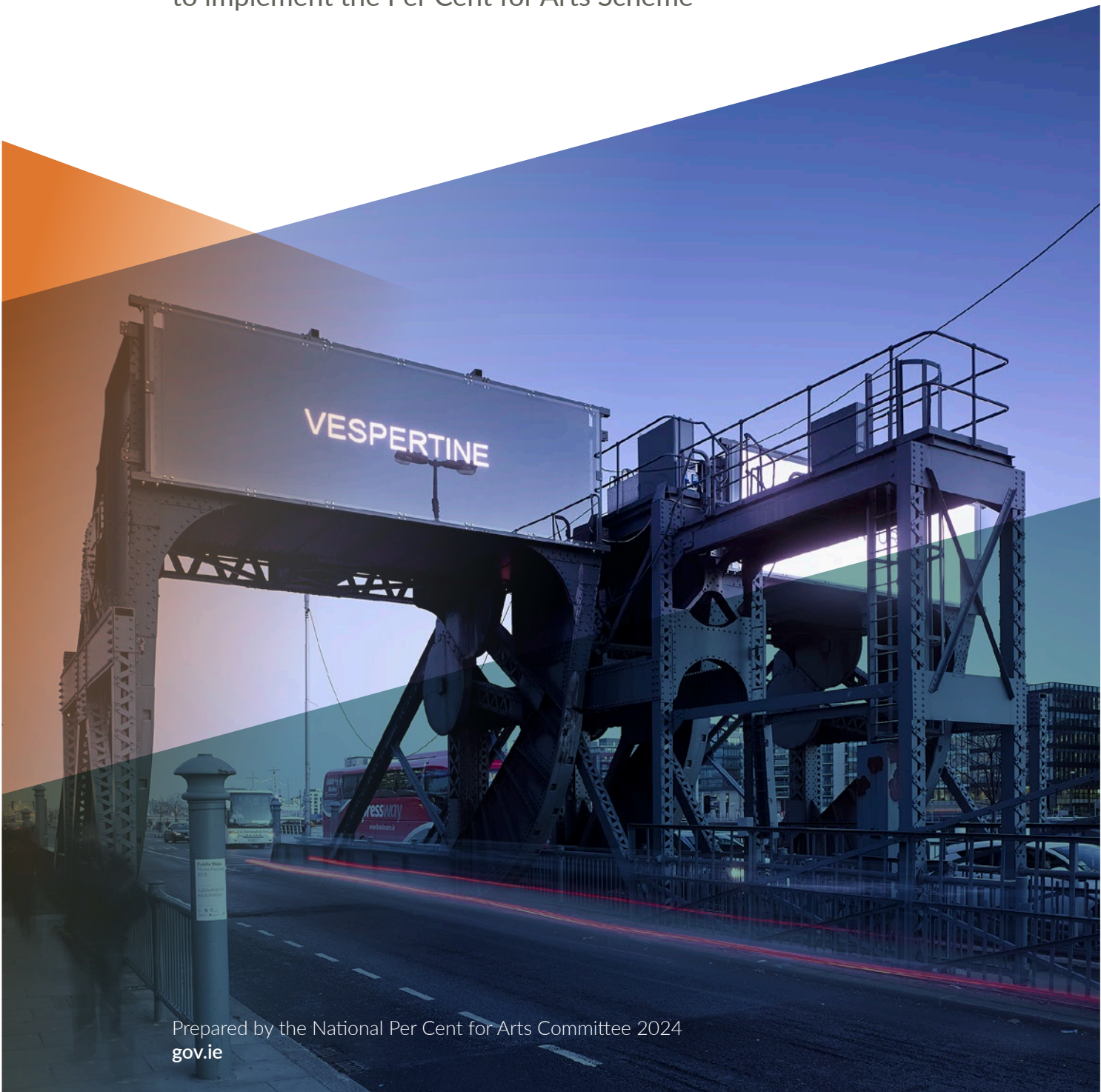




Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028

A Whole-of-Government Policy Framework  
to implement the Per Cent for Arts Scheme



Prepared by the National Per Cent for Arts Committee 2024  
[gov.ie](http://gov.ie)



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Front Cover: **Dublin Ships** by Cliona Harmey. Commissioned by Dublin City Council in partnership with Dublin Port Company and Dublin Docklands Development Authority (2016). Funded by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Photo by Ros Kavanagh.

Inner Cover: **The Balloon Tree** by Róisín de Buitléar. Commissioned by Children's Health Ireland, CHI Tallaght (2021). Funded by the Department of Health Per Cent for Arts Scheme and National Children's Hospital Foundation Tallaght. Photo by Brian Cregan.

## Foreword



The publication of *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028: A Whole-of-Government Policy Framework* to implement the Per Cent for Arts Scheme is a seminal moment in the history and development of public art and the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in Ireland.

The Per Cent for Arts Scheme, which is operating in Ireland since 1978, allocates up to one per cent of public capital programmes to fund contemporary arts projects in places and spaces. In 2020 government increased the funding available under the scheme. More funding for public art combined with state infrastructure ambitions under *Project Ireland 2040* means more artists will now have opportunities to develop projects of ambition and scale for public environments across the country.

With this policy government is renewing its vision for the Per Cent for Arts Scheme to flourish, shaping public spaces and fostering community engagement. Public art changes and evolves over time. By keeping its definition wide and inclusive, the committee has ensured the creative imagination of the artist is prioritised to innovate and lead new ways to connect art and people.

The publication of the policy is timely. With intensifying humanitarian and climate uncertainties, public art can become increasingly recognised for its ability to enrich our surrounding environments, stimulate dialogue and reflect the values of a diverse society.

The National Per Cent for Arts Committee has listened carefully to the success factors and the challenges of implementing the scheme. It has considered the potential and ambition for public art in Ireland and developed this holistic framework to stimulate new possibilities. The whole-of-government approach is a vital step forward: increased collaboration across the public service and the arts, underpinned by an evidence-based approach, will ensure key outcomes can be achieved for artists and the public.

The timeline, 2024–2028, will enable the policy outputs and outcomes to feed into the review of *Project Ireland 2040*. My department will provide leadership through new governance structures, oversight arrangements and a resourced unit in the Arts Council to ensure effective implementation. Taken together, these measures will maximise and harmonise the use of the scheme across the public service.

As Ireland approaches the fiftieth anniversary of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in 2028, we have much to celebrate and more work to do. I look forward to the delivery of *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028* and the transformative change it can support for artists and communities across the country.

I would like to thank the National Per Cent for Arts Committee, chaired by Professor Ciarán Benson, for its important work over the past two years. I extend deep appreciation for the input by the very many artists, arts managers, community representatives and public sector staff who engaged in the regional consultation process during 2023.

**Catherine Martin TD**  
Minister for Tourism, Culture,  
Arts, Gaeltacht Sport and Media

June 2024





**Elemental by Joseph Hillier.**  
Commissioned by Claregalway Educate Together National School, Claregalway (2021). Funded by the Department of Education Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Photos by Joseph Hillier.



## Preface



In Ireland, as this policy documents, it is the Per Cent for Arts Scheme that has been the means by which the Irish state has supported public art since the 1970s. In the absence of an overarching framework to implement that scheme, it has done so in an ad hoc and haphazard way, a way that has limited the scale and ambition of a whole generation of artists wanting to work in the public realm. This can now change, and that change is what the work of this committee, established by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, now recommends.

Public art in Ireland, supported by an ambitious cross-government commitment and by an efficient specialist unit, can now ratchet up its ambition, open up a rich set of opportunities for artists, and move art in Ireland, in all its forms, further into an international league of achievement and significance. This will, in turn, create new occasions for people in Ireland to engage with the arts in their everyday lives.

This requires leadership and supportive scaffolding. It requires buy-in from each and every state agency in charge of a capital budget. It requires support for the often complex logistics – engineering, financial, project managerial, health and safety, maintenance, insurance, etc. – involved in making great works of public art. It depends on supportive leadership at the top of government and at the heart of the public service.

This committee itself is, I believe, evidence that the Irish state is now prepared to enable a whole new level of support for public art via a scaled-up Per Cent for Arts Scheme for every capital project in the government's *Project Ireland 2040* programme.

This policy, and its recommendations, are the necessary conditions for the next phase of advancing public art in Ireland.

**Professor Ciarán Benson**  
Independent Chair,  
National Per Cent for Arts Committee

June 2024

All art seeks a public, but not all art is 'public art'. Public Art, in general terms, is art made possible by agencies capable of commissioning work for spaces traversed by a public at large. In the case of this present policy, that agency is the Irish state, its 'public' being people living in Ireland in the first instance, visitors in the second.

Why should the state spend taxpayers' money on art in public spaces? Because of what art does. In autocratic states, public art is a means of intellectual coercion, telling citizens what to think and what not to think, what to value and what not to value, what to notice and what to avoid. In democratic states, public art seeks to expand our thinking and imagining, not to control and diminish them. Public art in such states seeks to celebrate and remind, to challenge and console, to humour and confront, to honour and lament, to enlighten and enliven. Ideally, public art is sensitively responsive art born of artists' imaginations in dialogue with community and commissioner expectations.

# Introduction



Transborder by Cathy Coughlan featuring Havoc Dance. Commissioned by South Dublin County Council, Library Square Tallaght (2016). Funded by Dept of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Photo by Maxwell Photography.

**Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028** is a whole-of-government policy framework to implement the Per Cent for Arts Scheme. The policy sets out its purpose, mission, value and potential, and leads both public services and artists into a new era of public art in Ireland through a shared recommitment to the scheme.

The policy-development process was led by the National Per Cent for Arts Committee, an interdepartmental and interagency group convened by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in 2022.

