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Imagine

a creative Ireland

where the arts are
dynamic and self-reliant

valued and nourished
by society

and open for all to
make or enjoy

The Arts Plan 2002–2006

How to read the Arts Plan

The Arts Plan follows a logical planning narrative.

The *Chairman's preface* and the *Context* that follow set out our values and our sense of the key issues; these sections sketch the environment in which the Arts Council is working.

The *Context* leads into a focus on our vision, a long-term aspiration for the arts in Ireland. This long-term view is developed into a medium-term statement of strategic intent, followed by the objectives of this plan.

Building on the evidence we have gathered and our fundamental purposes, we identify sustainability as the key direction to follow in the coming five years. This will be the means by which we will move towards realising our vision.

That overall theme of sustainability is developed into *Objectives* that will inform every aspect of the Arts Council's activities and will contribute to enhancing the sustainability of the arts in Ireland.

These objectives will be delivered in two ways:

- We will undertake initiatives that range across the full spectrum of our work – for example, in developing audiences for the arts. These objectives for the arts are described on pages 12-23.
- In each of the different artforms, we will interpret the overall objectives in a way that is sensitive to the particular circumstances that apply to that artform. The artform objectives are described on pages 26-43.

Each objective will be addressed through a number of inter-linked strategies. In turn, each strategy will be realised through specific actions, and expressed in the form of development programmes or grant programmes. Financial provision for these is outlined in the budget on pages 46 and 47.

We will report regularly on performance. To facilitate this, we indicate a range of appropriate measures at the end of each section.

We will set targets that will define what we mean by the successful achievement of our objectives, strategies and actions: these will be published separately in the Arts Council's Corporate Plan.

The analysis on which this approach is based, and a more detailed discussion of our intentions, can be found on our web-site www.artscouncil.ie

Chairman's preface

We in the Arts Council believe in the unique value of the arts in society. They unlock the imagination, stimulate curiosity, they provoke, open minds to new ideas. They enhance life.

We look forward to an Ireland in the future where the arts are at the heart of education. We value the idea that people should be able to achieve their full creative potential. We want to improve the recognition of 'being an artist' in Ireland as an authentic human vocation.

Such a wide remit means that many people, organisations and institutions have a legitimate call on public attention and resources in developing the arts as part of the wider cultural framework. As the key organisation charged with supporting and developing the arts, we have to make sure we select the right things to do, and we gather the best possible information to help us make choices and decisions. We have consulted widely in the preparation of this third plan for the arts, and engaged in real and valuable dialogue about priorities.

Ultimately, of course, we must exercise our judgement in deciding priorities. Demands for our support always greatly exceed what we have to give, and we must make choices. We have done our best to make the processes through which we have reached our conclusions as open as possible, and, using our website in conjunction with other mechanisms, we will continue the process of public information.

Experience shows that the failure to establish priorities can lead to dissipated effort and unrealisable expectations. We need to exercise our judgement in selecting the strategies that will enable us to make a real impact on developing the arts.

Also, our experience shows that we need to establish a balance between what we can or should do, and what is best left to others.

It is welcome that the arts are taking their place on so many others' agendas, and we look forward to making partnership even more central to the way we work in the future – especially with local government, and with the Department of Education and Science.

This has led us to re-state our goals, in the particular context of opportunity and challenge presented at the beginning of the new century, and at the point where our organisation moves into its second half-century. We could make choices based on geographic, spatial or sub-sectoral priorities; we could move forward incrementally, increasing support to all those whom we assist at present; or we could focus largely on new ideas in the arts.

But by building on careful dialogue with people who care about the arts and with other agencies in the public sector, we have chosen to lead on the principle of sustainability.

Over-reliance on the Arts Council as a funding source is unhealthy, and diversification of resources for the arts must be a priority over the term of the plan. At the same time, we need to supplement grant-based support with the many other kinds of support, recognition and encouragement that artists and arts companies need in order to thrive.

This requires us to complete the transformation of our own organisation, something we embarked on with the preparation of our second plan, and its adoption by Government. The third Arts Plan, marking as it does the beginning of our second half-century, represents an unparalleled opportunity to make a difference for the arts in Ireland.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick J. Murphy." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long, sweeping underline.

Patrick J Murphy
Chairman / Cathaoirleach

Arts Plan 2002-2006

Context

In 1951, Ireland was among the first countries to set up an arts council, as a means of providing recognition and support for the arts. As Ireland has grown in wealth and confidence, the bond between the arts and national identity has matured. The state has proliferated its supports, empowering local government to provide resources, encouraging citizens to give to the arts, providing tax incentives to support individual artists.

Irish cultural policy, of which arts policy and provision is a part, has expanded in recent years. Local involvement in arts provision is at last beginning to grow. The role of the arts in education is gaining recognition with curriculum reform. Major international festivals and other emblematic events promote international recognition of Ireland's contemporary culture. The move towards multiple sources of policy intervention enriches recognition and support for the arts.

This makes it both possible and necessary for the Arts Council to change its role. Increasingly it is becoming a partner in what is now a joint effort. Sometimes it is withdrawing altogether from a funding role to one where the focus is on general guidance and development. The emergence of other players makes it more necessary, rather than less, that an overall strategy for the arts is overseen with clarity and imagination.

The Arts Council has always played a role as intermediary between the state and the arts sector. With each successive arts plan, it has found itself interpreting this role afresh – not least with the promise of a further revision in 2002 to its enabling legislation. It is a continuing strength of the arts in Ireland that State *support* has been separated from State *control*.

Building both on its own values and experience, and on detailed dialogue with the sector, the Council has an opportunity to set out its long-term vision for the arts in Ireland in this plan.

It encapsulates our best estimate of what the future holds for the arts in Ireland, together with the objectives we should pursue and the strategies we should develop.

Economic growth has funded substantial additional public spending on the arts in recent years. Taken together with the diversification of policy interests, this has impelled a transformation in our role. We have moved from being driven purely by the need to provide hand-to-mouth funding to meet short-term demand to a situation where we can focus on priorities for the long-term development of the arts in Ireland.

Taking a long view, we have set out in this plan our aspirations for the next five years, informed by an even longer-term vision. Funding may or may not grow at a pace to match demand from the sector or from the public. In this context, we will be committed to meeting long-term needs while sensitive to the immediate budgetary constraints.

Accordingly, this plan sets out a flexible structure that looks to the fundamental strengths of the arts in Ireland – the artists, the organisations bringing their work to the public, the broad spectrum of arts activists in all walks of life. It supports their long-term sustainability. Regardless of how quickly we can travel, this is our direction and our destination.

Vision

In the long term, our vision is for a creative Ireland, where the arts are dynamic and self-reliant, valued and nourished by society, and open for all to make or enjoy. We have translated this into a plan for the next five years that builds on the strengths of the arts and the body of support and recognition they already enjoy.

Statement of strategic intent

As a direct result of increased State support over the past decade, the arts in Ireland have been transformed. Thanks to the involvement of national and local government in the provision of arts buildings and services, the arts are becoming a nationwide reality.

