooper. That creativity was recognised at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

In December 2012, for example, with the help of Arts & Business NI investment money, Replay and Brennans came together to create a pop-up theatre in a disused Belfast centre retail space. 'A Boy and His Box' was performed to Christmas shoppers over a five-day period, and they were given tea, milk and toast in the form of Brennans product sampling.

In March and April 2013, and again in September, the company toured with Babble, a production for babies, at which Brennans again offered product sampling. The theatre company's Wobble production for two to four year olds also featured product sampling.

"We've done lots of events, which have been very positive. We like to challenge each other and that's a very important part of the process. Continuous dialogue is essential," says Hammond.

Grand Opera House and The Co-operative

In 2010, family business organisation The Co-operative carried out a survey among its members to see what CSR activities it should undertake. Inspiring young people featured highly in its findings.

A year later, when the Grand Opera House announced it would do its first summer youth project, The Co-operative recognised a great opportunity to achieve its CSR objectives by inspiring young people. Since 2011, the two organisations have been partners. The Co-operative provides vital financial support for the theatre to conduct workshops and deliver full-scale youth productions, which have included Buggy Malone, Honk! and Annie.

In December 2013, it announced it would sponsor the project for a fourth year, with



The launch of *A Boy & His Box*, a Replay Theatre Production supported by Brennans. The partnership was shortlisted at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

“IT ALLOWS US TO
CREATE AWARENESS
OF BOTH OUR BRAND
AND OUR RANGE, BUT
TO DO IT IN A VERY
CREATIVE WAY”

a production of *Guys and Dolls*.

Aine Dolan, community and education manager, Grand Opera House, says the continued partnership with The Co-operative has been hugely beneficial to the organisation and the young people who have been involved. "As a result of having the sponsorship, we were fortunate that we could source some additional funding through Arts & Business NI to develop a

bespoke arts-based project to meet the objectives of the business," she says.

"The young people, meanwhile, get to learn an awful lot about the processes of creating a show, and for many it's their first time to work with a professional theatre company."

Now its flagship programme, the summer youth project promotes the theatre's other initiatives with schools and community groups, as well as its programme of children's shows.

An inspired move

In 2012, the partners went a step further when they created the Inspired Futures project together, which saw the Grand Opera House work with four local schools, and commission a script writer, facilitator and director to work alongside young people to create a brand new piece of theatre centred on The Co-operative values.

Three 10-minute pieces were devised and performed by the schools in the Grand Opera House. The students then travelled to Manchester as part of the UN's International Year of Cooperatives 2012, performing to packed audiences and standing ovations.

Chris Boyd, corporate affairs and democratic services manager with The Co-operative, says it was one of the most inspiring things with which The Co-operative had ever been involved.

"From a business point of view, working with the Grand Opera House gives us many branding opportunities. It also allows us to give our members benefits, as they get discounts on the tickets. But we couldn't have done that unless we were doing something with the community and young people as well," he says.

Some 1.2 million young people benefited from The Co-operative's UK activities last year. A quarter of the firm's employees are under 25, so Boyd says it makes business sense for The Co-operative to partner with something



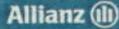
Grand Opera House youth productions, which were sponsored by The Co-operative, a partnership that was shortlisted at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

that will enhance their lives "because they are our customers and employees of the future".

With The Co-operative's members voting overwhelmingly in favour of extending the partnership into 2014, Boyd and Dolan say this is a testament to the success of the partnership thus far. As is the recognition of the partnership in the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

Also shortlisted in the Sustained Partnership Award category were Ulster Orchestra & JTI, which are featured on Page 12.

A supplement on business and the arts in conjunction with the Belfast Telegraph, Allianz and Arts & Business NI



The Wallace High School, Lisburn team sparkles at the Young Enterprise Business competition final in London



Above and below: Actors perform in c21 Theatre Company's production of Romeo & Juliet, which was supported by Burke Shipping Company and shortlisted at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards

Coming of age

As many businesses recognise the importance of reaching out to young people, some are also recognising that the arts can be an effective way of doing this

THE organisations shortlisted for the Young People Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards have found inspiration through their collaborations.