The National Per Cent for Arts Committee, following the increase of funding available to the Per Cent for Arts Scheme<sup>1</sup>, had the following remit:

- Bring a harmonised approach and improved awareness of the operation of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme to all public-service bodies
- Develop a whole-of-government policy framework on the Per Cent for Arts Scheme and implementation plan
- Provide oversight on the development of publicart.ie, including the creation of a data system
- Make recommendations on the development of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme.

The committee's report on its findings and recommendations concluded that:

1. A whole-of-government approach, commitment and leadership begins a period of renewal with the publication of a government policy framework on the Per Cent for Arts Scheme.
2. An ongoing governance structure is required for oversight on the implementation of the government policy framework 2024 to 2028.
3. A public-services operational instruction and national guidelines for the Per Cent for Arts Scheme will bring a harmonised approach to the effective implementation of the scheme.
4. The establishment of a specialist unit within the Arts Council to manage the delivery of the policy framework will support participating public services, artists, curators, public art coordinators and public engagement.
5. Per Cent for Arts funding bands should be reviewed upwards and indexed to inflation following periodical reviews.
6. Public services should have the flexibility in light of major construction projects to increase the cap on the scheme in line with international best practice.
7. The redevelopment of publicart.ie will provide an authoritative voice and national platform to meet the objectives of the policy framework.
8. The policy framework will integrate with other government policies, such as *Project Ireland 2040* for its potential to deliver on other, wider cross-government objectives.

<sup>1</sup> Approved by government in 2019, effective from 1 January 2020.

## What is Per Cent for Art?

The Per Cent for Art principle is one of the oldest international cultural policy mechanisms to fund the creation of public art for public environments, first introduced by France and the US in the 1930s. The principle defines that public bodies operating at national, regional or local level can allocate 1%<sup>2</sup> of public building construction costs to commission or purchase art by artists for the public domain through state spending on public housing, hospitals, schools, transport or water.

Today, most countries implement a version of the Per Cent for Art principle either as a mandatory obligation or through a voluntary approach. The models applied internationally can vary according to the historic, social and economic differences between regions and countries.

In Ireland the Per Cent for Art Scheme, a government initiative, was first introduced in 1978. Since 1997 this scheme has been made available to all capital projects across all government departments.<sup>3</sup>

Almost fifty years on, the state has invested in countless artists and numerous public places and spaces to realise a huge variety of arts projects: on streets and bypasses, housing developments, in hospitals, schools, courthouses, public offices, parks and more. Some are iconic and prominent landmarks, others more discreet, meaningful interventions that also include new music, books, films and performances created by artists and communities together. All of which have responded to and added value to how we connect as people to each other and to our places and public spaces.

## How does it work?

In Ireland the act of commissioning an artwork under the scheme is led by a public body undertaking a public capital project.

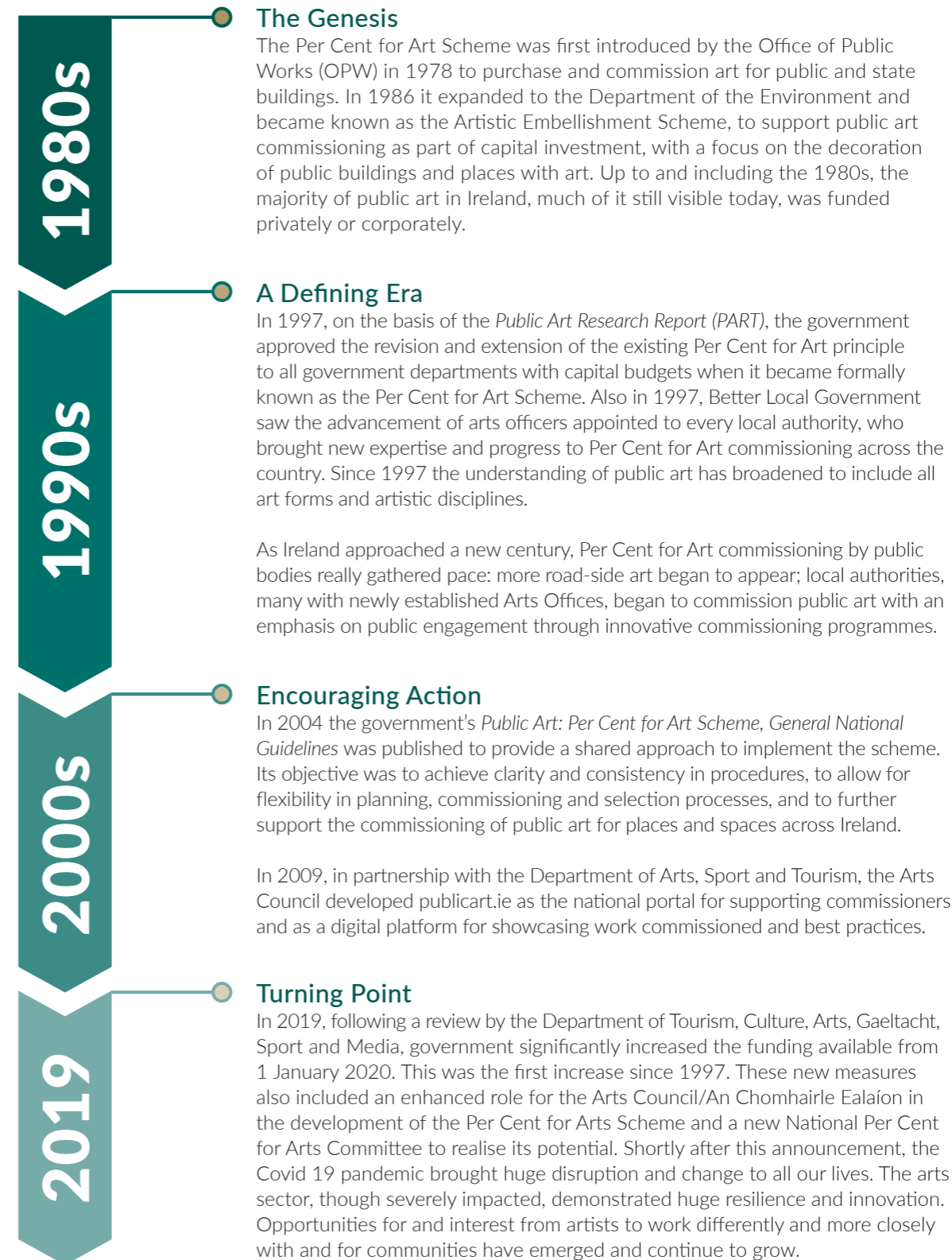
All public art projects are unique and commissioned from artists for a specific place, site, setting or context. The commissioner has to make important decisions, including who will encounter the work or engage with the project. Successful public art is based on a commissioner's ability to work well with professional artists and ensure adequate resourcing to support the creative process. A project briefing document is used to guide the artist's thinking, to develop ideas, and to facilitate collaboration. The engagement of local stakeholders and organisations in the commissioning process is often addressed through an effective steering committee or advisory panel to support community participation.

Ensuring adequate time for ideas to develop and a team approach, together with arts expertise, are all essential to achieving high-quality art outcomes that deliver lasting impacts for people and places.

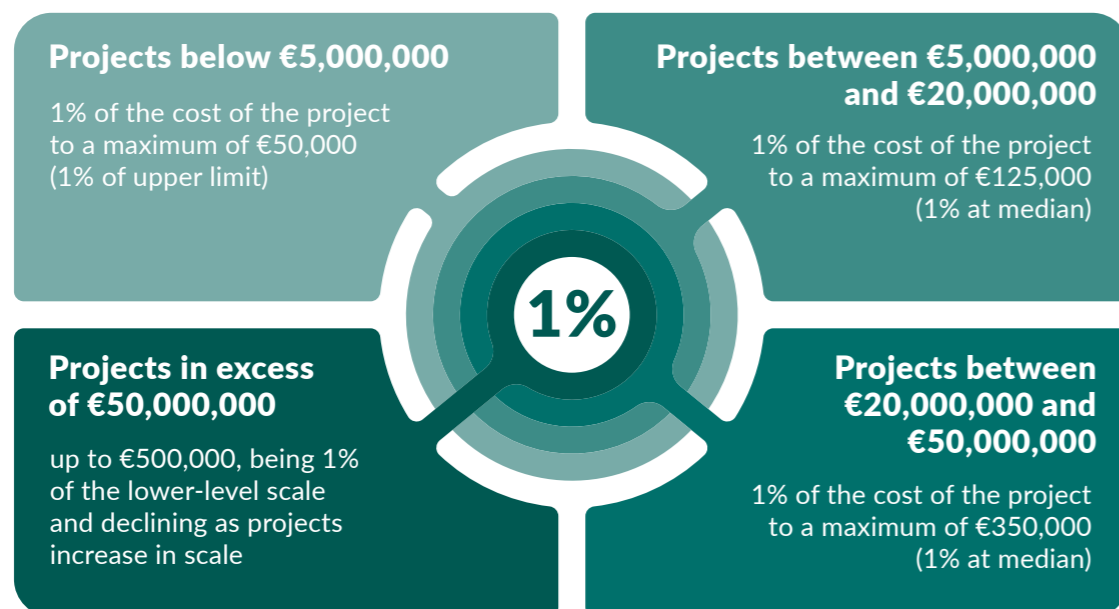
<sup>2</sup> Many countries apply a higher percentage depending on the nature of the commission – that is, nationally significant work of scale.

