

2023-26 INVESTMENT PROGRAMME BRIEFING

Friday, 25th February 2022

DARREN HENLEY:

Hello. We're waiting for guests to arrive.

You will get to ask questions today. They won't all be answered, and they will be fed into the Frequently Asked Questions.

Today's session is live captioned and there is BSL interpretation.

We'll just wait for a few minutes to allow everybody to come in.

Welcome and thank you for attending this briefing. My name is Darren Henley. I'm the Chief Executive of Arts Council England.

Today we will be updating you on our Investment Programme and how it connects to the Government's Levelling Up agenda, and we'll look at the detail to the addendum for applicants that we've shared this morning.

I'd like to introduce you to my colleagues. Joining me is Tonya Nelson, Area Director, London. Laura Dyer, Deputy Chief Executive for Places, Engagement and Libraries. Simon Mellor, our Deputy Chief Executive for Arts and Museums. And Claire Mera-Nelson, our Director, Music and London.

I want to talk about the implications of the Government's settlement and instruction. These were published earlier this week. Before the pandemic we worked with so many of you in consultation to imagine something that became Let's Create, our new ten year strategy.

Together we created a vision to ensure that everyone of us in this country can benefit from creativity and culture. I said I believed in people in all parts of our sector to make that a reality. Then we had the pandemic. It underlined its necessity. But I know the pandemic has placed a huge strain on our sector, on our freelance community and on those working and leading in organisations.

It is in that tough context that we're sharing more information about our Investment Programme today. I do know that it means more information to digest and to play into your preparation of your NPO or IPSO applications. I know that takes deep thought and care. I promise we'll keep on communicating with you and we'll provide all the support and help we can to you as you begin that work. All I ask you to remember is our Investment Programme is fundamental to making that worthwhile vision of Let's Create a reality. The change maybe hard to navigate, but I believe we will offer something powerful to all communities across England as a result and it will be worth it.

In order to make those changes described in Let's Create, we need resources. So, I want to put some context on the figures mentioned in this week's announcement. Our current annual National Portfolio Organisation budget is £410 million. This increase in government support will give us the opportunity to boost our investment in NPOs and IPSOs outside of London by £43.5 million across the next three years of the investment period.

It comes on top of £200 million confirmed by the Chancellor for Arts Council England to investment through the Cultural Investment Fund and we will be announcing the first recipients of that separate stream of funding.

That new Cultural Investment Fund money comes on top of the lion's share. Distributed from you Arts Council England, it has helped cultural organisations to deal with the crisis, created by the pandemic. And together, all of this represents the biggest investment in culture that we've ever seen as a country.

It underlines the importance of the work that our artists, our arts organisations and museums, and our libraries do every single day.

Over the next three years, we'll invest a total of £75 million more in areas outside of London and that's funded through a mixture of the £43.5 million new money from the Government that I've just mentioned and by moving existing money away from London and into other parts of the country. This is something we want to discuss directly with you here on this webinar today.

By the end of the 2023 to 2026 Investment Programme, we're required to reduce the budget in London by £24 million a year. With that money moving to other parts of the country.

This instruction accelerates the work we have been doing for many years. It means we can support more people in more places living creative lives. We can't hide from the fact that redistributing investment will mean some London based

organisations will lose funding or see it reduced. That doesn't mean we are turning away from our amazing capital city. Our commitment to London will still be substantial. You don't need me to tell you that London is a global city, but with many different villages within it. It is a leading cultural centre with a historic concentration of cultural institutions of all scales. They play an important role in attracting tourists, in innovating and in building this country's creative reputation. They create work that offers deep meaning to our many diverse local communities.

Whilst there will be a smaller budget of London, a reduction of about 15%, we expect that the capital will still continue to receive one-third of our NPO funding by the end of this investment period. Let's Create applies to London just like the rest of the country and our challenge will be to ensure strong and balanced ecology of funding in the capital. As elsewhere, we want the organisations we support to represent London's diverse communities. We won't shy away from addressing that ambition in spite of the reduced budget.

