Opera Production Award 2015

Guidelines for applicants

Opera Production Award: application checklist

Use the checklists below to make sure that your application for an Opera Production Award is complete.

Items that are mandatory for all applications (check all of these items)

- ☐ I have filled all of the sections of the application form that are relevant to my application.
- ☐ I have prepared an Opera Production Budget using the Arts Council's template, and have this ready to upload.
- ☐ I have prepared CVs / brief biographies of all key personnel, and have these ready to upload.
- ☐ I have prepared all other required supporting material (as outlined in section 1.7 below) and have this ready to upload.

Items that are mandatory for certain applications (check those that apply to your application)

- ☐ My proposal involves working with children or young people, and I have submitted a copy of my/our *Child Welfare Protection Policies and Procedures*.
- ☐ My proposal involves working with animals, and I have submitted a copy of my/our *Animal Welfare Protection Policies and Procedures*.

Other items that I consider relevant to my application (check those that apply to your application)

- ☐ I have prepared additional supporting material that I believe is relevant to our application (as outlined in section 1.7 below) and have this ready to upload.

Second opinion (check this item)

- ☐ I have asked someone else to check over my application to make sure there are no errors and nothing is missing.

Getting help with your application

- If you have a technical query about using the Online Services website you can email onlineservices@artscouncil.ie
- Answers to common questions about using Online Services are available in the FAQ section on the Arts Council's website at: http://www.artscouncil.ie/en/fundInfo/funding_faqs.aspx
- To watch our YouTube guide on making an application go to http://www.youtube.com/artscouncildemos
- If you require assistance with the content of your application, call the Arts Council on 01 6180200 or email awards@artscouncil.ie
- If you have access requirements, contact the Access Officer on 01 6180219

1. About the Opera Production Award

1.1 Deadline for submission of applications

All applications must be made using the Arts Council's Online Services.

The deadline for receipt of applications is: **5.30 pm, Thursday, 20 February 2014**

1.2 Objectives and priorities of the award

The objective of the Opera Production Award is to encourage new approaches to the presentation of opera to audiences. The award is intended to support the making and presentation of opera productions during 2015, in line with the Arts Council's published policy for opera (available to download from the publications section of the Arts Council website: http://www.artscouncil.ie/en/publications/policy.aspx.

Applicants may seek support for the production of opera at varying scales, such as:

- Main scale opera for presentation to audiences in larger venues
- Small and medium scale opera, for presentation to audiences in small/medium venues.

The emphasis of the award is on encouraging a collaborative approach to opera production based on partnerships between artists, producers and presenters. The term 'producers' here refers to artists/individuals/organisations with a *significant* track record in opera production and the term 'presenters' can here refer to venues, festivals or others. Proposals seeking funding to present opera in unusual 'off-site' locations will also be considered, provided they meet the criteria. In considering proposals, the Arts Council will take into account the range and type of opera to be funded.

Priority will be given to proposals that demonstrate:

- A clear artistic vision
- Experience in professional opera production
- Strong evidence of partnership between a number of 'value adding' partners
- A clear plan for attracting audiences.

1.3 Who is eligible to apply?

The award is open to organisations, groups and individuals working in collaborative partnerships, who have a demonstrable track record in professional opera production.

Applicants in receipt of Arts Council funding via the RFO/AF/APG grant programmes will be eligible to apply, provided it is clear that the activity for which funding is sought is additional to and is distinctively complementary to activity supported by any other funds provided by the Arts Council.

For applications which involve a partnership or consortium, an individual or single organisation must be clearly nominated as the applicant.

The award is open to individuals and organisations who are resident in (the Republic of) Ireland. There are certain exceptions where the Arts Council may deem eligible applications made by those based outside (the Republic of) Ireland. However, before admitting as eligible any such application, the Arts Council would need to be satisfied that the the primary purpose for which funding is sought is to create and present an opera production in the Republic of Ireland.

The Arts Council is committed to equity and inclusion, and welcomes applications from individuals or groups within culturally diverse communities and from people with disabilities.

Who is the applicant?

The applicant is the person or organisation that will receive any grant offered and who will be required to accept the terms and conditions of that grant.

Any grant offered will only be paid into a bank account held in the name of the applicant.

All documentation provided must be in the name of the applicant (individual artist or arts organisation). For example, if you apply to the Arts Council for funding under the name Máire de Barra, then all documentation, including bank and tax details must be in that name. Variations such as Mary Barry or Barry Studios are not acceptable.

1.4 Who is not eligible to apply?

Applicants who do not have a demonstrable track record in professional opera production are not eligible to apply.

