

**Artist**  
**Award Scheme 2026**



Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin  
Wicklow County Council



Wicklow County  
Arts Office



funding  
the arts



# 1 BACKGROUND

Wicklow County Arts Office established the Artist 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.

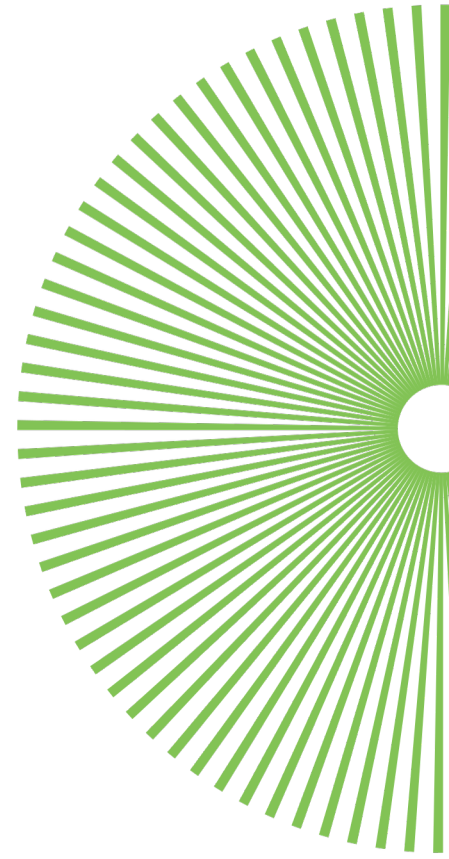
# 2 SCHEME PURPOSE

The Artist Award Scheme assists professional artists in the development of artistic practice by enabling them to explore meaningful ways to create work, test out innovative thinking and grow new ideas. The award supports professional practising artists to develop or realise a particular body of work or to undertake professional development.

The Artist Awards Scheme is open to artists at all stages of their careers that reside in or are native to County Wicklow. Professional artists working in any art form, discipline or genre including; film, music, visual arts, theatre, dance, literature, architecture, animation, performance, circus, traditional arts, film, and drama, are eligible to apply to this scheme.

This scheme aims to enable artists to:

- ↳ Develop and/or present new work
- ↳ Consider new approaches to their work in the digital and virtual space as a valid and essential arena for artistic endeavour
- ↳ Reach out to and connect with vital collaborators, networks, peers and other socially engaged artists, academics, community leaders, etc. to develop a discourse on their practice
- ↳ Connect with international networks, organisations and practitioners, to develop future collaborations and opportunities on an international scale
- ↳ Work in collaboration with communities of place and communities of interest in County Wicklow to develop and / or present new work



The purpose of the Artist Award Scheme is to support and nurture professional artistic practice in County Wicklow. In recognition of the limitations and the challenges posed to artists and their practice, we aim to:

i. Support the development and creation of virtual, digital and physical practice and methodologies

ii. Support reflective ways of thinking and developing work which includes the creation of new local, national and / or international collaboration, reaching across borders tangible and imaginary

**Note:** In practical terms, this may include short-term mentorships, training or development support at the postgraduate level. It may also include the presentation of new work outside the county and/or country by an artist resident in County Wicklow (where there is demonstrable benefit to the artist's practice)

iii. Support the creation of new works in all art forms that respond to times of social change, research new ideas; question themes or insights and look to the future.

**Note:** The proposed artworks must generate a dialogue through contemporary arts and have a significant impact on the artist's career development

While the maximum award available is €5,000, awards are often made for lesser amounts.

Previous Artist Award Scheme applications have sought support to:

↳ Participate in short-term courses or specialist workshops

↳ Contribute to the costs of participation in a residency

↳ Take part in professional mentoring programmes or development opportunities

↳ 'Buy time' to develop or research a new body of work

## 3 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

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

### **Excellence (latent or achieved) of artistic practice:**

↳ Provide evidence of a robust and proven professional arts background (through the applicant's CV and accompanying documentation)

### **Quality and innovation of approach:**

↳ Demonstration of inventive, ambitious, high-quality and innovative approaches in applicant proposals (including embracing digital or virtual practices)

### **Distinctive benefit to artist's professional practice:**

↳ Outline how the proposal will distinctly benefit the applicant's professional growth as an artist and / or professional practice outputs

### **Feasibility and viability of proposal (including evidence of advanced planning):**

↳ Provide a well-defined project timeline (for project completion within the timeframe of the Award)

### **Financial Feasibility:**

↳ Provide a breakdown of project expenses within your 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 WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY

