



Creative Schools 2021

Guidelines for Applicants

Deadline: 5.30pm, Thursday 10 June 2021

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Key points to remember

- This document contains important information about the Creative Schools initiative and how to go about making an application.
- We strongly advise that you read this document carefully before beginning the process of making your application.
- We also strongly advise that you start the process early, and give yourself **plenty of time** to make your application.
- We recommend that you aim to upload your application **at least 48 hours** before the advertised deadline. That way, if you encounter a technical problem you will have time to contact us so that we can assist you in resolving it.
- Please note that, on account of the large volume of applicants using the online system on the last day of the deadline, we cannot guarantee that we can resolve any technical issues you may have if you contact us **on the day of the deadline**.
- Please note that **no supporting materials are required**.

Please read and complete the following checklist carefully:

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- I have read and understand these guidelines.
 - In the event that I have had an issue, I have contacted the Arts Council for assistance.
 - I have filled in all of the sections of the application form relevant to my application.
 - I have asked someone else to check over my application to make sure there are no errors and that nothing is missing.
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Getting help with your application

- The Arts Council makes every effort to provide reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities who wish to submit an application or who have difficulties in accessing Online Services. If you have a requirement in this area, please contact the Arts Council's Access Officer, Adrienne Martin, by phone (01 6180219) or by email (adrienne.martin@artscouncil.ie) **at least three weeks in advance** of the deadline day.
- If you have a technical query about using the Online Services website you can email onlineservices@artscouncil.ie
- Answers to common questions about using Online Services are available in the FAQ section of the Arts Council website at: <http://www.artscouncil.ie/en/FAQ/online-services.aspx>
- To watch our YouTube guide on making an application, go to <http://www.youtube.com/artscouncildemos>
- If you require assistance with the content of your application, call the Arts Council on 01 6180200 or email creativeschools@artscouncil.ie
- Answers to common questions about the Creative Schools initiative are available at <http://www.artscouncil.ie/creative-schools/schools-opportunities/>

1. About Creative Schools

1.1 Objectives and priorities of Creative Schools

Creative Schools is a flagship initiative of the Creative Ireland Programme to enable the creative potential of every child. Creative Schools is led by the Arts Council in partnership with the Department of Education and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

The initiative is also informed by the Arts Council's ten-year strategy (2016–25) *Making Great Art Work: Leading the Development of the Arts in Ireland* (see here: <http://www.artscouncil.ie/arts-council-strategy/>).

The Creative Schools initiative supports schools/centres to put the arts and creativity at the heart of children's and young people's lives. This initiative provides opportunities for children and young people to build their artistic and creative skills; to communicate, collaborate, stimulate their imaginations, be inventive, and to harness their curiosity. It will empower children and young people to develop, implement and evaluate arts and creative activity throughout their schools/centres, and stimulate additional ways of working that reinforce the impact of creativity on children and young people's learning, development and well-being.

Each school/centre will be matched with a Creative Associate who will work with them to carry out an analysis of their current engagement with the arts and creativity. Using this they will create a sustainable Creative Schools Plan that will draw on a range of opportunities within the school/centre and the wider community.

Creative Associates will respond to the school's/centre's development priorities and needs in order to support them in deepening the arts and creative opportunities for children and young people. They will use their practical experience to develop partnerships and mechanisms that enable sustained relationships between schools/centres and the arts and cultural sectors.

Participating schools/centres will be supported to design, deliver and report on elements of their Creative Schools Plan during their participation. They will also be asked to cooperate with an independent evaluation of the initiative.

1.2 Who is eligible to apply?

All Department of Education recognised primary and post-primary schools and Youthreach centres that have not already participated in a previous round of Creative Schools are eligible to apply.

Eligible schools/centres may apply to both Creative Schools and the Creative Clusters initiative for the 2021–22 school year. However, if your school/centre is successful with both applications you would need to decide which to engage with as schools cannot participate in both initiatives at the same time. Schools/centres leading or participating in Creative Clusters that started in the school year 2019–20 are eligible to apply to Creative Schools 2021. Creative Clusters is an initiative of the Department of Education, led by and in partnership with the 21 full-time Teacher Education Centres (operated Education Support Centres Ireland) and funded through the Schools Excellence Fund.

