

/ flourish

v. flour·ished, flour·ish·ing, flour·ish·es

verb

grow or develop in a healthy or vigorous way, especially as the result of a particularly congenial environment.

synonyms:

grow, thrive, prosper, grow/do well, develop, burgeon, increase, multiply, proliferate; shoot up, bloom, blossom, bear fruit, burst forth, run riot; put on a spurt, boom, mushroom



Clare County Council
Arts Strategy 2019-2023

**This policy has been developed
in the context of**

National Policy

**Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional,
Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs**

The Arts Council

LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023

**The County Clare Local Economic and Community Plan
(LECP) 2016-2021**

LOCAL AUTHORITY POSITIONING

Social Development Directorate of the Local Authority.

Clare library service.

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Methodology

Our process involved a wide-ranging programme of consultation and discovery including in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, focus groups, public meetings, desk research and literature review. We also received submissions from members of the public and ran an online survey for artists.

In particular, Clare Arts Office recognises the need to develop further meaningful and deeper consultations and conversations in the particular areas of

- a) Children and Young People**
- b) Diversity**



So what did you say

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES ARISING FROM THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Our consultations recognised what we have achieved over the years but was very clear as to the level of demands from artists, individuals and communities.

The consultation process confirms that there is a vibrant active community of practicing artists, arts organisations, amateur and voluntary arts practitioners and groups of all ages, engaged in the practice and development of the arts across the county. Their dedication and commitment is acknowledged as central to the dynamic cultural environment enjoyed by Clare citizens and visitors to the county.

However, there are gaps in arts provision. Through the consultation process a range of shared development and investment needs emerged.

A core issue raised during the consultation process was a need for the development of new arts infrastructure, both hard (building based i.e. artists studios, creative community hubs and co-working spaces) and soft (platforms/networks/forums) to provide visible points of access to arts, and to help expand opportunities for creative engagement in, for example, youth arts, arts-in-education and arts-in-health initiatives. Artists expressed the need to access studio spaces that support individual artform practice, as well as co-working spaces to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and artistic innovation through links with other sectors.



Other high priority issues to merge focused on the need to consolidate and expand opportunities for participation in arts programmes, activities and events throughout the county.

A recurring issue was the large number of young arts graduates who leave the county following graduation due to a lack of opportunities at home. While this is a national issue, there is the need to create opportunities for young arts graduates through local arts programmes where they could be mentored by established artists/practitioners. The role the arts can play in helping to tackle issues relating to economic development and social inclusion was felt by many to be greatly under-utilised and under-valued. The need to establish an infrastructure of partnerships, business supports and facilities to create the right conditions for development of the creative and cultural industries, in order to stimulate their potential for the local economy was highlighted by a number of contributors, as was the opportunity to think through new development models for artists and creative micro-businesses, in the craft, design and digital media fields – to support the development of cultural tourism product and programmes.

In particular, concerns were raised around resources, funding and accessibility from the perspective of the cultural sector, and awareness and information from the public perspective.



Setting the Scene

In combining local and national policies, Clare Arts Office adopts the following approaches:

We understand that how we define, identify with, and participate in the arts varies from community to community and person to person.

It is the practitioners who work in the arts sector, both professional and volunteers, who provide the foundation for the arts to thrive in Clare.

Clare County Council views the arts as a central strategy in its cultural, social and economic development.

The arts have a vital intrinsic value and can provide great social, health and wellbeing, quality of life, environmental and economic benefit to individuals and communities

There is a need to retain, develop and attract dedicated and talented individuals and to create environments where people working in the cultural sector are valued and have rewarding and sustainable careers.

The Arts Office will promote best practice management of the arts including increasing marketing and information, and by improving physical and financial access.

Clare enjoys large and engaged audiences in the arts. However, there is scope to increase participation in the arts and spread participation more equitably by targeting excluded groups.

Clare enjoys a greater percentage of young people than regional or national averages. Immersing people in culture from an early age fosters a deep appreciation and engagement in the arts and to this end we will look towards collaborative planning with children and supporting more targeted cultural initiatives for young people, so as to unlock their full creative potential.

Arts participation in rural areas is of particular concern, particularly in those areas that are suffering population decline.

Setting out our Stall - What Clare Arts Office Does?

