

2027 Strategic Project Award Scheme

Wicklow Arts Office is pleased to announce the 14th edition of its Strategic Project Award Scheme and invites applications from artists, national resource organisations, individual curators, and / or artist collectives to propose projects which will nurture practice, enhance connectivity, generate new perspectives and support new voices within County Wicklow.

There are two streams available under the 2027 Strategic Project Award Scheme:

- **Stream A – Open for applications for new artistic projects**
- **Stream B – Open for applications for the consolidation or development of strategic projects previously awarded under Stream A of this Award Scheme. Previous awardees under Stream B are not eligible.**

A separate application form is available for each Stream.

The 2027 Strategic Project Award Scheme is open for applications between 10th July and 21st August 2026.

Note: Applicants may only submit one single application for this Award Scheme (e.g. either Stream A OR Stream B).

Scheme Purpose

The Scheme is open to individuals and organisations from across all arts disciplines. Reflecting the balance of other elements of the Arts Office programme, the Arts Office would particularly welcome strong applications in the art form areas of literature, film, dance, artist development, music, and the visual arts. In previous years, the Arts Office has awarded projects where proposed project outcomes included the following:

- Development of the artist collection(s) / community(ies) of practice in the county
- Inter-regional collaborations by Wicklow-based artists, for work which culminate in presentation in the County
- Development and/or presentation of ambitious new work sited / situated in the County
- Projects which will create strategic connections for art form development
- Projects which propose high-quality public participation and engagement opportunities
- Projects which increase artists' networking and professional exchange in the county

Previously supported work under this scheme includes visual arts engagement, digital arts, arts in the public realm, arts and health, early years, and arts and disability.

Wicklow County Council Arts Office welcomes applications from artists / groups / organisations who propose innovative artistic solutions which meet the strategic development goals of Wicklow County Council's Arts Office.

Details of what can be supported

Stream A (maximum: €15,000)

Support for new initiatives which add significant value to existing arts practice, experience, and participation in County Wicklow, and which support Wicklow County Council Arts Office Strategic Goals, will be prioritised. Wicklow Arts Office welcomes projects which will take place in areas of the county less well served in terms of cultural provision, in line with the strategic aims of the County Wicklow Arts Plan.

Stream B (maximum: €10,000)

Consideration will be given to developmental applications for previous Award recipients, from practitioners who wish to consolidate a current project or to further develop an area of practice previously awarded under the Award Scheme under Stream A.

Note: Previous recipients of Stream B support are not eligible to apply

Applicants must evidence in their Stream B application, the requirement for additional support, work completed to date on the existing project funded, and clarify how additional funding under Stream B will add value / further enhance the initial project supported, and the strategic goals of Wicklow County Council's Arts Office.

Summary of acceptable new application proposals (note: this list is not exhaustive)

- Development of the artist collection(s) / community(ies) of practice in the county
- Inter-regional collaborations by Wicklow-based artists, for work which culminate in presentation in the county
- Development and/or presentation of ambitious new work sited / situated in the county
- Projects which will create strategic connections for art form development
- Projects which propose high-quality public participation and engagement opportunities
- Projects which increase artists' networking and professional exchange in the county
- Initiatives which support artist's engagement with audiences differently or adapt their practice if their work necessitates a shift in focus
- Innovative proposals which support artists to collaborate differently and effectively

Wicklow Arts Office may fund selected projects up to a maximum of **€15,000** for any one application under Stream A, and up to a maximum of **€10,000** for any one application under Stream B. We welcome applications where there is evidence of a wider budgetary framework, e.g. partner funding. In this case, applicants must specify confirmed sources of income (including those in-kind), which may contribute to the application.

Assessment Criteria

Applicants must demonstrate how their project responds to the following criteria:

- Distinctive nature and artistic merit of the proposal (30 marks)
- Excellence and demonstrated track record of applicant / group's artistic practice (25 marks)
- Benefit of the Award to the artist(s)/group(s) artistic development or profile (15 marks)
- Benefit of the Award to the development of the Arts in Wicklow (15 marks)
- Feasibility of the proposal including evidence of advance planning and clear financial model to support delivery of the proposed project (15 marks)

Applicants must evidence adherence to the eligibility criteria, Guidelines, Child Protection Policies and appropriate insurance cover (where relevant) for their application to be considered for assessment.

Who is eligible to apply

This Award Scheme is open to all professional practicing artists across all art forms and genres. Applicants must be from County Wicklow or residing in County Wicklow for the past three consecutive years.

Who is not eligible to apply

- Undergraduates
- Persons currently in full-time education
- Persons not from or residing in County Wicklow for the past three consecutive years

What is not eligible for support

- Full-time undergraduate education
- Any project which has already begun or is underway (unless applying for Stream B)
- Projects focusing primarily on community rather than artistic outcomes
- Initiatives which form part of a competitive, charitable or fundraising context
- Funds for capital purchases such as equipment, capital improvements, etc.
- Publication costs or production-related costs for commercial activity
- Deficits or start-up costs for new organisations
- Alcohol / hospitality / food & drink expenses
- Projects where the activity takes place outside County Wicklow
- Insurance costs where it exceeds 10% of the overall project budget
- Projects where the majority of costs relate to equipment hire / administrative costs
- Incomplete applications
- Applications which do not have relevant supporting documentation

*Note: in the event that your application is ruled ineligible, it will not be assessed.