Ulster Orchestra and AES

Energy company AES's outreach programme aims to heighten awareness of the importance of people's impact on the environment, so when the company developed a partnership with the Ulster Orchestra it looked beyond its initial employee engagement activities to that of youth involvement.

In May 2013, the partners held a series of concerts under the banner 'The Planet Earth', which have been recognised at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards. The one-hour concerts used music from a wide range of backgrounds to look at the earth and our impact on the environment. It involved 400 people, including key stage 2 students, teachers and business people in the Larne/Carrickfergus area.

Prior to the concerts, a series of workshops were held where the students used recycled instruments, and some created their own pieces of music. The shows were then staged at the Carrickfergus Amphitheatre.

What emerged was a successful project with a tripartite arrangement that benefited all parties, according to Davy Elliott, compliance officer and insured risk manager with AES.

"The schools clearly got a lot out of it; the kids thoroughly enjoyed it and learned a lot about energy resources, environment etc. It ticked the boxes for the orchestra's outreach programme, introducing children to music, enhancing its education and schools outreach programme and teaching them about music and how it works."

"From AES's point of view we certainly saw

the project as fantastic for brand awareness. We got a lot of media coverage, it engaged our own employees who went down and participated in the concert, and it was fantastic fun," he says.

Veronica Morris, head of external relations at Ulster Orchestra, says the orchestra particularly benefited from the outreach element of the programme, as it allowed it to bring music to where the young people are. "It has also enabled children and young people, many with special educational needs, to explore the relationship between the environment and musicality," she says.

AES and Ulster Orchestra are set to continue their partnership, with plans to extend their programmes to people with special needs.

c21 Theatre Company and Burke Shipping Group

For many students, studying Shakespeare at school can have a lasting impact on their perception of the literary great. Unfortunately, that opinion is often less than favourable as students recall hours of studying and trying to grasp the meaning of plots and themes.

c21 Theatre Company wanted to change that outcome by creating a new version of Romeo and Juliet, and bringing a production to local theatre venues and schools.

In early 2013, its ambition was realised when it secured sponsorship from the Burke Shipping Group, which provided the funds needed to go ahead with the production. The Romeo & Juliet project has been shortlisted at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

Stephen Kelly, actor, producer and co-founder of c21 Theatre Company, says he wanted to engage as many young people as possible, so felt the production needed to be shown in

regional theatres and schools. Sean McCready, managing director of Burke Shipping, had a similar objective, specifically requesting the theatre company to target rural communities, including Ballymena, Larne and Coleraine.

"Sean had a passion for education and wanted to get young people involved in the arts. His financial backing of the production was key to its existence, along with the Arts & Business NI backing," says Kelly.

The Arts & Business NI investment allowed the theatre company to offer a complementary drama workshop based on the production to each school that booked the performance.

Burke Shipping gave its employees the opportunity to get involved in the rehearsals and to take part in two master classes around role plays and improvisation techniques at the company's facility.

While Burke Shipping benefited from the cultural branding that went with the Romeo & Juliet production, Sean McCready, managing director of Burke Shipping, shies away from it.

He says it is important the company engages with the younger generation.

"We're always trying to get involved with different age groups to show them how we work with c21 and also how our business operates. The arts act as a massive link between the business and the community. I wanted to bring the theatre company out to the schools especially those in the rural areas. c21 has brought into that and made the arts very accessible to people in rural areas," says McCready.

The project engaged over 2,000 young people, as well as an additional 300 in the over-21 section.

The company has gone on to support c21's summer scheme, a panto production in Ballymena, and McCready has become a board member of the theatre company.

"It's a dream to have Sean contribute to our organisation. With his business background, it's priceless," says Kelly.

Lyric and PwC

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) has supported the Young Enterprise Business competition, sitting on its judging panel for a number of years. PwC noted that while the applicants were very good in many respects they fell down when it came to delivering their presentations.

There was, PwC noted, a lack of confidence and self-belief among some of Northern Ireland's young people, so it decided to act. In 2013, the firm offered Young Enterprise its best asset: some of its staff who would act as mentors to



the six finalists in the competition. The company also drafted in the Lyric Theatre to offer mentoring around presentation and voice skills - to both the young people and PwC employees. The creative learning department at the Lyric worked extensively through theatre

skills and drama training.

