

glossary

Making Great Art Work

In 2015, the Arts Council, published Making Great Art Work (MGAW) , a 10-year strategy for the development of the arts in Ireland. That strategy contains words and terms that we often use within an arts development context.

This glossary aims to make clear what we mean when we use certain terminology in MGAW and in our related three-year plans (2017 – 2019)(2020—2022) . Some of the terms we use are complex, and there may be questions about them. Therefore, we aim to provide a clear sense of how the terms are being applied in the day-to-day business of the Arts Council.

Where we thought it might be useful, we added other relevant terms that might help to explain the broader work of the Arts Council. The terms in this publication are provided in alphabetical order.

We hope you find this glossary useful.

A

Access

- 1: Having a reasonable spread of different art forms available to the general public throughout the country.
- 2: Working to overcome physical, social and cultural barriers to engagement with the arts, so that the arts are available to as many as possible.

Activities

The work of a group or organisation to achieve an aim.

For arts funding purposes, 'activities' is understood to mean any work or action an arts organisation carries out to achieve its aim – for example producing, programming, running projects, creating partnerships and so on.

Advice

Guidance, recommendations, instructions, and so on, offered to try and encourage good practice.

By law, the Arts Council must provide advice to the Minister for the Arts or the Government if they ask for it. The Arts Council is a designated Planning Authority which means its opinion can be sought on planning and development applications in Ireland.

The Council also provides advice to arts organisations, the wider cultural sector, and to a range of public organisations and agencies. In some cases, the organisations might ask for the Council's advice. Even if they don't ask, the Council can offer advice if they think it is appropriate or if they believe this could help in their mission to develop the arts.

Advocacy

Public support for a particular cause, policy or course of action.

Advocate

As a verb, 'to advocate' is to publicly support or recommend a particular cause or policy.

As a noun, an 'advocate' is someone who presents a case or makes an argument for a particular cause on behalf of another person or organisation.

Amateur

Someone who engages in the arts on an unpaid basis.

Annual Investment Plan

The policies and budget priorities set out by the Arts Council for the coming year.

Applicant

The person or group named on an application for funding. If funding is granted to an applicant, they are responsible for managing the funds to deliver all the activities outlined in the application.

Artist

A person who is actively pursuing a career as an artist in any art form, and who considers their arts work as their main profession or career. This applies even if their work in the arts is not their main source of income or they have other employment.

Artist - emerging

An artist in the early stages of their career who is developing their practice and reputation and becoming recognised by fellow artists and critics.

Artist - established

A well-known artist, who has produced an extensive body of independent work and is generally recognised as a professional practitioner with a good track record. The established artist produces quality work on a consistent basis.

Artist - mid-career

An artist, who is recognised by other artists and critics as a practitioner and whose work is gaining more general public recognition.

Artist - senior, significant or honorific

An artist who is widely recognised, by the art world and the public, as an artist with a significant track record for excellent work over an extended period of time.

Audience(s)

Audiences are consumers of the arts – for example, people attending a concert or event, visitors to an exhibition, readers of literary works, listeners and viewers of the visual arts, and so on.

Audience (International)

Visitors to Ireland who experience Irish arts and audiences abroad who encounter Irish arts.

Audience development

Audience development is any activity aimed at making the arts widely accessible.

There can be several levels of audience development. For example:

- **increasing** audiences – attracting more people with the same profile as the current audience;
- **deepening** the relationship with the audiences – adding value to the audience experience by helping and encouraging an audience to explore related (and non-related) more complex forms of art. This promotes audience loyalty and encourages return visits;
- **diversifying** audiences – attracting people with a different profile to the current audiences, including people who have had no previous contact with the arts.

Audience engagement

Audience engagement refers to capturing the interest of those who are attendees, visitors, readers, listeners, viewers and learners, and so on.

Audience engagement does not include audience responses which are achieved by marketing strategies – for example, visits to a website, signing up for a mailing list, and so on.