The critical issue now is how best to build on this progress. While there will always be a need for funding to foster artistic growth in and for itself, artists and arts organisations need different kinds of supports to realise their full potential. Local authorities and others are looking for expert support to enhance their own burgeoning role in arts policy-making and support. The seedlings of growth nourished over the last decade need to be planted on in more fertile ground. Looking at the arts in Ireland today, we see low living standards, with many artists and companies too often battling against the odds. There is little or no investment in audience development. Organisationally, we see skills shortages and under-resourced managers and artistic directors. The transition from emergent young company to stable maturity defeats too many. The contributions of remarkable individuals are too often dissipated where no provision has been made for succession planning at management or board levels.

Our strategic response to these conditions is to plan for greater *sustainability* in the arts. Financial supports, in the form of grants and awards, will never grow as fast as the levels of legitimate demand. In any event, a sustainable arts sector does not require money alone. It also depends on the imaginative and creative potential of artists and artistic innovators, on the skills and knowledge that reside in artistic work, on the quality of management or policy-making, on the networks and other facilities created by communities of interest, and on the quality of the infrastructure.

Ours is a wide canvas. Our support needs to extend across the full spectrum of promise and achievement, whether nurturing new talent, creating a climate that supports risk and experiment, or fostering the capacity to thrive in an ever more competitive environment.

Arts Plan 2002-2006

We must, for instance, move away from a situation in which artists and arts organisations depend excessively on a single source of funding. We must encourage a situation where their long-term viability is underpinned by a mixture of supports from various sources and success with audiences. In turn, we must work with others to build that wider cultural agenda.

Achieving such a balance will entail considerable change in what the Arts Council does. Eventually it will mean spending relatively less on funding relationships and relatively more on initiatives geared to realising national arts developmental objectives. It will mean greater clarity around the purpose for which grants are given, and more effort being put into assessing their impact.

Objectives

To promote the sustainability of the arts, we will focus our resources on these six overall objectives:

- Make an arts career a realistic ambition for excellent and innovative artists.
- Broaden and enrich participation in the arts.
- Raise standards in arts leadership and management.
- Broaden and enhance audiences for the arts.
- Extend the international impact and success of Irish arts and artists.
- Work with others to help bring the arts closer to local communities.

This plan describes the detailed objectives, strategies, actions and measures of performance that will allow us and others to make decisions, monitor implementation and evaluate impacts.

Unlike its predecessors, this plan includes specific provision for the professional expertise required to deliver it. This underlies the importance of transforming our own executive structure.

The evidence and analysis base for the plan are to be found in a series of more detailed planning statements for each of the high-level objectives listed above, and for each of the artform areas in which the Arts Council is actively engaged.

See www.artscouncil.ie

Objectives for the arts

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Make an arts career a realistic ambition for excellent and innovative artists

Until now, our pattern has been to provide direct financial support to individuals, to provide grants to artists' service and resource organisations, and to favour production companies and promoters that offer opportunities to artists. We have also compensated for the absence of vocational education provision in many areas, even at undergraduate levels.

Despite considerable financial commitment, and the large numbers of people and organisations working to improve conditions for artists, these barriers remain:

- Working conditions for artists, including wage and fee scales, facilities for developing, making and showing work, tax structure and social welfare support, are inadequate and often discriminatory, making it very difficult for people in the sector to maintain their careers in Ireland. Few artists can afford to invest in pension planning.
- Efforts to pursue a career in the arts are inhibited by disjointed public policy on education and professional development, earnings and mobility.
- Creative and innovative programming is sometimes constrained by a lack of confidence and capability among producers and presenters of artists' work.
- The insecurity of artists' earnings does not sustain them in innovative and ambitious work. For many, this increases reliance on Arts Council and other public subsidies.
- More than sixty small organisations provide information, advice and other services to artists: limited resources mean that their efforts are dissipated and sometimes duplicated.

The Plan

Improve artists' economic security and status.

- Support new work and improve financial stability, through awards and bursaries.
- Support artistic innovation and production, through awards for artist-led projects.
- Improve the quality and availability of spaces for creating, producing and presenting work.
- Support Aosdána to augment its membership to reflect the full range of contemporary creative practice.
- When funding organisations, specify standards for remuneration, professional development, physical resources and other services for artists.
- Publish information bi-annually on artists' welfare, pension levels, taxation, and mobility opportunities.

Provide incentives to artists of significant quality to develop artistically.

- Encourage the development of artistically ambitious work.
- Advocate better education and professional training for artists and provide awards for this in Ireland and overseas.

Strengthen capacity among programmers and producers to undertake artistically ambitious programmes.

- When funding organisations, promote better programming by agreeing minimum levels of artistic and technical expertise.
- Test models for in-service training and continuing professional development, aimed at enhancing artists' career opportunities.

Promote greater public-policy coherence on artists' needs for educational, creative, technical and professional development supports.

- Fund artist organisations to deliver services and resources in Ireland and overseas.
- Analyse the legal, regulatory and competitive pressures on artists with a view to advocating appropriate governmental reforms.
- Research and campaign for proposals for changes in legislation and regulations to benefit artists.
- Campaign, with artists' representative bodies, to influence the approach of state bodies to supporting art as a profession.

Measures of success:

- Improved artistic income levels.
- Adherence to minimum fee levels.
- Greater number and diversity of artistically ambitious programmes.
- Increased audience participation in artistically minded programmes.
- Uptake of training and mobility supports for programmers and producers.
- Effective cooperation between government departments and agencies to support artists.

Broaden and enrich participation in the arts

All people engage in creative activity at some stage in their lives. The Arts Council celebrates and acknowledges this, and we have directed our support to ensuring that the experience can be artistically challenging.

This includes assisting artists to work with communities, with young people and in schools. It includes assistance to organisations focusing on amateur and voluntary activity, and to arts organisations that make participation a central part of their work.

But:

- Poor provision for the arts in formal and informal education limits opportunities for people to experience or engage with the arts: the Arts Council's remit and resources cannot (and should not) compensate entirely for these deficiencies.
- There are many opportunities for participation in the arts, but few are characterised by a high quality of artistic experience for people participating.
- Support for participation is often short-term, episodic and project-based. It fails to transfer proven models of excellence to mainstream provision.
- Artists are inadequately supported to make work in collaboration with communities; opportunities to foster greater participation are thereby missed.

The Plan

Improve the skill-base of good artists who wish to work in arts participation.

- Support artists to broaden the range of their professional experience of arts participation internationally.
- Make curriculum development proposals to third-level institutions, aimed at providing artists with skills in arts participation practice.
- Document and disseminate best practice in participation work.

Extend and enhance the arts experience of young people in the formal and informal education sector.

- Build capacity in arts organisations to enhance the experience of primary teachers in arts programming.
- With the National Youth Council of Ireland, enhance the capacity and scope of the National Youth Arts Programme.
- Disseminate best-practice models of arts in schools, through local authorities and other local agencies.
- Develop and campaign for proposals to achieve better arts in education.
- Commission a study on the values of youth arts practice with a view to encouraging the development of youth arts.
- Research, with the Science Council, the potential for young people to participate in the arts via new media and technologies.

Promote high-quality arts participation.

