

Making Great Art Work

Investment Plan 2017



Welcome to the Arts Council's *Making Great Art Work* Investment Plan for 2017.

This plan sets out our approach to budget planning and provision for 2017 in the context of our *Making Great Art Work: Three Year Plan 2017–2019*. It describes how we will prioritise investments in the twelve months ahead, and how this will inform our financial decisions and allocations. The intention is to ensure that our investments are sustainable in number and scope; are proportionate to projected resources; and are made on the basis of clear criteria, using transparent processes.

Our annual investment plan and our annual report, published at either end of the budgetary process, will demonstrate how our financial decisions and allocations are consistent with our strategic objectives and with the detail of our three-year plans.

This Investment Plan sets out the basis for significant change. It signals the beginning of a process of radical adjustments to established investment patterns, budget allocations and funding relationships. This approach is informed by the findings of *Inspiring Prospects*, the Arts Council's Strategic Review 2014, which found that the Arts Council needs to "change its investment strategies and behaviours," and to "take greater account of recent and current developments, and be less reliant on precedent as the basis for funding decisions".

2017 is the first year of the *Making Great Art Work Three-Year Plan 2017–2019*, which in turn is the first iteration of a ten-year strategy. The Arts Council is committed to changing its investment behaviours over the coming years. While amounts of funding may or may not change in certain cases, the basis on which funding is offered will change in most cases.

2. Strategic Priorities for 2017

The Arts Council's Strategy, *Making Great Art Work*, plots the coordinates for the development of the arts in the decade 2016–2025. The Three-Year Plan 2017–2019 describes the investment strategies that we will prioritise during 2017–2019.

Following consultation with the sector and other stakeholders in response to the publication of *Making Great Art Work*, we have now identified our key strategic priorities for 2017 as follows:

2017

1. Identify gaps in our investment in artists and adjust our investment strategies and criteria, paying particular attention to emerging and mid-career artists.
2. Increase our investment and award levels in bursaries, mentorships and residencies across a range of settings to create more and better opportunities for artists.
3. Develop a bursary scheme for emerging artists.
4. Establish a number of strategic partnerships with communities for whom access to the arts is difficult.
5. Introduce a programme to support the arts sector to grow and diversify audiences and participants across all areas of the arts.
6. Increase our investment and prioritise our commitment to children and young people across all artforms.
7. Increase our investment in small festivals to support greater participation in the arts throughout the country.
8. Agree a Memorandum of Understanding with RTÉ and other cultural institutions which will increase public engagement in the arts.
9. Increase our investment in non-recurring support for artists.
10. Review our existing funding relationships with venues in partnership with Local Government.
11. Implement a promotional campaign in partnership with the sector on the intrinsic and societal impact of the arts in Irish life.
12. Increase investment in our ICT and information management systems and capacity to ensure we can effectively and consistently track and report on our investments across a range of measures and categories to advocate better the value of the arts and the work of artists.

3. Budgetary Approach

The Arts Council's grant from government for 2017 is **€65.1m**, which represents an increase of **8.3%** on the 2016 amount. When savings brought forward and deferred commitments are taken into account, the available budget for 2017 is **€66.9m**. This increase will enable us to deliver on a number of its strategic priorities, while at the same enhancing its investment relationships with a number of key organisations and partners.

As has been well documented, the reduction in overall funding to the Arts Council between 2008 and 2014 was 34%. Recent years have seen an improvement, and as such there is greater scope for us to think strategically about framing our investment allocations in the coming years.

In order to reflect the strategic priorities as set out at Section 2 above, our budget for 2017 will be allocated across four key areas:

Making Great Art Work strategic priorities	<i>The Artist & The Public</i> Festival and events schemes (to enhance access and public engagement). Individual artists (bursaries, projects, commissions, residencies, schemes). Local authority partnership (local authority grant funding, invitation to collaboration). Young people, children and education. Community focused programmes. Open Call programme (to support work of ambition and scale).
Arts area expenditure	Grants to arts organisations; Opera Production Award; Laureate for Irish Fiction; Chair of Poetry; Artform initiatives.
Other arts spend	The Abbey; Aosdána; Touring; Artform expertise; Arts Audiences; Cultural diversity; Special initiatives.
Fixed costs	Salaries and administration costs.

For 2017, based on the grant from government, the total anticipated amount to be spent in each of the areas is as follows¹:

FIGURE 1 – Breakdown of 2017 expenditure

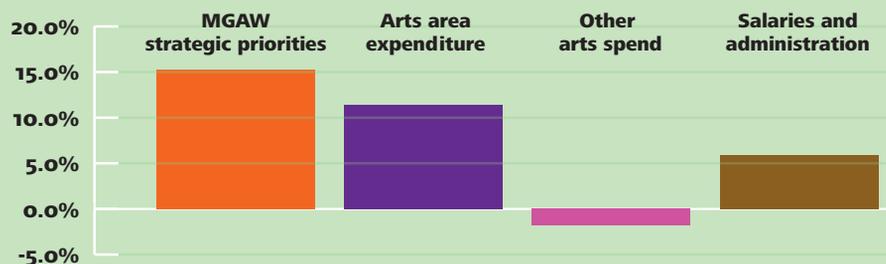
	2017 €m	Proportion	Change from 2016 %
MGAW strategic priorities	19.0	28.4%	+15.2%
Arts area expenditure	29.9	44.7%	+11.4%
Other arts spend	11.7	17.5%	-1.8%
Salaries and administration*	6.3	9.4%	+5.9%
TOTAL	66.9		+9.3%

**This includes the proposed increased investment in ICT and information management systems.*

FIGURE 2 – Proportional breakdown of 2017 expenditure



FIGURE 3 – Percentage rates of change to budgetary areas from 2016 to 2017



¹ These figures are approximate and are for illustrative purposes only. Amounts may vary based on the outcome of the grants funding process.