

A NEW JOURNEY INTO A BETTER FUTURE.



National Campaign for the Arts
PRE-BUDGET 2022 SUBMISSION
SEPTEMBER 2021

INVEST. SOW. REAP. **THE ARTS MATTER.**



It took the global pandemic to inspire a wider governmental and public understanding of the societal value of the arts, the work of Ireland's 55,000 strong workforce of artists, arts workers and arts organisations. When the streets emptied and our homes became our entire world, artists got on with doing their jobs. Their products, their output – their art - quelled our fear, absorbed our grief, gave us joy and respite, and reminded us again and again that despite being apart we were not alone.

The limiting effects of necessary restrictions and lockdowns kickstarted the demystification of 'the arts', what the arts are, who they are for, how the arts can forge the building blocks of a just, healthy, inclusive, and diverse society, why each citizen could be confident and proud to assume the role of a contemporary 'patron of the arts' through their tax euros. The artists, their many and varied artforms, the day-to-day graft, the multi-layered processes of making art, and the time needed to do that work, gained better and widespread understanding. The return on investment in the arts was revealed. The arts bled into the national consciousness, as Ireland reclaimed artistic expression as a simple and vital part of everyday life for everyone.

While this recognition and the significant additional supports provided to artists, arts workers and arts organisations during the pandemic is hugely welcome, the fundamental pre-existing financial crisis within the sector remains. At last analysis, two thirds of workers in the sector are earning less than €20,000 a year, 60% of artists and arts workers have neither health insurance nor private pension and 74% of performing artists and creative practitioners are reliant on another source of income¹ More recently, the Arts Council reported that 48% of professional artists have considered abandoning their career in the arts over the last year, with lack of income and financial pressures being cited by 70% of those as the main reason².

A decade on from the financial crisis, government investment in the bodies that underwrite the artistic output of the nation, including the Arts Council, Culture Ireland, Creative Ireland and others, have barely recovered. Ireland continues to languish on the bottom rung of European investment in culture. Remuneration for Irish artists and arts workers is consistently and significantly less than the national average, and the working day continues to lengthen as artists strive to create and present their work with meagre wages and budgets.

1. Theatre Forum: Payscales Survey: Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts in 2018; National Campaign for the Arts Annual Survey (2018); Arts Council Ireland/Arts Council of Northern Ireland: The Living and Working Conditions of Artists in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland (2010).

2. Arts Council: New Report on the Impact of the Covid Crisis & Budget Submission for 2022.

Despite the staggering sweat equity committed by artists and arts workers, most struggle to eke out a basic living, existing in precarity without stability or security. For their enormous investment of time and effort, artists and arts workers remain unable to invest in themselves, their families, their communities, or their futures.

The funded arts sector has always existed at the discretion of those who decide the pecking order of societal needs. It seems often forgotten that artists and arts workers do not live in a parallel society: they are as impacted by crises in health, housing, education, climate action and equality as all other citizens.

If proof of value is key to investment decisions, NCFE strongly asserts that the last eighteen months are clear proof of concept: invest in the arts and the arts will return manifold. The arts community has perceptibly demonstrated the return on investment in economic terms. Artists, arts workers and arts organisations continue to repay the nation's investment in the sector through discernible positive impacts on individuals and communities in the areas of health, mental wellbeing, education, societal cohesion, diversity, inclusion, creativity, critical thinking, innovation, entrepreneurship, global reputation and many more.



Photo: Luca Trufarelli

Budget 2022 provides Government with the golden opportunity for a renaissance moment, to reset the pilot light for Ireland’s 55,000 artists, arts workers, and arts organisations, secure the livelihoods of our artistic and creative workforce, and guarantee a sound working future for the next generations of Irish performers and creators.

The key points laid out in this Pre-Budget Submission are the basic building blocks from which the arts sector can commence a new journey into a better future. By committing to equitable and sustained investment in the arts, Government can ensure continued economic return on investment from the sector and guarantee the rights of more than 5 million citizens of our island to reap the wealth of life-affirming benefits that the arts provide.

INVEST. SOW. REAP. THE ARTS MATTER.



NCFA calls on Government to immediately address the following issues:



	ISSUE →	SOLUTION →	RESPONSIBILITY →	WHO BENEFITS →
1.	<p>The ongoing Covid-19 restrictions mean that the arts sector will not reopen fully until small and large gatherings are permitted to full capacity, and research shows that the arts sector could take until 2024 to recover.³ Given that the Arts Council could only meet a portion of demands for support in 2020 and 2021, it is vital that last year's increase becomes the new baseline for funding.</p> <p><small>³ "Survive Adapt Renew". Report of the Expert Advisory Group June 2020 to the Arts Council http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/Life_Worth_Living_Arts_and_Culture%20Recovery_Taskforce().pdf</small></p>	<p>Increase funding to the Arts Council to €150 million in 2022. This investment will have a direct impact on the work of artists. Crucially, the arm's length principle, which underpins the Arts Council's funding, will protect the independence of the arts community. Investment in the Arts Council is the most direct way to support artists, arts workers and arts organisations to make work for everyone to enjoy and participate in.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media 	<p>Irish citizens, audiences, artists, arts workers and arts organisations</p>
2.	<p>The promotion and success of Irish culture abroad was halted by the pandemic, and remains severely curtailed in 2021. This has resulted in loss of income for Irish artists and loss of impact on the world stage. Increased investment is crucial to finding new ways to share Irish artists' work across the globe and firmly re-establishing Irish work on international stages to achieve maximum impact for Ireland's international standing. It is essential to continue to support Culture Ireland to develop the digital capacity of organisations and individual artists to help them break into international markets, along with the restarting of support for physical mobility.</p>	<p>Increase funding to Culture Ireland to €7 million in 2022. This will support its new development plan to continue strong connections with the UK and Europe in the context of Brexit, and to globally meet the demands, needs and expectations of Irish arts abroad and Global Ireland 2025.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media 	<p>Artists, arts workers and arts organisations, international audiences</p>