- Assist organisations to operate sustainable high quality participation programmes.
- Set up a new programme for participation, based on sustainable models already piloted, and aimed at offering high quality artistic experiences.
- Document the level and quality of amateur arts activity, with a view to developing a range of direct supports for the amateur sector that reflects the Arts Council's concern with the artistic process and aesthetic values.

Foster higher standards of interaction by arts organisations with the community.

- Support youth ensembles and resource organisations that offer high-quality artistic opportunities and links to the professional arts infrastructure.
- Prioritise community projects that show commitment to high artistic standards.
- Encourage working partnerships between the arts sector, the voluntary sector and public agencies as appropriate, so as to raise standards of arts participation and broaden the reach of artists and arts organisations.

Pilot and implement a system of supports for local providers engaged in arts participation projects.

- Enable delivery at local level of artists' residencies and artists in schools, youth and community projects; devise and deliver a programme of development support, and withdraw from direct funding.

Measures of success:

- Improved artistic standards of participation practice.
- Increase in the number of professional artists developing their work in arts participation.
- Higher standards of arts participation.
- Increased arts programming in schools.
- Greater local involvement in support for youth arts.
- Better quality, quantity and diversity of community involvement in the work of local arts organisations.
- Increased local delivery of residency schemes.

Raise standards in arts leadership and management

The arts sector in Ireland has begun to professionalise only in the last ten years. Sub-sectors (like dance, literature) are fragmented, companies tend to be small and are governed by voluntary boards. Arts programming is unduly variable and key business areas such as marketing and information systems are under-developed. Managers are generally drawn from a practising arts background. While many have gained considerable practical experience, they lack access to relevant training and professional development opportunities.

Until now, the Arts Council has responded to the training needs of individuals, has published best practice guidelines for managers and boards, and has included organisational development as part of grant-aid supports.

But still:

- Most arts organisations employ fewer than ten people. Many do not have the functional and managerial expertise they need, and have limited experience in cooperating to acquire and share this expertise.
- Cooperation around shared interests and issues is poor, leading to a failure to articulate and lobby effectively for public and political support.
- Most organisations remain excessively reliant on Arts Council and other public sources of funds, potentially compromising their autonomy and viability.
- Low recognition of the importance of good governance militates against focused direction, organisational performance and succession planning.
- Arts employment is unstructured and uncertain, and talented individuals are not sufficiently acknowledged, rewarded and motivated. Alongside this, the recent proliferation of new arts venues has highlighted a skills shortage.

The Plan

Improve professional, managerial and organisational development capabilities.

- Commission and support the delivery of a certified training programme to enhance management, arts programming and leadership skills.
- Phase out once-off management bursaries for arts managers, in favour of the integration of training into business plans.

- Assist individual managers to extend their professional experience and contacts overseas.
- Enable organisations to interact more with the private sector – sharing skills, experience and resources.
- Publish a range of relevant guidance materials for arts organisations.
- Set minimum levels of expenditure on staff training in multi-annual funding agreements.

Promote networking, cooperation and the strengthening of professional resources.

- Encourage audience development and sales consortia, through capital funding for IT infrastructure and project funding for the employment of functional expertise.
- Create a chief executives' forum – to promote best standards of practice, develop relationships between managers, and monitor in-service training needs and delivery.
- Establish a mentoring programme for venue managers.
- Subsidise corporate membership of relevant professional bodies and networks.

Foster best-practice standards of governance in arts organisations.

- Review current structures and, through funding agreements, promote better standards of governance.
- Review and revise the right to audit an organisation's standards of governance as a condition of significant grant-aid.

Measures of success:

- Adherence to best management practice, as appropriate to size and function of organisation.
- Favourable trends in the profile of non-Arts Council income as a percentage of total.
- Increased number of initiatives to promote the pooling of resources and sharing of overhead costs.
- Adherence to best standards of corporate governance.

Broaden and enhance audiences for the arts

Arts audiences are typically well-educated and affluent. This social composition has remained largely unchanged over the years, although recent investments in infrastructure and local service provision have transformed the regional spread of the arts.

Arts Council policies have concentrated on production and distribution, and have in the main not tackled the fundamental challenges of sustaining and building the quality of audience experience, or broadening its social range.

This demanding area of public policy needs to be tackled through the arts programming and management capacities of key organisations. The following issues are as relevant for them as for the Arts Council:

- Public education in, and information and awareness of the arts are limited, restricting the range of choices people can make.
- Artistic programming is typically divorced from audience development in arts organisations.
- Policy is constrained by the lack of data on numbers, behaviours and profiles of audiences.
- The quality of services, programmes and facilities for the arts varies regionally.
- The rapid growth in regional arts venues has not been matched by skilled artistic programming and management capacity, or by the availability of high-quality arts production.

The Plan

Strengthen the capacity of arts programmers and producers to expand, broaden and build loyalty among their diverse audiences through creative producing, programming and marketing.

- Designate a percentage of grants to arts venues and festivals for marketing and audience development.
- Provide incentives for more touring, longer tours, and more collaborative planning between venues and companies.
- Commission work relevant to specific audiences, and build audience engagement through residencies.

- Create sub-sectoral or locally-based marketing and promotional arts consortia.
- Build experience and practical knowledge of effective methods of audience development.
- Initiate a major public art commissioning programme, with other public-sector partners.

Help arts organisations to encourage and facilitate the critical engagement of audiences.

- Encourage greater expertise in education, audience outreach and documentation programmes.
- Turn the *Critical Voices* visiting critics project into a recurring programme.
- Devise and implement mechanisms for assessing the levels of audience appreciation.

Improve public awareness of the enjoyment and benefits to be derived from the arts.

- Encourage arts organisations to experiment with new methods of broadening and diversifying the social reach of audiences.
- Promote recognition by the general public and by the public and private sector institutions of the value of the arts.
- Encourage arts organisations to improve public awareness of the arts locally.

Measures of success:

- Deeper knowledge of audience characteristics, attitudes and behaviours.
- Increased audience loyalty.
- Improved audience-building skills.
- Better standards of presentation, programming, mediation and audience care.
- Increase in the number of events and opportunities for critical engagement by audiences.
- Increase in the uptake by audiences of events and opportunities for critical engagement with the arts.
- Increased public awareness of the enjoyment and benefits to be derived from the arts.

Extend the international impact and success of Irish arts and artists

Increasingly, artists and arts organisations find there is an international dimension to their work. The Arts Council has moved from a position of providing limited support to international activity to one where it consciously promotes the artistic and organisational development benefits of working internationally. Indeed, those not able to meet the challenges of operating internationally or not influenced by international trends are at a significant disadvantage.

Therefore our strategies for audience development and for artists' support now have an international dimension. Specifically, we want to help artists and arts organisations to optimise the benefits of successful artistic trading internationally.

The strategic challenge now is that:

- Given our small population base, the artistic viability and success of many Irish artists and arts companies is dependent on international mobility and networking.
- Most arts organisations are too small and inexperienced to invest in and exploit the market intelligence needed to target and enter new overseas markets.
- There is no integrated framework of public-policy provision to support international arts activity.

The Plan

Strengthen the capability of indigenous arts organisations to identify and exploit opportunities overseas.