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

## 3.2 WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE

↳ Undergraduates

↳ Persons currently in full-time education

↳ Persons not from or not residing in County Wicklow for the past three consecutive years

## 3.3 CATEGORIES NOT ELIGIBLE

↳ Full-time undergraduate education

↳ Any project which has already begun or is underway (unless there was a first phase of a project and what is proposed is a distinctive second phase or subsequent development)

↳ Initiatives which form part of a competitive, charitable or fundraising context

↳ Funds for capital purchases such as equipment

↳ Alcohol / Entertainment / Hospitality / Food & Drink expenditure

↳ Self-publishing within literature; CD production within music; materials within the visual arts (paint/canvas etc.); bridging finance; final editing; purchase of equipment

↳ 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

## 4 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

A diverse pool of assessment panel members, comprising arts managers, arts practitioners, 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 recipients for 2026.

## 5 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 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

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 approx. 6 - 8 weeks

Successful applicants will be required to submit documentation and high-quality visuals along with a brief report and an Income and Expenditure account before the final drawdown of funding and project completion

Successful applicants must hold Public Liability, Employers Liability and / or Professional Indemnity Insurance as appropriate and they may be asked to submit evidence of coverage

Wicklow County Council and the Arts Council must be credited in any publicity relating to the work which was supported under this scheme. A letter of offer will set out specific branding and crediting requirements

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

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. 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 the first instalment to Wicklow Arts Office

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** that post-assessment, detailed feedback on applications submitted is not possible

## 6 DOCUMENTATION & EVALUATION

Projects supported under the Artist Awards must be documented throughout the lifetime of the project. The final report submitted must include the following:

↳ An evaluation report to include a reflection of the overall experience(s) throughout the project from the perspective of the participants, artist(s), coordinating organisation or community group

↳ A short 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, showing the project in action or the project outcomes. 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

## 7 HOW TO APPLY

Read all documentation carefully.

Under the 'Apply Online' section on our website, click on the 'Apply Here' link, choose the 'Submit' button next to 'Artist Award Scheme 2026' and complete the following:

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

↳ Upload a budget for 2026 plus an Income and Expenditure account for 2025. Please ensure the amount of grant funding you are seeking is included on the budget document (**note:** budget templates available on our website must be used)

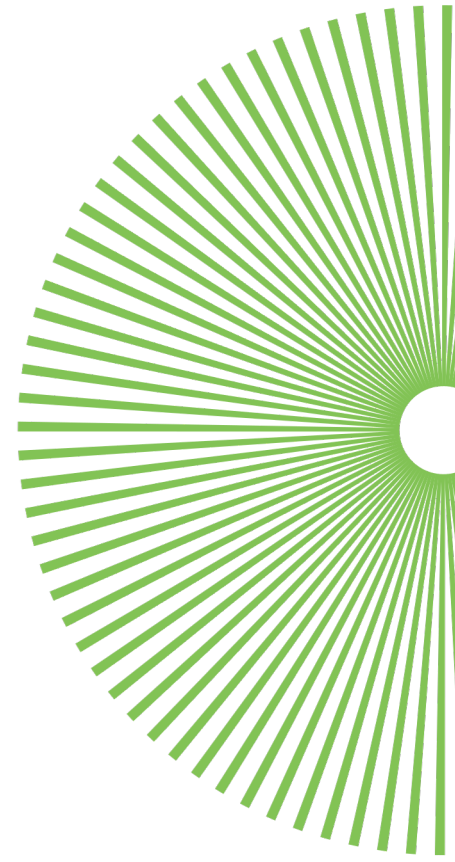
↳ Upload supporting documentation which must include:

» Up-to-date Artist CV (max 2 pages)

» Up to 5 examples of your work or items that demonstrate your track record. This can include images, reviews, letters of support, treatments, draft scores, and audio or video recordings (links to YouTube, Vimeo, Soundcloud, MP4, etc.)

## 7.1 SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS MAY BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

- ↳ Tax Clearance Confirmation
- ↳ Evidence of being from, or, having resided in County Wicklow for the past three consecutive years



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For any questions or requests for application support, you can reach out to [wao@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:wao@wicklowcoco.ie) until Friday, 30th January 2026

Please make your subject line 'Artist Award Scheme 2026'

## APPLICATION DEADLINE

**Thursday 5th February 2026 at 4pm**

Applications are accepted via the online platform **Submittable**

Questions may be directed to [wao@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:wao@wicklowcoco.ie)

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