Assessment Process

A diverse pool of assessment panel members, comprising arts practitioners, arts managers, curators, producers, and individuals with relevant artistic and community expertise, along with local knowledge, will contribute to maintaining a well-rounded perspective and expertise during the application assessment process.

The Assessment Panel, once appointed, will have access to the submitted applications and will convene to evaluate them, shortlist, and recommend award scheme recipients for 2027.

Conditions

- All awards are subject to the availability of funds. Awards may be withheld or divided at the discretion of Wicklow County Council
- All projects must take place in County Wicklow or be of benefit to residents of the county except projects which involve international collaborators. Applicants must indicate their relationship with the county as outlined in the application form
- Applicants must provide evidence that any organisational commitment referenced by the artist in support of their application has been confirmed e.g. letters of support to show that a particular mentor is available, a place on a course is secured, or an exhibition opportunity confirmed
- Applications and supporting documentation must be submitted online via the [Submittable platform](#)
- Applications must be complete and have all relevant supporting documentation
- Incomplete and / or late applications will **not** be accepted
- No emailed or posted applications will be accepted
- All applications must adhere to the guidelines set out in this document
- Applications will be assessed by a panel of professional arts practitioners and will include representation from Wicklow County Council
- Shortlisting is likely to apply
- Applicants will be notified as soon as is practicable. It is anticipated that the overall process from submission of applications to notification of outcomes will take approximately 6 – 8 weeks
- Successful applicants will be required to submit documentation and high-quality visuals along with an evaluation report and an expenditure account before the final drawdown of funding and project completion (by 1st November 2027)
- Successful applicants must hold Public Liability, Employers Liability and / or Professional Indemnity Insurance as appropriate and they may be asked to submit evidence of insurance coverage
- Wicklow County Council must be credited in any publicity relating to the work supported under this award scheme. A letter of offer will specify Wicklow County Council's branding and crediting
- Where relevant, compliance with best practices and legislation in Child Protection as outlined by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality must be adhered to, in addition to Wicklow County Council's procedures regarding Garda Vetting
- Projects should be realised in full within the timeframe specified in the application and latest by 1st November 2027. Any alterations to the project timeframe must be submitted to the Arts Officer in advance. The Arts Officers' decision on the matter is final. Failure to complete a project or complete a project within the timeframe specified may result in the cancellation of final instalment payment and the possibility of reimbursement of prior instalments to Wicklow County Council
- Projects awarded will not commence until 2027. Project elements already underway cannot be supported
- Projects must be completed in 2027 by deadline 1st November 2027
- If you are proposing a project which has a physical outcome in the public realm such as a mural, sculpture, or significant outdoor event on public lands, confirmation of receipt of appropriate permissions and / or licenses are required, this includes instances where a project idea is subject to a planning application
- Wicklow County Council reserves the right to review the Strategic Project Award Scheme at any time and as a result, may make any changes necessary without any prior notice to applicants
- **Please note** post-assessment, detailed feedback is not possible

Documentation & Evaluation

Projects supported under the Strategic Project Award Scheme must be documented throughout the lifetime of the project. The final report submitted must include the following:

- An evaluation report to include a reflection on the overall experience(s) throughout the project from the perspective of the artist(s), participants, coordinating organisation or community group
- A brief written report detailing how the grant from Wicklow County Council was expended i.e. project details, cost, timeframe, match-funding, outcomes
- An expenditure report along with Proof of Expenditure (i.e. paid invoices / receipts) to the value of the grant amount awarded
- A visual record (images / video) of the main stages of the project. A minimum of 5 high-quality digital images are required. Wicklow County Council reserves the right to use these images for any publicity relating to this scheme
- Evidence of your recognition / accreditation of Wicklow County Council's financial contribution to the project e.g. local newspaper articles, advertisements, reports, promotion material, etc. If a permanent artwork is created, Wicklow County Arts Office should be credited alongside the permanent work

How to Apply

Please read all documentation carefully.

Applications must be made through the Wicklow Arts Office online platform [Submittable](#), where applicants are asked to submit the following:

- A completed online application form for either **Stream A** OR **Stream B**
- A detailed supporting budget outlining all costs, expenditure and income.
*Note: applicants must use the budget template provided for eligibility. Budget templates are available [HERE](#) (the budget template and the reference application form are located at the bottom of this webpage)
- Up to **five** examples of your work or items that demonstrate your track record
- An up-to-date CV (maximum 2 pages)
- Letters of support
- Supporting documents such as artists / group / organisation biographies or profiles
- Confirmation of venues / site permissions / licenses where applicable

Please name all the files you upload, including your name, title of work and / or type of work. We are unable to accept links to Google Drive.

Queries

For any questions or requests for application support, contact wao@wicklowcoco.ie.

This support service is available up to Friday, 14th August 2026.

Please make your subject line 'Strategic Project Award Scheme 2027 – Stream A or B'.

Application Deadline

Friday 21st August 2026 at 4pm

Questions may be directed to wao@wicklowcoco.ie