Claire McGonigle, head of client and market development, PwC, says the firm wanted to give Northern Ireland's "rising stars of the future" as much help and support as it could.

"In the current climate, there has to be a partnership approach for everyone. Because of that we worked with Young Enterprise and the Lyric to pull together a programme that would tick a number of boxes. It would help and develop the next generation coming through but would also give our people something back as well."

PwC recognised that its staff could also benefit from the workshops with the Lyric.

"There's a recognition that a lot of professional firms, and PwC is no exception, have people who are very well trained and technically very competent but maybe we don't put the same emphasis into softer developmental skills. We tried to look at a programme that would capture all of that but would still give something back under our corporate social responsibility," says McGonigle.

The three organisations worked together with the schools to deliver a full day of training to each of the six Northern Ireland finalists at the Lyric. A short film was also made to document the event.

Philip Crawford, creative learning co-ordinator with the Lyric Theatre, says his department also worked with the winning team to polish their performance as they set off to the grand final in London.

"It's an exciting stage of their lives and they're really open to change, while PwC staff responded very positively to it," says Crawford. "In fact, the employees requested further training days, and close to 80 of them returned to the Lyric for an event with our creative learning department."

The project's nomination and ultimate shortlist at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards was clearly well deserved.

Also shortlisted in this category were Cahoots NI and Danske Bank, winners of the Sustained Partnership Award.



Recognition & Reward

Arts & Business
Northern Ireland

Picture this

In a unique employee engagement exercise, advertising agency AV Browne worked with the Belfast Print Workshop in 2013 to provide fine art print training for its staff. The results surpassed the expectations of both parties

AV Browne and Belfast Print Workshop have been shortlisted in the Employee Engagement Award category at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards. They join National Trust, Herbert Freehills LLP, Happenstance Theatre and Edwards & Co Solicitors in the process.

In early 2013, AV Browne was keen to provide its staff with skills training in the area of fine art print making in an effort to boost creativity and innovation at the firm.

The agency approached Belfast Print Workshop to provide the training, but before long the project had grown legs and extended way beyond traditional print workshops.

Taking place over a number of months, the idea of the project was that each participant would produce limited edition prints that publicised the work of Belfast Print Workshop while enhancing the reputation of AV Browne.

The agency wanted to utilise the workshops so it provided its designers with two clients each, and gave them the freedom to create their own vision of those clients.

Win-win

Stephen Moore, group creative director, AV Browne, says the aim of the project was to create a win-win situation for all of the participants.

"We tried to squeeze as much out of it as possible. The idea behind giving our designers two clients was to show how they were proactive

about a client rather than waiting for a brief. It transformed what they could do for that client."

AV Browne also hoped Belfast Print Workshop would benefit, as the work would highlight to clients just what the workshop did.

"We hoped it would make them realise there was a facility they could work with going forward," adds Moore.

He says the project acted as a great training tool but was also a real morale booster as the team worked together - and even got to display their creations.

An exhibition of the prints was held in a local coffee shop over two days in June with clients invited in to see the work. Feedback was very positive, according to Moore.

From a business and employee engagement perspective, the skills training made a huge difference to the work generated by AV Browne. The staff members also felt empowered by the creative freedom. On the back of the workshops, they have set up AVB Editions, an employee-driven workplace initiative that sees staff meet every Wednesday to discuss prints and artworks they intend to produce.

In return for the workshops, AV Browne worked with Belfast Print Workshop staff to create a new brand identity for the membership organisation. Workshop staff members were brought into the agency's office and saw the whole creative and selection process in action.



Employees from AV Browne work on their designs at Belfast Print Workshop, a project shortlisted in the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business Awards

"We were very keen that in the same way that we had a group experience of the print workshop, they should have a group experience of ourselves, so we brought them into the studio," says Moore.

Vicki Maguire, director, Belfast Print Workshop, says there were so many different aspects to the project that it made for a really positive partnership with great results. She adds that there are many business benefits when firms link up with the arts.

