

# Arts Council

## Plan for Children and Young People's Arts

Image: Gesamtkunstwerk  
Photographer: Pat Redmond

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Implementation Plan  
2023–2025

This plan outlines how we will implement our policy for children and young people's arts

It runs alongside and in support of the Arts Council's Making Great Art Work: Three-Year Plan 2023–2025





Image: Tiny Mutiny / An Ceannairc Beag Bideach  
Photographer: Andrew Downes

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What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
<p>We will support artists from diverse backgrounds, across disciplines and at all stages of their careers to develop their practice, to collaborate, and to be ambitious when making work with and for children and young people.</p> <p>In line with our <b>Paying the Artist</b> policy, we will continue to advocate for and support fair pay and conditions for artists who work with and for children and young people, and explore pathways to support artists to have sustainable careers and to be fairly paid for their work.</p> <p>In line with our <b>International Arts</b> policy, we will continue to encourage artists and organisations to engage with and avail of EU investment and initiatives and other international partnerships that support them to develop their work for and with children and young people in collaboration with international colleagues, and that support young people to exchange artistic ideas with their counterparts in other countries.</p>	<p>We will work with partners to ensure that our funding and supports are available and accessible to artists from a range of backgrounds that are reflective of the diversity of children and young people in Ireland – including new applicants; applicants with disabilities; applicants from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds; and applicants whose first language is not English or Irish.</p> <p>As the Arts Council develops and implements our <b>Irish Language Arts</b> policy, we will work with partners in the Gaeltacht and Irish-language organisations to ensure our range of funding and supports are available and accessible to artists and arts organisations working with children and young people through the Irish language.</p> <p>We will ensure diverse representation on our peer-panel lists, including young panellists aged 16+ from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>We will work with education partners to ensure that a greater diversity of children and young people who wish to develop a career in the arts and creative industries have opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge and experience that will help them reach their full potential. (See also: Developing Capacity)</p>	<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Artists from diverse backgrounds will gain more opportunities to develop their skills and careers in the area of children and young people's arts.</p> <p><b>CONDITIONS</b></p> <p>Artists will have better pay and working conditions in safe places and spaces to make and present their work with and for children and young people.</p> <p><b>RECOGNITION</b></p> <p>Artists and their role in supporting the arts in the lives of children and young people will be better understood and valued by policymakers and the public through our advocacy and communications.</p>





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What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
Across our investments and partnerships, we will ensure children and young people have opportunities to engage in high-quality creative experiences across all art forms.	We will seek to ensure that the right of children to take part in the arts is widely recognised, valued and supported, and highly visible across our public communications.	<b>GROWTH</b> A measurable increase in public engagement and awareness of children and young people's arts.
We will prioritise partnerships that can support children and young people to enjoy the arts at different ages and across a range of contexts. (See also: Spatial and Demographic Planning)	We will encourage and support the artists and organisations in which we invest to publicise their programmes widely in collaboration with other partners and providers to promote access.	<b>REACH</b> More children and young people to be engaged in the arts for the first time through targeted programmes.
	We will highlight the innovative work of children, young people, artists and organisations in this field, and will seek to increase the visibility of excellent practice.	<b>SUPPORT</b> More advice available across the arts sector to promote and develop good practices in engaging children and young people with the arts.
	We will use our influence to amplify children and young people's voices in the arts. We will deepen our understanding of the arts, informed by children's and young people's views and experience.	<b>VALUE</b> Increased investment and recognition in the value of work by, with and for children and young people.



## 2. Public engagement (continued)

What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
	<p>We will support artists and organisations to develop high-quality creative experiences that are reflective of the diversity of children's lives, including experiences as Gaeilge for children who are learning Irish or growing up with Irish, including (but not limited to) those living in the Gaeltacht, attending naíonraí, Gaelscoileanna and Gaelcholáistí.</p> <p>We will explore interventions to address the pattern of decline in participation in the arts as children and young people grow.</p> <p>We will support pathways for young people to continue their journey with the arts into adulthood – whether exploring a career in the arts or continuing to enjoy the arts in their free time.</p>	



Image: **The Nutcracker**  
Photographer: Ewa Figaszewska

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### 3. Spatial and demographic planning