We know that this change will be challenging and we should all recognise that reductions in our London budget will have an impact on the lives and livelihoods of you working in the capital. Decisions will be guided by Let's Create. Those decisions will be taken by our national and area councils in the autumn.

We will look at the whole ecology and all the individual bids before making any decisions. We will take those decisions carefully and fairly and according to our published criteria. I want to finish my section by acknowledging that change is always tough to navigate. Positive for some, but threatening for others, but we are claim about our aim.

It is to support the most ambitious and inclusive cultural organisations old and new across all our cities, towns and villages as we make the Let's Create vision a reality. Everyone deserves the best and meaningful and cultural experiences.

Thank you for listening to me.

I'm going to pass over to Tonya to talk through in more detail what this means for the up-and-coming investment process.

TONYA NELSON:

Thanks, Darren.

Just to reintroduce myself.

My name is Tonya Nelson. I'm London area director. I'm a fast-talking American. I'm going to do my best to talk slowly so you can digest the information I convey in the next couple of slides.

I also want you to know that we are putting a ten-minute break in the So, after I speak there will be a break and then we'll come back for questions. So, that break will provide the ideal opportunity for you, if you have a question, to put it the question box and then we will attempt to answer those questions when we return.

So, the slides I'm going to take you through just highlight the key details of the addendum that was issued on Wednesday and just so you know, there has been no further update. Wednesday is the day that the addendum was published. The addendum provides guidance that sets out how you need to respond to the DCMS' instruction to us regarding our budget. The first thing I want to do is to kind of give you a sense of a timeline, where are we now regarding this investment process.

So, in January, we published a Guidance for Applicants as well as supporting material for this Investment Programme. You should have seen that information on our website and been able to start to digest the direction of travel from that. This past Wednesday, we published the addendum to our guidance, which again tells you how the Government's settlement with us has implications for the application process.

We also issued planning figures to our current NPOs. If you haven't gotten those planning figures, please get in touch with us. There is a couple of points I want to make about the two points about the addendum and the planning figure. One is nothing in the addendum changes an organisation's eligibility to apply. Everything that we wrote in the Guidance for Applicants still stands. The addendum provides additional guidance regarding the budgets that we have available. The planning figures for those of you who are current NPOs, are intended to be for those organisations the maximum you can apply for within your main application.

So, this is how we will assess how much activity you can provide against that planning figure. You can still apply for an uplift in a second section. I also want to make really, really clear that the planning figure shouldn't be considered a promise of funding. We may end up, once we see all the applications, providing you with that level of funding. It may be less. It may be not at all. We have to understand what the whole set of applications look like in making our decisions.

So, as you can see on the slide today, we're having this session for you.

Next Monday, 28th February, the application portal opens. That will be the first time you will be able to submit an application.

During the month of March, we'll be holding further digital briefing sessions.

So, if you don't pick up everything today or you have questions after reading the materials, please do feel you can come to those digital briefing sessions. As I said earlier, I'm going to be providing the highlights, the key points from the addendum, but I advise you to read the whole addendum before making your application.

The portal closes on 18th May.

You have between 28th February and 18th May to submit your applications.

We'll be making our decisions and announcing them by the end of October 2022. I hope that's helpful in positioning you in terms of the timeline.

Next slide, please.

Now, I want to go over with you the key budget information you should know that informed the addendum. First of all, as Darren said, government has confirmed that our Spending Review provides us with an uplift of £43 million to be spent outside of London. We may not spend the entirety of that money on NPOs, but what's important is that uplift cannot come to London.

We've also been asked to redistribute £16 million from our current NPO portfolio to other areas outside of London by 1st April 2023. What that means in practicality is our current NPO budget needs to be reduced by £16 million in the context of us making our decisions around the next NPO round. In addition, £8 million needs to be transferred from London to outside of London by 1st April 2025.

What we're envisioning is that £8 million will be moved through relocations and I'll say more about that later, but essentially, that is about London-based organisations moving outside of London. ACE is told to prioritise investment in the 109 Levelling Up for Culture Places we will abbreviate as LUCPs. I will talk about those in a following slide. Organisations receiving £2 million or more are asked to collectively deliver an increase in activity of 15% to Levelling Up for Culture Places by March 2026.