1.5 What may you apply for?

Applications will be assessed within a competitive context. Applicants are advised to be realistic in terms of both the level of funding sought and the proportion of overall expenditure that this will represent. Applicants are therefore encouraged to clearly demonstrate how other income streams will contribute to ensuring the feasibility of proposals. Applicants may submit only one application per funding round.

Applicants are advised to contact the Opera team at the Arts Council in advance of submitting an application.

The Arts Council will also consider costs specifically relating to the making of work by artists with disabilities. If you wish to apply for additional funding on this basis, you should provide information with your application outlining what these additional costs are.

How much funding may you apply for?

Applications for an Opera Production Award must be accompanied by a detailed production budget setting out income and expenditure in relation to the proposed production. The maximum amount you may request is the difference between the **total expenditure** and the **total income** you indicate in your detailed production budget.

- **Total expenditure** should include all production fees (including artists' fees), technical costs, promotion and publicity, administration costs, and so on. How you break down the costs of your proposal and allocate resources gives Arts Council assessors a good picture of the feasibility of your project and whether or not it is realistically costed.
- **Total income** should include what you expect to receive from other funders, production partners, box office receipts, programme sales, commercial sponsorship, fundraising, and so on.

It is also important to reflect all in-kind support in both income and expenditure, so reflecting the full and true value of your proposal.

Note on in-kind support	If you expect to receive in-kind support, you need to put a financial value on it so that the contribution it makes to the real value of your proposal is clear. You should think of in-kind support both as expenditure and as income: whatever amount you declare on the expenditure side you should also declare on the income side. Time contributed by directors or board members may not be reckoned as an in-kind cost.

You are asked to indicate income, expenditure and amount requested at three stages during your application:

- Online, when you initiate the application (totals only)
- In section 3 of the application form (totals only).
- In your detailed production budget

Make sure that the totals are the same on all three; and make sure that the amount requested equals TOTAL EXPENDITURE minus TOTAL INCOME.

1.6 What may you not apply for?

Activities and costs that you may not apply for include the following:

- Major capital purchases
- Ongoing core costs
- Activities or costs that do not fit the purpose of the award
- Multiple productions within the same application
- Activities that are more suited to another award funded by the Arts Council or operated by other State agencies such as Culture Ireland
- Activities that have already taken place or that will have commenced before a decision is made on your application
- Activities undertaken for charity fund-raising purposes, for participation in a competition, or for primarily profit-making purposes

- Activities that have already been assessed by the Arts Council. An exception will be made if the Council has specifically advised you to redirect your application to this award. Please bear in mind that such advice is not an indication of a successful outcome.

1.7 What supporting material must you submit with your application?

In order to be considered eligible for assessment under the Opera Production Award, you **must** submit a completed Opera Production Budget, using the Arts Council's template for this purpose. You may download the template from the Opera Production Award page of the Arts Council's website.

Alternatively, please contact a member of the Art Council's Opera Team, who can supply you with one.

You must also submit the following:

- A completed Opera Production Award application form
- Detailed up-to-date CVs or biographies (three pages max.) of those involved in the proposed project
- Written evidence of a partnership approach to production – for example, copies of correspondence between the contributing partners
- Evidence of any financial support including cash and/or in-kind contributions from partner organisations and sponsorship, where relevant – for example, this could include memoranda of understanding, statement of support, or similar documents
- A Marketing Plan, which should include details of the marketing roles and responsibilities of each partner, and details of realistic audience and income targets
- Details of previous relevant work – including recordings, video clips, previous brochures/programmes and reviews.

If you are in receipt of Arts Council funding under RFO, Annual Programming grants or Annual Funding, then you must supply written evidence that the project for which you are seeking Opera Production funding is exceptional and outside the remit of your funded activities.

If your proposal involves working with children or young people then you must provide a copy of your *Child Welfare Protection Policies and Procedures*.

If your proposal involves working with animals, then you must provide a copy of your *Animal Welfare Protection Policies and Procedures*.

If you do not submit the required supporting material, the Arts Council will not be able to make an assessment of your application and it will be deemed ineligible.

Optional supporting material

In addition to the required supporting material listed above, you may also submit any other material you consider relevant to your application – for example, previous brochures or programmes, reviews, critical evaluations, audience feedback, etc.

2. Making your application

2.1 Register with the Arts Council's Online Services

All applications must be made through the Arts Council's Online Services; applications made in any other way (by post, fax or email) will not be accepted.

You must have an Online Services account to make an application. If you do not already have an Online Services account, sign up by filling out the registration form here: https://onlineservices.artscouncil.ie/register.aspx.

Within five working days you will be issued (via email) with a unique ARN (artist reference number) and password which you can use to sign in to Online Services.