In line with the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, the Arts Council is committed to ensuring that it takes positive policy measures to promote equality of opportunity for all those living in Ireland, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status,

religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller Community. Furthermore, the Arts Council notes the ground of socio-economic background as a further basis for which equality of opportunity must be guaranteed.

The Arts Council therefore welcomes applications that are representative of the diversity of Irish society, including, but not limited to, any of the characteristics outlined above.

1.3 Who is the applicant?

The applicant is the school/centre that will receive any grant offered and which will be required to accept the terms and conditions of that grant. **Any grant offered will be paid only into a bank account held in the name of the school/centre.**

All documentation provided must be in the name of the school/centre – **e.g. if you apply to the Arts Council under the name Newtown National School, then all documentation, including bank and tax details, must be in that name. Variations, such as Newtown Primary, are not acceptable.**

Registering as a group or organisation

Schools/centres must register with the Arts Council as a group or organisation (rather than as an individual) before making the application (see section **2.1 Register with the Arts Council's Online Services**). If your school/centre has already registered with the Arts Council's Online Services, you do not need to register again, and you should use your ARN to apply. **If you are registering for the first time, please ensure your school/centre name is the same as the one used on your bank account.**

Because your application involves children and young people under the age of eighteen, as a condition of funding (should your application be successful) you will be required to confirm and demonstrate that you have suitable child-protection policies and procedures in place. Please see www.tusla.ie for more information.

Please note: each school/centre can only apply once in 2021.

1.4 Who is not eligible to apply?

Schools/centres not in receipt of capitation grants from the Department of Education/Education and Training Boards and are not in the free-education scheme are not eligible to apply.

Schools/centres that have already participated in a previous round of Creative Schools are also not eligible to apply.

Schools/centres leading or participating in Creative Clusters that started in the school-year 2020/2021 are not eligible to apply.

1.5 What are you applying for?

Creative Schools is a two-year programme.

Participating schools/centres will be provided with a package of supports that includes working with a Creative Associate, training and networking to support them to create their Creative Schools Plan, as well as seed funding to begin to implement their Plan.

How much funding may you apply for?

Schools/centres will be awarded a once-off grant of €4,000 (in total) to implement their plans over the two school years 2021–22 and 2022–23.

In addition to funding, what supports does Creative Schools 2021 provide ?

- Schools/centres will be allocated a Creative Associate, who will support them for a maximum of nine days over the school year.
- School Coordinators will attend training, which will provide the opportunity to meet with other participating schools/centres and with the Creative Schools team. School Coordinators should be available to attend this training, and substitution will be paid to facilitate their attendance.
- Other training and networking opportunities, including young voices in decision-making using the Lundy Model, may be available to schools/centres.
- Schools/centres will be invited to take part in Creative Schools Week, a national celebration of the arts and creativity.

Note: the delivery method for training, networking and other events will be decided in due course in line with government health guidelines.

What activity can you use the funding for?

In consultation with the Creative Associate, the school will decide how they wish to use the funding. The funding must be used to support the implementation of the Creative Schools Plan and to achieve the ideas that will be generated from discussions with staff, children and young people, families and the wider community. This may include but is not limited to:

- Creative methods to develop arts and creativity policies and plans
- Working with artists and/or creative practitioners
- Exploring creative ways to teach and learn
- Arts and creative professional development for teachers
- Engaging with local arts and creative organisations
- Providing workshop, exhibition or performance opportunities for the children/young people
- Visits to galleries, theatres, cinemas, museums, libraries and the local arts centre .

Note on pay and conditions for artists:

The Arts Council is committed to improving the pay and conditions of artists. In this context, the Arts Council has published a policy on the fair and equitable remuneration and contracting of artists. **Read the full policy here:** [Paying the Artist](#)

When can you begin spending the funding?

Schools should wait until their Creative Associate has had the opportunity to work with the school community before they begin spending their funding. The consultation process with the Creative Associate, in the early weeks of participation, enables the inclusion of a wide range of voices, and supports the school community to generate new creative ideas and opportunities. This process influences how schools/centres use their funding.

