Opera Project Award for activities commencing in 2014

Guidelines for applicants

Opera Project Award: application checklist

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

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

- ☐ I have filled all of the sections of the application form that are relevant to my application / proposal.
- ☐ I have prepared up-to-date CVs of all key personnel with the application, and have these ready to upload.
- ☐ I have prepared examples of previous work that I consider relevant to my application, and have these ready to upload.
- ☐ I have prepared a detailed budget setting out proposed income and expenditure for the project, and have this ready to upload.

Items that are mandatory for certain applications (tick 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*.
- ☐ My proposed project involves partner organisations, and for each of these I have a *memorandum of understanding* that I have ready to upload.
- ☐ I have cited financial support or sponsorship in the project budget with individuals or organisations with which I do not have a memorandum of understanding – for these I have prepared evidence of such support or sponsorship, which I have ready to upload.

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

- ☐ My proposal relies on the expertise of other named people or organisations, and I have a document detailing those people and their expertise ready to upload.

Second opinion (tick 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 Project 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: **5.30pm, 29 August 2013**

1.2 Objectives and priorities of the award

The Opera Project Award supports initiatives by professional practitioners in the field of Opera commencing in 2014. The Award is intended to support the development and/or presentation of new work at a small scale across two strands of work.

Strand 1: Opera Development

The purpose of the Opera Development strand is to facilitate the development of ideas for new work in a collaborative context. The emphasis of this strand of the award is on innovation and experimentation. It is intended to support artists and creative teams to develop new ideas over time without the requirement to formally present the outcome of their work to audiences.

Priority will be given to proposals that:

- Focus on developing new ideas through innovation and experimentation
- Demonstrate a focus on various types of collaboration
- Deliver significant development opportunities to practitioners
- Provide evidence that the proposal is of a high artistic quality. The track record of the key artists will be taken into account.

Strand 2: Opera Presentation

The purpose of the Opera Presentation strand is to facilitate the presentation of new, innovative and experimental work created in a collaborative context that offers unique or distinctive operatic experiences to practitioners and to audiences.

Applicants under Strand 2 must be able to clearly demonstrate that the project is feasible on the basis of a commitment from an experienced producer, such as a producing company, a theatre/venue, an established festival and/or other arts organisation.

Priority will be given to proposals that:

- Involve the presentation of new opera
- Focus on presenting opera within new contexts to new audiences or otherwise expand the avenues through which opera reaches people
- Demonstrate evidence of a capacity to successfully realise the project e.g. By the contribution of value-adding partnerships
- Are high quality artistic projects that demonstrate a strong and imaginative approach. The track record of the key artists will be taken into account.

1.3 Who is eligible to apply?

The award is open to individuals and organisations working in Opera. To be eligible to apply applicants must:

- Be resident in (the Republic of) Ireland
- Not be in receipt of funding under any Arts Council recurring grant programmes.

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 outcomes of any such proposal would benefit the arts in (the Republic of) Ireland.

While grant-aided organisations (RFO/AF/APG) are not eligible to apply, it is expected that funded organisations with the capacity to present opera as part of a wider programme (e.g. opera companies, venues and festivals) will play a role in supporting or partnering with applicants for the Presentation strand of the

award (and may play a role in the Development strand). In such instances the applicant must demonstrate that the support offered and the proposed role of the funded organisation is additional to and separate from the activities for which that organisation has received core funding.

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 are not eligible to apply include the following:

- Organisations in receipt of funding under any of the main Arts Council grant programmes (Regularly Funded Organisations, Annual Funding, Annual Programming Grant)
- Individuals or organisations who do not have a demonstrable track-record as professional artists / organisations.
- Individuals currently in undergraduate or postgraduate education.

1.5 What may you apply for?

There are two bands of funding available corresponding to the two strands of the Opera Projects Award:

- Strand 1 - for Opera Development – up to a maximum of €20,000
- Strand 2 - for Opera Presentation – up to a maximum of €80,000

In making your application, you should be realistic in specifying the funding you are seeking and in the proportion of your total expenditure that this will represent. You will need to demonstrate clearly how other income streams will contribute to the feasibility of your proposal.

You may apply for only one strand in any one round. You must clearly indicate which strand you are applying for on the application form.

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. In addition to the normal limits stated above 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 should you apply for?

In applying for Opera Project Award funding, you are required to submit a detailed budget listing all items of income and expenditure relating to your proposed project.

The maximum amount you may request is the difference between the **proposed expenditure** and the **proposed income** you indicate in the budget.

- Proposed expenditure should include all fees, wages, technical costs, promotion and publicity costs, administrative costs, and so on.
- Proposed income should include what you expect to receive from other funders, box office receipts, programme sales, 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:

- On the detailed budget that you submit as part of your application
- Online, when you initiate the application (totals only)
- In section 3 of the Application Form.

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?

You may not apply for more than one project-type award (in any artform/arts practice) in any one round of funding. 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
- Activities which 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 which will have commenced before a decision is made on your application – as it can take up to 12 weeks from the closing date for this award before a decision is delivered on your application, you should not start activities until after this period
- 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, except in cases where the Council has specifically advised you to redirect your application to this award. Please bear in mind, however, that you should not regard such advice as an indication of likely success in your application
- Projects that solely involve the touring of existing productions.

