

Youth Council for Northern Ireland



Section 75, Northern Ireland Act 1998

**CORE/INFRASTRUCTURE/PROGRAMME FUNDING SCHEMES FOR
REGIONAL VOLUNTARY YOUTH ORGANISATIONS (RVYOs)**

AN EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

DECEMBER 2007

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Executive Summary

1. The Youth Council is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. In accordance with its Equality Scheme, the Youth Council screened its existing policies. The Youth Council published a report on the screening of its current funding policy which identified the need to develop a new funding policy. It has also determined that a full Equality Impact Assessment on this new policy is essential given the importance of funding for voluntary youth organisations.
2. Under the provisions contained in the Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, the Youth Council is obliged to meet a number of statutory functions, including the need to:
 - assist the effective provision of administrative services (including training, equipment, and travel expenses) by voluntary headquarter organisations
 - which provide facilities for the youth service; and
 - whose activities are exercisable, or whose services are available, throughout Northern Ireland and not only in some particular locality.
3. YCNI's Strategic Plan 2004-2007 reinforces these functions through its Mission, Vision and Values. In particular, under Core Aim 6, YCNI outlines the manner in which Regional Voluntary Youth Organisations (RVYOs) are to be supported:
 - *Core Aim 6: to ensure regional voluntary youth organisations receive appropriate support in the delivery of efficient and effective youth work, through the provision of information, advice, training, and financial and other resources.*

The Council recognises the importance and value of the role played by RVYOs, either in supporting the delivery of services to children and young people through local youth groups, or through the direct provision of key services to children and young people.

4. **Policy Developments**

Over recent years there has been a growing awareness that the list of RVYOs receiving support through core funding has stagnated and this presents a cause for concern on a number of fronts.

Following a detailed consideration of current YCNI funding practice and extensive consultation with relevant stakeholders in the sector, YCNI has developed a new draft funding policy for 2008/09 onwards which is transparent, user-friendly, equitable and fit-for-purpose.

The policy is based on a number of key principles:

- funding should follow the customer;
- funding must aid the delivery of cost effective and high quality youth work;
- it must fit with YCNI's statutory purpose;
- it must demonstrate fairness;
- it must demonstrate accountability.

The detail of the proposed new funding policy is contained in Appendix 2 of the full Report.

5. This EQIA will ensure that Council's new funding policy is consistent with the overall youth service policy and also improves access to Council funding by regional voluntary youth organisations working with Section 75 categories of young people.

It has been completed using both quantitative and qualitative analysis, and is based on the practical guidance for carrying out EQIA's issued by the Equality Commission.

6. In conducting this EQIA the following data and research findings were taken into account:
 - findings of the EQIA "Promotion through the Youth Service of the personal and social development of young people"
 - Geographic Information System Youth Service data
 - Northern Ireland Census 2001
 - Pre-consultation feedback
7. An assessment of the impact of the existing policies was then conducted in respect of the nine categories of persons identified in Section 75. This exercise identified the following issues:
 - Whilst there is an overall majority of membership coming from a Protestant background in the Youth Service as a whole, this tends to be concentrated within uniformed and church based provision where the size of groups is much smaller and the periods of contact are much shorter.
 - Roman Catholic membership, although less numerous, is a more concentrated type of provision which is characterised by larger unit sizes and longer periods of contact.
 - The numbers of minority ethnic children within the membership of the Youth Service are in proportion to the Northern Ireland Census 2001, they are however lower than the numbers of children from an ethnic minority background within the education system. It is now widely accepted that the census figures are out-of-date and that the proportion of those from minority ethnic groups has risen significantly in Northern Ireland in the new millennium.
8. In line with its earlier screening of this policy, the Youth Council recognises existing inequalities that may be attached to previous funding arrangements and proposes that there is an overwhelming case to introduce a revised funding policy, developed through an active consultation process with relevant stakeholders, in order to ensure that the new policy will support greater access to the Council's funding by a wider range of bona fide youth organisations.
9. The Youth Council's new funding policy, "Young People Focused", includes a number of funding streams – Infrastructure and Programme Funding. The Council proposes to advertise publicly for eligible voluntary youth organisations to apply for funding under the above funding streams.