1.6 What commitment is required by participating schools/centres?

As part of their participation, schools/centres selected will be required to:

- Nominate a School Coordinator for participation in the initiative. This must be a principal or teacher currently employed in the school.
- Commit that the School Coordinator will attend all required training courses and will attend non-required courses, where possible.
- Ensure the School Coordinator has significant time to work with the Creative Associate throughout the duration of the initiative. Substitution payment is not available for these ongoing activities.
- Mobilise the school/centre community to engage with the Creative Schools initiative.
- Commit to giving significant time and resources to developing, implementing and evaluating the Creative Schools Plan. This will include drawing on the time of staff, children and young people, families and the Board of Management.
- Commit to ensuring the voice of children and young people is central to the school's/centre's participation, and to the development, implementation and evaluation of the Creative Schools Plan.
- Evaluate and report on the school's experience in the initiative in order to share learning, and to inform planning and further policy development in this area.
- Cooperate with the team conducting an independent evaluation of the initiative.

2. Making your application

2.1 Register with the Arts Council's Online Services

All applications must be made through the Arts Council's Online Services; applications made in any other way (by post, fax or email) will not be accepted.

You must have an Online Services account to make an application. If your school/centre already has an account, you should use this account.

If you do not already have an Online Services account, sign up by filling out the registration form here: <https://onlineservices.artscouncil.ie/register.aspx>.

Within **five working days** you will be issued (via email) with a unique ARN (Arts Reference Number) and password that you can use to sign in to Online Services.

Requirements for using Online Services

Your computer and Internet browser will need to meet the following requirements to use Online Services successfully:

PC	Windows 7 or higher with Internet Explorer 8.0 or higher OR Firefox 27 or higher OR Chrome 33 or higher
Mac	Mac OS X v10.5 Leopard or higher <i>with</i> Safari 3.1 or Safari 10 OR Firefox 27 or higher OR Chrome 32 or higher Note: if Safari 11 prevents upload of documents, use Firefox or Chrome

Note: you will also need to have Microsoft Word or OpenOffice Writer installed to complete the application form. OpenOffice Writer is free software that can be downloaded from here: <http://openoffice.org>.

If you are using OpenOffice you must use OpenOffice Writer version 4.0.1 or earlier.

More recent versions of OpenOffice Writer than 4.0.1 have resulted in problems with the appearance of application forms when they are submitted through Online Services.

Please refer to the Arts Council video *Using OpenOffice to Download, Complete and Upload the Application Form* at <https://www.youtube.com/user/ArtsCouncilDemos>.

Apple Mac users should take note of the section that deals with the issue of downloading version 4.0.1 on Macs that have the latest versions of Mac OS installed.

Note: Mac OS X 10.15 Catalina or later requires OpenOffice 4.1.7 or later.

If you cannot meet, or do not understand, any of these requirements, please contact us for advice as far as possible in advance of the deadline. Give yourself enough time to complete the application form.

You should become familiar with the Online Services website well in advance of the deadline and in advance of preparing an application. It is likely that there will be heavy traffic on the site on the final afternoon of the closing date. You should prepare and submit your application well in advance of the deadline.

Upload times can be much longer than download time. It may take you longer than you think to upload your supporting materials.

Technical support

If you need technical support while making an online application, you can contact the Arts Council by emailing onlineservices@artscouncil.ie or by phoning 01 6180200. We recommend you report any technical issues with us well in advance of the deadline. Please provide a contact phone number and make sure that you are available to receive a return call from us.

We deal with queries on a first-come first-served basis.

Please note that there is often a high volume of calls as the deadline approaches and technical-support calls received **on the closing date** may not be resolved before the deadline.

2.2 Fill in the application form

If you have not already done so, download the Creative Schools application form. The application form is a Microsoft Word/OpenOffice Writer-compatible document that you fill in offline (on your own computer). The application form includes guidance on how to fill in each of its sections.

Making your case

In order to make the best case for why you should participate in Creative Schools, you should give careful consideration to what you include in the following sections of the application form.

Your application must meet each of the assessment criteria – see section **3.3 Criteria for the assessment of applications**.

In each section your answers might include your school's/centre's current strengths, along with areas for potential development.

2.1 Rationale for application

Give a summary of why you would like to participate in the Creative Schools initiative (up to three short points).
Note: this question is not scored.