"Employees can really benefit and gain new skills from working with a charity or arts organisation. Such a partnership can actually help them with employee motivation, developing skills, team building and so on," says Maguire.

Belfast Print Workshop is set to offer team-building workshops for businesses in the future, and hopes to further the partnership with AV Browne, says Maguire.

Also shortlisted in the Employee Engagement Award category were: National Trust & Herbert Smith Freehills LLP, winner of the Community Engagement Award, and Happenstance Theatre and Edwards & Co Solicitors; Edwards & Co received the Business of the Year Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.



The ones to watch

Each year the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards recognise business individuals who go beyond the call of duty to add huge value to an arts organisation. We take a look at those who were shortlisted in 2014

VERY often arts organisations benefit enormously from the insight, experience and commitment from business professionals. The 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards recognised those individuals who excel in their contribution to the arts.

Christopher Neill, assistant solicitor, Cleaver Fulton Rankin, nominated by Audiences NI

Christopher Neill joined the board of Audiences NI through the Young Professionals on Arts Boards Programme in 2012. The audience development agency for Northern Ireland looked to Neill to bring his legal skillset and experience to the board. Audiences NI was going through a major restructuring and strategic re-focus at the time and wanted Neill to contribute to and lead that process. It couldn't have selected a better individual.

Eileen Mullan, chair of Audiences NI, says Neill has "added so much value to the organisation and intelligence at board level that he's been a tremendous asset".

"To have somebody of that calibre and maturity come on the board and grasp the reins is, certainly for me, an absolute treat," she says.

Neill has approached his role with enthusiasm and a very big smile, according to Mullan.

"He certainly loves his role as a board member. He embraces it and shows

commitment. When he's needed he's there, when he's given a task he delivers."

Mullan says the board has benefited hugely from the fact that Neill is a young professional.

"If we don't address the shortfall in young people on our boards then we're going to see an absolute dearth in board seats in the coming years. We need to give them a platform to start that journey, and the Young Professionals on Arts Boards Programme is an excellent way to achieve that."

Cathy Law of Cathy Law Communications, nominated by Replay Theatre Company

PR specialist Cathy Law has had an association with Replay Theatre Company for a number of years but it was during her tenure as chair with the theatre company that she displayed real commitment and leadership in guiding it through monumental change.

During her time as chair, the company saw significant structural changes, a move to different premises and three artistic directors.

Law helped the company secure major sponsorship with Joseph Brennan Bakeries, which has enabled great things for Replay and remains a sustained and growing partnership with the company.

Ruth Cooper, Replay's new executive director, says Law's role was a significant one in the organisation.



Christopher Neill, assistant solicitor, Cleaver Fulton Rankin



Cathy Law, Cathy Law Communications



Lesley Bourke, general counsel and company secretary, Danske Bank

"Cathy was integral to establishing a number of sponsorships and her service has been really useful and beneficial for Replay," says Cooper.

Law's time as chair with the organisation also saw Replay's profile grow as it was invited to tour internationally. Replay created its first ever show for children and young people with profound and multiple learning difficulties, titled BLISS.

As a result of the production, three committees at Stormont jointly hosted a presentation about Replay's future plans for the work.

Law stepped down from the board in late 2013, leaving Replay in a strong position for the new chair to work from.

Lesley Bourke, general counsel and company secretary, Danske Bank, nominated by Cahoots NI

When Lesley Bourke joined the board of Cahoots NI in 2003, she brought with her legal experience, essential for ensuring the company adhered to legislation and regulation. But throughout her time with the board, and particularly since she took over as chair in January 2012, Bourke has helped shape

the strategic direction of the company.

Marianne Crosslé, fundraising officer with Cahoots NI, says Bourke is an excellent chair.

"We are a theatre company which works with young children so we must have very robust health and safety and child safety policies in place. We have the benefit of having a chairman who can examine any documents and make sure we are operating within the law."

Crosslé says Bourke is "very good at cutting straight to the heart of the matter, keeping everything on course, and being very focused on what is being consulted on".

She adds that it's extremely important for an arts organisation like Cahoots NI to have someone like Bourke.

