Arts Act Funding

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What funding opportunities are available in Co. Wicklow?

There are three funding schemes available directly through Wicklow County Arts Office: the Artist Award Scheme, the Artist & Community Collaboration Award Scheme and the Arts Festival Award Scheme. Full details and guidelines for the funding schemes are available on the Wicklow Arts Office website.

The deadline for applications is **4pm on Friday 11th December 2026**.

The Wicklow Short Film Award 2027 developed by Screen Wicklow and Wicklow Arts Office supports emerging Wicklow filmmakers to make high-quality, original films in the county. Full details and guidelines are available on the Wicklow Arts Office website or the Screen Wicklow website.

The deadline for applications is **4pm on Wednesday 16th December 2026.**

There is a Co. Wicklow Creative Ireland programme; the team can be contacted on creativewicklow@wicklowcoco.ie for queries about their specific funding opportunities.

2. Who do I contact if I have any questions about the funding opportunities?

For questions relating to the Wicklow County Arts Office Arts Act funding schemes 2027 (the Artist Award Scheme, the Artist & Community Collaboration Award Scheme and the Arts Festival Award Scheme), please contact wao@wicklowcoco.ie

For questions relating to the Wicklow Short Film Award 2027, please contact filmaward@wicklowcoco.ie

For questions in relation to the Co. Wicklow Creative Ireland programme, please contact creativewicklow@wicklowcoco.ie

3. How do I apply for funding?

Applications and supporting documentation for all funding schemes must be submitted online via the platform **Submittable**. No emailed / posted applications will be accepted.

Word document versions of the Arts Act funding schemes are available on the website for **reference purposes only**, to assist with the development of an application before using the online platform to submit.

4. **Are narrative films / dramatic pieces eligible for the Artist Award Scheme and the Artists and Communities Award Scheme?**

   Yes, narrative films / dramatic pieces are eligible for both Artist Award Scheme and the Artists and Communities Award Scheme. Fictional film maker is considered to be similar to a fiction author when applying for support and Wicklow Arts Office has supported both previously in this context.

5. **Is there a particular award scheme that would be more suitable to film, and would the production of a documentary qualify?**

   The Artist Award Scheme and the Artist & Community Collaboration Award Scheme are open to all artforms including film, music, visual arts, theatre, dance, literature, architecture, animation, performance, circus, traditional arts and drama.

   A documentary film would still qualify under the film artform. With a documentary film project, the quality of production and the depth of research involved in the making of the documentary would be key aspects which the assessment panel will look at.

   There is a specific Wicklow Short Film Award 2027, which has been developed by Screen Wicklow and Wicklow Arts Office, and aims to support emerging Wicklow filmmakers to make high-quality, original films in the county. Full details and guidelines are available on the Wicklow Arts Office website or the Screen Wicklow website.

6. **For the individual artist award scheme, can you apply to this to buy time e.g. to work on adapting a virtual piece for an in-theatre experience with a specific venue as a presenting partner?**

   Yes, you can use this funding to buy time to focus on a specific project, such as researching a new idea, adapting or expanding an existing project, finishing a novel, developing a short film into a feature length production, etc. From the assessment panel's point of view, it's all about how you justify the need for funding to buy that time.

   Having a specific venue as a presenting partner will strengthen your application as it shows that you have secured a commitment from a project partner. A short bio or CV of the venue must be included as supporting material, and you should ask the venue to provide a personalised and detailed letter of support, which will also strengthen your application.

7. **Would a letter of support be enough from a mentor or would you suggest supplying a biography/CV as well?**

   The more information you can provide for your mentor the better, so please do include a separate biography / CV if possible. Don't assume that your mentor will be known to the assessment panel, so include as much information about their achievements and experience as you would your own.

8. Can I use my personal bank account to receive funding?

The lead applicant for all funding schemes (individual artist, artist & community collaboration, and arts festival) is required to have a bank account into which the awarded funds will be deposited if the application is successful. The name on the bank account must match that of the name of the lead applicant, or there may be some delay in being set-up as a supplier. The lead applicant must pay the artist and any other expenses relating to the proposed project directly from the awarded funds.