Should your application be successful, this summary may be published on the website of the Arts Council or its partners and in other published material relating to this initiative. For this reason, you should keep in mind that what you write may have a wider audience beyond the assessment team.

2.2 Benefits for learning and development

What you write here should help those involved in assessing to understand how your participation in Creative Schools can support your school's/centre's learning and development in the arts and creativity. It should include how you hope to develop the arts and creativity in your school/centre from your current starting point, how this relates to teaching and learning and to your school's/centre's development priorities. You may like to include information about: challenges and opportunities in your school/centre that you would like to embrace; areas of learning and development in your school/centre that would most benefit from artistic and creative engagement; what outcomes you would hope to see. **Note: please do not include proposals for specific projects or activities. These will be developed by successful applicants as part of their Creative Schools Plan in partnership with their Creative Associates.**

2.3 Capacity for participation

What you write in this section should outline the commitment of the school/centre management to developing the arts and creativity and the capacity of your school/centre to participate fully in the initiative. It should include how school/centre management will mobilise your school/centre community to engage with the initiative, how they intend to give time and resources to developing, implementing and evaluating your Creative Schools Plan, and how they will ensure your School Coordinator has time to work with the Creative Associate.
Note: substitution payment is not available for this.

2.4 Voice of children and young people

In this section you should describe how you will ensure that the voice of children and young people will be at the centre of your work as a Creative School, including how this can be achieved in ways that differ from or enhance your current practice of decision-making in the school/centre. This should also include your commitment to developing processes to ensure that children and young people are involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of your Creative Schools Plan in a meaningful way.

3.1. How much are you requesting from the Arts Council?

In this section please ensure that the amount requested is €4,000 exactly.

2.3 Make your application online

To make your application online, you go through four main stages. Click **Save draft** at the end of each stage. You can come back to your application and revise it at any time before you finally submit it.

1. Choose funding programme and download application form

To start a new application, click the **Make an application** button on your home page, and follow the prompts to choose the funding programme you wish to apply for and to give your application a unique reference by which to identify it. At this stage you can also download the application form (if you have not already done so.)

2. Request funding amount

At this stage you specify the amount of funding you are requesting, which should be €4,000.

3. Upload your application form

Follow the prompts to upload your filled-in and saved application form. You can save your application as a draft, and come back to it later. **No supporting materials are required.**

4. Submit your application

When you are satisfied that you have uploaded your application, click **Submit**.

Once submitted, your application cannot be amended. Do not submit your application until you are completely satisfied.

You should expect to receive two emails. The first will be issued immediately your application is received by the Arts Council. The second may arrive a few minutes later, and will contain

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your application number, which will be used in all correspondence related to this application.

Note: it is important that you contact onlineservices@artscouncil.ie if you **do not** receive the second confirmation email containing the application number.

3. Processing and assessment of applications

3.1 Overview

The Arts Council considers all applications, makes decisions and communicates these to applicants in accordance with set procedures. The aim is to ensure that the system for making awards is fair and transparent.

3.2 The assessment process

All applications received are processed by the Arts Council as follows:

- 1 The application is acknowledged.
- 2 The application is checked for eligibility – all eligible applications then progress to the assessment stage.
- 3 The Creative Schools team, Arts Council adviser(s) and/or staff make an assessment and score all eligible applications.
- 4 The Creative Schools' team, Arts Council adviser(s) and/or staff review all applications to ensure, in so far as is possible, that a broad range of schools/centres and regions are represented, and make a recommendation on which schools/centres are successful or unsuccessful.
- 5 The executive reviews all applications and recommendations, and makes decisions.
- 6 Decisions are communicated in writing to applicants.
- 7 Decisions are noted by Council.

3.3 Criteria for the assessment of applications

We acknowledge that all schools/centres will begin this creative journey from different starting points. Schools/centres will be assessed according to the criteria below.

1. **Benefits for learning and development (2.2 of your application)**
 - How the school/centre hopes to develop the arts and creativity from their current starting point.
 - How participation will support teaching and learning in the school.
 - How the school's/centre's development priorities can be addressed through their participation in the initiative.
2. **Capacity for participation (section 2.3 of your application)**
 - The commitment of the school/centre management to developing the arts and creativity in the school/centre.
 - How management will mobilise the school/centre community to engage fully with the initiative.
 - The willingness of the school/centre management to identify and allocate suitable time and resources to the initiative.
 - How relevant staff will be supported to participate in the initiative as part of their existing roles.