Thank you. Next slide, please.

So, I just want to again just so to reinforce what the budget redistribution is from London. In 2023, and 2024, the first year of our investment round, £16 million will come out of London's existing budget to be redistributed to NPOs and IPSOs outside of London and where possible Levelling Up for Culture Places.

In 2024/2025, we will maintain that £16 million cut. There is no additional cut in the second year. It is just bringing forward the £16 million that we make in this year's selection.

Now, in 2025/2026 that is when the £8 million shift should take place.

So, that is around the relocation programme and as Darren said in the beginning, the total quantum of shift by 2026 will be £24 million out of London.

So, what does this mean for the application process?

So, first, all London-based applicants will have to indicate on their application via the yes or no question if they are prepared to consider relocating. By checking this box yes, it doesn't mean their' committing to moving out of London. It means you're interested in learning more about what our relocation programme is. We will provide further information on the new relocation programme by the summer. So, you should be rest assured that your application as it stands will be considered on its merits and then you will get further information about the relocation programme towards the end of the process. The programme is designed and will be designed for organisations who do not currently have a public-facing building.

There will be no capital funding available for relocation.

What we will do is provide case studies for organisations that have relocated previously and there may be some funding available for feasibility studies and options analysis, but what I want to emphasise is that Arts Council will be playing a limited role in organising relocations.

We will be not be brokering them, but we are looking for organisations that probably are ready and have existing contacts outside of London, who may feel it is appropriate for them to move. And then in terms of organisations that are receiving £2 million per annum or more, in the application you'll have to confirm via

a new question a commitment to contribute to the 15% increase in commitment to Levelling Up for Culture Places by March 2026.

The next slide, please.

What this means for our decision-making. Well, what we know is London is always competitive in terms of the Investment Programme that we have, but this year, it will be the competition is going to be even more fierce and we're going to have very tough decisions to make.

However, we still expect to bring in new organisations. So, new applicants should not be daunted by this. We will offer uplifts to some current NPOs. Those that are contributing as we said from the start to Let's Create in ways that we feel are worth the extra money. However, what is clear is that we will need to remove or reduce funding from existing organisations in our current portfolio.

The application process is open to everybody right now, but we will be working on a smaller budget. The applications will be assessed on their merits and in line with the criteria set out in the Guidance for Applicants. We are looking for applications that present the best opportunities to deliver on our strategy.

Next slide, please.

I just want to say a little bit more about the Levelling Up for Culture Places.

So, we've identified 109 places outside of London that include our priority places outside of London in this group that we feel are the ones that have a particular need.

As we make decisions about how to invest this additional money, we will prioritise increasing our investment in existing NPOs in those Levelling Up for Culture Places. We will invest in new NPOs in those places and then we will also invest in new activity in Levelling Up for Culture Places delivered by NPOs outside of those places, but working in partnership with them. I think what that means for London is, we want to hear from you if you happen to be doing work or plan to do work in those Levelling Up for Culture Places.

However, your funding will come from the London budget and that means there is going to be limited funding to provide uplifts and it will be unlikely that you will receive an uplift in your funding for doing work in those Levelling Up for Culture Places.

Next slide, please.

I just want to emphasise that we are committed to London's priority places. They are the most need and being the places where we feel that we can really make a difference in terms of culture being able to thrive.

So, just as a reminder, those priority places are Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Croydon, Enfield and Newham. If you are in those places, or if you're doing work that affects those places for you to highlight those in your application.

I also want to emphasise that we are looking to increase and broaden access to culture in terms of the culture, the rich cultural diversity of London. We will be looking for organisations that are diverse-led to invest in whether you are a new organisation or you're an existing organisation in our portfolio.

Next slide, please.

So now, we have a break.

It is now 2:51 so come back at 3:01 and we'll continue with the question-and-answer period.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON:

Good afternoon again, everyone.

We're going to begin the Q and A session.