- Support training, targeted at organisations with the potential to develop internationally.
- Through multi-annual funding agreements, ensure that financial supports are available for those organisations whose economic and artistic sustainability in the future will be strengthened by international activity.

Enhance the ability of artists and arts organisations to build an international profile.

- Provide companies with the means to recruit artists internationally, to plan international co-production and touring, and market their work overseas.
- Assist artists and arts managers to develop overseas contacts, networks and career opportunities.

- Assist the production of materials to support overseas audience development.
- Introduce a visiting critics' and curators' programme, to develop international opportunities for Irish artists and arts organisations.

Ensure the availability of market intelligence.

- Improve the Arts Council's international information and advisory services, especially through the world-wide web and through networked relationships with like organisations.
- Enhance the information and advice from artists' service and resource organisations.
- Create an international database of country-by-country market intelligence, through exchanging information with other arts councils.

Influence public-policy providers to rationalise international approaches.

- Encourage greater coordination of policies and financial supports.
- Establish, with overseas cultural agencies in Ireland, new mechanisms for supporting international projects.

Measures of success:

- Improvement in the capability of artists and organisations to identify and exploit artistic and market opportunities overseas.
- Increased contribution of international operations to net earnings.
- Greater access to and recognition from international critics.
- Wider geographic reach of overseas promotions.
- Better dissemination of marketing information on international opportunities.
- Greater coherence among government departments and agencies on international strategies and policies.

Work with others to help bring the arts closer to local communities

More and more people are engaging with the arts. The Arts Council, together with local authorities, has helped create a nationwide infrastructure for local arts development – recently augmented by the construction and refurbishment of a network of arts venues. But this trend has acquired a momentum that has outstripped the capacity of either the Arts Council or local authorities to respond effectively to future and growing requirements.

Key issues are:

- Public expectation and the need for more and better arts provision, created by the growth of arts activity locally and the investment in arts buildings.
- Local arts organisations and policy-makers often lack the resources (experience, information, skills, staffing levels) to fulfil this expectation.
- Arts planning locally and nationally is made particularly challenging by the number of different bodies responsible (including social partners, such as voluntary sector and community development agencies), the varied standards and approaches adopted, and the absence of linkages between plans.
- New structures in local government offer considerable potential for local arts planning to be better integrated.

The Plan

Ensure coordination nationally and locally.

- Coordinate responses to the needs of local arts organisations and national providers within artforms.
- Ensure that national resource organisations provide appropriate services and advice to local arts programmers.
- Negotiate five funding and service agreements per year with local authorities, based on shared priorities that link national strategic priorities with local and artform development needs.
- Promote the exchange of experience – using networks, consortia and publications.
- Agree with local authorities and others the responsibility for local delivery of grants, schemes and development supports, based on a shared agenda.

Increase the role of partners and other sponsors in sustaining the arts locally.

- Prioritise funding to organisations that exhibit best practice in local arts development.
- Research the local social and economic impact of artistic events and festivals.

- Negotiate a sustainable financial profile for arts venues, to ensure the viability of the physical infrastructure. This will form the basis of multi-annual funding of venues, and be part of the national spatial strategy for the arts.
- Implement with partners the forthcoming Exhibita and Auditoria studies, with particular reference to touring, venue management and the capital infrastructure.
- Establish an incentive funding scheme for the provision of rehearsal workspaces and studios for the arts.
- Establish an incentive funding programme for local authorities regarding support for festivals.

Improve the expertise, advisory and informational resources available locally to artists and arts organisations.

- Establish with partners a web-based database of public art, with guidelines for best practice in commissioning.
- Monitor standards of best practice for education, outreach, audience and arts participation.
- Initiate audits of local arts every five years, to provide high-quality statistical information.
- Study the feasibility of a national arts advisory service.
- Deliver a programme of information workshops for arts professionals.

Assist local agencies in procuring new resources for arts and culture.

- Publish information to help local agencies identify new financial resources for arts.
- Publish a study of experiences in other countries on how local agencies can identify new financial resources for arts and culture.
- Pilot new ways of helping local agencies to procure new resources for arts and culture.

Measures of success:

- Greater coherence in purpose and in support services among local and national arts providers.
- Increased provision of resources to artists and arts organisations from other sources.
- Improved local availability of expertise, advisory and informational resources.

Artform objectives

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Make architecture central to our way of life

The practice of architecture is complex. It is framed on the one hand by the context of spatial planning and design for the built environment, and on the other by economic, social and commercial imperatives. At its best it is characterised by high artistic ambition.

The Arts Council has long had a role as a prescribed body with the power to comment on planning applications and development plans. In recent years public policy for architecture in Ireland has been explicitly articulated by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands; this in turn enables a greater clarity about the role of the Arts Council.

Despite recent advances, formidable challenges remain:

- There is almost no provision in primary or post-primary education to develop people's understanding of architecture – its form, role, language or aesthetics.
- Low levels of public critical awareness result in little demand for buildings of architectural significance, even in buildings for the arts.
- There is no formal recognition of aesthetic value in planning legislation, and local authorities often lack architectural expertise.
- Compared to other countries, Ireland offers limited opportunities or supports for artistic ambition and development of architects.

The Plan

Offer incentives to architects of significant promise to develop artistically.

- Support emerging gifted architects to extend their experience of architecture internationally.
- Explore new ways of advocating or supporting artistically ambitious architecture.

Raise public engagement with architecture.

- Support a resource organisation and publishers to provide materials to help increase public appreciation of architecture.
- Examine the feasibility of a centre for architecture, to enhance public engagement with architecture and urban design.
- Initiate a youth residency programme within youth services.

Advocate higher standards of architectural design in the built environment.

- Support more architects to apply principles of good design, through funding of architectural resource organisations and publishers.
- Devise a mechanism for identifying important modern buildings, and for advocating their protection in local development plans.
- Support local authorities in producing development plans.
- Analyse the role of prescribed organisations under the Planning Acts, recommend collaboration and cooperation among them, and publish criteria by which the Arts Council selects applications for comment.

Advocate higher design standards in the physical infrastructure for the arts.

- Through the Arts Council's role under planning legislation, comment on significant arts buildings.
- Encourage collaboration between urban designers and the planning and arts staff of local authorities.
- Offer expert architectural input to the development of arts buildings.

Influence curriculum development and delivery in architecture.

- Support architecture in schools, including residencies and teacher-support programmes.

Measures of success:

- Increased international recognition of Irish architects through exhibitions, competitions and commissions.
- Increased public and commercial interest in and appreciation of high quality architecture.
- Improved quality of new building and urban design.
- Increased attention to artistic considerations in development plans and other infrastructural policies.
- Improved standards in the physical infrastructure of the arts.
- More opportunities for young people to become aware of and enjoy architecture.

Promote dance as a vibrant and enjoyable art form

In the last decade the reputation of Irish dance has spread worldwide. In Ireland recognition for dance as an art form has grown and more dance is being presented. But prevailing negative attitudes to dance, particularly as a career, seriously restrict developments within this artform. Another section in this plan (traditional arts) is concerned with traditional dance.

The Arts Council has extended the range of its support for dance. This includes not only direct assistance to choreographers, dancers and dance production companies, but also more recently a recognition of its rehearsal and other choreographic development needs.