"Lesley is very generous with her time, and has never once said she wasn't able to attend a meeting. She is very interested in the company and what it does. The same could be said for all of our board members, but certainly Lesley is always willing to go the extra mile."





Lessons in dedication

Arts organisations throughout Northern Ireland are reliant upon committed individuals to drive them forward, but every now and again some staff and directors take their dedication to a whole different level

FIVE people from the world of the arts have been shortlisted for the Arts Individual of the Year Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards 2014. All have one thing in common: an unequivocal commitment to the arts and the organisations in which they work.

Ali Fitzgibbon, Young at Art

Ali Fitzgibbon first started working in the arts at the age of 11 – hanging up posters for £1.25 an hour – and has been committed ever since. She says the arts are an integral part of people's lives.

"The arts are really important because they are our identity. Through the arts, we learn a lot about social skills and a lot about empathy. We learn how to have conversations, and how to tell stories. We experience things together. Especially with the economy as it is at the moment, the arts have put a lot of humanity back in to life."

As executive director of Young at Art, Fitzgibbon has taken a strategic approach to her role with the organisation. A few years ago, she undertook a diploma in social economy business and subsequently incorporated that into the business.

Young at Art now has a commercial arm, which offers services to artists looking to put on shows. In 2013 it accounted for 20pc of Young at Art's turnover as Fitzgibbon expanded her staff from three to 13.

Through her leadership, Fitzgibbon has increased the annual festival programme, which includes Belfast Children's Festival, and developed year-round activities.

She says forming partnerships with businesses is important for Young at Art. For example, the organisation's media partners for the Belfast Children's Festival are U105 and the Belfast Telegraph.

"The arts can offer value-associated leverage, but both the commercial business and the arts organisation must ensure that any partnership is the right fit," says Fitzgibbon.



Ali Fitzgibbon, artistic director of Young at Art and shortlisted nominee at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards, says the arts are an integral part of our lives



Paula McFetridge, artistic director of Kabosh is a true champion of the arts



Karin Jeffrey has done great things at the Grand Opera House since she joined in 2013



Paul Bosco McEneaney, artistic director of Cahoots NI and shortlisted nominee at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards



Press and marketing officer at Cinemagic, Claire Shaw, far right, works on creating innovative partnerships

Her ability to develop partnerships has led to a significant increase in Kabosh's turnover and a refinement of its three strands of work: site-specific theatre, social cohesion and cultural tourism.

McFetridge says it is important that Kabosh continues to focus on its values but that it takes a business approach to its fundraising and partnerships.

"We are a small business. We get core funding from the Arts Council and Belfast City Council but so much of our investment is about working to commission, working to tenders, working with businesses through sponsorships where we meet the needs of other organisations.

"I'm a great believer that artists have this ability to respond creatively and meet the needs of business. It's possible to have a meeting of minds where something very unique can happen. The needs of the organisations are very different but at the core of it, we're all running small businesses that need to break even, that need to provide employment, and that need to have a respect or understanding of their audience or client base."

Karin Jeffrey, Grand Opera House

In just a few months with the Grand Opera House, Karin Jeffrey's impact on the organisation has been profound. When Jeffrey joined the company she immediately set about developing new partnerships.

She helped to secure a major sponsor in the form of 3ivetwo Healthcare Group for the Grand Opera House's pantomime. The healthcare firm's chief executive Mark Regan was impressed by her "enthusiasm, vision and business acumen".

In addition, Jeffrey has forged relationships with other businesses in Northern Ireland, including Ernst & Young, which sponsored a CATS production. She also worked with Translink and Europa to introduce the Belfast Theatre Express, which brings first-time visitors from the Republic of Ireland to Belfast. The result has been an increase in revenue and footfall to the theatre.

"It was important to make our partnership approach much more commercial because that is needed in the current economic environment.

"You have to be creative, commercial, and you have to add layers of value. I don't even use the word sponsorship any more, I use the term corporate partnership. The whole essence of it is a partnership. It's important to have buy in from both the business' staff and Grand Opera House staff."