I hope that you're all able to be back and ready to go again.

My name is Claire Mera-Nelson and I'm Director, Music. I'm facilitating the questions today.

We've had loads of questions coming in and for sure, there will be more questions than we're going to be able to answer right now, but we'll do our best to get through as many as we possibly can and hopefully those that we don't get through today, we will be able to follow up and provide more information about at a later stage. I'm going to kick off the questions by picking up perhaps Simon, if I could start with you. We've had quite a few questions asking whether London, existing

London National Portfolio Organisations have been given a planning figure that is less than their current NPO grant?

SIMON MELLOR: Thanks, Claire.

The answer to that is no.

In general terms every current NPO has been given a planning figure that's very close to their current grant. There are a few exceptions to that, but they're minor.

So, as Tonya was saying very early on, that planning figure should not be read as a minimum level of funding or even a maximum level of funding. Once we get the applications in front of us, we may well take decisions on a case-by-case basis about which organisations we feel we may need to remove entirely and which organisations we feel we may need to offer reduced funding.

For those that we offer reduced funding we will need to work with them during the funding negotiation period to agree a revised activity plan.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Okay.

Just picking up on a question about the funding generally.

I think people would appreciate some clarity on how much funding is available to London organisations overall. I think there is maybe a little confusion about the £75 million which you said would be assigned to organisations outside of London, but a question about how that's made up.

SIMON MELLOR: Okay.

So, there are two different things you asked there, Claire. Let me talk about the budget for London.

The budget for London is approximately £160 million per annum. That's going to be reduced over this next period, this investment period, by £24 million. Hopefully that's 15% roughly. That hopefully gives you broadly a sense of what's going to happen in London. I think the question of how that money is - the money outside of London is a little complicated because it consists of two elements. Some additional funding from the Government, £43.5 million in total over this period and the additional money that's being moved out of London. In effect, the £16 million because if you think the £8

million operates in a slightly different way because it is tied to particular organisations.

I don't know whether that - hopefully that provides a bit of clarity.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Thank you, yes.

I think we'll come back to some other questions that relate to how this is going to work in a moment, but Laura, perhaps if I could turn to you for a moment.

Can you clarify the difference between Levelling Up for Culture Place and the Arts Council's priority places?

LAURA DYER: The priority places, of which there are 54, including five in London, were created through a methodology which you can see on our website which took in a whole load of data around need which included things like funding from Arts Council England, engagement stats, other information and some linked to children and young people. Some to do with economic like indices of deprivation. That data set was looked at to identify a group in need and then we also applied an opportunity scoring. A series of prompts about how ready places were to work with us to really shift the dial in terms of opportunity access and ambition in those places and that's how we created the 54 priority places.

The much longer list, which we're calling the Levelling Up for culture list, includes a whole range of other places outside of London where we looked just at the need data. We just looked at the scores for need and then looked at that on a national basis and added to the list which brings us to the full 109.

Outside of London, that includes both our priority places and this extended list. There is a link on the website that you can have a look at if you really want to delve into that data, but that's the summary.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Thank you very much, Laura. Related to that and I'm not sure whether this is one you'd like to pick up or whether Simon wants to come back in. If an organisation is considering moving out of London, would you prefer them to primarily look at moving to one of the Levelling Up for culture areas or are you open them to moving anywhere in the country?

LAURA DYER: If organisations are looking at relocating, they should look at where it is best for them and the connections that we've got to.

That doesn't have to be one of the Levelling Up places. If there is an opportunity to do, great, but it is what is right for your business and where you've already got the links.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Thank you.

Perhaps, just turning to Simon, there is a question which is about applying for additional investment.

So, uplifts for existing National Portfolio Organisations. Somebody is commenting there is some advice that some London NPOs may receive an uplift, but if they can't apply for additional investment to respond to the new Levelling Up for culture requirement, what is the additional investment section to be used for?

SIMON MELLOR: Thanks, Claire.

Just to be clear, technically, all applicants can apply, whether you're based in London or not for an uplift.