Requirements for using Online Services

Your computer and internet browser will need to meet the following requirements to use Online Services successfully:

PC	Windows XP or higher *with* Internet Explorer 7.0 or higher OR Firefox 2.0 or higher
Mac	Mac - Mac OS X v10.5 Leopard or higher *with* Safari 3.1 or higher OR Firefox 2.0 or higher

Please note: You will also need to have Microsoft Word or OpenOffice installed to complete the application form itself. OpenOffice is free software which you can download here: http://www.openoffice.org.

If you cannot meet or do not understand any of these requirements, please contact us for advice as far as possible in advance of the deadline.

Give yourself enough time to complete the application

You should become familiar with the Online Services website well in advance of the deadline and in advance of preparing an application. It is likely that there will be heavy traffic on the site on the final afternoon of the closing date. You should prepare your application and submit it well in advance of the deadline.

Upload times can be much longer than download times. It may take you longer than you think to upload your supporting materials.

There is frequently a high volume of enquiries and phone calls on the day of any funding deadline so if you have a last minute query you may find it more difficult to get through to us.

If you experience technical difficulties at any time while making an online application you can contact the Arts Council for help by emailing onlineservices@artscouncil.ie.

2.2 Fill in the application form

If you have not already done so, download the application form for the award you wish to apply for. The application form is a Word document which you fill in offline (on your own computer). The application form includes guidance on how to fill in each of its sections.

Making your case

In order to make the very best case for why you should receive funding, you should give very careful consideration to what you include in the following sections of the form:

2.2 Summary of your proposal	Give a summary of your proposal (up to three short points). Should your application be successful, this summary will be published on the **Who We've Funded** pages of the Arts Council's website – for that reason, you should keep in mind that what you write may have a wider audience beyond the Arts Council assessors.
2.3 Details of your proposal	What you write here is a key part of your proposal, and should help those involved in assessing your application to understand the full scope of what you want to do and why. It might include entries such as a practical explanation of the activity you propose, your artistic goals and ambitions, the wider context in which you are making the proposal, and any other information you consider relevant.

2.4 Your application and the assessment criteria	Describe how your application meets each of the assessment criteria – see **3.3 Criteria for the assessment of applications** on page 8.
2.5 Locations and venues for your production	List key dates, locations / venues, audience capacities and planned audiences for your production
2.6 Other artists, individuals, groups or organisations involved in your proposal	Identify key artists / groups / organisations involved in your proposal
2.7 Role of each partner in your proposed production	Describe the role of each partner in the proposed production, specifying their contribution

2.3 Prepare the detailed Opera Production Budget

You are required to include a detailed Opera Production Budget with your application. Use the Arts Council's template. The budget amounts you enter are summed automatically to derive values for TOTAL INCOME, TOTAL EXPENDITURE and AMOUNT REQUESTED FROM THE ARTS COUNCIL.

NUMBERS	• Number of performers • Number of stage management personnel • Number of weeks of rehearsal • Number of performances	
UNEARNED INCOME	Income from other funders, production partners, sponsorship, fundraising, etc.	Summed as **TOTAL INCOME**
EARNED INCOME	Income from box office sales, programme sales	
PROPOSED EXPENDITURE	Includes details of: • Venue costs • Production fees • Technical costs • Promotion and publicity • Administration costs • Contingency	Summed as **TOTAL EXPENDITURE**

2.4 Prepare any supporting material required for the application

You are required to include supporting material with your application. Typically, this might include samples of your current work – for example, text, video, images, or sound recordings.

You must submit all such supporting material online; so, if necessary, you need to scan or save material in electronic format.

Acceptable file formats

The following table lists file formats that are acceptable as part of an application.

File type	File extension
text files	.rtf/.doc/.docx/.txt
image files	.jpg/.gif/.tiff/.png
sound files	.wav/.mp3/.m4a
video files	Quicktime/.avi/.mov/.mp4
spreadsheets	.xls/.xlsx
Adobe Reader files	.pdf

For convenience, gather together all the files you need in an accessible location on your computer.

Uploading web links

Please note: any links you provide must be on YouTube. Links to other hosting sites will not be viewed. To provide links to material hosted on YouTube (www.youtube.com), copy the URL (the full address of where your material is hosted on YouTube) into a Word document or equivalent and upload it as a web link supporting document.

Check that the link works from within the document you upload – that is, that it links correctly to your material on YouTube.

If you do not wish material you upload to YouTube for the purposes of your application to be publicly viewable, you can flag your video as 'unlisted' in its settings.

Naming files appropriately

Give all files that you intend to upload filenames that make it clear what they contain or represent. For example it should be clear from the file name whether the document is a CV, a sample text or a review of previous work.

Please submit supporting documents in separate, appropriately named files.

Good file names for an applicant called Jack Russell	russelljack application.doc russelljackWIP.doc russelljack Child Protection Policy.doc russelljack youtube link.doc

The total combined limit for all supporting material uploaded with a single application is **40MB**.