What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
<p>We will invest in children and young people's arts in every city and county. We will do this through our local-authority partnerships; initiatives such as Culture Night and Creative Places; as well as direct investment in artists and organisations across Ireland.</p> <p>We will work with our partners in education to ensure that children and young people have access to high-quality arts experiences as part of their early learning and care, primary, post-primary, further and higher education.</p> <p>We will continue to support the work of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment where appropriate. For example, we will continue to support its work to introduce a new specification for Leaving Certificate drama, theatre and film studies; and we will collaborate and provide advice in relation to curriculum development in arts education and other areas that are enhanced by engagement with the arts.</p>	<p>Through our investments and partnerships, we will seek to ensure that more children and young people can engage with the arts at home and in the wider community, in public spaces and in nature.</p> <p>We will encourage the artists and arts organisations in which we invest to maximise their reach and impact by partnering with the education settings and child and youth services through which public policy for children and young people is implemented at local and national levels.</p> <p>We will reflect on findings from our new Arts in Early Learning Pilot and continue to work with partners to promote key principles for engaging with the arts in early learning and care in line with Aistear and Síolta and in support of the First Five Strategy.</p> <p>As we continue to review our support for residencies in higher education institutions, we will reflect on how we can best support the initial and continuing professional development of artists, educators and other professionals who can play a key role in how children and young people experience the arts.</p>	<p><b>EQUITY</b></p> <p>Spatial distribution of our funding for children and young people's arts across the country will be fair and equitable.</p> <p><b>KNOWLEDGE</b></p> <p>An accessible national resource to support spatial and demographic planning in the arts will be developed.</p> <p><b>COLLABORATION</b></p> <p>Stronger relationships will exist with our public-sector partners in governance, strategy and implementation.</p> <p><b>SPACES</b></p> <p>Better infrastructural places for artists, including young artists, will be developed in partnership with the government, local government and stakeholders.</p>

### 3. Spatial and demographic planning (continued)

What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
<p>We will continue to support residencies in higher education institutions that provide initial teacher education and equivalent qualifications in early learning and care.</p> <p>We will continue to work in partnership with youth-work organisations to enhance children and young people's access to the arts outside of school.</p> <p>We will continue to lead out on the development and delivery of Scoileanna Ildánacha/Creative Schools in partnership with the Department of Education and other government partners.</p>	<p>We will seek to use our influence to expand access to arts provision for children and young people outside of school, including through specialised youth arts provision in areas such as circus, dance, music, film and digital arts. We will continue to support youth arts practices that are focused on ages 10–24 and will explore opportunities to extend equitable opportunities for younger children to take part in the arts after school and in the summer months.</p> <p>Through the Creative Schools programme, we will continue to reach a wide diversity of schools and settings, and will further develop our engagement with schools in alternative settings.</p> <p>We will share our learning and insights from Creative Schools widely, including through the publication of an evaluation report of the programme to date.</p>	





Image: **MAKING WAVES 2023 TOUR**  
Photographer: **Ste Murray**

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What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
<p>We will continue to ensure, and increase where possible, targeted budgetary provision to support children and young people's engagement with the arts.</p>	<p>We will ensure that our funding programmes, guidelines and criteria for assessment reflect our policy and support us to achieve our vision for children and young people's arts.</p>	<p><b>ACCESSIBILITY</b></p> <p>Applicants will find it easier to apply for funding and report on their work.</p>
<p>We will continue to engage in strategic partnerships and initiatives that can help children take part in the arts, and that can maximise the impact of our investments.</p>	<p>We will seek to increase our support for arts initiatives that are relevant and accessible to children and young people in challenging circumstances, such as those in hospital, experiencing homelessness, direct provision, asylum from war or other forced migration, children with disabilities or additional needs, and those experiencing poverty or other forms of exclusion.</p>	<p><b>FLEXIBILITY</b></p> <p>Improved flexibility in how we invest in the arts and public engagement in the arts.</p>
<p>We will support the delivery of programmes by artists and arts organisations that serve the children and young people in their communities.</p>	<p>We will partner with relevant organisations – and will support artists and arts organisations to work in partnership with others – so as to develop meaningful programmes that can ensure children in challenging circumstances are prioritised and supported to participate in the arts.</p>	<p><b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b></p> <p>Published data and narratives that show the unique value of investment in the arts.</p>
<p>Across all of our investments, we will champion high-quality arts experiences and the ways in which these experiences support the quality of children and young people's lives.</p>		