<sup>3</sup> The Per Cent for Art Scheme, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (2024). [gov - Per Cent for Art \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

## History of the Per Cent for Art Scheme in Ireland



### Current bands and limits are:



### What is its value?

The Per Cent for Arts Scheme gives people the opportunity to experience and encounter public art in their everyday lives. It provides a challenge and opportunity for professional artists to create ambitious work for public engagement and response. Public art, across all art forms, engages with audiences and communities in a variety of ways and often opens up possibilities for access to, and participation in, the arts. Public art changes and evolves over time. The definition is therefore wide and inclusive, encouraging work across scales, durations and media.

Ambitious public art projects reframe our understanding of a people, a place and a time. The unique character of ambitious public art projects often gives status to its place, and depending on the nature of the commission can develop an experience and environment that is people-centred. Public art adds depth, meaning and value for people and places. To date, the scheme has supported artists to create a rich diversity of projects for the public domain: examining social, political, economic, environmental and cultural issues; celebrating achievements; revealing

new perspectives on our daily lives; bringing communities together; and contributing to the vitality of the places where we live, work, study and visit. However, it is fair to say that it has not reached its full potential.

### What is its potential?

Our country is entering a period of huge potential for public art. The increased funding, arising from the capital investment proposed under *Project Ireland 2040* for a rapidly growing and changing country, provides significant opportunities for public bodies to commission artists and to engage communities in meaningful ways.

Artists are evolving their practice and approach to public art projects, including how to address social, environmental and cultural issues. Public art thinking and practice has shifted from an emphasis on the tangible and permanent. Many artists are interested in a dialogue model – that is, how art can provoke a response, community engagement or experience, opening up new spaces for enquiry and innovative ways to create a sense of place.

This framework will strengthen and enable commissioners to draw from the full range of art forms and artistic disciplines to expand the scope and vision for public art in Ireland. To mark this commitment, the name of the scheme will change from Per Cent for Art Scheme to Per Cent for Arts Scheme.

Embedding this policy framework in national infrastructure programmes is timely. Capital tracker projections under *Project Ireland 2040* for 2018–2028, based on a capital allocation of €87.45 billion, could yield €10 million per annum for Per Cent for Arts projects. Currently, 20% of this potential is being realised.

### What is the case for change?

While it is evident that significant inroads have been made and positive outcomes achieved over many decades of implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, there is more to be done.

The National Per Cent for Arts Committee, in the development of this policy, set out to understand how it could build on the accomplishments of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme and achieve greater success where challenges remain. From its extensive research and consultation, issues for policy development were identified. Together, they make up the case for change

- Ireland has grown and changed in numerous ways since the Per Cent for Arts Scheme was first introduced. The context within which the scheme operates is increasingly complex and challenging: digital and technological innovations, environmental challenges, changing demographic patterns and other policy, regulatory and external factors are all influential in determining the right path for the scheme to develop.
- The Per Cent for Arts Scheme will become more integrated with broader government policy objectives, such as *Project Ireland 2040* and the *National Development Plan*. This will ensure its potential for fostering innovation for better quality of life and liveable places is harnessed to support artists and better civic and community dialogue.

- While many artists have benefitted from Per Cent for Arts opportunities there are many more who are not familiar with it, unsure of how to engage with it or don't yet see its value or potential in relation to their own arts practice.
- Although aligned with supporting the capital achievements of *Project Ireland 2040*, the Per Cent for Arts Scheme is currently not referenced in the Public Spending Code or Public Financial Procedures. Funding has not been reviewed periodically to keep pace with inflationary pressures, as happens in other areas of the built environment.
- Across the public service (government department, state agencies and public services) and arts sector there are issues and challenges, including low awareness, inadequate information and data, variable approaches, a degree of uncertainty as to where responsibility for leadership, governance and management of the Scheme lies at national level.
- There is a lack of evidenced-based data and national visibility and awareness in the outcomes and outputs of the scheme.
- Across the public service there are diverse procedural, geographic and demographic variances in Per Cent for Arts opportunities being realised.

**Together, these challenges make the case for change. They inform the design of this policy framework, which will support more effective implementation of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme by:**

- **Moving to a more outcomes-driven focus to ensure results for artists and the public;**
- **Increasing collaboration across the public service and the arts; and**
- **Developing a more evidence-driven and responsive approach**

## What do we want to achieve?

**The ambition is for the Per Cent for Arts Scheme to play a more significant role in everyday life.**

Ireland's public art achievements over the past four decades have brought us to a new era of implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme that requires a different model to enhance and make visible the distinctive role and contribution of public art in the wider development of our country through *Project Ireland 2040*. We want to achieve more opportunities for more artists to create work of scale and ambition for more people in more places.

*Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028* is focused on six high-level policy outcomes (illustrated on P16) which will support continuous improvement across the public service and within the arts in the implementation of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme. These outcomes are ambitious and align with specific *Culture 2025*, *Making Great Art Work* and *Project Ireland 2040*, priorities and actions.

The outcomes cannot be achieved by government departments, public agencies, artists or organisations working alone. A collaborative approach is essential. Through this policy, partnerships will be developed: from education to local government to the health sector, and from inside and outside the arts and cultural sector.

Innovation and collaboration in public art is most impactful when it occurs closest to project implementation. Local government is among the most important, prolific and innovative commissioners of public art in Ireland, operating at the front line in implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme since 1988, and will play a leading role in the implementation of this policy, so that government investment can be targeted at where it can achieve its greatest impact.





### Six high-level public art outcomes



### What has informed this policy?

A baseline of evidence was developed to inform this policy framework. This includes: three commissioned research reports on the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in local government, health and education contexts; international comparators; a companion research digest; and a review of the use of the scheme in government departments.

To inform this new policy-driven approach to implement the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, a national engagement and consultation process was undertaken with artists, public art specialists, public service employees, arts organisations and relevant representative professional bodies, academics and international experts during 2023.

Findings of the consultation have been analysed thematically, based on views and opinions expressed by more than 200 participants in group engagements and one-to-one discussions.

A message of hope was expressed that an effective new policy will reflect the specific and nuanced advice, insights and ambitions articulated by the contributors based on decades of experience here in Ireland, coupled with an informed understanding of effective practice in other jurisdictions.

The policy framework presented in Part 1 of this report is informed by the recommendations of the research and by the consultation process. These reports are available on [publicart.ie](http://publicart.ie).



The Picture Book: A Twilight Fairytale by Redmoon Theatre Company (Chicago). Commissioned by Donegal County Council, Stranorlar & Ballybofey, Co. Donegal (2010). Funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Photo by Paul McGuckin.

# Part One



# 1. Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028 Policy Framework

The *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028 Policy Framework* is built around six high-level outcomes, four pillars and eighteen actions. They are designed to work together to increase opportunities for artists to make new work for public environments, for people to access the widest range of high-quality public arts experiences in their everyday lives, and to take advantage of more opportunities to develop and express individual and community creativity through participation in public art projects.

The policy builds public sector innovation and collaboration to ensure effective delivery of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme to transform urban centres, neighbourhoods, districts and settings so that communities, especially those experiencing inequality or exclusion, can engage with public art supporting dynamic, resilient, innovative and outward-looking places.

## Maximising the potential of Ireland's Per Cent for Arts Scheme

### The Pillars

The framework of four pillars is designed to achieve the six high-level Per Cent for Arts Scheme policy outcomes and the vision of *Project Ireland 2040*. The pillars focus on themes such as improving public access to the arts, valuing the artist, increasing innovation through collaboration, and building capacity and ownership of the scheme.

**Pillar 1 Connecting Art and People:** places emphasis on increasing the number of Per Cent for Arts projects delivered so that more people can experience a meaningful public art presence in places throughout Ireland. Raising public awareness and increasing access to public art by diversifying the range and nature of artists and art forms commissioned is a key focus, as well as providing up-to-date information and ensuring commissioners have access to the expertise and guidance they need to develop projects that engage the public in impactful ways.

**Pillar 2 Valuing the Artist:** focuses on developing an environment in which professional artists can make work of ambition and quality for the public domain with access to the information, guidance, expertise, resources, training and professional-development supports needed to do that well.

**Pillar 3 Innovating for Sustainability:** will ensure that the Per Cent for Arts Scheme Policy Framework is innovative and focused on delivering real impact for people in Ireland. This will be achieved through a whole-of-government approach, using collaborative means to solve problems, supporting knowledge and investing in developmental approaches that deliver creative and future-facing public art solutions.

**Pillar 4 Building Capacity and Ownership:** ensures that the public services and diverse stakeholders have the guidance, tools, skills and capacity to deliver effectively, through training, seminars, networking opportunities and best-practice examples. Key to this pillar is the development of a new Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit and the strengthening of evidence-based decision-making.

## The actions

Each of these interlinked pillars will be achieved through eighteen specific actions. **The implementation detail under each action is provided in Part 2.** These cross-cutting, strategic actions will be implemented across the public service and within the arts sector to support a new vision for the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in Ireland.

