[*Title first name surname*] MLA

Parliament Buildings

Stormont

Belfast

BT4 3XX

[*Date*]

Dear [*title surname*],

I am writing to you as the [*job title*]of [*organisation*], an arts organisation in your constituency. As our local MLA, I want to tell you about the benefits that arts and culture bring to [*constituency*] and the rest of the country and explain how that benefit is at risk given the proposed cuts to arts funding.

Firstly our [*Organisation*] makes a significant contribution to the local economy. [*Write about your economic contribution e.g.* *how many people to you employ? What’s your annual turnover? Do you provide skilled employment e.g. apprenticeships? Do you attract tourists who then spend money in local restaurants, hotels and bars?]*

[*Organisation*] is a valuable part of the local community, and helps to make [*constituency*] a place where people enjoy living, working and visiting. [*Write about your social contribution e.g. do you run projects to increase health and well-being? Has your organisation helped attract other investment to make the area better? Are you an important community hub? Talk about your reach into other populations, age ranges and ethnic diversity, older people, disability programmes etc*]

[*Write about the role that public funding plays in your business plans e.g.* In this organisation we receive [24%] of funding from Arts Council of Northern Ireland and [15%] from the Local Authority, with the rest earned from ticket sales, earned incomes and other fundraising…etc] With increasing pressures on National Lottery funding and local budgets, we are faced with deeply disproportionate cuts to our funding as a sector. We depend on core funding as the springboard from which all out work and fundraising takes its momentum.

[*Organisation*] plays an important role in education in [*constituency*]. [*Write about your contribution to education e.g. do you run projects with children and young people? Do you work with local schools? If so, how many local children and young people have you reached, and what has been the benefit for them?*]

The arts matter in [*constituency*]. Arts and culture make a real difference here. They also make a powerful contribution to our prosperity and evening economy, adding £200 million to the NI economy for less than 0.02% of total Government funding (DEL and AME). Our sector produces the talent that drives the creative economy, one of the fastest growing parts of the UK economy.

On the basis of an 8% reduction, exchequer investment in the arts here will plummet further here. In Wales and the Republic of Ireland, constituents currently receive, per capita per year, £10.03 and £12.79, respectively, whereas here, would struggle to even reach £5. In other words, if these cuts are implemented, for every £100 of governmental expenditure, just 7p will go to the arts. If this were to rise by just tuppence, the additional monies would go a long way to secure 5,500 jobs in a sector that reaches every nook and cranny of the country and touches the lives of more than 8 out of 10 local citizens.

Creativity is the life blood of business; creativity leads to strong, inclusive vibrant communities. Creativity generates local cultural identity here in [*constituency*].

Public funding of arts and culture helps to revive local economies. The arts drive regeneration. They are a crucial resource that we cannot afford to lose. The potential of the arts should be enjoyed by all local constituents and not only by those with the material resources, educational advantage or family tradition. With decimated public funding, that possibility is greatly undermined.

That is why we value your support in seeking the necessary and sustainable investment in the arts and to assist us in opposing these deeply damaging cuts.

I would like to invite you to our [*theatre/gallery/museum/*library] to talk to you and show you the impact we are making in your constituency. If you would like to come and see the incredible work we’re doing please get in touch with me *[insert a name and contact details]*.

We hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,