Paul Bosco McEneaney, Cahoots NI

Paul Bosco McEneaney's passion for the arts began as early as the age of eight. He has maximised that passion over the years, becoming a veritable fixture on the local arts scene in Northern Ireland.

Indeed, as the driving force behind Northern Ireland's award-winning children's theatre company, Cahoots NI, McEneaney has made a significant impact on the sector here.

Through his work, he has developed successful partnerships with commercial entities.

These include Cahoots NI's current major sponsor Danske Bank, a partnership that has won the Sustained Partnership Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards. More recently he has linked up with property group Osborne King and CastleCourt Shopping Centre.

"We've been intent on creating many relationships with different businesses," he says. "Sponsorship is all about finding a business that matches the arts organisation's aims and objectives. You must understand what all parties need out of the project, and have a very strong and good working relationship. It's essential."

McEneaney believes children's theatre is a powerful art form in itself, and is committed to developing it, both at home and abroad. He is currently secretary of TYA, the UK Centre of the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People (ASSITEJ).



Allianz

Local heroes

The 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards saw the launch of a new community art prize, aimed at supporting some fantastic community projects across Northern Ireland

THE Allianz Arts & Business NI Community Art Prize is offered to support local community projects.

In an example of gaining multiple benefits from an arts project, Allianz is not only sponsoring the prize fund of £3,250 - with the winning project taking home £2,000 - but it has also got staff involved in the process. All of the companies in the running for the prize were nominated by Allianz employees. Allianz says it wants to invest in community projects that operate in the areas where staff live. The four projects listed here comprise the 2014 finalists.

Big Telly Theatre Company

For generations, right up to the 1960s, the last Sunday in September was a festival day in Portstewart. Every year, farmers and townfolk would congregate in their Sunday best to celebrate the harvest festival in style with games, music and dance.

Last year, Big Telly Theatre Company, in tandem with many local traders and community groups, revived that historical tradition. Such was the success of Big Sunday that plans are under way to hold it again this year.

However, in 2014 it's going to be bigger and better - with the help of Allianz. Big Telly Theatre Company has won the Allianz Arts & Business NI Community Art top prize of £2,000.

Established in 1987, Big Telly Theatre Company is currently collaborating with Portstewart traders and community groups to establish a cultural identity for the town through a series of projects, the main event being Big Sunday.

"It was brilliant last year," says Linda McCracken of Big Telly. "There was an amazing



A performer at the Big Telly Theatre Company festival day in Portstewart, winner of the Allianz Arts & Business NI Community Art Prize

buzz in the town. We had street performers everywhere, and shops that wouldn't normally open on a Sunday presented special events. The hairdressers did 1920s hairstyles, and beauticians



Belfast Circus Community School engages young people in the creative learning process

were on-hand to give 1920s make-overs. That was enormous fun. The post office opened to do pass-the-parcel games for the children."

This year Big Telly Theatre Company intends to make Big Sunday even bigger, and will use the £2,000 to bring in more street artists, more music, and more fun.

Belfast Community Circus School

The aim of Belfast Community Circus School is to engage young people in a creative learning process that promotes and supports team-working; builds confidence and self-esteem; enhances communication skills, and increases concentration levels.

The end result? According to Will Chamberlain, who has seen the school grow over almost three decades, "It's absolutely amazing."

"You see young, shy, introspective people turn into waving, smiling, confident performers. I see this often, and it makes my heart swell every time."

Chamberlain should know what he's talking about. The Community Circus works with up to 1,300 youngsters a year. "We see every one of those people as an individual with their own skills and talents, and help them develop those."

Belfast Community Circus School has won a shortlisting award of £500 through the Allianz Arts & Business NI Community Art Prize, and will invest the money in this year's annual show at the Portadown Town Hall.

Whitehead Wombles

For the past eight years, a group of volunteers has been meeting regularly to combat litter in the town of Whitehead. The brilliantly named Whitehead Wombles is a small but effective group that removes litter and dog mess from the streets. Occasionally larger group events are organised when families and townspeople of all ages come together to target specific areas of Whitehead for clean-ups.