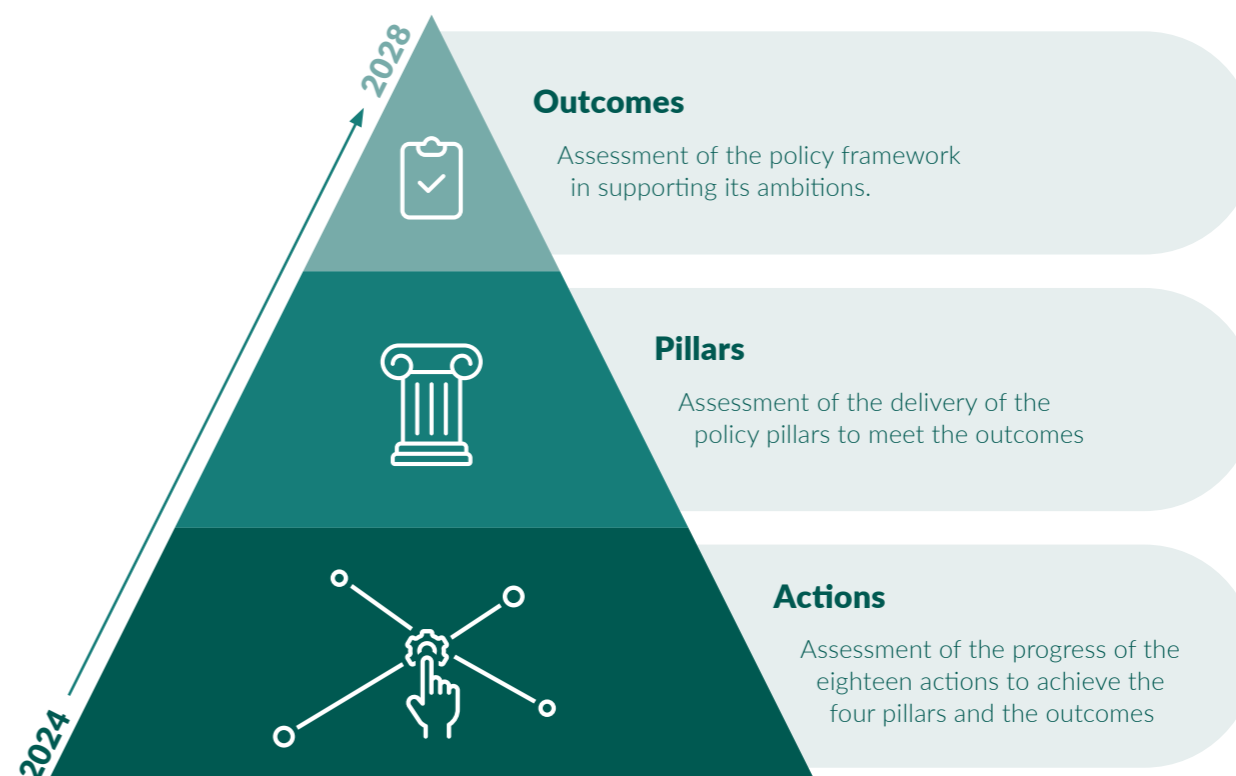
Actions such as strengthening whole-of-government collaboration, promoting a culture of innovation and optimising the use of data will ensure progress, streamline communications between the centre and sectors implementing this policy, and support a move beyond awareness of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme to

facilitate mindset and organisational change by piloting new initiatives that stimulate innovation in public arts practice within and across sectoral boundaries.

**The four pillars and eighteen actions will respond to new evidence, data and information and policy change as they emerge. Evidence will be collated on an ongoing basis over the next four years to inform decision-making with a view to improving the policy to achieve the greatest impact.**

## Measuring impact

The review framework used to assess the outcomes of the *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028 Policy Framework* can be illustrated as a pyramid.



Capturing data on the impact of the work of the public service will be achieved through the use of a range of methodologies: qualitative and quantitative metrics gathered from government departments and public bodies commissioning art, together with feedback from artists, stakeholders and the general public.

The benefits from greater openness, transparency and accountability, and better targeting of policy outcomes in implementing the scheme can support change and deliver significant impacts for artists and the public.

The National Per Cent for Arts Committee will engage with the Public Service Reform Evaluation Unit and work collaboratively with creative and public stakeholders and public art experts to identify appropriate indicators to measure the successful implementation of these actions in an effective and appropriate manner for each sector.

**One Hour Archive by Louis Haugh.** Commissioned by Grangegorman Development Association (2019). Funded by HSE, TU Dublin and Department of Education and Skills Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Photo by Louis Haugh.



## Operating Instructions and National Guidelines

**The criteria to be met by government departments, public agencies and sectors implementing the scheme are set out in the Per Cent for Arts Scheme Operating Instruction. The instruction provides contextual information on the scheme, the rules governing its operation, guidance on the commissioning process, oversight, drawdown and payment procedures, including qualifying and non-qualifying costs.**

The *Public Art: Per Cent for Art Scheme, General National Guidelines, 2004*<sup>5</sup> provide a common national approach to the implementation of the scheme. They offer clarity and consistency in procedures that address the planning, selection and review of Per Cent for Arts projects and best practices to further develop commissioning approaches. New and updated guidelines, which take account of evolving issues for public bodies implementing the scheme, will be published by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

<sup>5</sup> *Public Art: Per Cent for Art Scheme, General National Guidelines, 2004*, Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, 2004.

## Pillar 1 | Connecting Art and People

The environment in which we live affects every part of our lives. The decisions made today about the built environment not only serve our needs for shelter, commerce and culture, leisure and mobility, but also anchor us in the past and accompany us into the future. They will affect quality of life, identity, well-being, health, welfare and sense of place, impacting the quality of the places we inherit and those we make today. That is why *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028* is both timely and vital.

At the heart of all capital programmes are people. Public art humanises the built environment, offering communities greater cultural, social, economic and environmental value in the places and spaces they inhabit. Good public art practice needs time for public engagement through ongoing dialogue and a collaborative approach to deliver high-quality art outcomes. This Policy Framework will aim to secure the highest levels of creativity and innovation in the commissioning of art for public places and spaces, and recognises that, as well as delivering projects of national scale and significance, some public artwork is for discrete audiences. Diverse approaches to commissioning appropriate to context and setting will be encouraged and supported. This pillar places public art at the heart of civic society and as central to local and national dialogue of people and place. It is focused on two key aspects that will improve implementation of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme:

- **Creating the right conditions to deliver meaningful outcomes for art and people; and**
- **Ensuring the scheme is maximised for wider spatial and demographic reach and impact.**

The Per Cent for Arts Scheme is unique in the potential it offers to deliver locally accessible public engagement and participation opportunities in arts projects that animate and enrich places and spaces. That said, barriers remain that may prevent people from taking part, including those experiencing isolation,

discrimination or inequality. Underpinning this pillar is a shared commitment to removing barriers to participation by strengthening policy mechanisms that enable commissioners to curate a series of targeted public art projects – for example, by pooling existing and future Per Cent for Arts budgets to develop public art programmes so that more people can experience a unique public art presence in the places where they live, work and play.

One of the greatest challenges affecting our society, and disproportionately those who are socially vulnerable, is the climate crisis. This framework recognises the vital role of commissioners as advocates to lead and implement progressive approaches to reflect changing environmental contexts. New models of commissioning that examine public art practice through a sustainability lens will be developed. The Per Cent for Arts Scheme will fund artists to engage with communities, facilitating processes of creative reflection on themes of local relevance focused on transitioning to circular and sustainable community practices to imagine equitable, just and safe futures.

Over the next four years, the aim will be to improve quality of life and well-being through individual and community participation in the development of contemporary and ambitious public art projects. The following four actions have been prioritised to help achieve the overall objectives of this policy:

**Action 1 | Make public art more visible and accessible for people**

**Action 2 | Create more opportunities for people to participate in public art**

**Action 3 | Collaborate to imagine and enact new futures with communities**

**Action 4 | Put equality and human rights into the heart of public art**

## Pillar 2 | Valuing the Artist

The Per Cent for Arts Scheme has provided valuable opportunities for many artists to create ambitious public art for people and places, including iconic sculptures, the composition of music, theatre performances, children’s books and many more examples that have brought value and meaning to where we live and work.

Valuing the role and ideas of the artist is essential to ensure public art outcomes of artistic merit. Central to this pillar is providing a public art ecosystem that resonates with both artists and commissioners, where their work is valued and understood across the public sector and through public engagement. The policy outlines two key aspects to improve implementation of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme for artists:

- **Creating the right conditions to cultivate artistic ambition and innovation; and**
- **Widening the pool of artists to diversify creative and public outcomes.**

Central to the creation of a thriving public art ecosystem will be a network of independent public art experts – for example, curators, advisors and consulting companies to support commissioning bodies in the integration of art with people and places. This policy acknowledges their importance in growing and developing a culture of innovation in public art.

The actions of this pillar are focused on making the Per Cent for Arts Scheme more visible and accessible, increasingly through digital delivery, to more artists across art forms, and engaging more with artists and listening to their views to ensure they have the knowledge and creative flexibility needed to create public art in relevant and meaningful ways. Artists will be supported with clarity in the information and expert advice available, and with resources and services. Emerging artists will be supported to engage and experiment in public art projects.

Building on the Basic Income for Artists pilot, the opportunity exists to ensure the Per Cent for Arts Scheme has potential to add sustainably significant levels of opportunity and income for more artists across all art forms.

The development of a learning environment will incentivise ambition and innovation in public art, and align the Per Cent for Arts Scheme with contemporary art trends and practices, such as building new learning partnerships; expanding professional-development opportunities; increasing knowledge at third level; and investing in research to grow evidence-based decision-making.

**Action 5 | Ensure the vital contribution of the artist is visible and valued**

**Action 6 | Seek to diversify artists, art forms and practice**

**Action 7 | Establish professional supports for artists to reach their ambition**

## Pillar 3 | Innovating for Sustainability

Creativity is the lifeblood of the arts and is fundamental to innovation. Under this pillar a new approach to implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme will be established to develop a culture of innovation that maximises the potential of the scheme for artists, the public and those leading implementation, while ensuring the scheme is applied in a systematic way.

Innovation is needed in the design and development of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, as well as the artistic outcomes and unique public manifestations made possible by it. Collaboration across departments, agencies and sectors is essential to implementing the scheme effectively and efficiently.