B

Budget Model

The Arts Council's financial calculations to determine the budget needed to achieve its strategic priorities.

Or

The way the Arts Council describes how and why it will spend its money.

C

Civil Society

Non-governmental, non-profit groups or organisations working in the interest of the citizens - for example, charities, community groups, sports clubs and so on.

Collaboration

Working with others to produce something.

Collaborative arts practice

A practice where artists work with non-professional individuals and groups to make or interpret art. The practice involves a mutually beneficial two-way engagement that nurtures and values the different ideas, experiences and skills of all involved. Example: a Traveller women's group working collaboratively with a theatre-maker. Also known as *participatory arts practice*.

Community

A group of people who hold something in common.

Community has tended to be associated with two key aspects: first, people who live in the same area; second, people who are 'communities of interest' because they share an identity – for example Afro-Caribbean people or people with a particular disability.

Communities (for whom access to the arts is difficult)

For the purposes of MGAW this includes:

- Children and young people (up to 25 years)
- People of working age who are unemployed or homemakers
- People of lower socio-economic status (by social class, education, income)
- People with disabilities
- Older people
- Members of minority communities
- Isolated rural communities.

Community development

A process of people working together to change and improve the quality of their lives, the communities in which they live and the society of which they are part.

Community-engaged arts practice

Arts programmes and projects – in any art form – undertaken and shared by the community working in collaboration with professional artists.

Creative and cultural sector

A collective term covering three areas:

Core Creative Fields

The focus is on producing 'originals' and 'experiences'. Examples of originals would be visual arts (paintings, sculptures and so on), artisan crafts (hand-made items like furniture), designer-made creations (jewellery, clothes and so on). Examples of experiences would be live theatre performances, musical compositions, heritage projects and so on. The core creative fields produce highly expressive content and are protected by copyright.

Cultural Industries

Whether public or private, the focus is on mass-production of creative content which exploits intellectual property (IP). Examples of cultural industries would be film and television production companies, broadcasters, book and magazine publishers, record companies, computer game companies and so on. These companies buy the right to use the intellectual property – the creative idea or work of an individual – to mass produce creative content.

Creative Services

Individuals or companies who provide creative services to clients for a fee. Examples of creative services would be design consultants, advertising agencies, digital media experts and so on. The creative service sells intellectual property to the client in the form of creative ideas and plans.

Cultural diversity

The existence of a variety of cultural or ethnic groups within a society.

Usually, cultural diversity takes into account language, religion, race, sexual orientation, gender, age and ethnicity.

With regard to cultural diversity and the arts, the Arts Council policy promotes an **intercultural** approach that *“promotes interaction, understanding, respect and integration between different cultures and ethnic groups on the basis that cultural diversity is a strength that can enrich society, without glossing over issues such as racism.”*

D

Demographics

Statistical information about the characteristics of a population, such as age, sex, education level, income level, marital status, occupation, religion, birth rate, death rate, average size of a family, average age at marriage.

Development (agency)

The Arts Council working to:

- improve and bring about change in the arts,
- ensure that all its actions, decisions, investments and partnerships are explicitly linked to Arts Council goals and strategic objective.

Discipline

A specialist field within any art form – for example, painting, sculpture, photography, mixed-media and so on.

Diversity

Differences among people in relation to their culture, identity, language and abilities.

E

Engage in the arts

1. People engaging as audience members (readers, listeners, spectators) of the contemporary arts;
2. People engaging as participants or collaborators in arts practices (for example, a Traveler women's group working collaboratively with a theatre-maker);
3. People actively engaging in the arts in a voluntary or amateur capacity (for example, members of a youth theatre or a choir).

Evaluation

Examining and assessing how an organisation (or one of its projects or programmes) is performing.

Evidence

Any piece of factual information that provides confirmation that a thing is objectively true or not.

Evidence-based decision-making

Using facts and verified information to guide our decision-making process.