But:

- Absence of positive promotion of dance within education seriously restricts the development of dance infrastructure.
- Lack of retraining and professional development for those reaching the end of their performance career is an enormous waste of artistic potential.
- Opportunities for Irish choreographers are severely limited, both at home and abroad.
- Lack of access to suitable working spaces limits the capacity to train, to make new work, and to rehearse and produce work, particularly in areas of high dance activity.
- Public knowledge and appreciation of dance is low, despite the large numbers taking part in a wide range of dance activities.
- Programming, audience development and marketing strategies have failed to yield significant results, especially outside Dublin and Cork.
- Dance organisations are over-reliant on Arts Council funding.

The Plan

Advocate better education and training for dance.

- Support youth dance ensembles that are capable of providing excellent professional development experiences.
- Complete a baseline study of levels of demand, provision and take-up of dance education, to advocate comprehensive professional training in dance.
- Persuade education authorities to provide undergraduate dance training.
- Phase out undergraduate awards; introduce re-training awards for mature artists.
- Build a model for vocational dance education.

Improve professional development for dance artists.

- Assist choreographers to find new work opportunities in Ireland and beyond.
- Extend Aosdána to incorporate the membership category of choreography.
- Create opportunities for post-graduate or in-career professional development, and for choreographic development.
- Enhance professional services available to dance artists.

Encourage better dance promotion.

- Stimulate more and better theatre dance programming.
- Support better marketing and audience development planning.
- Support training for venue managers to build capacity to programme dance.

Enhance knowledge about, and critical appreciation of, dance as an artform

- Assist Irish dance writers to extend their field of expertise – in particular, through international exchange.
- Undertake a marketing initiative to improve the profile and appreciation of dance, and build audiences for dance.

Create a better physical infrastructure for dance.

- Ensure dance specifications are adequately developed in the brief for dance buildings.
- Support local authorities to develop facilities and resources for dance.

Measures of success:

- Increased provision and take-up of education and training for dance within the formal education sector.
- Increased employment of dance artists.
- Increases in the number of dance performances, in the number of venues performing dance and in audience sizes.
- Reduced reliance by dance organisations on funding from the Arts Council.
- Improved quality of dance programming.
- More positive and informed attitudes to dance as an artform.
- Improvement in facilities for dance within existing and new venues.

Nurture film as art

The level of public policy interest and investment in film has grown steadily in the last decade.

The Arts Council confines itself to the cultivation of creative experiment in film (the Irish Film Board/Bórd Scannán na hÉireann is responsible for the development of the industry more broadly). Together, the two bodies are concerned to broaden the range of film available to Irish audiences.

From the Arts Council's perspective the key issues are:

- The investment-driven climate for film and TV production does not provide opportunities for artistic innovation and experimentation.
- The commercial exhibition system for cinema limits the range of film available to audiences.
- The limited programming expertise and physical facilities for cultural cinema, especially outside major urban areas, constrains the quality of the audience experience.
- International promotion of Irish film artists' work is hindered by poor access to international film festivals, fairs, screenings and other opportunities.
- The potential impacts of transformations in production and exhibition technologies have not yet been fully grasped.

The Plan

Support the production of experimental and innovative work of high artistic ambition.

- Assist young film makers to make film.
- Assist the development of new work, through support for film artists.
- Develop proposals aimed at the establishment of a €1m. equity fund for productions.
- Through grants to resource and facilities organisations, support the availability of training and technical resources for film artists.

Improve access to international platforms for Irish film artists and their work.

- Assist individuals and companies to develop international opportunities.
- Identify the most effective means of supporting Irish film overseas, and develop new supports as appropriate.

Foster an attractive investment environment for exhibiting arthouse film.

- Research and develop a public-private partnership funding model for exhibiting arthouse film.
- Influence the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to change the cost base of the certification of arthouse film.

Improve the skills, knowledge and infrastructure for film programming and exhibition.

- Extend in-service training for venue programmers.
- Focus financial support for organisations that present cultural cinema through Irish-made and non-English language productions.
- Improve the quality of projection facilities.
- Set standards for new and refurbished arts buildings and exhibition facilities, making them suitable for film.
- Create a database of all films funded by the Arts Council since 1973 and facilitate access to them.

Improve the audience for cultural cinema.

- Support the design and delivery of high quality and sustainable educational programmes in film-making and appreciation.
- Through grants to festivals, promote wider access to best quality international cultural cinema.
- Research the feasibility of a new programme of film exhibition subsidy.

Measures of success:

- Increase in the number and kind of artistic or experimental films made and exhibited.
- Increased level and diversity of funding opportunities used by film artists.
- Increase in the number of Irish artistic or experimental films being shown abroad.
- Higher overseas earnings by Irish film artists.
- Greater public policy coherence for improving access to international platforms for Irish film artists and their work.
- Emergence of at least one new dedicated facility for cultural cinema outside Dublin.
- Increase in the skills and knowledge of cultural cinema programmers.
- Improvement in the quality and quantity of physical facilities for exhibition.
- Increase in the number of film studies programmes in primary and secondary schools.

Increase the audience for literature

Irish writing in English enjoys an undisputed international reputation. High levels of book sales suggest that reading is popular, but serious engagement with literary work remains a challenge.

Wishing to enable new writers and new texts to be developed in Irish and English, the Arts Council primarily supports works of the creative imagination, literary biography and literary criticism. We are also concerned to promote the sustainability of Irish publishing, in the face of global competition.

We see these as the key issues:

- The high level of functional illiteracy in Ireland is a serious barrier to the enjoyment of literature by everyone.
- The distinctive values of thought, communication and expression to be found in contemporary literature in Irish are diluted by the paucity of writing, publishing, critical comment, translation and readership in Irish.
- The level of international recognition for Irish writing is high, but very few Irish writers can make a living from publishing their work.
- Succession planning has become critical for a generation of founding owner-managers in Irish literary publishing. This has serious implications for Irish literature, which is dependent upon publishers willing to publish work of interest to Irish readers.
- Limited scale, editorial expertise and marketing capacity militate against the capacity of Irish literary publishing houses to compete internationally.

The Plan

Promote literary readership.

- Work with An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council and others to encourage more people to engage with contemporary literature.
- Negotiate an agreement with bookseller and publisher associations to track sales of books by Irish writers in Ireland and overseas in any language.

Enhance the literary contribution to literacy programmes.

- Improve the availability of reader development texts and other materials of high literary quality.

Build the capacity of literary publishers to sustain operations.

- Focus support on publishers who set succession programmes in place, engage specialist staff and develop sound international strategies.

- Support publishers' and writers' resource organisations to promote
 - the sale of rights of Irish published books,
 - international author tours,
 - an international awareness of Irish literature in translation,
 - improved training programmes,
 - better co-ordination of Irish book publishing promotions overseas,
 - research into readership behaviour in both languages.
- Create incentives and supports for emerging publishers, and for professional development in editorial skills.

Increase the number of people engaged in creative writing in Irish.

- Stimulate new writing of a high quality in Irish.
- Champion creative writing in Irish in secondary schools.
- Improve editorial and production values by Irish-language publishers, focusing on marketing and promotion.
- Develop new Irish-language writing workshops.
- Create a three-year university-based Irish-language writer-in-residence programme (to replace the Arts Council's existing annual scheme).