The whole-of-government approach taken to implement the scheme will promote innovation and sustainability to:

- **Deliver an integrated public service and arts sector response; and**
- **Set out a clear reform path to develop public art at national and local levels.**

This pillar will see the Per Cent for Arts Scheme embedded within the wider landscape of national and sectoral reform in line with *Our Public Service 2030* and the capital development ambitions of *Project Ireland 2040*. Aligning with the national reform landscape will improve coordination, increase collaboration and inspire innovation.

In a rapidly changing world, flexibility will be vital to the implementation of the scheme to ensure confidence and agility in responding to opportunities and changes, as yet unknown, such as adapting to climate change, a growing and diverse population and digital technologies. For example, the processes used in the commissioning and production of public art will be committed to reducing its carbon footprint, reducing the production of waste, and supporting the public sector’s leadership in circular practices and policies. Public art has a unique potential to

demonstrate innovation and to act as a creative social experiment that contributes to the future achievements of the country.

A key action is to ensure public art is protected, with commissioned art projects being maintained and cared for as part of valued local and regional public art collections. This also applies to the documentation and digitisation of temporary and time based public art, conservation of historical works and decommissioning.

With a focus on collaboration, this pillar directs that the public service and the arts sector will work in partnership to bring about positive change through the development of public art, and in so doing strengthen Ireland’s reputation internationally for creativity through the implementation of the Per Cent for Arts principle. Building a culture of innovation means piloting new approaches. The actions of this pillar are designed to promote excellence in public art and to create the conditions for this ambition.

**Action 8 | Promote a culture of innovation among public bodies**

**Action 9 | Build knowledge, research, insights and understanding**

**Action 10 | Work towards creating a national collection of public art**

**Action 11 | Establish environmental and climate targets**

**Action 12 | Position the Per Cent for Arts Scheme as an international exemplar**

## Pillar 4 | Building Capacity and Ownership

The Per Cent for Arts Scheme is implemented in a multidisciplinary, dynamic operating environment, which has become increasingly complex and interconnected. It involves an extensive range of stakeholders; eighteen government departments, 100 non-commercial state agencies, thirty-one local authorities, staff in health, education and community sectors, artists, curators, public art professionals and arts organisations. The extent of stakeholders involved can lead to fragmentation, poor communications and confusion about who is leading and where responsibility and accountability lies for coordination nationally and locally.

Building operational capacity and ownership across the public service and the arts sector is critical for success. At the heart of this work are people. In large and small ways, there is a need for all those involved in the implementation of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme to learn new practices, and to shift our mindsets, systems and protocols to achieve the ambition of this policy. The development of skills and knowledge to support institutional change is the focus of this pillar.

The actions will ensure consistency of application and compliance with regulation, including care and maintenance of public art. They provide a practical response to implementing the cross-government approach outlined under Pillar 3. In particular, they will:

- Streamline and simplify communications;
- Develop better systems, structures, processes and tools; and
- Make it easier to engage with the range of supports available.

The approach will be evidence-based: identifying gaps; developing capacity and confidence-building for stakeholders by creating effective guidance, insights and advocacy tools for public art. Opportunities will be created for all those implementing the scheme to participate in decision-making about the design, planning and development of public art services and future innovations. The actions in this pillar will improve coordination and management of the scheme for diverse stakeholders as well as develop new public art initiatives.

**Action 13 | A Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit to coordinate and deliver excellence**

**Action 14 | Publish new national guidelines on the Per Cent for Arts Scheme**

**Action 15 | Improve communications and engagement**

**Action 16 | Make information, advice and expertise more accessible**

**Action 17 | Improve data collection and reporting outcomes and impacts**

**Action 18 | Build capacity through professional development**



**The Stones of the Hollow Hill** by James Winnett. Commissioned by Kildare County Council, Kerdiffstown Park, County Kildare (2023). Funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Per Cent for Arts Scheme with additional funding from Kildare County Council, Kerdiffstown Landfill Remediation Project. Photo by Michael O'Rourke.

## 2. Leadership, Governance and Implementation

The development of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme requires an effective and flexible model of governance, given the size of the public service and the number and diversity of organisations involved. Committed senior leadership involving the public service, arts sector and technical expertise will ensure the strategic prioritisation of public art in the development of high-quality environments and that momentum is sustained throughout the lifetime of the framework.

### Governance structure

The governance structure for *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028: A Whole-of-Government Policy to Implement the Per Cent for Arts Scheme* is based on best practice in the delivery of similar national policy frameworks.

The integrated approach taken will help the wider public service to work together to implement cross-cutting reforms, overcome barriers to collaboration, address common challenges, share best practice and identify better ways of working. High-level buy-in across the public sector is critical for delivering on this framework.

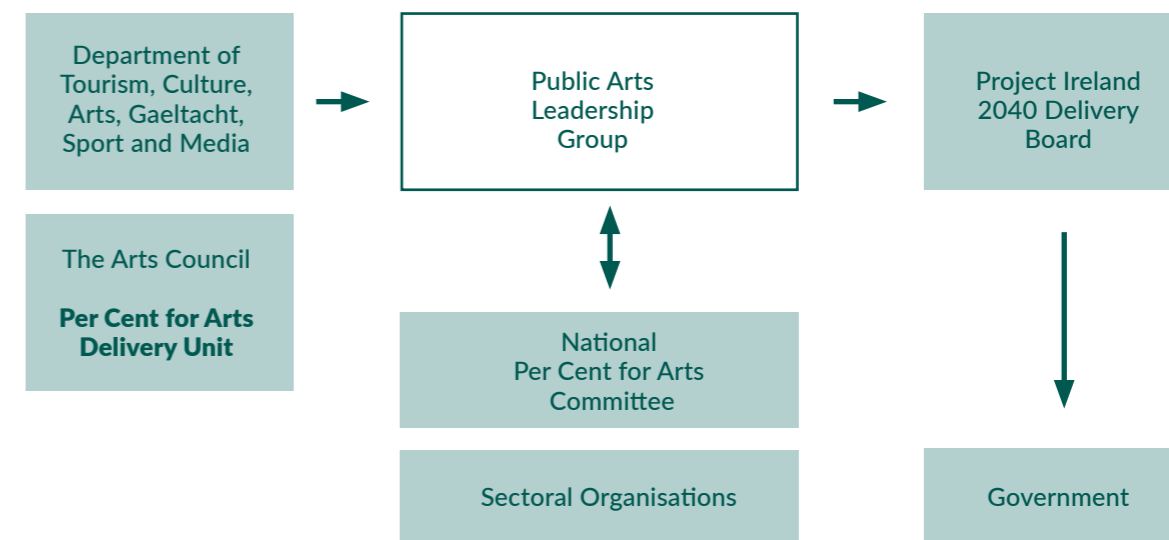
A **Public Art Leadership Group** led by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media, and working in partnership with the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon, will be established to drive the vision for change set out in this framework. This reflects the movement to policy implementation.

The **National Per Cent for Arts Committee** is the interdepartmental/inter-agency governance structure established to oversee the policy development phase (2022–2024). This committee will be refreshed, and its remit will change to analysing and sharing data on the implementation of the scheme, supporting the development of public art within each government department, and identifying professional-development needs and gaps. This committee will inform the decision-making of the Public Art Leadership Group.

**Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board** is the key governance structure established by government (2018) in respect of *Project Ireland 2040* to oversee its implementation and delivery of the *National Development Plan*. A key function of the board is to monitor and oversee implementation structures and performance across the various sectors to ensure a coordinated and collaborative whole-of-government approach to *National Development Plan* and *National Planning Framework* delivery. The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media will introduce this policy framework for consideration by the Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board as a key stage in the decision making process.

**Government** will note the recommendations and actions identified arising from *Public Art 2024–2028: Per Cent for Arts Scheme Policy Framework and actions*.

The relationship between the key stakeholders is set out on the following page.



### What is the role of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media?

The department will chair the Public Art Leadership Group and lead all communications across government. In particular, the department will:

- Report to relevant government committees, such as Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board (on the implementation of this policy framework)
- Support integration of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme into the Public Spending Code and Public Financial Procedures in accordance with revised capital-expenditure guidelines
- Analyse and review all data gathered and available on the implementation of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme
- Lead any international engagement regarding the implementation of the scheme and policy with the embassy network

### What is the role of the Public Art Leadership Group?

The Public Art Leadership Group will provide expert oversight on the implementation of this policy.

Its leadership and oversight role will include:

- Monitoring and advising on the roll-out of the implementation of the eighteen actions across the four pillars
- Consultation partner on a detailed annual implementation plan
- Oversight of structured engagement with the public services implementing the scheme
- Data, knowledge and analytical insights on the use of the scheme
- Advancing recommendations on the development of the scheme
- Advising on performance indicators, goals, timelines, review schedule, annual progress reports
- Being appraised of national and international policy and economic developments that may impact the Per Cent for Arts Scheme
- Establishing expert advisory groups or sub-committees as needed
- Meeting three times a year

## What is the role of the National Per Cent for Arts Committee?

This committee will be represented on the Project Leadership Group and support its work by:

- Promoting shared ownership: each member will be a project sponsor for the development of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in their own representative department/organisation
- Ensuring effective cross-departmental and interagency communications, agenda setting and establishing internal teams where appropriate
- Developing a detailed annual implementation plan, with inbuilt flexibility to enable it to respond to emerging priorities
- Developing data, knowledge and analytical insights on the use of the scheme
- Making recommendations on the development of the scheme
- Understanding the impacts of the scheme on artists and the public
- Determining opportunities to participate in any EU-wide informal networks for exchange of information and experience

This governance structure is designed to ensure that, up to and beyond the lifetime of this policy framework, the scheme will become integral to every public capital project, providing valuable experiences and outcomes at a local level.