The Council proposes to introduce these new funding arrangements on a phased basis, commencing in 2008/09. Full details of this new funding policy are available as an appendix to the full EQIA report.

10. The Youth Council now wishes to consult on the findings of this EQIA and with this objective in mind, the availability of this report has been publicised widely and has been posted on the Youth Council's website at www.ycni.org. In addition, a number of consultation meetings will be arranged.

A copy of the full Equality Impact Assessment report is available on request. It is available in alternative formats including in **large print**, on computer disc, by email, in Braille, on audio-cassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those people who are not fluent in English.

11. Arrangements for consultation are being co-ordinated by:

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The closing date for response is Friday 1 February 2008

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI), when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between nine groups of persons, namely:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without;

and, without prejudice to the obligations above, to also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

1.2 YCNI sets out in its Equality Scheme how it proposes to fulfil its statutory duties. Policies are screened to assess whether they impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity or the duty to promote good relations using the following criteria:

- Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups?
- Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy?
- Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity between the relevant different groups, either by altering the policy, or by working with others in government or in the larger community, in the context of the policy?
- Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that policies of that type create problems specific to any relevant group?

1.3 YCNI published a report on the screening of its current funding policy which identified the need to abandon its existing policy and develop a new funding policy. YCNI is currently consulting on the proposed new policy. It has also determined that a full Equality Impact Assessment on this new policy is essential given the importance of funding for voluntary youth organisations.

1.4 This EQIA will ensure that the new funding policy proposed by YCNI will provide improved access to YCNI funding by regional voluntary youth organisations working with Section 75 categories of young people.

1.5 Review of Public Administration

On 22 November 2005, Government announced a series of changes as part of the overall Review of Public Administration (RPA). In relation to Education, the main changes were as follows:

- To set up a single Education Authority for Northern Ireland with responsibility for the functions performed currently by the Education and Library Boards including the Regional Training Unit, the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA); front-line support and related functions currently undertaken by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) and Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG). It is to become the employing authority for all teaching and other staff employed in grant-aided schools and will absorb some functions of the Staff Commission, while others will no longer be required.
- To transfer certain functions from the Department of Education (DE) to the proposed new Education and Skills Authority (ESA), following an Internal Review.
- To transfer ownership of the controlled schools estate, currently with the Education and Library Boards, to the Education Authority.
- To appoint a Director of Children's Services to co-ordinate the Education and Skills Authority's responsibilities for children.
- To establish a new statutory Education Advisory Forum to act as a unified advisory interface between the Department and the education sector.
- To establish a new Regional Library Authority.
- Youth services administration will be placed within the new Education Authority, as will the functions of the Youth Council for Northern Ireland.

Given that the new Education and Skills Authority (ESA) will not be established until 1 April 2009, and given the fact that YCNI commenced the review of its funding policy in 2006, YCNI's intention is to introduce the new funding policy in 2008/09, on a phased basis. YCNI recognises that ESA will wish to review its own funding policies in due course. However that does not negate the need to take action now to address inequalities inherent within the existing funding policy.

1.6 The purpose of this consultation document is to set out the findings of an Equality Impact Assessment conducted by the Youth Council for Northern Ireland. This information can also be made available, on request, in alternative formats including in **large print**, on computer disc, by email, in Braille, on audio-cassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those people who are not fluent in English. The document is also available on the Youth Council website at www.ycni.org.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE POLICY

2.1 Legislative Framework

Under the provisions contained in the Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, the Youth Council is obliged to meet a number of statutory functions, including the need to

- assist the effective provision of administrative services (including training, equipment, and travel expenses) by voluntary headquarter organisations
 - which provide facilities for the youth service; and
 - whose activities are exercisable, or whose services are available, throughout Northern Ireland and not only in some particular locality.