3.	ISSUE →	SOLUTION →	RESPONSIBILITY →	WHO BENEFITS →
	<p>Universal Basic Income (UBI) has gained political traction over the past months as a means of providing a basic income for all citizens to reduce inequality and enable everyone to make a contribution to society⁴. According to the NCFA Survey 2020, 72% of artists working in Ireland were earning less than the National Minimum Wage before COVID-19. This trend has been identified in a number of surveys over the last 10 years since the economic crash in 2008⁵. A recent EY report for The Arts Council stated that in 2020, the recession in the Arts sector will be around -55% compared with -11% in the Irish economy on a whole⁶. NCFA views the Basic Income for Artists trial announced by the Taoiseach in the Economic Recovery Plan 2021⁷ as vital to supporting artists and arts workers to remain working in the Arts Sector.</p>	<p>Prioritise and expedite the Basic Income for Artists pilot scheme, as a key recommendation of the Arts and Culture Recovery Taskforce and announced by Minister Martin in the Economic Recovery Plan 2021, as a step towards Universal Basic Income for all citizens over the lifetime of this government. A Basic Income for Artists pilot scheme recognises the need to remove precarity from the lives of artists and arts workers of all disciplines, so that they might develop, create and present their best work for the benefit of all society. The basic income trial should be an unconditional, non-means-tested, weekly payment to an individual that is integrated within the Revenue system. It must include individuals who make art of all kinds and also those who work together to deliver art and artistic experiences to society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media • Revenue • Department of Social Protection • Department of Public Expenditure and Reform 	<p>Artists and arts workers</p>

4. A two-year UBI study in Finland showed that those receiving UBI worked on average six days more a year than those receiving benefits and had better mental health and wellbeing, as well as higher levels of confidence in the future. There was also a greater increase in employment for people in families with children. UBI could provide a baseline for all sectors to rebuild and recover from the pandemic.

5. Theatre Forum: [Payscale Survey: Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts in 2018](#); National Campaign for the Arts Annual Survey (2018); Arts Council Ireland/Arts Council of Northern Ireland: [The Living and Working Conditions of Artists in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland](#) (2010)

6. Survive Adapt Renew". Report of the Expert Advisory Group June 2020 to the Arts Council [Life Worth Living Arts and Culture%20Recovery Taskforce\(1\).pdf](#)

7. The National Recovery and Resilience Plan <https://assets.gov.ie/162666/2cea0451-5682-436e-9ddd-a816f328c1df.pdf>

4.	ISSUE →	SOLUTION →	RESPONSIBILITY →	WHO BENEFITS →
	<p>It is important that the arts and culture remain at the heart of Government plans. NCFA recognises the vital contribution Creative Ireland has made in this regard, and in particular with its investment in children through Creative Youth, placing arts at the centre of local communities and providing vital wellbeing supports. Creative Ireland is due to end in 2022.</p>	<p>Extend the Creative Ireland programme and maintain funding at current levels to 2027. Given the success of Creative Youth, Creative Communities and the ongoing work of the Creative Health and Wellbeing strand, it is vital that the arts and culture remain at the heart of Government plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media • Department of the Taoiseach 	<p>Arts organisations, artists, arts workers and local audiences</p>

5.

ISSUE →

Local Authorities are significant stakeholders in arts and culture; they can also be significant drivers of thriving artistic communities. Despite similar levels of funding to the Arts Council (some of which comes from the Arts Council itself), Local Authorities are not explicitly mandated to invest in arts or culture, even though they are also often the key stakeholder for many of the country's arts centres and festivals.

SOLUTION →

Ring-fence arts spending for Local Authorities and encourage the funding of creative industries and arts activity via Local Enterprise Offices and LEADER funds. NCFA recommends delivering on the recommendation in *Life Worth Living: The Report of the Arts and Culture Recovery Taskforce*⁸ to Sustain Local Authority Capacity to Support Arts, Culture, Live Entertainment and Events. In the context of COVID-19, engagement with the Department of Local Government must be undertaken to protect these budgets beyond the pandemic.