## Implementation structure

### Per Cent for Arts Unit: The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

The Arts Council will be resourced through the annual estimates process by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media to establish a unit and a team to coordinate and manage the implementation of the policy.

A fully resourced Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit will include the following, though not exhaustive, areas of responsibility:

- Deliver the implementation plan/s agreed by the Public Art Leadership Group
- Coordinate engagement and work in partnership with the National Per Cent for Arts Committee
- Disseminate and promote best practice in use of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme
- Report on progress to the Public Art Leadership Group
- Be the central point of contact, knowledge and guidance for the broad range of stakeholders involved in implementing and operating the Per Cent for Arts Scheme
- Manage publicart.ie and other communication and PR platforms to ensure widespread awareness of the scheme and its public-facing outcomes
- Gather data and insights relating to the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, including tracking, monitoring, reporting mechanisms and research
- Facilitate cooperation between public sector, arts organisations, artists and technical experts to structure practical methods of cooperation – for example, partnerships, protocols, public engagement and professional-development opportunities
- Ensure a diverse range of interest groups are consulted in refining and scoping proposed actions while maintaining a balance of voices

The delivery unit will bring to life the policy vision and its implementation. It is recognised that this is a stepped approach – that there are actions that will develop over time that will require resourcing and a robust model of governance.

## A phased approach to implementation

New leadership, governance and implementation structures will support government to define and implement a clear, informed, policy-led approach for the integration of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in wider policy frameworks to maximise its potential for artists, people and place.

*Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028* lays out a three-year programme of action, with the fourth year (2028) focused on learning, review, evaluation and recommendations to inform further policy development at the mid-point review of *Project Ireland 2040*. In 2028 Ireland will also mark and celebrate fifty years of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme.

## Achieving project outcomes

An incremental approach to the development of *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028* can ensure time for:

- An integrated approach.
- Engagement with key stakeholders and sectors
- A focus on possibilities in the long term
- Commitment and buy-in to a shared vision

## Indicative implementation timelines 2024–2028

Preparation and set-up phase 2024–2025	Phase 1: Implementation 2026	Phase 2: Implementation 2027	Longer-term planning & review 2028
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Framework noted by government</li> <li>• Department of TCAGSM affirmed as lead dept</li> <li>• Communications campaign</li> <li>• Funding to establish the Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit secured and positions advertised</li> <li>• Governance structures established</li> <li>• Phase 1 Implementation Plan agreed</li> <li>• Publicart.ie is relaunched</li> <li>• New National Public Art Guidelines launched</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll-out of key policy actions commences</li> <li>• New information and advisory service launched</li> <li>• Key sectoral and interagency partnerships consolidated</li> <li>• Performance indicators agreed</li> <li>• Business and finance planning for developmental projects</li> <li>• Identify key policy strands for optimising resources from existing funding streams</li> <li>• Phase 2 Implementation Plan agreed</li> <li>• Annual report on implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, including spend, spatial spread, diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing roll-out and evaluation of key actions</li> <li>• Initiate public art pilot projects, recognising that options and solutions will need to be tested, refined and costed</li> <li>• Promote <i>Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028</i> internationally – for example, European Cultural Alliance and initiate partnerships</li> <li>• Plan and develop celebratory programme on fiftieth anniversary of the Per Cent for Art(s) Scheme for delivery in 2028</li> <li>• Phase 3 Implementation Plan agreed</li> <li>• Annual report on implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, including spend, spatial spread, diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate the fiftieth anniversary</li> <li>• Ongoing developmental programme roll-out</li> <li>• Learnings from policy implementation and taking an incremental approach</li> <li>• Evidenced-informed forward planning and future Per Cent for Arts Scheme policy</li> </ul>



### 3. Public Art and Policy Integration

The development and implementation of *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028* is part of a much broader arts, cultural and built-environment public-policy landscape in Ireland.

The policy maximises the potential of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme for people, places and artists for the future. Successful integration with Ireland's overarching cultural policy, planning and development frameworks – *Culture 2025* and *Project Ireland 2040* – requires a unified understanding of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, its purpose, role and potential to support the vision for Ireland as a 'creative, innovative and culturally attuned society, whose people are provided with high quality, well managed built and natural environments that contribute to public confidence and quality of life'.<sup>6</sup>

By linking the Per Cent for Arts Scheme to the overall development of the country, the broader role and significance of public art to contribute to the delivery of high-quality environments becomes more visible. As Ireland enters a new era of infrastructural expansion up to 2040, coupled with the renewal of national arts and cultural policies (*Culture 2025*, *Making Great Art Work 2016–2025*), it is important that all public services with capital budgets understand the potential offered by public art.

The holistic approaches to development, promoted by the *National Planning Framework*, *National Development Plan*, *Civil Service Renewal 2030*, *Climate Action Plans*, *National Architecture Policy* and the *Town Centre First Policy* create an opportunity to act strategically, aligning *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028* within these broader frameworks.

The eighteen actions support continuous improvements in how public services implement the Per Cent for Art Scheme to maximise its impact for people and artists.

This chapter identifies three areas for action at national and local levels for public services with the objective of developing new models of best practice:

- Integrating the Per Cent for Arts Scheme into the public and civil service;
- Linking public art to other cultural frameworks; and
- Integration of art within the planning and development system.

#### Integrating the Per Cent for Arts Scheme into the public and civil service

The whole-of-government approach will ensure greater coordination across the public service and deliver new opportunities for cross-departmental and interagency collaboration.

The longer-term goal is to bring the scheme in line with international Per Cent for Art equivalents in other jurisdictions, ensuring that the scheme is applied automatically to all public capital projects.

The practical implications of this shift necessitate a stepped approach and public services with capital budgets and programmes should, where possible:

- Become familiar with the principles and ambition enshrined in this policy
- Apply the Per Cent for Arts Scheme to its capital programmes
- Implement the scheme based on the policy, instruction and guidelines.
- Identify and report barriers to implementation of the policy which cannot be resolved locally
- Keep up with good practice
- Seek support from the Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit as necessary

<sup>6</sup> *Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan and National Planning Framework 2018–2027*, Department of Housing Planning and Local Government (2018).

#### Linking public art to other cultural frameworks

Nationally, *Culture 2025* and *Making Great Art Work 2016–2025* are the overarching policy frameworks for the development of the arts in Ireland.

Local government is also mandated to plan for and develop the arts under the *Arts Act 2003*. Many other public bodies, nationally and locally, have opted to develop their own arts and cultural programmes, policies and strategies. At a county and city level there are arts plans, culture and creativity plans, development plans, and economic and community plans that each provide supporting frameworks for progressing cultural, economic and community development objectives, statutory planning, place planning and infrastructural development for their areas. Through Creative Schools, a quarter of all schools now have a Creative Plan.

*Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028* provides an overarching policy framework to assist all public services and other sectoral partners to take a policy-based approach to implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme for their areas or sectors. In particular, public services that regularly implement the scheme (local authorities, Office of Public Works, education and training boards, hospital groups, and so on) are encouraged to strategically plan so as to clearly identify the future needs and potential of public art within their communities.

The integration of public art within these broader cultural frameworks will maximise the process of implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, providing greater clarity of purpose, need and potential that improves delivery for artists, places and communities, and results in a more considered and developmental approach.

#### Integration of public art within the planning and development system

Under the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) there is no specific reference to the arts. There is a mandatory objective for the provision of culture in *Local Development Plans* and general references to community and culture in the *National Development Plan*. There are currently no provisions relating to the arts under exempted development provisions.

Public art can be a tangible asset in planning matters, not just historically in relation to cultural heritage but for its potential to create liveable and vibrant places and spaces. There are a number of planning tests that public art readily satisfies in demonstrating that it fulfils a sound planning purpose. These include, but are not limited to:

- *Community benefit* – public art can contribute to a sense of place, expressing what matters to a community and adds depth and meaning for people and places
- *Built form* – public art (depending on the nature of the project) can help add texture and character, and animate and activate our use of public spaces and places
- *Heritage and culture* – public art can highlight and explore deeper cultural narratives and help to tell contemporary stories

The development of a more strategic role for public art within wider planning and development processes will be examined in dialogue with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

# Part Two

## 4. Overarching Action Plan 2024–2028

### Maximising the potential of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme

In this section the actions that will support structured development under each pillar and help to achieve the six outcomes are dealt with in more detail. Each action is supported with a short introduction and associated sub-actions. Some of these sub-actions are the responsibility of the commissioner. Throughout the lifetime of this framework, in-built reviews will afford the opportunity to identify and include new actions to be delivered over the next four years.

## Pillar 1 | Connecting Art and People

### Action 1 Make public art more visible and accessible for people

This action will support the creation of new, high-quality public art projects for people throughout Ireland to experience at national level and in their own localities. Projects of scale and ambition from the iconic to the discreet will engage diverse publics and audiences, and will enhance Ireland's artistic and cultural reputation. At times, public art commissions may generate debate. This will assist with a rounded approach to public discourse. This action will bring increased visibility to public art, with an emphasis on communications, archiving and maintaining public art projects.

- Redevelop publicart.ie as the central information hub. Managed by the Arts Council, it will provide advice, support and best-practice examples and collect data relating to the Per Cent for Arts Scheme.
- Create a national communication strategy to bring visibility to the celebrated outcomes of Per Cent for Arts commissions.
- Public bodies that are regularly commissioning art through the Per Cent for Arts Scheme will be supported to prepare a plan that sets out a curatorial approach aligned with national policy.
- Information gathered in the preparation of this policy will be used to develop achievable targets to increase access to Per Cent for Arts opportunities in underserved areas.
- The Arts Council and the County and City Management Association will work together under their Framework for Collaboration agreement to strengthen the approach by local government for a strong public art presence in all parts of the country.