2.2 Current Practice

YCNI's Strategic Plan 2004-2007 reinforces these functions through its Mission, Vision and Values. In particular, under Core Aim 6, YCNI outlines the manner in which Regional Voluntary Youth Organisations (RVYOs) are to be supported:

- *Core Aim 6: To ensure regional voluntary youth organisations receive appropriate support in the delivery of efficient and effective youth work, through the provision of information, advice, training, and financial and other resources.*

The Council recognises the importance and value of the role played by RVYOs, either in supporting the delivery of services to children and young people through local youth groups, or through the direct provision of key services to children and young people.

In line with this aim, annually the Council assigns between £1.5m and £2m to support groups and activities that operate in accordance with its Strategic Plan. The allocation of these funds is determined by available resources and the Council's priorities but generally falls within one of two categories – core funding and programme funding – where the former supports the needs of the RVYO and its constituent members, while the latter is designated for time-bound projects that may be organised by any bona fide group.

In relation to core funding, at the present time 29 RVYOs attract infrastructure or core funding. Their affiliated groups provide for approximately 180,000 young people and utilise 1,513 part-time workers and 17,000 volunteers. Funding packages run from approximately £2,000 to £240,000, with an average of £45,000.

Appendix 1 lists those youth organisations currently in receipt of core/infrastructure funding.

2.3 Policy Developments

Over recent years there has been a growing awareness that the list of RVYOs receiving support through core funding has stagnated and this presents a cause for concern on a number of fronts.

Firstly, this may encourage dependency on Council support and this support may not be guaranteed in the longer term. Secondly, this strategy of support may not encourage applications from new organisations that may be able to represent marginalised groups that have not previously attracted support. In line with Core Aim 4, and Council's desire to promote diversity and inclusion, this trend is disconcerting. Finally, the Council may be failing to acknowledge changes in its external environment by maintaining traditional relationships at the expense of innovation.

Following a detailed consideration of current YCNI funding practice and consultation with relevant stakeholders in the sector, YCNI has developed a new draft funding policy for 2008/09 onwards which it believes is transparent, user-friendly, equitable and fit-for-purpose.

The policy is based on a number of key principles:

- funding should follow the customer;
- funding must aid the delivery of cost effective and high quality youth work;
- it must fit with YCNI's statutory purpose;
- it must demonstrate fairness;
- it must demonstrate accountability.

The detail of the proposed new funding policy is contained in Appendix 2.

2.4 Equality Considerations

This EQIA builds on the outcome of the 2004 EQIA on the overall youth service policy "the promotion, through the youth service, of the personal and social development of young people".

More recently, in June 2007 the five education and library boards jointly published an EQIA on 'Registration and Grant Aid Schemes for local Voluntary Youth Groups'. This EQIA dealt with grants made available by the Boards for local voluntary youth groups and in the process highlighted a number of issues that are of direct and immediate relevance to the current EQIA. For this reason, the present EQIA has drawn on the earlier work, in particular when reaching conclusions regarding measures to mitigate adverse impact

This EQIA will ensure that YCNI's new funding policy aligns with the findings of the earlier EQIA produced by the Education and Library Boards, is consistent with the overall youth service policy and also improves access to YCNI funding by regional voluntary youth organisations working with Section 75 categories of young people.

3. CONSIDERATION OF AVAILABLE DATA AND RESEARCH

In conducting this Equality Impact Assessment the Youth Council took fully into account data and research findings from the following sources:

3.1 Findings of the EQIA 'Promotion through the Youth Service, of the personal and social developments of young people'

This EQIA was completed in May 2004. It was conducted on a co-joined basis by the Department of Education, the five Education and Library Boards and the Youth Council for Northern Ireland.

This EQIA resulted in the creation of the Geographical Information System (GIS) see 3.2 below.

3.2 Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

GIS is a means of displaying youth service data on a geographical basis rather than presenting statistical summaries. The Boards provide the Youth Council with statistical data related to various characteristics of both voluntary registered and controlled youth groups. This data is geographically analysed to identify gaps in youth service provision so that necessary resources can be allocated more effectively and also to assist in the development and planning of such services. The data provided annually by registered youth groups pertains to the number of young people attending the youth group, their age, gender, ethnicity, disability, perceived religious affiliation as well as the number of workers/volunteers, paid/voluntary hours worked and staff qualifications.