Now, the group wants to get the local primary school involved by asking students to create anti-litter images. These will then be assessed in conjunction with local artist Naomi Hunter to find the best ideas. Hunter will run a workshop with some of the children to develop the ideas, from which flyers, posters and banners will be printed to promote social awareness of litter.

A key member of the Whitehead Wombles is Noel McKee. He says the basic message of the group is respect: "This is our town. Our community. We have to be prepared to take responsibility for it. We need to respect each other, respect ourselves, and respect the town we live in if we want to engender a sense of community."

The Whitehead Wombles have been awarded a shortlisting prize of £500.

St Malachy's Castlewells GAA

A GAA club offers much more to its local community than simple sports. St Malachy's is open all week and provides a place to go and activities for people of all ages - from mothers and toddlers to OAPs. It also provides a base for local charities such as PIPS, Marie Curie Bridgewater Cancer Suite, and Mind Your Mate to name but a few.

Terry Connolly of Allianz says it is an integral part of the community that it serves. "It's great for socialising and there's some brilliant entertainment. The St Malachy's take on Strictly Come Dancing, The X Factor, and Mrs Brown's Boys have been really popular."

This year, the GAA club plans to put on a schools' show that will involve local youngsters and in turn create a great atmosphere in the local area. It has been awarded £250 for fourth place in the Allianz & Business NI Community Art Prize.

Allianz

Sticking to the plan

As one of three businesses shortlisted in the Business of the Year Award category at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards, Stratagem has shown immense commitment in its sponsorship of the arts - not least because its people delve into their own pockets to make programmes happen

WHEN lobbying company Stratagem decides to sponsor an arts project, its team spends its own money to make that sponsorship a reality. One could be forgiven for thinking the downturn in the economy would put a stop to arts sponsorship, but there has been no change in Stratagem's approach.

The company continues to support a range of projects, including the John Hewitt Summer School and the Clondeboy Festival. In a partnership with Ulster Museum, it worked with various community groups to create corporate postcards.

The walls of its offices at the restored Carnegie Library also highlight Stratagem's sponsorship of the visual arts; they are adorned with the works of local artists and cartoonists. The company has also just expanded its sculpture collection with John Behan's Belfast Famine Ship.

Gráinne Walsh, head of consultancy with Stratagem, says supporting the arts gives the company "long-term exposure to key audiences in a creative and subtle way".

"Support of the arts offers us the chance to highlight our unique approach to business, democracy and the arts with key stakeholders."

"We're a supporter of the arts as a really important vehicle for expression. They can be a very practical tool and can help unleash human creativity. We know that in terms of our team here, we get the best work from them when they are being creative and excited."

To mark its 15th anniversary in 2013, Stratagem took clients, partners and the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment Arlene Foster to the showing of political drama "What Drama?" at the MAC.

In 2013, it joined forces with youth

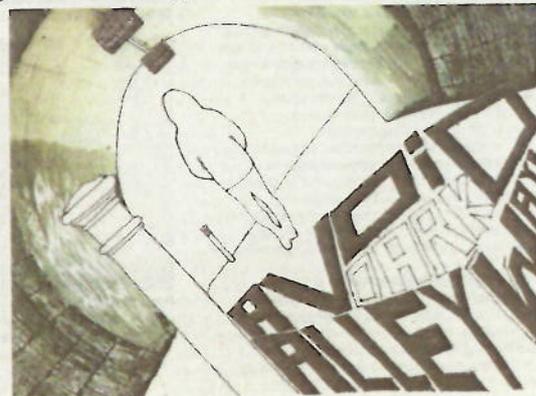
arts organisation WheelWorks, with the support of Arts & Business NI, to create two projects working with young people. That partnership has won the Young People Award at the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

Walsh says there are bottom-line benefits to supporting the arts.

"I know from organisations I've advised that have taken the path of engaging with the arts that they have really seen the benefits. The multiple ways we have engaged with the arts through Arts & Business NI gives us a sense of the importance of creativity and having a bit of fun in what you do."

AES was also shortlisted in the Business of the Year Award, and won the Special Award at the 2014 Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards.