### Action 2 Create more opportunities for people to participate in public art

There is considerable evidence of the connection between participation in arts and culture and improved health and well-being, pride of place, quality of life and self-esteem. Many artists are evolving how they make and share work to address social, environmental, cultural and economic matters. This action will aim to increase the range of Per Cent for Arts opportunities available to artists to work with individuals and communities keen to participate in public art projects across a wide range of social contexts in urban and rural settings throughout Ireland.

- Publicart.ie will highlight high-quality public engagement practices in the development of Per Cent for Arts projects to inspire commissioners to achieve quality public outcomes.
- Commissioning bodies will be supported to develop a public engagement plan at the earliest point possible in the planning stages of their Per Cent for Arts commission.
- The commissioner's ambition for public engagement and participation should be clearly outlined in the artist's brief, so that interested artists are aware when preparing a proposal to what extent a community process will form part of their project.
- Operational instruction and guidance will ensure that the policy of pooling Per Cent for Arts budgets is applied to support flexible, creative, experimental approaches that may target particular communities, generate spatial spread, and thematically respond to a range of local interests and needs.
- Public bodies should use public art expertise to enhance and support their commissioning process. This will support contemporary practice being considered, create new opportunities for public engagement and participation, and broker relationships between the artist, the commissioning authority and the public.



**The Happy Prince** by Little John Nee, Writer, Performer and Vincent Kennedy, Composer, Conductor. Commissioned by Donegal County Council (2012), performed at An Grianán Theatre, Letterkenny. Funded By the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Photo by Paul McGuckin.

### Action 3 Collaborate to imagine and enact new futures with communities

This action focuses on developing public art projects that build dialogue and strengthen relationships between artists, communities and other sectoral experts through the art-making process. New future-facing models of arts practice, collaboration and multi and inter-disciplinary processes that respond to social issues are encouraged.

- Multi and inter disciplinary arts practices that support artists to co-create with communities and co-author work with other professionals, such as scientists, engineers or academics, will be supported.
- Per Cent for Arts research residencies that enable artists, curators and creatives to work collaboratively with local partners and communities will be expanded to engage meaningfully with community interests and needs, and to achieve shared outcomes with those communities.
- Commissioners will be encouraged to consider at project-planning stage the legacy for active civic engagement in arts and culture that might arise from Per Cent for Arts projects.

### Action 4 Putting equality and human rights into the heart of public art

The Per Cent for Arts Scheme is founded on democratic principles that enshrine equitable rights to arts and cultural experiences for all people in Ireland regardless of who they are or where they live. It supports equal opportunities for all artists across Ireland to make new work and earn an income. This policy advances the work of government in promoting cultural rights, as outlined in human rights law, as well as cultural democracy, cultural sustainability and circular priorities through the distinctive contribution of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme.

All those implementing Per Cent for Arts projects will adhere to *Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014*.

- The potential of public art to bring people together, explore cultures, generate new perspectives and build social connectivity will be supported through Per Cent for Arts projects.
- Commissions can use an ecological methodology to address climate issues with a view to devising solutions such as adaptation, justice and mitigation.
- Public art projects will proactively seek to include people who may experience discrimination or injustice based on the nine grounds set out in Ireland's equality laws: race or religion, sexual orientation or gender, marital status, family status, age, membership of the Traveller community, or disability. Other grounds may also be relevant – for example, the *Arts Council's Equality and Diversity Implementation Plan* includes the additional ground of social class.
- Projects that explore the role of public art in challenging inequality and injustice through, for example, residencies or research will be piloted over the lifetime of the policy.

## Pillar 2 | Valuing the Artist

### Action 5 Ensure the vital contribution of the artist is visible and valued

The intrinsic value of art and culture as expressed through public art projects underpins this policy. Fundamental in this regard is the artist's right to freedom of expression, autonomy in making key artistic decisions, the integrity of the creative process, and the time required to develop and deliver projects. This must be understood and respected by those investing and commissioning through the Per Cent for Arts Scheme.

- Public bodies will facilitate the early integration of the artist (where appropriate) to facilitate ambitious public art that avoids creative compromises, missed opportunities and limited ambition.
- Public bodies will apply best-practice principles when commissioning Per Cent for Arts projects, ensuring appropriate pay and remuneration for the artist's expertise in a timely manner in line with public service codes of practice.
- A commissioner and the artist(s) will agree their respective roles and the shared public outcomes for the project at the outset of a commission, including the provision of appropriate support to deliver the project successfully and within budget.
- The artist's intent, the integrity of the work and its meaning in context will be protected for the public good. This includes care of the work, whether digital, temporary or traditional materials, and involves documenting and conserving the outputs and outcomes.
- The artist is recognised as the copyright holder of the artistic concept of a project. Issues relating to duration, location and ongoing care of the commission shall be agreed as part of the overall contract prior to installation.
- Guidance will be provided to commissioners to facilitate and raise awareness regarding the presentation and conservation of public art, including cases where the decommissioning of a project is appropriate.

### Action 6 Seek to diversify artists, art forms and practice

Public art commissioned and acquired through the Per Cent for Arts Scheme will represent the rich diversity of artists, art forms and practices in Ireland today, ensuring public art funded by the state is relevant and reflective of our society. Supports available to artists, using targeted communications, will be improved to promote equity in opportunities, to include and reflect more perspectives.

- The Per Cent for Arts communications strategy will seek to open up new public art opportunities by raising awareness among artists, promoting greater visibility of the scheme and highlighting investment across art forms and arts practices.
- Publicart.ie should provide a clear map of the supports available to artists, including information, best-practice case studies and resources.
- The Arts Council shall work internally and externally with artists' resource organisations and local authorities to facilitate engagement by a wider diversity of artists across art forms and arts practices to avail of Per Cent for Arts opportunities.
- Data will capture, through monitoring and reporting mechanisms, the diversity of artists commissioned and the type and range of public art funded. Based on findings, targets will be considered for any required representational changes.
- Different art-form and arts-practice needs, supports and opportunities will be identified and addressed as they relate to Per Cent for Arts commissions.

### Action 7 Establish professional supports for artists to reach their ambition

The creation of a learning environment where artists, curators and other creatives are supported to come together to learn from one another and their international peers will be vital to sustaining and renewing Ireland's public art ecosystem. The Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit will be resourced to function as a central hub offering advice and guidance to artists for Per Cent for Arts projects.

- Artists will have access to expert advice and guidance on issues that may impact the delivery of Per Cent for Arts commissions, including financial, regulatory, curatorial, legal and production.
- Artists' mentoring programmes and incubation projects will be explored and developed to support new voices and expand the breadth, range and expertise within the arts to deliver public art.
- A professional-development plan, informed by a skills-and-needs audit, will be developed to support artists and curators to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills to work in the field of public art throughout their professional careers.
- Networking opportunities for artists, curators, advisors, arts managers and those working in the field of public art will be established to create a space for knowledge transfer and to discuss opportunities, issues and challenges experienced.
- New opportunities for artists and professionals working in public art to interact with leaders in other professional fields, such as planning, engineering, community development, architecture and design, will be created, working with a range of public sector partners and relevant national and international networks.
- Working with third-level institutions, partnerships will be developed to build research capacity and critical thinking in public art in Ireland. This work will include a focus on action research and the development of methodologies that support and encourage greater innovation and experimentation in the implementation of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme

## Pillar 3 | Innovating for Sustainability

### Action 8 Promote a culture of innovation among public bodies

This action recognises that a culture of innovation will not be possible until a coordinated approach is adopted in the first instance, where a greater understanding of the role of public art and its potential in engaging communities and creating a sense of place can emerge.

- All public stakeholders involved in the Per Cent for Arts Scheme from government departments, national and local public agencies and service providers will work in harmony to operate the scheme, and ensure its application within capital projects of all scales.
- New approaches designed to bring efficiencies and innovation to the implementation of the scheme will be advanced, such as the potential to develop shared services and initiatives to harness public art expertise and experience from across the public service. Commissioners are encouraged to bring innovation and new ideas and approaches to implementing the scheme.

### Action 9 Build knowledge, research, insights and understanding

Innovation thrives on knowledge. This action commits to ongoing research aimed at gathering insights that support learning and promote the value of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, providing evidence of the important role public art plays in improving health and well-being, regeneration, vibrant places and spaces, and growing creative and innovative capabilities through investment in artists and the contemporary arts.

- New data and information will be gathered to provide evidence of the social and cultural impact of public art in Ireland. Research will contribute to a better understanding, mapping out and reinforcing the connections between the Per Cent for Arts Scheme and the delivery of quality provision in communities and in the built and natural environments.
- Commissioners will be encouraged to use the research and measurement methodologies to understand the local and social impact of their commissioning programmes.
- The barriers to creative engagement with the scheme for artists – their pay and conditions – will be captured.
- The effectiveness of this whole-of-government policy framework will be monitored and evaluated consistently.
- Insights and learning will be fed into other cross-government and sectoral policies, reports and reviews.
- The research reports, commissioned in the development of this policy, will be made available on [publicart.ie](http://publicart.ie), which will be a portal for existing and further research and critical thinking.

### Action 10 Work towards creating a national collection of public art

Over the lifetime of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, countless artworks and projects have been commissioned and purchased by public bodies across Ireland, including local authorities, schools, hospitals, and by the OPW for public buildings. While these commissioners are the undisputed owner and custodian of the art, the projects themselves are part of Ireland's rich artistic heritage and contemporary cultural life. Many works and projects are not as visible or accessible as they could be to encourage and support public engagement. This action aims to change this.