3.3 Northern Ireland Census 2001

Results of the census carried out in 2001.

3.4 Pre-Consultation

During the summer of 2006, YCNI launched a review of its funding for RVYOs. This review process included extensive consultations with both core-funded and non-core funded groups, carried out by Williamson Consulting on behalf of YCNI. Around 60% of the 79 organisations contacted gave a detailed response.

Consultation with the sector provided a wide range of information on activities, plans and difficulties faced by those involved in youth work. It demonstrated that youth work was becoming more complex and that young people want a wider range of alternatives which are often difficult to provide. Increasing pressures on organisations to find volunteers and increasing amounts of time being taken up on high levels of bureaucracy were also common responses.

Consideration of organisations deemed to be RVYOs showed a remarkable lack of consistency in their nature. These varied from generic youth headquarter and regional organisations with a Northern Ireland wide membership to thematic organisations which were not working Northern Ireland wide and did not have a membership but which aspired to work across the province. It also identified organisations that are in YouthNet membership but which are not exclusively involved in youth work.

An analysis of RVYOs suggests that there needs to be clarity about terms used to describe these, such as “regional” and “infrastructure”. Many organisations that consider themselves to be RVYOs do not comfortably fit into either definition.

Feedback from consultation with RVYOs showed a substantial agreement on many issues although differing views on some. Common views included:

- a need for greater clarity in relation to what YCNI funds, and why;
- a shared understanding of what is youth work infrastructure and YCNI’s role in supporting this;
- that YCNI funding shows credibility and levers other funds;
- uncertainty about why YCNI provides funding in some cases;
- that YCNI funding tends to be repetitive and difficult for new organisations to access.

Key Conclusions that can be reached from the review include:

- While YCNI funding is a small proportion of RVYOs total income, it is considered important for credibility and leverage.
- YCNI funding does not currently support an infrastructure or thematic work consistent with its strategy or the Youth Work Strategy.
- To maximise the impact of YCNI funding, it should be linked to delivery of strategic objectives or to provision of specific support to locally based youth work.
- The criteria used for future funding, and the basis for awards, should be absolutely clear.
- Future funding mechanisms need to recognise the value of work currently undertaken by RVYOs and other major youth organisations which are providing services that are relevant to the Strategy for the Delivery of Youth Work.

4. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

4.1 In 2002, a geographic information system (GIS) was established. All youth groups registered with the five Education and Library Boards submit annual returns which record the number of young people attending, their age, gender, ethnicity, disability and perceived religious affiliation. A detailed analysis of the 2004 data cycle was carried out which showed that generally the data was of an improved standard from that collected in 2003, but some concerns still existed in regard to its validity.

It is recognised, however, that there are a number of youth groups affiliated to RVYOs which are not registered with Education and Library Boards. In addition, some RVYOs manage projects which work directly with young people. Both the above situations are not reflected in the GIS figures analysed below.

4.2 Analysis of the GIS Data

4.2.1 Community Background

The 2001 Census reveals that of the total youth population of Northern Ireland aged 4-25, Protestants account for 33.4% of the population, Catholics 46.4%, other religions 5%, and no stated religion 14.2%.

In their EQIA on 'Registration and Grant Aid Schemes for Local Voluntary Youth Groups' (June, 2007), the Education and Library Boards reviewed available data on youth service membership by community background. While they identified significant differences in the type of membership by community background (e.g. uniformed v non-uniformed, attendance rate), it was felt that overall level of provision by community background was balanced:

'Therefore, although there is an overall majority of membership coming from a Protestant background in the Youth Service as a whole, this tends to be concentrated within Uniformed and church based provision where the size of groups is much smaller and the periods of contact are much shorter. Roman Catholic membership, although less numerous, is a more concentrated type of youth provision which is characterised by larger unit sizes and longer periods of contact.'

