Arts Festival

Award Scheme 2027

Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Wicklow County Arts Office

an arts council ealaíon funding the arts

1 BACKGROUND

Wicklow County Arts Office established the Arts Festival Award Scheme as one of several funding streams designed to support artists, arts participation and art form development. These initiatives are integral to Wicklow County Council's broader efforts to encourage excellence in the arts and enhance community involvement in artistic endeavours across the county.

2 SCHEME PURPOSE

The primary objective of the Arts Festival Awards Scheme is to support the development and programming of arts festivals in County Wicklow. This award seeks to financially assist festival development plans and / or programmes for the year 2027, covering:
i. The production or commissioning of new work for the festival
ii. The engagement of professional artists or ensembles as part of the festival programme
iii. Implementation of specific measures targeting audience development and / or public engagement
iv. The development of new strategies and / or approaches to festival delivery

Please note: the maximum award available under this scheme is capped at €15,000.

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.

3 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

To be considered for the Arts Festival Award Scheme, applications should exhibit the following:

Production / commissioning of new work & engagement of professional artists / ensembles:
↳ Demonstrate a clear and considered plan describing how the festival will be developed, managed, produced and presented

↳ Describe how professional artists / ensembles will be engaged

↳ Provide a well-defined project timeline, detailing the festival's delivery, promotion and evaluation (for project completion within the timeframe of the award)

Public engagement and audience development:
↳ Describe how the festival will reach new and existing audiences

Proven track record of delivery:
↳ Demonstrate a strong track record in programming, presenting, and producing successful arts festivals

Distinctive nature of artistic merit and evidence of ambition and innovation:
↳ Demonstrate the festival's artistic merit and distinctive qualities

↳ Display ambition and innovation in the proposal, to advance festival development beyond previous iterations

Feasibility of proposal (advance planning and finances):
↳ Provide a breakdown of project expenses within the budget including a breakdown of any additional sources of funding or income (including evidence of finances received, permissions and / or licenses already in place)

3.1 WHAT IS NOT ELIGIBLE

↳ Non-Arts Festival Events

↳ For-profit, charity or fundraising projects

↳ Competitive initiatives

↳ Alcohol / Entertainment / Hospitality / Food & Drink expenditure

↳ Festivals which take place outside County Wicklow

↳ Insurance costs that exceed 10% of the awarded amount

↳ Purchases of fixed / capital assets such as reusable equipment after the project is complete (e.g. instruments, cameras, computers, etc.)

↳ Proposals where the bulk of expenditure comprises of equipment hire / overhead / administrative costs

↳ Projects that focus primarily on the community rather than artistic outcomes

Note: Applications that are ruled ineligible will not be assessed

4 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

To ensure a comprehensive evaluation process, applications will be reviewed by a diverse panel, bringing together arts managers, practitioners, curators, and producers to provide both technical artistic expertise and regional context.

The assessment panel will be given access to submitted applications for the purposes of evaluation, shortlisting, and recommending award recipients.

Applications are competitively evaluated based on the application details and supporting documentation provided.

5 CONDITIONS

All awards are subject to the availability of funds. Awards may be withheld or divided at the discretion of Wicklow County Council

Applications and supporting documentation must be submitted online via the platform **Submittable**. No emailed or posted applications will be accepted

Applications must be complete and have all relevant supporting documentation. Incomplete and / or late applications will not be accepted

All applications must adhere to the guidelines set out in this document

Applicants **must** have obtained any permissions / licences needed to carry out a project in advance of submitting an application

Applicants must already have a Festival bank account and constitution or memorandum of association

Applications will be assessed by a panel of professional arts practitioners and will include representation from Wicklow County Council

The assessment process takes approx. 6 - 8 weeks from the scheme deadline. Applicants will be notified about the outcome as soon as is practicable

On completion of the festival, successful applicants must submit a brief evaluation report, an expenditure report, and high-quality visuals by the specified deadline before the final funding instalment will be released

Successful applicants are required to provide evidence of Public Liability, Employers Liability and / or Professional Indemnity Insurance, as appropriate, upon signing the letter of offer

Wicklow County Council and the Arts Council must be credited in any publicity relating to the work supported under this scheme. Successful applicants will receive a letter of offer detailing specific branding and crediting requirements

If a launch or celebration is organised as part of the project, the Wicklow County Art Office must be notified in advance and invited to attend

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

It is expected that proposals should be realised in full within the timeframe specified in the application. Any alterations to the project timeframe must be submitted to the Arts Officer in advance. The Arts Officers' decision on the matter is final.

Wicklow County Council reserves the right to review the Award Scheme at any time and as a result, may make any changes necessary without any prior notice to applicants

Please note: due to the high volume of applications, it may not be possible to provide detailed feedback

6 DOCUMENTATION & EVALUATION

Projects supported under the Arts Festival 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 project summary, results, key insights, challenges, timelines, impact of the award, reflection of the overall experience(s) throughout the project from the perspective of the festival team, artist(s) and audiences

↳ A detailed expenditure report showing an itemised breakdown of all costs incurred, along with proof of payment i.e. receipts or paid invoices equal to the value of the grant amount awarded

↳ A visual record (images / video) of the festival, showing the festival in action or the project outcomes. A minimum of 3 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. newspaper articles, advertisements, reports, promotion material, etc. If a permanent artwork is created, Wicklow County Arts Office must be credited alongside the permanent work

7 HOW TO APPLY

Read all documentation carefully.

Under the 'Apply Online' section on our website, click on the 'Apply Here' link, select the 'Submit' button (located next to 'Arts Festival Award Scheme 2027') and complete the following:

↳ Enter all relevant details on the online application form (emailed / posted applications will not be accepted)

↳ Upload your 2027 project budget. **You must use the budget template provided on our website.** Ensure the amount of grant funding you are seeking is included on the budget document. Evidence of funding support from other sources will reflect positively in the assessment of proposals

↳ Upload supporting documentation which must include:

» Up-to-date CV of artists / collaborators with the festival (max 2 pages per each artist)

» 5 examples of work that represent demonstrate the track record of the festival. This can include images, reviews, letters of support, and audio or video recordings (links to YouTube, Vimeo, MP4, etc.)

» Upload any project-related permits or licences secured (if relevant)

7.1 SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS MAY BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

↳ Tax Clearance Confirmation

↳ Evidence of Public Liability, Employers Liability and / or Professional Indemnity insurance as appropriate

↳ Garda Vetting documentation, if applicable. Documents requested must be presented in person to Wicklow County Arts Office

For questions or application support, please contact **wao@wicklowcoco.ie**
This service is available until 4pm on Friday, 4th December 2026

Please make your subject line 'Arts Festival Award Scheme 2027'

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Friday 11th December 2026 at 4pm

Applications must be submitted via the online platform **Submittable**

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Wicklow County Council

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