

# Sligo County Council Arts Plan 2020-2025

## Introduction

Sligo is home to many thriving and connected communities of artists, creative people and organisations, working in a diverse range of forms and genre. They are visible and recognised for the quality of their thinking, work and contribution to society. The social and economic benefits they bring to our communities are understood and valued. People of all ages and from different types of communities from all parts of the county can have deep and meaningful engagement with arts and creativity.

Now and in the future, this arts plan will underpin the work of artists and creative people through both financial and empathetic support, so that they have time and space to develop their practice and produce thoughtful, inspiring, high quality work. The Arts Office of Sligo County Council will be central to this and is referred to as Sligo Arts Office in this survey.

We are surveying the Sligo community, arts and culture providers and supporters as a first step toward identifying arts community need, goals and priorities for the ultimate development of a comprehensive county arts and culture plan.

So far, our conversations with stakeholders have resulted in a number of identifiable priorities for the forthcoming arts plan:

1. The need to appoint an arts officer to lead out and represent the arts at local and national levels. This is seen as essential in terms of driving the development of the arts over the next 5 years.
2. Artist's workspaces – artists need spaces in which to work and provision of studios would address this need. Security of tenure and fair rents should feature in any plan to develop artists' workspaces.
3. Direct project, awards, bursaries to artists – these are essential to enabling artists to create work and to make a living in Sligo. Artists work is being considered in context i.e. artist as citizen, creator, economic and social stakeholder, entrepreneur. Openness to working with Enterprise Boards and to harness other funding streams and opportunities has been a feature of artists work and will be strengthened in this arts plan.
4. Public art – new possibilities in public art/ art in the public realm will be explored across disciplines and public services to build on Sligo's considerable reputation in inventive and creative use of public art resources
5. New ways of working – Sligo is home to a range of high quality arts organisations, venues and festivals e.g. Chamber Music Festival with the

Vogler Quartet, Cairde, Yeats Summer School, Blue Raincoat, Model Niland etc. The former arts plan sought ways of working with and through these partners and in the new arts plan these relationships will be strengthened and enhanced with additional resources and innovations.

The survey will help us to build a comprehensive picture of the arts in the county and we would, very much, appreciate your participation.

Above all, we look to forward to sharing the results from these surveys and the outcome of our deliberations in Sligo's new arts plan which will be published in the autumn.

## ***Survey***

**(A) Art and artists – here we’re finding out about your involvement and / or interest in the arts:**

1. Are you an artist? How would you describe your work?

2. Do you work in the arts? How would you describe your work?

3. Do you attend arts events? Where and how frequently do you attend?.

**(B) Where are you located in the county?**

1. Sligo Town?

2. Co. Sligo and where specifically?

**(C) The Arts in Sligo are vibrant and the county has traditionally been associated with a number of well established artists of all disciplines and with arts organisations.**

1. How can the arts office best support venues such as the, for example, Hawk’s Well, The Model Arts Centre, Blue Raincoat Factory, the Yeats Building etc.?

2. How can Sligo Arts Office support the many professional artists of all disciplines who live and work in the county? i.e. professional artists including visual artists, film makers, musicians, dancers, theatre professionals, writers and poets. Artists who work in context e.g. in community settings are included here.

3. How can the Arts Office best support/ encourage/ resource the non-professional sector including Amateur drama, dance, choral groups, music, visual and creative writing?

4. How would you like to see Sligo Arts Office support artists in schools and education settings?

5. Public Art – can Sligo County Council maximise the reach and impact of its public art approach and actions? How?

6. How can Sligo Arts Office more effectively address marginalised audiences and specific audiences such as people with disabilities, older people, young people, culturally diverse and new Irish as both audiences and participants?

7. What role should Sligo Arts Office play in arts in education in both formal and informal settings?

8. Can Sligo Arts Office play a greater role in the ongoing professional development of artists and arts practitioners in the county?

**(D) What are the obstacles or hindrances to the development of the arts in Sligo?**

1. If finance and space were available, what would you like to see happen in the arts in Sligo?

2. Sligo arts office does not employ an arts officer at present. Is this an issue for the development of the arts in the county and if so, how? Does the arts service as it stands need to be changed?

3. Name any areas of the arts that you would like to see highlighted and developed in the next five years?

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. Please note that your response will be treated as confidential. Please forward this survey via email to [artsforsligo@gmail.com](mailto:artsforsligo@gmail.com) by **10<sup>th</sup> July 2019**.