2.5 Make your application online

To make your application online, you go through four main stages. Click **Save draft** at the end of each stage. You can come back to your application and revise it at any time before you finally submit it

1: Choose funding programme and download application form

To start a new application, you click the **Make an application** button on your home page, and follow the prompts to choose the funding programme you wish to apply for and to give your application a unique reference by which to identify it. At this stage you can also download the application form (if you have not already done so.)

2. Request funding amount

At this stage you specify the expenditure and income related to your proposal, and the amount of funding you are requesting. The amount you request should equal **Total expenditure** minus **Total income**. The final figures you enter here should be the same as those you enter in section 3 of the application form.

3. Upload application form and supporting material

Follow the prompts to upload your filled-in and saved application form, your CV and any other required supporting material (see **1.7 What supporting material must you submit with your application** on page 4). You don't have to upload everything at the same time. You can save your application as a draft, and come back to it later.

4. Submit application

When you are satisfied that you have uploaded everything you need to support your application, press **Submit**.

3. Processing and assessment of applications

3.1 Overview

The Arts Council considers all applications, makes decisions and communicates these to applicants in accordance with set procedures. The aim is to ensure that the system for making awards is fair and transparent.

3.2 The assessment process

All applications received are processed by the Arts Council as follows:

1	Applications are acknowledged.
2	Applications are assessed for eligibility, and any that are ineligible are excluded.
3	Adviser(s) and/or staff make a written assessment of the application.
4	Staff recommend application for funding/not funding to Grants Committee.
5	Grants Committee reviews staff recommendations and makes its recommendation for funding/not funding to Council.
6	Council Plenary make final decision.
7	Decisions are communicated in writing to applicants.

Timeframe

The Arts Council endeavours to assess applications as quickly as possible, but the volume of applications and the rigorous assessment process means that it will take up to 14 weeks from closing date to decision.

3.3 Criteria for the assessment of applications

Applications are assessed in a competitive context and with consideration of the available resources. All applications are assessed against criteria of **a)** artistic merit, **b)** how they meet the objectives and priorities of the award, and **c)** feasibility – each of these criteria is described in turn.

Artistic merit

The assessment of artistic merit focuses on the applicant's previous practice as well as on the nature of the proposed activity and might include, among other things, consideration of:

- The quality of the idea and the proposed arts activity as outlined on the application form and in the supporting materials submitted
- The track record of the applicant demonstrated through the CV(s) and other supporting material submitted
- The potential of the applicant demonstrated through the application form and other materials submitted
- The artform/arts practice context in which the activity is proposed
- The ambition, originality and competency demonstrated by the proposal.

Meeting the objectives and priorities of the award

Applications are assessed on how well they meet the objectives and priorities of the award – see page 2 for details of these.

Feasibility and value for money

The assessment of feasibility and value for money considers the extent to which the applicant demonstrates capacity to deliver the proposed activity and the level to which it enhances the impact of public funding. This includes but is not limited to consideration of:

- The personnel involved in managing, administering, delivering the project
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the provision of equitable conditions and remuneration for participating artists
- The involvement of project partners
- The proposed budget

- Other sources of income
- The availability of and access to other resources
- The proposed timetable or schedule.

3.4 Grants Committee

Once staff and advisers of the Arts Council have assessed applications according to the criteria outlined above, their recommendations are sent to the Grants Committee for consideration. The Grants Committee is a sub-committee of the Arts Council, and sits regularly to make funding recommendations to the full Council. Once the Grants Committee has considered and discussed staff recommendations, it will make final recommendations to Council for decision.

3.5 Outcome of applications

All applicants are informed in writing about the outcome of their application.

If your application is successful, you are sent a letter of offer detailing the amount of funding you have been awarded and the terms and conditions of the award. You will also be told how to go about drawing down your award.

The Arts Council receives a large volume of applications and demand for funding always exceeds the available resources. If your application is not successful you can request feedback from Arts Council staff. Eligibility and compliance with application procedures alone do not guarantee receipt of an award.

Unsuccessful applicants are not eligible to apply for another Arts Council award to do the same activity. If the Arts Council feels that the proposed activity would have been more suited to a different award programme, an exception may be made. In such circumstance you will be informed in writing.

Appeals and complaints

If you feel that the Arts Council's procedures have not been followed, check the Appeals and Complaints Procedure, or contact the Arts Council for a copy of the Appeals and Complaints information sheet.

Applicants may appeal against a funding decision on the basis of an alleged infringement or unfair application of, or a deviation from, the Council's published procedures. For details of the appeals process, see http://www.artscouncil.ie/en/fundInfo/funding_appeals.aspx.