Improve access to promotional platforms for Irish writers and their work, at home and abroad.

- Assist writers to build international readerships, and literary promoters to develop international relationships.
- Develop twinning relationships with prominent literary festivals overseas.
- Improve access for Irish writers to promotional platforms such as reviews and interviews on radio, TV and print media, festivals, book fairs, competitions and awards, point-of-sale promotions, including signings and readings, libraries and residencies.

Measures of success:

- Increase in the readership and greater breadth in the range of books read by Irish audiences, including young audiences.
- The establishment of a system for tracking trends in numbers of books by Irish writers sold in Ireland and overseas.
- Higher literary content in literacy programmes.
- More effective cooperation by Irish publishers to produce and promote literary work in Ireland and overseas.
- More sustainable opportunities for creative writers in Irish.
- Improved access for Irish writers to promotional platforms for literature in Ireland and overseas.

Raise the quality and quantity of music-making

Music in Ireland is characterised by a wide diversity of professional and voluntary practice, and forms part of the programme of venues, festivals and specialist concert promoters across the country. Another section in this plan (traditional arts) is concerned with traditional music.

The Arts Council has concentrated on career training, on improving the professional and organisational supports for composers, performing artists and concert promoters, and on supporting ensembles to complement the work of the RTÉ performing groups.

But still:

- The small population and hence the audience base in Ireland constrains the careers of Irish composers and performers.
- There is poor provision for music in primary and post-primary education, and limited pre-professional vocational education.
- There are high levels of amateur participation in music in Ireland but variable opportunities to improve musical skills.
- Music in Ireland has been driven by the vision of highly motivated individuals and by high levels of voluntary commitment, including unpaid professional inputs – but this limits its sustainability in the future.

The Plan

Support the career development of performing artists and composers.

- Provide awards to assist composers to make new work.
- Provide bursaries to help interpretative artists of promise to realise their artistic potential.
- Support long-term engagements between Irish composers and significant performing groups, along with other artistic producers.
- Seek further opportunities to join with others in supporting musicians-in-residence, led by local partners and others, based on the prototype developed in Sligo.

Improve the quality of music education within the formal education system.

- Work in collaboration with others to improve music education in schools.
- Work with third-level institutions to improve music training and education for performing artists, composers and teachers.

Support international promotion of Irish performing artists and composers.

- Encourage reciprocal commissions, tours, exchanges of artists and other international activities.
- Focus resources on artists and performing ensembles with the capacity to co-promote internationally and tour overseas.
- Assist music organisations to develop international profile and sustainable performing opportunities for Irish artists.

Enhance the artistic quality of amateur music-making.

- Support music participation through supports to resource and membership organisations and local authorities (in substitution for direct funding of amateur ensembles).
- Increase public awareness of the value of music in peoples' lives.

Strengthen music organisations to provide a better infrastructure for music.

- Promote better governance and management development among music resource and production companies.

Measures of success:

- Improvement in the earnings and career prospects of performing artists and composers.
- Improvement in the musical skills of primary school teachers.
- Increase in student uptake of music at second level.
- Increase in the number of Irish performing artists and composers being heard abroad.
- Greater public policy coherence for improving access to international platforms for Irish performing artists and composers.
- Increased support for amateur music-making by resource organisations and local authorities.
- Increase in the number and range of supports offered by music organisations to performing artists and composers.

Make Irish opera viable

A small number of companies, all operating seasonally, provide the bulk of professionally produced opera performances in the country, and one has toured overseas with considerable success. They are all dependent on state support, provided by the Arts Council, RTÉ, and the Department of Education and Science. Occasional opera productions or opera education activities are undertaken by other organisations: some of these have been supported with Arts Council grants. Other performances of live opera are produced by commercial promoters and/or venues bringing in touring opera from overseas, and by local semi-professional or amateur companies, generally without direct public subsidy.

The challenges of all the performing arts disciplines are to be found in this exceptionally costly artform:

- Irish artists in opera lack professional training and career development opportunities at home.
- The production base and by extension the audience for opera is limited because companies lack the financial, management and infrastructural capacity to develop year-round programming.
- The absence of an institutional base for opera has limited the development of an indigenous repertoire.
- The scale and relative costs of opera production create uniquely heavy demands on public sector supports, on sponsorship and on box-office earnings: this makes the practice of opera barely sustainable in Ireland at current funding levels.

The Plan

Improve training and professional development opportunities for Irish opera artists.

- Assist opera artists to avail of appropriate professional development opportunities overseas.
- Based on an audit of the opera training provided by Irish third-level music institutions, and the vocational training path of Irish artists in opera, advocate with education authorities better professional training provision for opera in Ireland.
- Assist Irish companies to develop long-term training and career development for local opera artists, in partnership with local education institutions.

Strengthen the governance and improve the quality of strategic planning in opera.

- Complete a strategic review to redefine and refocus Arts Council policies and supports for opera.
- Explore with RTÉ and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland the potential for greater cooperation in the provision of opera throughout the island.

- Help production companies to improve artistic and business planning.
- Encourage opera companies, venues and other opera producers to identify and pursue common strategies, and to promote opera in Ireland.

Strengthen the ability to present new work by Irish artists, particularly composers.

- Ensure opera companies and programmers have the skills and resources to present new work.
- Identify potential funding partners for commissioning of new Irish opera.
- Facilitate performances overseas of successful work by Irish composers.

Strengthen the capacity of opera companies and programmers to extend and diversify their audience base.

- Improve support for marketing and audience development, including the promotion of best international practice.
- Collect and analyse data on audience numbers, profiles, behaviours and demand.

Measures of success:

- Increased opportunities for graduate and postgraduate training in opera in Ireland.
- The presence of a successful professional training scheme at one or more Irish opera companies.
- Adherence to best management practice as appropriate to size and function of organisation.
- New collaborative projects between companies and promoters.
- Implementation of agreed new touring policy for opera.
- Increase in the number of commissions to Irish artists, and more performances of their work at home and abroad.
- More opportunities for audiences to experience the entire opera repertoire, including contemporary work.

Increase audiences for a theatre of high quality and artistic ambition

Theatre is among the most developed of arts sub-sectors in Ireland, with hundreds of professional practitioners, and more than eighty production companies operating professionally. Thirty-five of these are based in urban centres around the country and the remaining forty-five are based in Dublin, as are the leading international festivals. More companies are touring their work internationally, and playwrights have produced a substantial body of work that has entered the international repertoire. There is a lively youth theatre movement, and an extensive network of amateur companies and resources.

Despite the extensive level of theatre activity, and the considerable achievements of artists, artistic producers and venue managers, the sector faces some formidable challenges:

- The range of training, networking and support mechanisms for individual theatre artists, technicians and theatre management in Ireland is inadequate.
- Theatre organisations (including venues, production companies, youth theatres and resource organisations) are under-resourced, overstretched, and over-reliant on the Arts Council for income and support. Many are struggling financially and artistically.
- With few exceptions, theatre companies lack the capacity to increase, extend and build loyalty and discernment among audiences, thereby limiting opportunities for the public to realise in full the potential of theatre-going in Ireland.
- Theatre in Irish, whether professional or amateur, has been in decline for many years, in terms of repertoire, artists and audiences.