3. **Voice of children and young people (section 2.4 of your application)**

- How the school/centre will ensure that the voice of children and young people will be at the centre of their work as a Creative School.
- How this can be achieved in ways that differ from or enhance the school's/centre's current practice of decision-making.
- The commitment of the school to developing processes to involve children and young people in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Creative Schools Plan.

4. **Range of schools/centres**

- How Creative Schools 2021 represents the varying types of Department of Education recognised schools/centres.
- How Creative Schools 2021 represents Department of Education recognised schools/centres on a regional basis.

3.4 Scoring process

The Arts Council has a scoring system for Creative School applications. This system is intended to provide clarity to applicants as to how their application has been evaluated against the assessment criteria. The scores offer an indication of the extent to which applications are deemed to have met each criterion.

Assessors will consider applications using their professional judgement based on the information provided within the application, their knowledge of the Irish education system and the wider arts and creative learning landscape, and the competitive context in which all applications are evaluated.

Each eligible application will be scored against the first three assessment criteria using the following scores:

Numeric score	Word value	Explanation
0	Not met	In the view of the assessor, the application is deemed to have provided no evidence and does not meet the criteria.
1	Potential to meet	In the view of the assessor, the application is deemed to have potential but does not meet the criteria.
2	Met adequate	In the view of the assessor, the application is deemed to have met some elements of the criteria and is viewed as adequate.

3	Met good	In the view of the assessor, the application is deemed to have met the criteria and is viewed as good.
4	Met very good	In the view of the assessor, the application has met the criteria and is viewed as very good.
5	Met excellent	In the view of the assessor, the application has met the criteria and is viewed as excellent.

Following the assessment and scoring of all eligible applications against criteria 1, 2 and 3, applications are ranked by score nationally.

Criterion 4: range of schools/centres

In line with the objectives and priorities of the Creative Schools initiative, a review of the applications nationally takes place, and to ensure, in so far as is possible, that a broad range of schools/centres and regions are represented. To ensure this, some applications may achieve an additional score of 5 for criterion 4 (note: an application can only achieve this additional score once).

0	Balance in the range of schools/centres met	
5	Application supported balance in the range of schools/centres	

Applications are then batched by region and ranked by their scores.

Taking all four criteria into account, the maximum score a school/centre can receive is 20 out of 20.

All applications are then recommended as successful or unsuccessful based on their final score.

3.5 The decision-making meeting

The executive reviews all applications and recommendations, and makes decisions.

Declaration of interest

In order to ensure fairness and equity in decision-making, the Creative Schools team, Arts Council adviser(s) and/or staff reviewing/assessing applications and making decisions must declare an interest where they have a close personal or professional link with an applicant or are linked in any way with an application. An ‘interest’ is either ‘pecuniary’ or ‘non-pecuniary’ (e.g. familial relationships, personal partnerships, or formal or informal business partnerships, etc.).

The interest must be declared as soon as the Creative Schools team, Arts Council adviser(s) and/or staff members become aware of it. Where an interest is declared, the individual concerned will not receive papers relating to that applicant and will be required to leave the room when the specified application is being reviewed.

3.6 Outcome of applications

All applicants are informed in writing about the outcome of their application.

If your application is successful, you will be sent a letter of offer detailing the supports awarded, including funding, as well as the terms and conditions of the award. You will also receive information about drawing down your payments. Following acceptance of the offer, schools/centres will be matched with a Creative Associate. Creative Associates will begin to work with schools in November 2021.

The Arts Council receives a large volume of applications, and demand for funding always exceeds the available resources. If your application is not successful, you can request feedback from the Creative Schools team. Eligibility and compliance with application procedures alone do not guarantee receipt of an award.

Appeals

Applicants may appeal against a funding decision on the basis of an alleged infringement or unfair application of, or deviation from, the Arts Council's published procedures. If you feel that the Arts Council's procedures have not been followed, please see the appeals process at http://www.artscouncil.ie/en/fundInfo/funding_appeals.aspx or contact the Arts Council for a copy of the appeals-process information sheet.