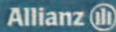
Allianz



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Lets create something amazing together

artsandbusinessni.org.uk



Stepping it up

As Allianz's new ballet and arts brand ambassador, Northern Ireland's own Melissa Hamilton hopes to promote the arts and inspire a whole new generation of dancers

BALLET dancer Melissa Hamilton returned to Northern Ireland on a winter's day in January for a very special photo shoot with Allianz as the two formally announced their partnership. The Royal Ballet's first soloist has joined forces with Allianz to become its ballet and arts brand ambassador.

The location for the photo shoot was one of Northern Ireland's most iconic spots, the Giant's Causeway, a world heritage site. Yet, on the day, the gales were ravaging the coast, amber weather alerts were out across the island of Ireland, and for a moment the shoot was in jeopardy. People from Dublin, London and across Northern Ireland had travelled to make it happen, so the decision was made to proceed.

As Hamilton took up position, the elements calmed, the sun came out and great shots ensued.

In fact, you could say the elements were perfect for Northern Ireland's best known ballerina, and there was something of a pathetic fallacy about her new partnership with Allianz. Hamilton is a force of nature in her chosen profession, and she has decided to link up with Allianz, itself a force in the business world.

"I felt that in becoming an ambassador I could bring more awareness to ballet in Northern Ireland and hopefully inspire today's and future generations of children to a possible career in the ballet world," she says.

Raised in County Down, Hamilton trained at the Jennifer Bullock School of Ballet in Lisburn before joining the Elmhurst Ballet School in Birmingham at the age of 16. When her mentor at the school Masha Mukhamedov moved to Greece, Hamilton followed so she could continue her training privately. Seven years ago her dream of joining The Royal Ballet in London became a reality, and she is now a first soloist for the prestigious company.

"I am proof that, with a huge amount of hard work, it is possible," she says.

Homeward bound

Hamilton's partnership with Allianz will see her make a number of trips back to Northern Ireland in the next year, as she embarks on various projects working directly with the insurance provider. She says there's a possibility she will perform back on home soil in the future.

"Allianz is fully committed to supporting and giving exposure to talent that has come out of, or is currently flourishing in, Northern Ireland and I am privileged that this includes me," she says.

Indeed, Brendan Murphy, CEO of Allianz, says that as companies look beyond the traditional sponsorship model to the cultural, societal and community benefits that investment in the arts can bring, Allianz

“THROUGH
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hopes to be one of the leaders in this area.

"At Allianz we believe this is a positive development and are excited for the future of our business and arts partnerships both nationally and globally. Seeing the success of Allianz's partnerships with great artists such as Lang Lang and how they reach down into communities is not just aspirational, it's reality,

and to us the one thing that really matters when it comes to supporting these initiatives," he says. Allianz has long supported the hugely talented and determined Monica Loughman, Ireland's first prima ballerina with the Perm State Ballet and founder of the Irish Academy of Ballet.

Similarly, Allianz believes that Hamilton can "inspire the next generation of Northern Irish ballet dancers by telling her story of how, through hard work, determination and following your passion, dreams do come true," says Murphy.

"For artists like me, a business sponsorship like this with Allianz means opening doors for greater exposure and awareness of what I am doing in my field," says Hamilton. "Being a first soloist of The Royal Ballet Company, I am dancing amongst some of the most talented dancers from countries all around the world and I feel that is something Northern Ireland, with the help of Allianz, will come to realise and be proud of."

Hamilton says she is very grateful that Allianz has acknowledged what she is doing with her life, and that it wants to bring it to people's attention.

"I hope that together we can bring hope, pride and inspiration to the development of and belief in the arts in Northern Ireland."



Melissa Hamilton, Allianz's ballet and arts brand ambassador for Northern Ireland.
Picture: Andrej Uspenski

Let's create something amazing together



When we bring businesses and arts organisations together, amazing things happen. The outcomes, just like the examples showcased in the Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards are often unexpected, but always welcome.

If you've been inspired to make a cultural or corporate shift and in so doing increase sustainability, performance or community engagement, taking the first step couldn't be easier. Simply get in touch using the details listed below. You never know, you might just end up amazing yourself.

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Call our Business Manager, Heather Carr on 028 9073 5150 or email h.carr@artsandbusinessni.org.uk



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