The Plan

Improve training and professional development for established and promising theatre practitioners and artists.

- Advocate improved provision for certified professional training in Ireland in the full range of theatre skills.
- Provide assistance to directors and scene designers to develop their practice.
- Devise and introduce mentoring supports for mid-career theatre practitioners.
- Replace existing supports for undergraduate study in Ireland with awards to assist theatre artists to have access to professional development opportunities overseas.
- Prioritise grant supports to production companies that contribute to the professional development of theatre artists.

Promote a more productive, safe and equitable environment for theatre artists.

- Prioritise grant supports to companies that provide safe, fair and equitable employment conditions.
- Support the dissemination of best practice standards through professional associations, resource organisations and interest groups.

Build viable organisations capable of sustaining artists and artistic ambition, building repertoire, and developing a diverse audience base.

- Through grant supports, improve the quality of rehearsal and other artists' facilities.
- Explore the impacts on theatre artists of regulatory, legislative and competitive conditions, to advocate reform as necessary.
- Provide grant and other resources to help build the resource base for theatre practice, in particular management development, artistic and business partnerships, critical discourse and international exchange.
- Promote training in areas of audience development (for example, marketing, box office, front-of-house and customer services).
- Provide appropriate supports for significantly enhanced marketing and audience building.
- Research theatre-related needs of the arts in education, while continuing to support organisations dedicated to theatre in education and theatre for young people.
- Modify grant programmes in the light of the recommendations of the Auditoria report on the infrastructure for the performing arts.
- Complete and implement the findings of the North/South Irish language theatre review.

Measures of success:

- More educational and professional training opportunities for theatre practitioners and artists.
- Improved quality of theatre productions.
- Adherence to minimum wage and fee levels for theatre practitioners and artists by theatre management.
- Improved income support environment for theatre practitioners and artists.
- Improved physical infrastructure for theatre practitioners and artists.
- Positive trends in audience numbers and in artistic programming.
- Higher levels of domestic and international touring.
- Increased amount and diversity of income sources.

Conserve, renew and enrich the traditional arts

Traditional arts (music, song, dance and storytelling) in Ireland enjoy high levels of involvement at all levels in society, and high international recognition. The tradition and its repertoire are renewed through creation and performance to high standards of originality and virtuosity on the part of a number of leading exponents, and is also expressed and disseminated through broad popular participation. In recent years, there has been a marked trend towards professionalisation, including the emergence of commercial management structures, especially in response to the competitive performance environment in Ireland and overseas.

In a public policy context where a variety of supports are provided elsewhere, the Arts Council's response to the traditional arts is directed towards supporting the maintenance and enrichment of repertoire, promoting high standards of performance, and increasingly towards enhancing the quality of audience engagement.

These are some of the issues for the Council in providing strategic support for traditional arts:

- Traditional artists rely uniquely (for the renewal of repertoire, technical skills, stylistic development and innovation) upon access to the materials of traditional music and dance that are frequently informal or personal in nature.
- While there is a very large potential international audience for traditional arts in Ireland and overseas (including exchange opportunities), traditional artists typically lack the resources to exploit them.
- Despite a broadly distributed and relatively informal system for transmitting traditional forms and materials, traditional arts suffer from the absence of a widely understood and well-articulated critical language of appreciation.

The Plan

Promote access to collections, archives and documents of traditional arts as resources to performers and teachers.

- Help archives and other resource organisations provide the best quality access in all media to source materials of traditional music, story and dance.
- Explore new mechanisms for collecting, documenting and disseminating traditional arts in all forms.

Support the artistic and aesthetic development of traditional artists.

- Provide awards to assist traditional artists to develop their skills and create work.
- Support master classes, concert performance and other mechanisms to disseminate the repertoire and the interpretation of traditional arts.

Support the career development needs of traditional artists.

- Provide mobility grants to artists of high potential or ability to develop their professional profile internationally.
- Work with third-level education institutions and other public agencies to improve in-career management supports for traditional artists.

Promote critical discourse on traditional arts.

- Commission or support the publication of new writing and critical discourse about traditional arts.
- Encourage the development of critical writing and debate about traditional music and dance.

Measures of success:

- Increased accessibility and usage of traditional arts archives and similar resources.
- Effective collaboration with third-level institutions in Ireland and elsewhere on the promotion and development of critical and aesthetic appraisal in the traditional arts.
- Improved earnings for traditional artists.
- Increased presence of traditional artists at major international events.
- Increase in the volume and quality of critical discourse about traditional arts, domestically and internationally.

Cultivate the audience for visual arts

The visual arts in Ireland have grown in scale and importance over the past fifteen years. The number of working artists has increased and there has been an improvement in the infrastructure of studios, workspaces and exhibition facilities countrywide. The revision of the primary school curriculum for visual arts is an opportunity to extend and enhance the experience of the visual arts for small children.

The commercial galleries play an increasing role in developing the international profile of contemporary artists. A growing number of artists benefit from the increasing affordability and integration of digital technologies into making and disseminating work. New forms are constantly emerging, as are opportunities for working across disciplines, and internationally. The maturation of the visual arts sector depends on a growth in the audience for visual arts within Ireland and internationally, and an improvement in artists' earnings.

The Arts Council has focused its support to the visual arts sector through bursaries to artists and grant-aid to organisations that provide facilities to artists and represent their interests. Galleries and other spaces for the exhibition of work have also been an important part of the Council's portfolio of supports.

Despite these recent advances, formidable challenges remain:

- Many professional visual artists lack suitable and secure studio facilities and spaces for making work.
- Currently, commissions and sales create enough earnings for only a small number of artists to make a living from their artistic work.
- Galleries, exhibition producers and other commissioners of visual arts are inadequately resourced to mediate work to the public, and to provide documentation and other services to the artist, including international promotion and marketing.
- The international profile of the visual arts in Ireland, while it is growing, is largely limited to the work of a small number of prominent artists.

The Plan

Improve earnings and supports for artists.

- Through grants to resource organisations, galleries and publishers, improve services and opportunities for artists to make, show and sell work domestically and overseas.
- Advocate and provide supports to improve continuing professional development.
- Devise and promote networking opportunities for artists and others working in the visual arts.
- Advocate and encourage better commercial conditions, for example through improved systems for royalty collection, intellectual rights protection and the wider adoption of exhibition payment rights.
- Encourage more people to buy and commission contemporary art.

Improve the capacity of galleries, curators, and arts producers to build audiences.

- Through grants to galleries, festivals and publishers, promote a more energetic approach to audience development.
- Promote opportunities for curatorial development via professional training, specialised seminars and international exchange.

Augment the delivery of the primary curriculum.

- Develop materials and mechanisms to promote best practice standards for the visual arts in education.

Build Ireland's international reputation for visual arts.

- Provide mobility grants to artists, critics and curators for export marketing and participation at major international events (exhibitions, art fairs, conferences).
- Support the production of promotional and critical materials.
- Provide supports for inward visits by critics and curators.
- Research and produce a proposal to establish a major international exhibition in Ireland.