9. Do I need to provide receipts for all project expenses which have been funded?

Yes, you will be asked to provide a final expenditure report after the project has been completed, and we will ask you to provide proof of expenditure i.e. paid invoices / detailed supplier receipts to the value of the award. Receipts / paid invoices must be dated from after the time of award offer and acceptance; expenses incurred before this time are not eligible.

10. Can I include insurance costs in my project budget?

Yes, you can include insurance costs as a line item in your budget. Insurance costs which account for more than 10% of your total project budget aren't eligible. Check each of the individual award guidelines for costs which are ineligible before detailing your budget.

Successful applicants must hold public liability, employers' liability and / or professional indemnity insurance as appropriate and they may be asked to submit evidence of same.

11. Can I apply for disability access costs in my application?

Yes, you can apply for personal disability access costs, in addition to the maximum amount available for the award scheme. These costs should remove barriers for artists or participants with disabilities who are delivering your proposal. Examples of support may include the services of an access support worker or an ISL interpreter.

Costs for making your work accessible to persons with disabilities should be considered a regular part of your work, and these costs should be included within your project budget. Examples of audience disability access costs may include producing exhibition materials in other formats, such as Braille or having an ISL interpreter for your event / performance.

12. Can artists who are working in a voluntary capacity apply for the artist scheme?

We always advocate for the artist to be paid appropriately for their work. The individual artist awards are for professional practicing artists only. The Arts Council defines a professional artist as an individual who identifies themselves, and is recognised by their

peers, as a practicing professional artist. The applicant does not have to make their living exclusively through their arts practice.

13. **Is there a guideline for what percentage of total budget is reasonable / recommended for the artists' fee? Is there a guideline for appropriate fee for a mentor on a project and how do emerging artists value their time?**

    There is no specific percentage that we would recommend, as each project is individual, and it really depends on what specifically you're asking for funding to support. The Arts Council has its 'Paying the Artist' policy which outlines its position and expectations with regard to remuneration and contracting within the arts sector.

    If you are applying as an artist, don't underpay yourself or underestimate the amount of work involved in a project from your own perspective. Wicklow County Council is committed to the fair and equitable payment of artists, and applications that do not align with this commitment will be deemed ineligible.

    When looking at fees for artists / mentors, refer to the representative body for that particular skillset / artform, such as Visual Artists Ireland, Performing Arts Forum, Create, Dance Ireland and Music Network. The Arts Council has a list of resource organisations here.

    Many of these bodies have published recommendations on different fee structures for artists, and if you can't find what you're looking for on their websites, pick up the phone or send an email to make an enquiry.

    Your peers may also be able to provide valuable insight into what they have paid artists, facilitators, or mentors for similar types of work, so reach out to people in your networks.

14. **I'm a full-time, registered artist, paying taxes etc. I'm not Irish but I am an Irish resident. Can I apply?**

    Yes, if you have lived in County Wicklow for three consecutive years or more and are based in County Wicklow, you can apply for funding through Wicklow County Arts Office.

15. **Can you apply to both the individual artist and community collaboration funding schemes?**

    Yes, you can apply for both funding schemes, but just not for the same project or for the same stage of a larger project with multiple outputs (e.g. developing a screenplay followed by the production of a short film). Each funding scheme will have its own priorities and criteria, so make sure whatever strand you're applying for is appropriate to the type of project you're applying for funding to support.

16. Is there an existing list of community groups and / or mentors deemed appropriate by Wicklow Arts Office for participation in projects?

We do not have a list of specific community groups or mentors that we would consider appropriate or suitable for participation in arts-led projects. The Wicklow Community Directory would be a great place to start if you're looking for organisations who work in specific areas, such as health care etc. Similarly, the Co. Wicklow Public Participation Network details community groups from each municipal district that focus on environmental, social inclusion and other community activities across the county.