8. *Life Worth Living: The Report of the Arts and Culture Recovery Taskforce* [https://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/Life_Worth_Living_Arts_and_Culture%20Recovery_Taskforce\(1\).pdf](https://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/Life_Worth_Living_Arts_and_Culture%20Recovery_Taskforce(1).pdf)

RESPONSIBILITY →

- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

WHO BENEFITS →

Arts organisations, artists, arts workers and local audiences

6.

ISSUE →

Ireland's current tax regime does not encourage philanthropic giving or corporate investment in the arts or artists.

SOLUTION →

Commission a review of taxation practice as it relates to the arts in Ireland and internationally, in order to make recommendations around the tax regime, including an examination of VAT, gifting to the arts, and possible measures on artists' incomes. NCFA awaits the delivery of the recommendations in *Life Worth Living: The Report of the Arts and Culture Recovery Taskforce*⁹ to Mitigate Income Loss by establishing a new VAT Compensation Scheme for artists and for freelance arts, live entertainment and events workers and companies; and Address the Environmental Impact of Arts, Cultural and Event Activities by establishing and funding a Creative Green Programme.

9. *Life Worth Living: The Report of the Arts and Culture Recovery Taskforce* [https://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/Life_Worth_Living_Arts_and_Culture%20Recovery_Taskforce\(1\).pdf](https://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/Life_Worth_Living_Arts_and_Culture%20Recovery_Taskforce(1).pdf)

RESPONSIBILITY →

- Revenue
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

WHO BENEFITS →

Philanthropists, corporate supporters, artists, arts workers, arts organisations

	ISSUE →	SOLUTION →	RESPONSIBILITY →	WHO BENEFITS →
7.	<p>Inadequate, inaccessible and unsustainably expensive insurance is a significant issue for artists, arts workers and arts organisations. The cost of insurance continues to have a negative impact on our sector and will act as a significant barrier to recovery post-COVID-19, unless it is materially resolved.</p>	<p>Implement insurance reform that will quickly reduce liability and motor insurance premiums to affordable levels and keep them that way. In line with the Alliance for Insurance Reform¹⁰ we urge the Department and Minister to ensure that sufficient funding is in place to allow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful reform of the Personal Injuries Assessment Board • Enactment of new legislation to rebalance the duty of care • Ensuring that An Garda Síochána has the resources necessary to pursue insurance fraud • A comprehensive plan of action by the Insurance Competition Office at the Department of Finance to ensure the urgent entry of more underwriters into the Irish liability and motor insurance markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Finance • Department of Justice • Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation • Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media 	<p>Artists, arts workers and arts organisations</p>
8.	<p>The arts sector urgently needs to adapt to the climate emergency, by reducing carbon footprint and other environmental impacts, and enhancing sustainability competencies in areas such as waste management, energy use, travel and touring. However, implementing these changes and shifting work practices requires substantial investment and training.</p>	<p>Address the environmental impact of arts, cultural and event activities by establishing and funding a Creative Green Programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media • Department of Environment, Climate and Communications • The Arts Council 	<p>Artists, arts workers, audiences and everyone</p>

¹⁰. Alliance for Insurance Reform <https://insurancereform.ie>

9.

ISSUE →

Lack of diversity within the arts as a result of systemic barriers to equal participation in, and contribution to, arts and culture.

SOLUTION →

Develop an action plan which will address the systemic barriers, including social protection regulations, which prevent artists from active and equal participation in cultural life and work. This action plan could take into account the structural obstacles that prevent State Bodies, State Agencies and Arts Council funded organisations from upholding the Public Sector Duty.

RESPONSIBILITY →

- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

WHO BENEFITS →

Artists, arts workers, arts audiences, and everyone

10.

ISSUE →

Lack of detailed research about the arts sector has been an issue for many years. Funding bodies, organisations and lobbying bodies, such as NCFA, have had to rely on out-of-date, unreliable statistics to communicate valuable information about our sector. The research commissioned by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and the Arts Council throughout 2020 and 2021 has created an invaluable resource for the sector, for Government and for the public. While the majority of the research has focused on the necessity and impact of COVID-19 supports, this should represent the beginning of a new era of research to inform the development of Ireland's arts and culture sector.

SOLUTION →

Commit to new and continued investment by the Department, the Arts Council and other key funding bodies in essential research into the arts and cultural sector, including:

- Establishment of a research section within the Department to ensure the coherence of a research strategy across all funding bodies, national cultural institutions and statutory agencies.
- Continued investment by the Arts Council in research, including the important Arts and Cultural Participation series which takes insights from the Growing Up In Ireland Study.
- Inclusion of questions about participation in, and access to arts & culture, in Census 2022.

RESPONSIBILITY →

- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media,
- The Arts Council

WHO BENEFITS →

Artists, arts workers, arts organisations, arts audiences, policy makers



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National Campaign for the Arts (NCFA) is a volunteer-led, grassroots movement that makes the case for the arts in Ireland. Formed in 2009, NCFA ensures that the arts are always on local and national government agendas and are recognised as a vital part of contemporary Irish life.

This submission was drafted by colleagues from across the National Campaign for the Arts membership, which involves hundreds of Irish arts and cultural professionals and organisations representing 55,000 individuals working in the wider arts and cultural sector.

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