4.2.2 Political Opinion

Data is not collected on the political opinion of youth service membership. There has been no suggestion to date that political opinion is an issue in relation to youth service provision.

4.2.3 Racial Group

The data collected indicates that the membership of the registered Youth Service by ethnicity, as at 2005, is:

Ethnic Background

Ethnic Group	(n)	% within Youth Service	% within Population
White	163,703	98.8	98.90
Chinese	457	0.3	0.10
Asian	267	0.2	0.05
Afro-Caribbean	369	0.2	0.07
Travellers	381	0.2	0.07
Other	321	0.2	0.06
Total	165,498	100	100
Missing Data	1,067		

This information suggests that the number of minority ethnic children within the membership of the Youth Service is in proportion to the Northern Ireland Census 2001, although it is widely accepted that Census figures are now out-of-date and that the proportion of those from minority ethnic groups has risen significantly in Northern Ireland in the new millennium.

4.2.4 Age

The estimated population of those aged under 25 in Northern Ireland is estimated at 36.9% of the total population with the biggest percentage in the 10-14 age group (7.96%).

The Table below sets out the total counts of youth service membership falling within the specified age bands.

Age distribution by membership

Age Group	Number	%
4 – 9	56,283	32.7
10 – 15	88,261	51.3
16 – 18	20,555	11.9
19 – 25	6,914	4.0
Total	172,013	100

The estimated population of those aged under 25 in Northern Ireland is estimated at 36.9% of the total population with the biggest percentage in the 10-14 age group (7.96%).

This shows that 84% of the membership is under the age of 16. Over half the membership is aged 10-15 but thereafter there is a dramatic decline to 12% at age 16-18, and then only 4% at age 19-25.

The distribution of membership by age and group type is set out below:

Distribution of membership by age and group type

Group Type	Age 4-9	Age 10-15	Age 16-18	Age 19-25	Total
Uniformed	29,277	24,310	3,903	451	57,941
Voluntary	13,658	27,805	6,896	2,983	51,342
Controlled	3,831	15,275	4,574	1,191	24,871
Church-based	6,213	14,526	2,691	784	24,178
Community Based	2,344	3,888	1,138	456	7,826
Other	960	2,457	1,353	1,083	5,853
Total	56,283	88,261	20,555	6,912	172,011

This shows that in uniformed provision a greater proportion of membership comes from within the age group 4-9 relative to the other main types¹. The controlled provision² has the highest membership in the age range 10-15 (61%).

4.2.5 Marital Status

The available data on membership of registered youth groups does not specify marital status. There has been no suggestion to date that marital status is an issue in relation to youth service provision.

4.2.6 Sexual Orientation

A survey was undertaken by YouthNet of 362 young people who identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgendered (LGB/T) under the age of 25 as part of research commissioned by the Department of Education in 2003. The survey, whilst a relatively small sample, indicated that 44% of respondents were members of youth clubs, 27% of youth groups; 25% of uniformed organisations and 21% of church-based youth groups.

In youth organisations, 36% of respondents stated that they had experienced a negative attitude. The research concluded that no segment of the youth sector, statutory or voluntary, can be exempt from bringing their practice up to standard, in line with not only fundamental child protection and youth service policies, but also basis human rights.

4.2.7 Gender

The Table below presents the distribution of gender by age group in the registered Youth Service. Overall, the gender balance is weighted in favour of males who account for 53% of total membership although this pattern is subject to some variation according to age group.

¹ The proportion of young people attending uniformed youth provision declines steadily with age. In all other types of provision penetration peaks at 10-15 and declines thereafter.

² The term "controlled provision" refers to those youth groups under the direct control of the Education and Library Boards.

Distribution of gender by age group and gender (2005)

Age	Male		Female		All Members	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
4 – 9	25,725	47.5	28,473	52.5	54,198	100
10 – 15	44,395	51.7	41,464	48.3	85,859	100
16 – 18	11,261	55.9	8,831	44.1	20,092	100
19 – 25	3,621	55.6	2,884	44.4	6,505	100
	85,002	51	81,652	49	166,654	100

This table shows a distinct pattern for a steadily increasing proportion of male membership by increasing age.