Expert body

A person or group of people who have a great deal of knowledge or skill in a particular discipline.

F

Five considerations

The main pointers the Arts Council will use to measure the relative value of its investments within the overall competitive funding context. The 'Five considerations', which will be published and distributed, will be the basis of all Arts Council funding decisions.

They are: 1. Artistic Quality; 2. Artform Development; 3. Public Engagement; 4. Partnerships and Resources; 5. Business Model.

Framework

The basic structure which supports an approach to an objective, and serves as a guide that can be adapted as required by adding or deleting items.

Funding agreement

A written agreement between the Arts Council and a person or organisation receiving funding. The agreement sets out what the money is for, what the Arts Council expects in return, and how the recipient will account for their spending.

Funding framework

The structure of the Arts Council's funding programmes, designed to offer the most effective means for the achievement of its strategic goals.

G

Grant

A sum of money offered each year to cover a programme of events or multiple activities in that year. Grants will be tied to specific conditions set out in the funding agreement.

Governance

Establishing, implementing and monitoring policies by the members of the governing body of an organisation.

I

Impact

Longer-term changes that come about as a result of an organisation's decisions and policies, together with other factors contributing to the change (for example, an overall change in well-being in a community).

Index

A set of related indicators to help measure performance across programmes that have similar content or have the same goals and objectives (for instance a gender equality index).

Indicators

Indicators are pieces of well-defined information showing whether or not something has occurred, has been achieved, or is likely to be achieved.

Initiative

A specific Arts Council-led programme to target an identified investment need, usually in partnership with an outside organisation.

Inputs

Inputs are the financial and non-financial (for example, knowledge) resources that an organisation uses to carry out its work. No organisation has a limitless supply of inputs, so it is imperative that inputs are used for activities (for instance, grant-making or organising events) that are most likely to produce desirable results.

Inter-disciplinary

Combining and using two or more skills or disciplines to achieve an objective.

Invest / investment

Putting money, effort, time, and so on into something to achieve a result.

The Arts Council grants funding to individuals and groups who will, in turn, return the investment by delivering art experiences that lead to positive public outcomes.

Investment Strategy

The Arts Council's plan to use its financial and human resources to the best advantage.

M

Marketing

The activity or business of promoting and selling arts experiences.

Monitoring

Regularly and systematically collecting, recording and assessing information so that it can be used to check progress against plans.

Multi-annual funding

Money offered over a period of two or more years.

Multi-disciplinary

The presence of more than one discipline in an artistic process, product or event.

N

National Planning Framework

Published under **Project Ireland 2040**, the National Planning Framework is a national document that will guide, at a high-level, strategic planning and development for the country over the next 20+ years, so that as the population grows, that growth is sustainable (in economic, social and environmental terms).

O

Outcomes

Outcomes are the short-to-medium-term changes that are the result of activities, such as increased skills or heightened confidence.

Outputs

The immediate results from activities: examples of outputs are the number of grantees or audience size.

P

Participants

1. Participants are those who express themselves creatively by taking part in artistic activities.
2. In broader terms, participants include anyone who engages with the arts in any way at any level. For example, those attending an event, reading a book, watching a performance, and so on.

Participation (in the arts)

1. Active participation is when people are involved in artistic production by making, doing or creating something, or contributing ideas to a work of art, regardless of their skill level. Participation can embrace a range of amateur, voluntary and professional practice.
2. In the Arts Council, **arts participation** covers a broad range of practice where individuals or groups collaborate with skilled artists to make or interpret art. The practice involves a two-way engagement that nurtures and values the different ideas, experiences and skills of everyone involved.
3. In broader terms, participation in the arts extends to include anyone who engages with the arts in any way at any level. For example, those attending an event, reading a book, watching a performance, and so on.

Participatory arts practice

A type of practice in which artists collaborate with individuals and groups (non-arts professionals) to make or interpret art. The practice involves a mutually beneficial two-way engagement that nurtures and values the different ideas, experiences and skills of all involved. See *collaborative arts practice*.

