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The winner of the 2007 Arts and Culture Trust (ACT) Cultural Development Award, sponsored by Distell, was the Community Publishing Project (CPP) housed at the Centre for the Book (a specialist unit of the National Library) in Cape Town and managed since its inception by Colleen Higgs. The CPP provides advice, funding and technical support to writers and writers' groups in South Africa, to help them develop publishing skills and to undertake the publishing and marketing of works produced in their communities.

Over a six year period 29 books have been published with grants from the CPP. Writers and writers' groups from all regions, working in a range of indigenous South African languages, have received grants and published books independently. In response to daily queries about writing and realising the need for a comprehensive tool-kit for writers, the CPP raised funds for and commissioned experts to contribute to the Centre's pamphlet series for writers. As a result of the constant advice-giving arising from the CPP, Higgs developed, wrote and published **A rough guide to small-scale and self-publishing**. This book has been translated into Afrikaans, isiXhosa, isiZulu and Sesotho. Thousands of writers have been given advice and pamphlets, have had queries answered and have had access to information about publishing options.

Because of the work of the CPP since 2001 and the variety of publications and interventions that have come along with this project, this area is no longer invisible and it has begun to claim an important space for itself.

Publishers use the Centre for the Book and the CPP as a place to send writers to

- so that if they are not able to work with a writer, they know that there is a place that writers can turn to and receive useful advice and practical next steps. The Centre for the Book now has available a set of pamphlets for

writers available in five languages, a **South African Small Publishers Catalogue**, a Writer's Network Blog, and a Small Publisher's Blog.

The other finalists in this category were Art Bank Joburg and Art for Humanity.

An overview of the Arts and Culture Trust

The Arts and Culture Trust (ACT) helps to foster and develop creativity in South Africa through the evaluation and support of arts, culture and heritage projects. Launched just months after the inauguration of the first democratically elected government, ACT is the oldest body established to fund arts and culture in democratic South Africa. Since 1996 more than R12 million has been disbursed in support of 500 projects funded through ACT in all disciplines including, but not limited to, arts administration, arts education, community art, festivals, heritage, craft, fine art, dance, music, theatre, literature and multi-disciplinary projects. Former President Nelson Mandela endorsed the initiative and agreed to serve as the Patron-in-Chief of ACT. In this way ACT was initially known as the Arts and Culture Trust of the President until 1999.

The ACT Board of Trustees, comprised of leading art practitioners and administrators, are tasked with the implementation of funding policies, the evaluation of projects and the allocation of funds. Due regard is given to ensuring a spread of projects across all the cultural and artistic disciplines. ACT also provides bursary funds to formal and informal educational institutions specialising in arts and culture, and these in turn distribute such funds to individual students at their institutions.

The Department of Arts and Culture, Nedbank Sun International and The Vodacom Foundation are the founding trustees of ACT. The Royal Netherlands Embassy is a founding sponsor and Athol Fugard is patron of the Trust. For more information go to www.act.org.za (<http://www.act.org.za/>).