In exploring the patterns by the major types of provision it reveals that:

- The pattern for controlled provision shows a majority male membership becoming most pronounced at age 19-25. Uptake is considerably less at this age group.
- The pattern for voluntary provision shows steadily increasing male membership with increasing age.
- The pattern for uniformed provision is different to that of the controlled and voluntary groups. In this type of provision only at one age group (10-15) is there a majority of male members. Although the tendency is for male membership to increase with age the exception to this is at age 19-25 where the proportion of females increases sharply.

4.2.8 Disability

Historically, children/young people with disabilities attended specific clubs which had been constituted to meet their specific needs, e.g. Mencap Gateway Clubs. Many of these clubs continue to provide a service which is an important component of youth service provision. However, the service has developed in a more inclusive manner, primarily as a result of partnership working with the voluntary sector.

As part of the “Fundamental Review of Youth Services” carried out by the Education and Library Board Youth Services, an analysis of participation levels of young people with disabilities in mainstream youth service provision was conducted. It highlighted that, according to the NI Census 2001, 20% of the population have some degree of disability which is estimated at 242,000 people.

The level of disability increases with age and 6% of those aged 16-25 have a disability (Disabled People in the Labour Market, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2001). As such, it is likely that there are approximately 30,000 young people with disabilities from a population of around 540,000.

Assuming an approximate population of 30,000 young people with disabilities, it appears that somewhere in the region of 15% of those children/young people who avail of the youth service has a disability.

However, it is evident that children and young people with disabilities remain under-represented in the youth service. A positive sign is that recent monitoring data shows an increase in the numbers of young people with disabilities in all types of provision with the exception of church-based provision which records a substantial decrease.

4.2.9 Dependants

Data is not collected on young carers availing of youth service provision. An EQIA was conducted by the Department of Education, five Education and Library Boards and Youth Council on the "Promotion, through the Youth Service, of the personal and social development of young people". This EQIA and the consultation process identified a range of issues which were referred to the Youth Service Liaison Forum. None of the issues raised were linked specifically to a particular type of provision, instead they related to broader youth service policy.

4.3 General

Some additional issues were identified as a result of the initial consultation exercise which the Council initiated in summer 2006:

- A need for greater clarity in relation to what YCNI funds and why.
- Greater clarity about what constitutes youth work infrastructure and YCNI's role in relation to this.
- The importance of YCNI funding in demonstrating organisational credibility and leveraging of other funds.
- A belief that funding tends to be given on a repetitive basis making it more difficult for new organisations to access such funding.

4.4 Conclusion

In line with the earlier screening of this policy, the YCNI recognises existing inequalities that may be attached to previous funding arrangements, and proposes that there is an overwhelming case to introduce a revised funding policy, developed through an active consultation process with relevant stakeholders in order to ensure that the new policy will support greater access to YCNI funding by a wider range of bona fide youth organisations.

5. CONSIDERATION OF MEASURES TO MITIGATE ANY ADVERSE IMPACTS

5.1 The Youth Council has given careful consideration to the measures that might be taken to eliminate or mitigate, the adverse impacts that have been identified in the previous section of this report. The measures described below aspire to make funding available to a wider range of organisations while maintaining good relations with existing partners and ensuring that all Section 75 grounds are represented fairly through future funding. Further, YCNI is keen to ensure that future monitoring arrangements will provide robust data across relevant Section 75 grounds on which to base and review funding decisions.

YCNI will also ensure that the final agreed version of the Funding Policy is circulated widely, including across Section 75 groups. Information sessions will be held to brief applicant groups on the funding application process. A specific session will be organised focusing primarily on Section 75 groups.

The Youth Council wishes to consult on its new proposed “Young People Focused” funding policy which is contained in the Appendix to this report.

The following actions, which are described in more detail in the Appendix, are proposed.