If you've been given a planning figure, you can apply for an uplift. As Tonya was saying, we're very keen to build a portfolio, nationally, but also in London that is more representative of the country. We mean representative through two lenses. In terms of the geography, but in London, the five priority places. But also in terms of the diversity of the leadership of the portfolio. So, what we're interested in - what are the opportunities to increase our investment in diverse-led organisations?

That will be looking at both organisations that are currently in the portfolio, but potentially new organisations and we will be looking for those opportunities in London and then in relation to geography, in London, in particular, what are those opportunities in those five priority places?

That's where uplifts may come in to play, both by geography and in relation to the priority places in London and in terms of diversity.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: We're receiving a lot of questions about relocation and people just wanting to really understand what do we mean by relocation? What's the time pressure around that?

Is it okay if you have a head office in London, but another office elsewhere, could you then apply to be based elsewhere?

I wonder if you could share some general thoughts and

then we can drill in to one or two specifics on that.

SIMON MELLOR: I noted there were a lot of questions about that and not surprisingly.

I will put a bit of context around this just so it is clear. We're going to start designing a programme which will be focused on relocation.

The hesitation we've got, the slight delay is there is some legislation currently going through Parliament at the moment to do with subsidy control. We're just trying to keep an eye on that to make sure we design a programme that is compliant with that legislation, but in broad term, what we have been saying in the addendum is what we mean by relocation is a move of head office and registered office.

They may be the same thing or they may be different things, but both of them have to apply. That's what we mean by relocation. What we've also said is that what we want to see is that engagement to committing locally. That's an important emphasis. We're thinking about the long-term impact here.

As Tonya was saying, we have to achieve this relocation by 1st April 2025. So, what we will be doing is through this investment process, identifying a group of organisations who do two things. Who have submitted applications, and secondly, organisations who indicated an interest and willingness to relocate.

What we're looking at is putting them on to a programme that will continue to support them for two years and enable them to make that relocation. Within that two-year period they will have an opportunity to rejoin the portfolio as an IPSO or an NPO for that third year, but from within their new location. So that by 1st April 2025, they would hopefully be in the portfolio within their new location.

So, the full details, of course, will have to follow once we've got the programme designed and I notice, I just wanted to emphasise the point that Laura was making. This is very much about organisations deciding what is best for them as their business in terms of their location. The Arts Council won't be saying you're going to have to seek permission from the Arts Council to move anywhere.

The Arts Council won't be brokering and organising those things. It will be up to the organisations to do what's best for them as businesses. We are looking at what we can do about two things. One is providing some case studies to give people some insight into a number of organisations who have already moved and also, we're

hopeful that the legislation will allow us to provide some money for feasibility studies for potential options analysis.

What our current reading of the legislation as it is going through Parliament, it won't allow us to provide direct support for organisations to do the relocation.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Thanks, Simon.

There is another question which is about the 15% increase in activity in Levelling Up Culture Places and a question about what that means collectively.

What's the collective increase?

Will some organisations maybe do for than 15% and some do less?

How will this work?

SIMON MELLOR: Thanks, Claire.

So, the way it will work as follows.

It will be a condition of funding that if you're applying to receive on average £2 million or more per annum during this three-year period that you will commit to working - correcting to that collective endeavour to increase to 15%. Once we get into the funding negotiation period, what we'll do is do two things.

First of all, try and establish a kind of benchmark, a base level for where you currently are so we have got a 15% to measure against, but also have a look across all that cohort of over £2 million. We suspect that some organisations will be able to contribute and will want to contribute more than that.

What we have been saying to the government we think it is best to look at this as a whole group and commit to working with them as a group to collectively raise that 15%, recognising that some may be able to contribute more and some won't be able to, but everyone will have to contribute something. But as you can see from the addendum, it is quite wide ranging what we describe as activity. It can include mentoring and support as well as direct activity like productions and workshops, etcetera.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Thanks very much Simon.

Laura, if I could turn back to you and this perhaps picks up a little bit on something you commented on earlier.

Some people are interested to understand if there is any sort of pressure or guidance that they should look at one particular Arts Council area over another. Should they be having conversations with Arts Council colleagues in that area if they're considering moving to it or what should they do?