Increase the contribution of local authorities and others to the supply and quality of studios and workspaces for artists.

- Enhance the quality of local planning for the visual arts, and provision for artists' needs.
- Identify alternative spaces and work opportunities for visual artists.

Measures of success:

- Improvement in the range and source of earnings of Irish visual artists.
- Improvement in the quality of programmes offered by galleries, arts centres and other visual arts producers.
- Increase in the number of Irish artists exhibiting internationally.
- Enhanced international critical attention to visual arts in Ireland.
- Improvement in the supply and quality of studios and workspaces for artists.

Making it happen

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Budget

Expenditure over the five years of the plan has been linked to development programmes for each of the six objectives of the plan, to four grant programmes for organisations, and to our own communications and administration costs. The staff costs associated with the delivery of development and grant programmes are included in the respective lines for these activities.

The criteria whereby grant expenditure is linked to the objectives of the Arts Plan are published separately on our website www.artscouncil.ie and elsewhere.

For comparative purposes, total projected expenditure is shown alongside spending totals in the period of the last plan (which was three years' duration).

At the beginning of each year, in light of available income and other prevailing conditions, the Arts Council will produce an implementation plan setting expenditure and outcome targets. At the end of the year, we will report on the achievement of these.

	1999-2001	2002-2006
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES	€	€
Artists' supports	13,565,900	29,178,000
Participation, arts & education	411,000	4,577,000
Arts management & organisation development	60,100	2,195,000
Audience development	961,500	6,062,000
International arts development	1,020,500	3,912,000
Local arts development	6,644,300	15,553,000
GRANTS PROGRAMMES		
Resource & facilities organisations	22,801,900	44,402,400
Venues	42,412,700	99,968,600
Production companies	24,750,000	63,833,400
Arts events & festivals	8,547,700	26,706,400
INFORMATION, RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATION	1,739,500	4,633,000
ADMINISTRATION		
Non-programme pay costs and staff development	1,479,700	1,899,200
Other running costs	4,620,500	11,080,000
TOTAL	129,015,300	314,000,000

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES	€	€	€	€	€
Artists' supports	3,170,000	4,684,000	6,050,000	7,194,000	8,080,000
Participation, arts & education	542,000	665,000	1,000,000	1,190,000	1,180,000
Arts management & organisation development	256,000	329,000	484,000	526,000	600,000
Audience development	655,000	669,000	1,338,000	1,690,000	1,710,000
International arts development	630,000	512,000	730,000	940,000	1,100,000
Local arts development	2,034,000	2,265,000	3,137,000	3,852,000	4,265,000
GRANTS PROGRAMMES					
Resource & facilities organisations	7,720,400	8,111,000	9,086,000	9,485,000	10,000,000
Venues	15,364,600	16,734,000	18,765,000	22,585,000	26,520,000
Production companies	10,476,400	11,918,000	12,651,000	13,628,000	15,160,000
Arts events & festivals	4,095,400	4,645,000	5,152,000	5,814,000	7,000,000
INFORMATION, RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATION	748,000	800,000	865,000	990,000	1,230,000
ADMINISTRATION					
Non-programme pay costs and staff development	350,700	364,700	379,300	394,500	410,000
Other running costs	1,820,000	2,042,000	2,208,000	2,400,000	2,610,000
TOTAL	47,862,500	53,738,700	61,845,300	70,688,500	79,865,000

Implementation

To put this plan into effect, we must complete the transformation of the Arts Council into an agency for developing the arts in Ireland.

The growth and professionalisation of the arts sector and the increasingly hybrid policy environment for the arts have not so far been matched by changes in the Arts Council's executive structure. This is despite the many improvements and efficiencies that have been introduced in line with standards of public service quality improvement and accountability.

The traditional role of the Arts Council, as a provider of grants to individuals and organisations, has been overtaken by the need to plan more strategically, to draw on and further build its knowledge base, and to improve the range and quality of its arts development supports to the sector and to Government.

These are the issues that we must address in implementing this plan:

- Dependency on grant-aid has resulted in most of the Arts Council's resources being committed to deficit funding for an established cohort of organisations – whose needs are potentially a limit on innovation, restricting their growth and our discretion to undertake non-grant developmental work.
- Growth in the arts, especially the development countrywide of venues for the arts, creates a level of demand for funds that is unlikely to be fully met from existing public sources.
- Information, advice, training and other developmental supports are sometimes needed more critically than grants.
- Arts planning should reflect priorities that are capable of being tested by public consultation and measurement, with reference to targets and outcomes. The Council lacks the baseline data on which to build such an evidence-based approach.

The Plan

Improve our internal processes, systems and structures.

- Seek Departmental approval to implement our proposed new structure.
- Improve the administration and evaluation of grant programmes.
- Research and develop peer review processes to appraise organisational and artistic performance.
- Put in place financial measures to ensure that the priorities of this plan receive the appropriate mix of grant and non-grant supports including staff time.

Manage and meet the expectations of our key stakeholders.

- Act on the findings of customer surveys.
- Publish annual implementation plans, and report more effectively on outputs and outcomes.
- Establish a forum for ongoing sectoral dialogue.
- Design and implement, in cooperation with others, a system for measuring public awareness of the value of the arts.

Build the competencies required to implement the Plan.

- Commission and provide programmes of staff induction and training.
- Improve staff performance review systems.
- Adopt an online strategy for all aspects of our work.
- Enlarge our knowledge base, and enhance its potential to benefit the sector.
- Introduce internal audit procedures to ensure the priorities of the Arts Plan are being met.
- Promote the regular collection, analysis and dissemination of relevant arts and cultural data, ideally as part of a consortium involving our parent Department and others.

Measures of success:

- Improved levels of client and stakeholder satisfaction.
- Measured improvements in our core processes.
- Greater percentage of programme funding allocated under multi-annual funding agreements.
- Upward trends in productivity and performance.
- Enhanced public recognition of the value of our work.

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon is an autonomous statutory body, appointed by Government and funded by the Oireachtas to promote and assist the arts and to develop public appreciation of the arts. We work in the context of a public policy that aims to enable the people of Ireland to express as participants or engage as audiences with their own and others' cultures.

Our purposes are to promote the value of art in society, to enhance the quality of people's experience of the arts and to recognise both promise and achievement in the making of art.

As the Irish State's expert body on the arts, we are the principal instrument of arts funding and an advisory body to Government on arts matters. We achieve our purposes by developmental planning and provision, by grants to individuals and organisations, and by working with others in national and local government, and in the voluntary and private sectors.



The Arts Council is a voluntary body of 16 members and a chairman, appointed by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands for a term of five years.

The eleventh Arts Council was appointed in 1998. It has an executive staff of 32.

Current members of the Arts Council
1998 - 2003

Pat Murphy, Chairman

Mary Brady
Maud Cotter
Noel Crowley
Clare Duignan
Brendan Flynn
Carlo Gébler
TV Honan
Thomas Mitchell
Proinsias Mac Aonghusa
Siobhán Ní Éanaigh
Máire Ní Riain
Séamus Ó Cinnéide
Emer O'Kelly
Jane O'Leary
Una Ó Murchú
Patrick Sutton