5.2 Funding Streams

Future funding will be split into two streams – Infrastructure and Programme Funding:

5.2.1 Infrastructure (up to a maximum of 87.5%)

- Infrastructure Support Funding (up to a maximum of 75% of the total) for organisations whose primary purpose is youth work and which will support eligible core costs as defined by DSD.
- Thematic Infrastructure Support Funding (12.5% of the total) which will support eligible core costs as defined by DSD for organisations which do not meet the infrastructure support criteria but which deliver themed work considered to be of substantial value to the youth sector.

5.2.2 Programme Funding (minimum of 12.5%)

- Programme Funding (12.5% of total funding) for programmes that meet priority themes in the Youth Work Strategy and/or address specific priorities of the Youth Council.

5.3 Funding Decisions

Organisations applying for funding will be subject to the following process:

- Must meet YCNI’s nine basic criteria
- Must meet YCNI’s “regional” definition
- Those who meet the above, and also meet the “infrastructure support” criteria can apply for Infrastructure Support Funding
- Any organisation that meets YCNI’s nine basic criteria and the “regional” definition can apply for Thematic Infrastructure Support Funding

- targets in terms of direct work with young people or youth leaders;
- targets relating to other planned activity, e.g. research, piloting work, involvement in key committees/bodies etc.

All funded organisations will be expected to report on the achievement of these items and failure to fulfil the terms of the SLA may result in loss of funding.

5.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

All organisations funded under the Infrastructure Support and Thematic Infrastructure funding streams will be subject to monitoring and evaluation throughout the lifetime of their grant and within a reasonable period after the grant ends.

Monitoring with a view to being kept informed about the organisation's activities and the effective management of grant will be achieved routinely through meetings, visits and reports.

This process will help to ensure that the Youth Council's funding policy is having the appropriate impact on supporting services for young people.

5.8 Monitoring and Geographic Information System (GIS)

This system is currently being reviewed by a working group representing both the statutory and voluntary youth service sectors. The intention is to develop a more appropriate management information system for the youth service, of which statistical data will be a part and including data relevant to Section 75 grounds.

The collection of qualitative data and data relating to youth work outcomes is also being addressed.

This proposed revised system will assist with improved monitoring of the impact of public sector funding to voluntary youth organisations.

6. FORMAL CONSULTATION

6.1 The Youth Council now wishes to consult as widely as possible on the findings of this Equality Impact Assessment. With this objective in mind the Council proposes to take the following actions:

- press releases will be prepared and submitted to various media outlets;
- prominent advertisements inviting the public to comment on this matter will be placed;
- this report will be issued to all of the consultees listed in the Youth Council's Equality Scheme and to any member of the public on request;
- a copy of this report will be posted on the Youth Council's website at www.ycni.org;
- individual consultation meetings will be arranged with representatives of particular interest groups; and
- this report can be made available, on request, in alternative formats including in large print, on computer disc, in Braille, on audio cassette and in minority languages for those who are not fluent in English.

6.2 The arrangements for consultation are being co-ordinated by:

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6.3 The closing date for responses is Friday 1 February 2008.

7. Publication of the results of this Equality Impact Assessment

The results of this EQIA will be published on the Youth Council's website: www.ycni.org.

APPENDIX 1

Regional Voluntary Youth Organisations (RVYOs) in receipt of Infrastructure Funding

Army Cadet Force Association
Boys' Brigade NI
Catholic Guides of Ireland
Church Lads' & Girls' Brigade
Clubs for Young People NI
Contact Youth
Corrymeela Community
Duke of Edinburgh's Award
Face (formerly PHAB Inclusion Matters)
GirlGuiding Ulster
Girls' Brigade NI
International Voluntary Service NI
National Council of YMCAs
NI Deaf Youth Association
NI Youth Forum
Ocean Youth Trust
Play Resource
PlayBoard NI
Royal Mencap Association
Scout Association
Scouting Ireland (CSI)
Share
St John Ambulance
Voluntary Service Bureau
Wheelworks
Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster
YouthAction NI
Youth Link: NI
YouthNet NI

APPENDIX 2

“Young People Focused” Funding Policy