LAURA DYER: I think just to reiterate. I think it has to be about what's right for that organisation. So, some organisations will already have links, have partnerships on the ground. Some may already be thinking about the potential to move. So, I think that's the primary thing that we would be suggesting. I think we also have to be honest about our capacity. I think we, I am sure, are open to conversations, but we can't offer a full brokering service. I think what we are thinking about and it is early days, so we'll look at this and put this as part of the information that we're getting out, there are local authorities who are very keen to attract that may be looking at centres or clusters or particular facilities they've got, creative industries facilities or spaces that they're keen to attract organisations and businesses to.

I think as Simon says, if we can share that information, if we can put case studies together, if we can at least sign where we know that there are particular organisations or places looking then we're happy to do that. But we can't offer, as we have been talking internally, any kind of formal concierge service.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: We have organisations who work across the rest of the country. There are questions about will they be at a disadvantage if they're London-based and whether that's touring activity or supporting organisations across the country, to what extent is that a disadvantage? If they remain in London that is.

LAURA DYER: The key thing to say as Tonya and Darren alluded to, we will be making the decisions in our area and national council will be making decisions based on the application we receive and how organisations are demonstrating their contribution to Let's Create.

I think though, it is also fair to point out that the pressure in London, for that resource, will be much tougher because of the reduction in funding. So, I think, you know, we are keen for organisations that maybe, their impact is already predominantly outside London, but they may have their head office there. They may do little activity. They may be looking already at having a much greater impact outside of London.

I think certainly, we would be encouraging those organisations to think about whether relocation is viable, but it has to be right for the business and we will be making decisions based on Let's Create and how those applications deliver across the whole of England.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Many thanks, Laura.

Tonya, turning to you, there have been quite a few questions around the definition of diverse-led and just where the lines lie in relation to management, governance, the 51% rule and I wondered if you could just comment on that a little bit?

TONYA NELSON: Yes, sure.

Our definition is where there is 51% or more of the board and senior management are BME, disabled, female or LGBT. That's the kind of definition that we're using around diverse-led organisations. I did see some of the questions around diverse led organisations.

We are really wanting to encourage new organisations that are diverse-led as well as existing organisations to really, to put in an application to demonstrate how they can really help serve diverse audiences and help us be more representative in London where we have got the highest level of diversity to achieve the goals of Let's Create.

So, we're really wanting organisations not to be daunted by this addendum, but to really express in their applications that they are diverse-led and that they are working to help us be more representative in terms of our artistic output and our audiences.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Just picking up on a wider point about uplifts and what sort of conditions are there that might encourage us to be supportive of an uplift to an existing or London-based organisation?

TONYA NELSON: As said before, I think the two big areas around uplifts is priority places.

So, that is, you know, if you are already an NPO in a priority place and you feel you can provide more value to that area, you might want to apply for an uplift. If you are an organisation working outside of a priority place, but a lot of your work is related to that priority place, so you're just over the border, or

you're working some place where your work has been felt within that priority place, we want to hear from you and hear whether or not you could add further value to the priority places.

In terms of our diverse-led organisations, one of the things that has happened over the last couple of years with Covid is what we know is diverse-led organisations have kind of added in their workload in terms of supporting diverse populations during Covid and so many of those organisations will have a lot to offer in terms of supporting work with diverse populations.

We want to encourage them to apply and apply at the levels that they feel they can really deliver the work that they've been doing. Sometimes we have organisations that underbid because they want to get in the door, but we really want them to be able to express what they can do for diverse populations and ask for the money that they need to do to deliver that.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Is there a set number overall of NPOs that we expect to have in London or is it split borough by borough?

How are we going to end up?

TONYA NELSON: The way the process works and this is why it is really important, if after you've had your introductory conversation and feel that NPO funding is right for you, some people are better suited to Project Grants, but once you decide that you are suitable for an NPO, we want to see your application because what we do in this process is we look at a group of applications.

