

The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust works to improve the lives of people throughout the UK and Ireland, by changing minds through influencing policy, and by changing lives through innovative practice and partnership work. The Carnegie UK Trust was established by Scots-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in 1913.

Since its earliest days the Trust has been committed to supporting access to knowledge and culture. The Trust made a historic investment in the development of libraries and has created and supported many organisations working to promote the arts and culture.

It is timely for the Trust to reconsider its position on **public libraries and access to knowledge**, at a time when libraries are increasingly under threat from cuts in public expenditure. Whether the importance of libraries lies in providing a safe, inclusive community space, in providing access to information and knowledge or in encouraging people to read, there are challenging questions about how services are best provided to meet the needs of those who use them or who may need to use them in the future.

The **role of media** in our society, and how this contributes to our democratic system, is a key concern for the Trust. As part of its 2011-2015 work programme the Trust will consider how to build on the findings of the Carnegie Inquiry into the Future of Civil Society. We are particularly interested in local news media, how to maintain ethical standards in news reporting, how to ensure good governance in news media, and in the critical role that civil society can play.

The Trust has always had a strong interest in supporting involvement in **cultural activities**, particularly where these activities also provide social benefit. The Trust has a long history of providing support for innovative practice, including looking at the role of arts activity in the lives of disabled people, and creating community drama projects, choirs and festivals in deprived areas. The arts are increasingly being recognised as having considerable potential to contribute to wellbeing, as well as being used to support social change, to create social capital, or in therapeutic interventions. The Trust is keen to contribute to emerging policy in this area, and to encourage and support cultural activity which brings direct benefit to those involved.

Sharing Ideas

The Trust welcomes every opportunity to discuss ideas with policymakers, the public sector, voluntary organisations, business, individuals and communities. We are open to innovative ways of working in partnership, where these are appropriate to the aims of the research and to our evidence-based approach to policy development.