1.7 What support material must you submit with your application?

In order to be considered eligible for assessment for a Opera Project Award you **must** submit the following support material online:

- A completed Project Award application form
- A detailed budget setting out proposed income and expenditure for the project
- Detailed up-to-date CVs (three pages max.) of all the artists involved in the proposed project
- Evidence of any financial support or sponsorship identified in the project budget – for example, this could be a memorandum of understanding, a letter of offer, a statement of support, or a similar document
- Sound recordings and/or video files demonstrating recent work by key artistic personnel
- For proposals regarding new work, the score of the work and/or scores for previous compositions (maximum of three) – these must be submitted in hard copy.

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 support material

In addition to the required support material listed above, you may also submit any other material you consider relevant to your application.

Format for support material

All support material for the Opera Project Award must be submitted online, with the **single exception of hard-copy music scores.** Other hard copy support material will not be accepted. Please follow these guidelines for the different kinds of support material.

Include contextual information for all support material in a clearly-labelled text file.

Hard-copy scores	If you are including a hard-copy music score as part of your application, you must ensure that it reaches the Arts Council before the published deadline. We recommend that you use a recorded delivery service such as An Post's registered post or express post. It must be submitted in an envelope clearly labelled with: ● Your name (individual or organisation) ● Your ARN ● The name of the award you are applying for: **Opera Project Award.**
Video files	For any video files you submit, you must provide relevant contextual information. This might include details of the piece, when and where it was performed, thematic / general comments, the names of performers, how the work was financed (e.g. award, self-financed). Extracts should be no more than three minutes long, and no more than three extracts should be submitted.
Music or sound recordings	Give the names of performers, and detail the instrumentation where appropriate. Please title the files accurately using the following naming convention: *Composer – performers/ensemble – track name*.

2. Making your application

2.1 Register with the Arts Council's Online Services

All applications for project awards 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.

To register as a user of Online Services, go to www.artscouncil.ie, choose the Online Services tab and follow the prompts for **New user? Sign up.**

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 and submit well in advance of the deadline.

Upload times can be much longer than download time. It may take you longer than you think to upload your support 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 an award 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 Detail 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 is important to cover both the artistic and practical aspects of your proposal. This might include details of your artistic goals and ambitions, the wider context in which you are making the proposal, and any other information you consider relevant. It might also include practical details such as schedules, information on key partners, and any other administrative, technical or financial details you consider relevant.
2.4 Your application and the assessment criteria	Describe how your application meets each of the assessment criteria for a project award – see **3.3 Criteria for the assessment of applications** on page 9.

2.3 Prepare any support material required for the application

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

You must submit all such support 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 for a project award.

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

Gather together all the files you need in an accessible location on your computer.

Exceptions

For some artforms and art practices there are exceptions and special cases in relation to the requirement to submit all material online and in relation to acceptable file formats. Any such exceptions are noted in section **1.7 What support material must you submit with your application?** on page 4.

Uploading web links

You may provide links to material hosted on YouTube (www.youtube.com) instead of uploading the material directly.

To do this, copy the URL (the full address of where your material is hosted on YouTube) into a Word document or equivalent and upload that 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.

Good file names for an applicant called Jack Russell	russelljack Opera project application.doc russelljack performance clip.mp4 russelljack Opera project budget template round 2.xls russelljack Child Protection Policy.doc russelljack youtube link.doc

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

2.4 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 and on your budget spreadsheet.

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 support material (see**1.7 What support 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	The application is acknowledged.
2	The application is checked for eligibility – all eligible applications then progress to the assessment stage.
3	Adviser(s) and/or staff make a written assessment of the application.
4	Adviser(s) and/or staff recommend an application as shortlisted or not shortlisted.
5	A peer panel reviews all shortlisted applications and makes recommendations.
6	Decisions are authorised by Council.
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 12 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 application form and the support materials submitted. 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 and those involved in the project as well as the nature of the proposed arts activity and might include, among other things, consideration of:

- The quality of the idea and the proposed arts activity
- The track record of the applicant and the artistic personnel involved in the project as evidenced in their CVs and other support material submitted
- The potential of the applicant and the artistic personnel as evidenced in the application form and the support materials submitted
- The ambition, originality and competency demonstrated in the proposal
- How the application demonstrates innovation, experimentation and collaboration.

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

The assessment of feasibility considers the extent to which the applicant demonstrates capacity to deliver the proposed activity. This includes but is not limited to consideration of:

- The track record of 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 extent of involvement or commitment of identified project partners
- The proposed budget
- Other sources of income

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

3.4 Peer panels

The purpose of peer panel meetings is to allow for a diversity of expert views to inform the decision-making process. Peer panels normally consist of at least three external adjudicators with relevant artform and/or arts practice expertise.

Each meeting is usually led by an Arts Council member acting as non-voting chair. Arts Council advisers and staff attend as required, and those involved in the initial assessment of applications are on hand to provide information. Panellists receive a summary of each shortlisted application in advance and have full access to all submitted material on the day of the assessment.

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, however, 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.