



# Artist & Community Collaboration

Award Scheme 2026



Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin  
Wicklow County Council





# 1 BACKGROUND

Wicklow County Arts Office established the Artist & Community Collaboration 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

Participation and access are core strategic objectives of Wicklow County Arts Office. This award scheme will enable artists and communities to engage in arts programmes, explore their creativity, interact and exchange ideas with others and embark on new learning journeys.

The Artist & Community Collaboration Award Scheme 2026 creates opportunities for artists and communities of place or communities of interest to grow new ideas and resource themselves to develop something new, test out innovative thinking and explore ways of working collaboratively to create a new project or programme. Professional artists and community groups are invited to apply for this scheme.

Applications are welcome from all art forms including film, music, visual arts, theatre, dance, literature, architecture, animation, performance, circus, traditional arts, film and drama.

Before submitting an application, artists and community groups are required to have already approached the respective artist or community group collaborator and must provide written confirmation of their commitment to the proposal.

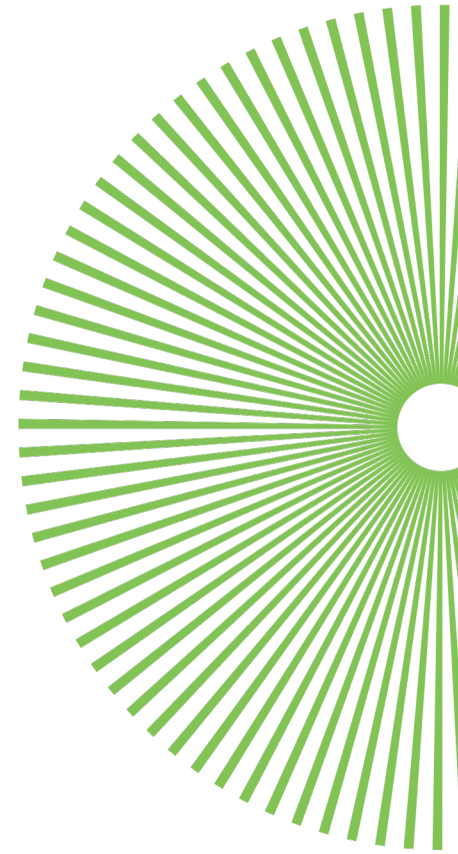
The primary objective of the Artist & Community Collaboration Award Scheme is to facilitate an artist and community partnership in any artistic discipline or genre, aimed at creating & delivering a high-quality project or programme that nurtures the creative growth of both the artist and the community.

This award funding is designed to cover one of the following areas, either partially or in full:

1. A research and production phase of a planned initiative or
2. The production or realisation of a new arts project or programme in 2026

Please note: the maximum award available through this scheme is capped at €5,000.

When applying, details of all projected income and expenditure involved in the project must be clearly laid out. Evidence of funding support from other sources will reflect positively in the assessment of proposals.



## 3 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

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

### **The extent of collaboration evidenced:**

↳ Demonstrate a clear and considered plan describing how the collaboration will be developed and managed

↳ Provide an overall timeline detailing project delivery, promotion and evaluation

### **Benefit to both artists and community:**

↳ Outline how the proposal will distinctly benefit both the artist's professional growth and the community group's artistic growth

### **Excellence of artist's work:**

↳ Demonstrate an inventive, ambitious, and innovative approach to the proposal

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

### **Financial feasibility of proposal:**

↳ Provide a breakdown of project expenses within the budget including a breakdown of any additional sources of funding or income

↳ Demonstrate and evidence the lead applicant's ability to manage and deliver the proposal

### **Background to community group and evidence of ability to deliver:**

↳ Describe the community group's shared interests, broad objectives, and their proven capability in project management

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

## 3.1 WHAT IS NOT ELIGIBLE

↳ For-profit or fundraising projects

↳ Deficits or start-up costs for new organisations

↳ Alcohol / Entertainment / Hospitality / Food & Drink expenditure

↳ Projects where the majority of activity takes place outside County Wicklow

↳ Insurance costs where it is more than 10% of the awarded amount

↳ Capital improvements / capital asset purchases

↳ Proposals where the majority of costs relate to equipment hire / overhead / administrative costs

Overhead/administrative costs that are appropriate and in proportion to the activities proposed, including planning and preparation costs

**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 at the discretion of Wicklow County Council. The community group must be based in County Wicklow and the project must take place in County Wicklow

The lead applicant (community group or artist) is required to have a bank account into which the awarded funds will be deposited if the application is successful. The lead applicant must pay the artist and any other expenses relating to the proposed project directly from the awarded funds

The lead applicant must have access to appropriate facilities for the proposed project, i.e. digital capacity, storage, heated room, toilet facilities, hot & cold running water, committee, chairperson, caretaker, etc.

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, on completion of their project, be required to submit a brief final evaluation report, and an Income and Expenditure account detailing how the funding was spent along with receipts

Successful applicants may be 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 which was supported under this scheme. A letter of offer will set out 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

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 & Community Collaboration Award Scheme 2026 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) 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 detailing a breakdown in costs incurred 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

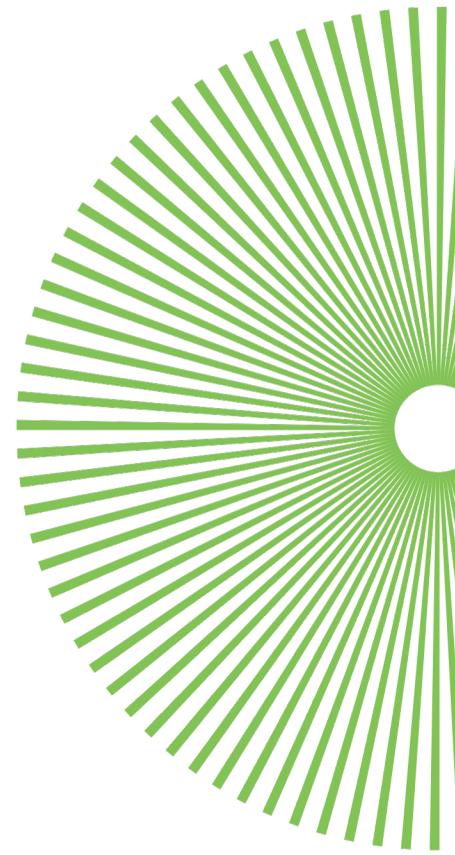
Read all documentation carefully.

Under the 'Apply Online' section on our website, click on the 'Apply Here' link, choose the 'Submit' button next to 'Artist & Community Collaboration 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.). If any individuals are captured in any image / video, a signed consent form is required for each individual
  - » Letter of support from the director / chairperson of the community group outlining the full agreement of collaborators / other funders and all parties to the application to indicate that this project was thought out together and that they are ready to participate

## 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



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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 & Community Collaboration 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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Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin  
Wicklow County Council



Wicklow County  
Arts Office