However, in your application you should be able to demonstrate an existing relationship with any partner organisations and demonstrate how they have been involved in the development of your project. These relationships can take time, so think about groups or organisations that you know or have worked with before or allow enough time for new relationships to be developed.

17. I would like to start a new Arts Festival. Can I apply for the Arts Festival Award Scheme?

The Arts Festival Award Scheme supports the development and programming of festivals which have already been established and can provide information on audience figures, how the award will develop the festival programme beyond previous iterations, etc.

You could look at developing a smaller range of events within a community setting, and then use the success and attendance of the public at those events to help develop an application for the Arts Festival Award Scheme the following year.

18. Do you have to include exact time parameters for your project? Is there flexibility to when it can be completed?

Yes, there needs to be a clear timeline for the proposal included in the application form. We recognise that projects can evolve during their delivery, and any alterations to the project timeframe must be submitted to the Arts Officer in advance. The Arts Officer's decision on the matter is final. Failure to complete a project or deliver a project on schedule may result in the forfeiture of your final instalment payment and a requirement to repay the first instalment to Wicklow County Arts Office.

The deadline for proposals to be completed and report documentation submitted to Wicklow County Arts Office is **31st October 2027.**

Festivals which extend later into 2027 must be able to complete their required reporting to Wicklow County Arts Office by no later than **30th November 2027** in order to receive the final funding instalment before year-end.

19. Can I submit an application before confirming collaborators or securing relevant permissions for my proposal?

No, your application must have full support of any collaborators, mentors, community groups, etc., who are mentioned in your proposal and supporting letters must be uploaded in addition to your application.

Applicants **must** have obtained any permissions / licences required to carry out your proposal in advance of submitting an application.

20. I am planning to work with a community group which includes children / young people. I already have completed Garda vetting, do I need to do it again?

For any successful applications involving children, young people and / or vulnerable adults, Wicklow County Council follows strict procedures in relation to Garda vetting. Successful applicants must liaise with Wicklow Arts Office to initiate and complete the Garda vetting process, if relevant. Commencement of work with children, young people and / or vulnerable adults is **prohibited** until such time as Garda vetting has been completed.

21. Can you make an application for a project on this scheme & apply for the same or similar project on other Arts Council schemes?

This is possible, and the Arts Council generally like to see that a project or artist has been successful in securing support from their local authority, but there are a few things to be aware of.

The Arts Council will not “double fund” any element of your project, so make sure that the specific element that you’re applying to the Arts Council for (artist fees, commission fee, etc.) hasn’t already been funded by Wicklow County Arts Office.

It may be possible to secure seed funding for a project from Wicklow County Arts Office and then to subsequently apply to the Arts Council to expand or develop that same idea, so long as it moves the project forward in a significant way.

22. What if we don't anticipate any financial return at the end of the project, is it ok to ask Wicklow Arts Office for the full amount?

We understand that shifting practices to develop events, exhibitions and projects in the digital sphere has meant a significant reduction in box office revenue, so we are taking a flexible approach to this. If you don’t anticipate any additional income from ticket sales specifically, then we would recommend looking at what other sources of funding or revenue could be generated to support the project.

We will also look at the feasibility of each project, and it always strengthens an application if we can see that you have identified other potential revenue streams (e.g. donations), or in- kind funding support such as a studio space, rehearsal facility, equipment etc. You can

also count your own time or any other personal investments which you may have made, as well as any benefit-in-kind which you may have secured.

23. Could you consider showing or sharing online the projects that were successful and received funding?

The details of all projects and artists who receive funding are published on Wicklow County Arts Office website and on the Arts Council website, so you can easily see who was funded and how much was awarded. If you want to find out more about any of the projects or artists who were successful in being awarded funding, check out their websites / social media.

24. Will I receive feedback if my application is unsuccessful?

Wicklow Arts Office can provide structured advice and feedback with respect to your application, but due to the competitive nature of the funding schemes, being in receipt of feedback is no guarantee of a successful application in the future.