The Arts Office has one full time staff member and a part time theatre attendant based in Cultúrlann Sweeney, Kilkee, Co. Clare. Ancillary support is provided by the Clare library service.

We offer professional and practical development initiatives across all art forms,

We co-ordinate key cultural events such as Culture Night and Cruinniú na nÓg and manage community and educational activities such as our Embrace (Arts & Disability) Programme, our Artist in Schools Scheme and our hospital residencies –

We collaborate and work in partnership with a number of local and national agencies in order to deliver our initiatives as we recognise this as key to maintaining and developing policy and programming e.g.

Encountering the Arts in Ireland, VAI, Dept. of Education, Create, Theatre Forum, Youth Theatre Ireland, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Clare Local Development Company, Galway 2020.

What Informs how we work

OUR VALUES

Clare Arts Office commits to being guided by the following principles and values for the duration of this plan:

Recognition

We recognize that the arts have a valuable role to play in society, bringing people together and building communities. We will encourage and respect the role of social and cultural traditions within the arts and within diverse artistic practices and public engagements.

Collaboration:

We value collaboration as a force to lead, shape and determine projects with artists, partners and communities in Clare. We are committed to *communicating and working* in a spirit of partnership, mutual respect, openness and transparency *with partners, stakeholders and our local arts sector* and we recognise and respect the expertise and insight of the artistic community in the county. We work

Integrity

We commit to the highest standards of ethical behaviour, integrity and accountability. We commit to achieving high quality in

- + our work, continuous professional development and to working on a progressive, innovative and creative manner. We commit to equality of opportunity and respect the rights, dignity and diversity of all our stakeholders. Good practice, quality research and emerging role models will inform our work to provide the highest standard of service to our citizens
- + We will respond proactively to changes in contexts and opportunities including how technology continues to change the way we access, create and distribute the arts



OUR VISION

The vision of Clare Arts Office is that through the creativity inherent in County Clare, every person will fully realise their own creative potential and the value of the arts in society.

OUR MISSION

Our mission, informed by the consultations surrounding this plan, is to enable the further development of the arts in Clare by focussing on the following strategic priorities:

Providing Open and Accessible Opportunities for All

Offering Strategic Supports to Artists

Fostering continued appreciation and development of the arts

Branch 1: Promoting Public Engagement with the arts through Open and Accessible Opportunities for All

We are specifically concerned with access for

- a) diverse communities
- b) children and young people
- c) older people

Current Projects

Clare Youth Theatre

Cruinniú na nÓg

Artist in Schools Scheme

Music Generation

Cultural Companions

Arts in Health

Bealtaine

Public Art Programme

Planned Projects

Creative Youth Partnership

Creative Placemaking

Branch 2: Offer Strategic Supports to Artists

Central to all projects and programmes laid out in the Arts Plan is the provision of supports, guidance, space and opportunities to artists to create, take risks, succeed (or not) and learn from unsuccessful efforts.

Creating Space

Artist Residencies

Professional Development

Exhibitions

Artists Studios

Riches of Clare Concerts

Culture Night

WRAP Fund

Response Scheme

Art Collection

Vision Symphony

Galway 2020

Branch 3: Foster continued development of the arts and artists

Clare Arts Office is committed to ensure that the intrinsic, social, educational and economic value of arts is communicated, well understood and appreciated by existing and potential stakeholders and communities. We recognise that the arts are a key player in sustaining the educational, social, economic, cultural and civic health of the community in ways that are often unseen or intangible.

Connection Points

Website Development

Arts Grants

Arts Awards

Professional Opportunities

Arts Promotion

Audience Development

Venue Development

Local Authority Supports

National Supports



Implementation & Review

Clare County Council's Arts Plan provides strategic direction and a targeted five-year work plan.

An annual work programme will be developed based on this plan and on the availability of funding for initiatives.

The core funding to cover the actions detailed in this strategy is enabled through an annual budget allocation jointly provided by Wexford County Council and the Arts Council towards the implementation of the County Arts Programme. In addition, further allocations will arise through the Per Cent for Art Programme, Creative Ireland, the Health Service Executive, Clare & Limerick Education and Training Board as well as other funding self-generated by the Arts Office.

A report on actions undertaken and progress made will be submitted to Clare County Council's annual report and published on the Council's website at the end of each year. Progress in the delivering of this strategy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis through the Council's review management process.

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