What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
	<p>We will seek to better measure our investment in children and young people across different art forms and practices, and across all areas of our work, with a view to ensuring that the scale and nature of our investment in children and young people's arts is appropriate and reflective of their needs.</p> <p>We will explore the wider social impact of investment in children and young people's arts and how it connects to the government's national Well-being Framework.</p> <p>As we review our funding programmes and partnerships, we will seek children and young people's views, as well as the views of artists and other partners, to ensure that our supports for children and young people's arts are effective</p>	



Why don't we  
have a library  
to make our own books  
and a gallery to  
show childrens  
ART?

Kids should  
make choices  
cause we have  
better voices

What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
<p>We will support artists and arts organisations to collaborate with others as they continue to develop their knowledge, confidence and skills to support children's engagement with the arts.</p> <p>We will support artists and arts organisations to share their experiences with others who can help children to participate in the arts.</p> <p>We will continue to develop our capacity to listen to children and young people, and to act on the insights gathered through research and consultation.</p> <p>We will continue to support artists and organisations to understand their roles and obligations in relation to child safeguarding, and to engage in training that supports them to ensure the safety and welfare of all children participating in the arts.</p>	<p>We will ensure the Arts Council is properly resourced as an organisation to deliver this policy, with appropriate allocation of staff and adviser time, and provision of relevant training. We will engage more people with relevant expertise to support our work with and for children and young people.</p> <p>We will create more opportunities for networking and for sharing best practice across the arts sector and with others who can help children take part in the arts.</p> <p>We will encourage more artists and arts organisations to develop their capacity to ensure children and young people have space, voice, audience and influence in the arts, and opportunities to inform the development of the arts.</p> <p>We will support more artists and arts organisations to develop their capacity to ensure a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for all children and young people; and to be alert to barriers to participation and to take action to address these.</p>	<p><b>EASE</b></p> <p>Easier application processes for funding and reporting.</p> <p><b>CONFIDENCE</b></p> <p>Arts sector confidence in its capacity to adapt and renew.</p> <p><b>RESPONSIVENESS</b></p> <p>Timely and strategic solutions to external change and opportunities in support of the arts sector.</p> <p><b>AWARENESS</b></p> <p>Greater visibility for the arts and a better understanding of its distinctive value and importance.</p>



What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
We will continue to support organisations that provide high-quality opportunities for young people to develop their skills across a range of art forms not widely available to children and young people in school, including architecture, circus, dance, theatre, film and animation.	<p>We will seek to ensure that our support and development of children and young people's arts are to the fore in delivering on our climate policy. We will encourage artists and organisations working with children and young people to develop robust practices in this area.</p> <p>We will listen to children and young people and other stakeholders as we review and renew our funding programmes so as to ensure our application processes are accessible to a broader diversity of applicants who can support children and young people's engagement with the arts.</p> <p>We will seek to improve opportunities for 16–24-year-olds who wish to develop their skills and experience to a high level, including those who wish to develop a career in the arts; those who wish to continue to actively participate in the arts as adults; and those who wish to engage their peers and younger children in the arts.</p>	<p><b>RELATIONSHIPS</b></p> <p>Reinforced partnerships and alliances between the arts and wider society.</p> <p><b>PATHWAYS</b></p> <p>More equitable pathways for children and young people to develop their skills in the arts so that they can avail of further opportunities and continue their journey with the arts as adults.</p>

## 5. Developing capacity (continued)

What we will continue to do	What we will do next	What will we have achieved?
	<p>With our Dance team, we will pilot Centres for Advanced Dance Training. These will seek to improve the availability of specialist dance training, across genres, to young people. The pilot will seek to redress the financial and spatial barriers to dance training, enabling a greater diversity of young people to develop their skills to a high level.</p> <p>With our Music team, we will work in partnership with others to explore equitable and affordable pathways for children and young people from all backgrounds and regardless of financial means to develop their skills to play and perform music, including opportunities to reach the standard required to play with our national youth orchestras and ensembles.</p>	



Image: Claddagh Festival of Children's Books 2022  
Photographer: Sean Leonard



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