Performance indicators

A performance indicator or key performance indicator (KPI) is a type of performance measurement. KPIs evaluate the success of an organisation or of a particular activity in which it engages.

Policy

A course of action or a principle adopted or proposed by an organisation or individual.

A set of ideas or plans used as a basis for making decisions.

Professional development

The process of improving and increasing the capabilities of people through access to education and training opportunities.

There are a variety of approaches to professional development for artists which include:

- coaching
- communities of practice
- lesson study
- mentoring
- technical assistance.

Public

1. Open or known to all people – for example, a public meeting.
2. The people, as a whole, of a community, state or nation – for example, the gallery is open to the public.
3. Concerning the public – for example, a public demand for information.

Public engagement

Public engagement in MGAW is a term covering the broad range of encounters the public may have with the arts.

Three kinds of public engagement are of particular interest to the Arts Council:

1. When the public engages as audience members (readers, listeners, spectators) of the contemporary arts funded by the Arts Council;
2. When the public engages as participants or collaborators in arts practices funded by the Arts Council. For example, a Traveller women's group working collaboratively with a theatre-maker;
3. Where people actively engage in the arts in a voluntary or amateur capacity. For example, members of a youth theatre or a choir.

Q

Qualitative data

Qualitative information is descriptive and is usually written or expressed in other forms such as images or sound. It is often provided in response to questions such as 'how' or 'why'.

Quality

How good or bad something is. The degree of excellence of something.

'Artistic quality' is defined by Arts Council as work that is both ambitious and original, is technically competent, connects to people, and leaves them challenged or rewarded in some lasting way.

Quantitative data

Quantitative information is numerical and is usually expressed in numbers and quantities.

R

Remuneration of artists

Money paid to artists for a work or a service .

S

Scheme

An intervention by the Arts Council whereby money is offered to develop, or to enhance the development of, an art form or arts practice.

Social cohesion

The degree to which members of a society are willing to co-operate with each other to improve the quality of life and wellbeing for all.

Social diversity

Social diversity refers to the differences between people who share the same culture. For example, within a single culture, people can be different from each other in their lifestyle choices, their religion, their tastes and preferences, and so on.

Social or societal value

Societal value refers to the full social, economic and environmental value of an organisation or initiative as defined by all of its stakeholders, given that different stakeholders have different priorities.

Spatial planning

The methods used by the public sector to influence the distribution of people and activities in spaces. This involves land use planning, urban planning, regional planning, transport planning and environmental planning. Other areas are also important and include economic planning and community planning. Spatial planning takes place on local, regional, national and inter-national levels and often results in a 'Spatial plan'.

Stakeholder

Any person or group who has an interest in, or can be affected by, Arts Council actions, plans or initiatives.

Standard

A standard is a set of related indicators, benchmarks or indices used to compare one thing against another in the same category. For example, comparing one performance to another.

Strategic partner

A party with which a long-term agreement is reached for sharing physical or intellectual resources to achieve a defined common objective.

Strategy

A plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim.

T

Target

A target is the specific goal which is expected to be achieved, as the result of an activity or activities, at a specified point in time.

V

Value for money

A measure of the quality of the product in relation to the money and time spent on it.

Voluntary arts

Creative, cultural activities that people undertake for self-improvement, social networking, leisure and fun – but not primarily for payment. The range of art forms is wide and includes crafts, dance, drama, literature, media, music, visual arts, applied arts and festivals.

Voluntary sector

A collection of independent groups that do things not for profit, but are not public or local authorities. These groups normally have a formal constitution, have paid staff and may or may not use volunteer help. Examples of voluntary sector organisations would be the National Youth Council of Ireland, Age Action Ireland and Volunteer Ireland.

Volunteer

A person who works for an organisation without being paid. For example, someone who works at an arts festival.

Someone who gives their services free of charge. For example, serving on the board of an arts organisation.