First of all, we assess them on how they meet the objectives of Let's Create and whether or not our investment principles are embedded, but then we take the group and look at the ecosystem of London to see where we get the balance that we need to make sure that we are covering geographically London, but also we're serving different types of audiences and populations. I mean the think that Darren said in the beginning about London is we know that we have London organisations that have impact outside of London, nationally and internationally.

So, it is a complex puzzle we need to put together where we're trying to make sure we're covering the local residents of London, making sure we support the cultural infrastructure for the nation and also supporting that international exchange that makes London a global city for culture.

I'm sorry, there is no formula I can provide to you. It is really a process of bringing together a set of applications and understanding how we can best deliver Let's Create.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Many thanks, Tonya.

Simon, is there a percentage of the funding that is allocated to existing NPOs?

SIMON MELLOR: No. Absolutely not. No.

We started with a flat budget. We don't have additional resources that we can put into the portfolio because we expended so many of our resources during the pandemic running a number of the emergency funds early on. We start with our current budget.

We're delighted that the Government has shown enough commitment to increase, to give us some further money, admittedly to spend outside of London, but that's the direction of travel that we have been on and there is the money that will be moving out of London. The same process applies nationally as it does in London in a sense. What we're looking at is the whole mix where there is no sense in which we're saying X percentage is earmarked for current NPOs and Y percent in new NPOs.

We look at the applications in front of us and we look to see which the ones are to help us deliver Let's Create. We have many, many, many more strong applications that we're able to fund. That's the reality of it.

Then the broad thing we have been saying from the get go, we want our National Portfolio to be more representative of the country by geography and by profile of its leadership.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: With the question of relocation, there is a question that's come up which is what happens if you indicate that you are interested in relocating and by the end of the second year, it becomes apparent that that's just not going to be feasible for you. What are the options for you at that stage?

SIMON MELLOR: I'm slightly nervous talking about a programme that we haven't designed yet, but in our mind, you know, as I said, as I was saying earlier, what we imagine is that organisations on a relocation programme will be given an opportunity to apply to rejoin the portfolio from their new location. If they haven't relocated, they won't be able to apply to rejoin the portfolio. So, in that sense, they will have left the portfolio and it will be like any other organisation that's left the

portfolio, they can of course, talk to us about what other funds might be available, Project Grants, but you won't be able to go back and rejoin the portfolio in London.

CLAIRE MERA-NELSON: Many thanks, Simon. We have only touched the edges of the very, very many questions that have come in. We'll do our very best to find ways of reflecting those questions and our responses back to them as soon as we possibly can. If I could hand back to Darren who is going to close the session.

DARREN HENLEY: Thank you, Tonya, Laura and Simon and to our BSL interpreters.

I want to summarize our next steps and the support we have available to you over the coming weeks and months.

You can visit our website right now where you will be able to access all the documentation and guidance that you need to make your application.

We do know that there is a lot of information online, but it is there to support you. We have been publishing information over a longer period of time to give you as much time as possible to prepare. You will see if you go to our website today, that we have made it clear which of the information is essential for you to read in order to make your application and which of it is intended as helpful background.

All the new applicants to the Investment Programme are required to have an introductory conversation with us before they submit an application, and we are having those conversations right now and you can find out more about them and how to book online. Current NPOs you can have one too and you can book that via your Relationship Manager. We're hosting a number of briefing sessions from 7th to 17th March, we'll dive deeper into the NPO and the IPSO programmes.

Along with some sessions where we will talk you through the templates that you will be required to complete and attach to your application. So, please do come along and join us for those if you can. If you can't, don't worry. They will be recorded, and they will be shared online afterwards.

Last, but not least, we want to say that we're here for you. We know that making an application to this programme is not something that any organisation will take lightly. We understand how pivotal a moment the outcome of this process will be for your organisation.

If you do need any further support, you can contact us. Our Customer Services Team are available to you and they'd love to hear from you either online or on the

phone.

Thank you for listening to us and thank you for your questions.

Please do take good care of yourselves and we will see you soon.

Have a really enjoyable rest of the afternoon and a restful weekend.