

Dear Melanie McGinnis,

I am writing to add my feelings to those of other supporters of the Ulster Orchestra, which is bound to be adversely affected by the Executive's budget for arts funding.

After four years of standstill funding, the proposed budget will only provide an inflationary uplift. Arts organisations such as the Ulster Orchestra need extra funding for their operations. The spiritual, emotional and intellectual contribution that the Ulster Orchestra makes to the lives of thousands of Northern Ireland residents, and to those further afield who hear their music on the radio or through recordings, is an unmeasurable element in people's wellbeing. For my part, it saves me from depression and social isolation, and gives me relief from the disability from which I suffer.

Because of the personal nature of this submission, I wish it to be treated anonymously.

Thank you for your consideration. Please remember that unlike buildings, once an organisation such as the Ulster Orchestra is damaged or destroyed, it cannot be restored as a living, organic and dynamic entity.