- Map the range of public art commissioned under the Per Cent for Arts Scheme – in so far as is possible – so as to understand the full depth and breadth of the works acquired, including works that no longer exist physically and works that are temporary and archived digitally.
- Establish a methodology to update the inventory as new works are completed, and create a digital archive of the collection working with partners to create innovative methodologies to identify, showcase and sustain their legacy.
- Explore a range of methods so that public art commissioned under the Per Cent for Arts Scheme is easily identifiable.
- Tell the stories of, and draw attention to, the collection, from spatial to art form and from artists and public perspectives, highlighting the importance of public art as a national cultural asset.

### Action 11 Establish environmental and climate targets

Government climate plans set out how Ireland can accelerate the actions that are required to respond to the climate crisis, putting climate solutions at the centre of Ireland’s social and economic development. This action focuses on how the Per Cent for Arts Scheme will play a part in the solutions required for a sustainable future. The evidence shows that public art projects can play a unique role in supporting public engagement with climate challenges, bringing art and people together to partake in civic dialogue and innovate creatively together.

- All Per Cent for Arts project commissions will demonstrate sound climate, environmental and circular priorities under the *Whole of Government Circular Economy Strategy*. For example, artists’ briefs for new public art projects will have climate and environmental priorities built into the development and legacy of their commissions.
- Commissioners will work collaboratively with artists to advise and support compliance with the shared climate agenda, and minimise any disproportionate burden of responsibility on the artist.
- The context of climate and the environment will be included in training and awareness-raising initiatives with artists.
- Artists and commissioners will be encouraged to explore and innovate on climate-related themes through Per Cent for Arts programmes, and to engage the public in discussions and actions that encourage attitudinal and behavioural change.
- Environmental concerns relating to each art-form and arts-practice area will be identified.
- The progress and impact of climate and environmental actions delivered through new public art commissions will be measured.
- Climate and environmental actions will be an ongoing feature of the cross-department governance and reporting of the development of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme.

### Action 12 Position the Per Cent for Arts Scheme as an international exemplar

Across Europe there are comparative models in Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, France and Italy. Governance and implementation of the principle internationally have undergone change over time. Most countries have moved away from an exclusive emphasis on the visual enhancement of places, with greater focus being paid to public engagement and developing contemporary art practices. In some countries the scheme is mandatory; in others the percentage of funding allocated for a project ranges from 0.5% to 2%, and some have targeted measures such as urban regeneration (the Netherlands) or building capacity in the arts sector (Norway). In all cases there is clear ownership and leadership of the scheme at ministerial level.

- Ireland’s whole-of-government approach to implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme 2024–2028 will be evaluated and the findings used to contribute to European and international learning and development in the evolution of the principle.
- International practice and trends in public art will be monitored, discussed and considered in light of the development of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in Ireland.
- Opportunities for partnership with European and international operators of the Per Cent for Art principle will be sought out, and networks that can inform the development of the principle in Ireland identified.
- Opportunities for collaboration with the embassy network will be led through government departments.



*Search* by Ciarán Taylor. Commissioned by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, public art programme, dlr Lexicon, (2019). Funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Photo by Julian Wilde.



*Assemble- A Film Trilogy* by Anthony Haughey & The Global Migration Collective. Commissioned by Fingal County Council (2021). Funded under the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Photo by Anthony Haughey.

## Pillar 4 | Building Capacity and Ownership

### Action 13 A Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit to coordinate and deliver excellence

A new Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit will be resourced and established within the Arts Council by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. The unit will be resourced to proactively develop and coordinate implementation of the policy actions, working in partnership with diverse stakeholders across the public service and arts sector to improve cooperation, harness collective intelligence and build capacity in collaborative planning on the Per Cent for Arts Scheme. A dedicated unit will coordinate and formalise public art services, in a manner that is consistent with reform of the public service. The full remit of this unit is set out in Part 1. Key functions will be to:

- Provide a central point of contact on the Per Cent for Arts Scheme for all stakeholders.
- Facilitate an interdepartmental and interagency shared approach for the policy issues to be tackled and integrated to achieve the six high-level public art outcomes.
- Assist artists and commissioners to be more informed and equipped to avail of the full range of Per Cent for Arts commissioning processes available to them, ensuring equality of opportunity, fairness and value for money.

### Action 14 Publish new national guidelines on the Per Cent for Art Scheme

The current *Public Art: Per Cent for Art Scheme, General National Guidelines, 2004* was a seminal intervention in the development of the scheme in Ireland, generating momentum following their publication. The 2004 guidelines remain operational until the next iteration is prepared, which will follow publication of this policy.

- The updated guidelines will be informed by the consultation process undertaken for Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028, and take account of key shifts that have occurred in the Per Cent for Arts operating environment over the past decade.
- The updated version will support more-effective Per Cent for Arts project management: from the inception of a commission to its production, ownership and maintenance, offering the commissioner and artist up-to-date technical guidance that clarifies their respective responsibility in matters of regulation and compliance.
- The resourced unit will publish new guidelines in 2025.

### Action 15 Improve communications and engagement

This action will raise awareness of *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028*, as the national policy framework to implement the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, strengthening engagement and accountability across the public service in Per Cent for Arts project delivery.

The entire public services and all relevant publically funded arts organisations will be involved in implementing this action, led by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and the Arts Council.

- An awareness raising campaign will promote the new policy, targeting the public service, artists, the arts sector and the wider public to build awareness and engagement.
- Arts and public service organisations will provide a link to this policy on their websites and outline their respective roles in the implementation of the policy to assist in disseminating opportunities to artists, commissioners, built-environment professionals and the public.
- A Per Cent for Arts brand identity will be created for application across all promotional materials relating to the scheme and individual projects funded by it. The new identity will be easy for the general public to recognise, bringing much greater visibility to the Per Cent for Arts Scheme and raising awareness of the valuable public outcomes it enables.

### Action 16 Build knowledge, research, insights and understanding

This action will support the creation of a national information and advice service managed and operated by the Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit. The unit will create and distribute knowledge to stakeholders on a broad range of subjects relevant to the implementation of the scheme, including commissioning, production, legislative and regulatory compliance, finance and public engagement.

- The initial focus will be on the provision of information and advice through digital services. To this end the national public art website [publicart.ie](http://publicart.ie) will be redeveloped as the authoritative platform for information, research, documentation and advocacy on the Per Cent for Arts Scheme for a wide range of stakeholders.
- Public art online services will include existing social media platforms to communicate opportunities, share outcomes, and build an online community and the public profile for public art.
- An overarching communications strategy for *Public Art in Ireland 2024–2028* will be developed to ensure Per Cent for Arts information is accessible and to reduce the need for repeat contact or follow up with the unit. The strategy will adopt the *Plain English Style Guide* prepared by the Reform Development Office of the Department of Expenditure and the *Cuir Tú Féin In Iúl*.

### Action 17 Improve data collection and reporting outcomes and impacts

Analysing data has become the essence of making smarter decisions across government for evidenced-based policy-making for improving the quality of people's lives. This action will ensure that public art data is collected in an ongoing and systematic manner and reported on annually. The collection of data will highlight the public value of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, help to identify implementation challenges, and support proactive measures to achieve better outcomes.

All public service departments and organisations with capital programmes will be involved in accurate data collection. The Per Cent for Arts Delivery Unit will lead coordination of this action.

- The rebuild of publicart.ie will incorporate a centralised data-collection system for the Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Data collected on a systematic and ongoing basis will be analysed and reported on by the Public Art Leadership Group.
- Public service organisations implementing the Per Cent for Arts Scheme, nationally and locally, will be supported to update their record-keeping arrangements and platforms to capture investment and trends in state-funded public art projects.
- Accurate data relating to fees available for artists through the scheme will provide evidence to support the role of government in providing solutions to support the living and working conditions of artists.
- A national register of Per Cent for Arts projects will be created in 2025 to capture data and information on the number, type and range of art projects funded by the scheme, the diversity of artists who received commissions, and the range of publics engaged.
- Socio-spatial data will be gathered to ensure a balanced spread of opportunities in urban and rural locations for artists and communities across the country.

### Action 18 Build capacity through professional development

This action will introduce capacity-building measures to develop skills and build confidence in a new generation of public art managers, coordinators, curators and public service employees tasked with implementing the scheme and managing project commissions. Capacity building programmes will be used to sustain and expand a culture of learning in the development of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in Ireland, such as identifying areas of need, sharing best practice, and increasing networking opportunities to grow public art expertise across the public service and within the arts.

- Information Clinics and Discovery Workshops will support capacity building across the public service to apply the policy and manage its implementation, while increasing awareness, knowledge and understanding of the Per Cent for Arts Scheme.
- Existing and new networks will be used to gather information on implementation challenges to share knowledge and best practice, building capacity across professions and sectors.
- A curated talks programme will create a space for stakeholders to explore professional public art practice led by experts in the field from Ireland and internationally.



# Appendices



## Acknowledgements

### National Per Cent for Arts Committee members 2022–2024

Name	Organisation
Professor Ciarán Benson	Independent Chair
Conor Falvey	Ass. Sec. Gen. Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
Maureen Kennelly	Director, Arts Council
Sinéad O'Reilly	Combined Arts Director, Arts Council
Mary McAuliffe	Public Art Policy and Development Advisor, Arts Council
Katie Lowry	Interim Head of Local, Place and Public Art, Arts Council
Deirdre Behan	Strategic Development Director, Arts Council
John Kennedy	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
Una Daly	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
Letitia Stepske	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
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Gerri O'Sullivan	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
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Joan Curry	Department of Transport
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Anne Kiernan	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
Melanie Scott	Association of Local Authority Arts Officers
Jenny Sherwin	Association of Local Authority Arts Officers
Claire Frizzell	Department of Foreign Affairs

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Jillian Quinn	Department of Foreign Affairs
David Keogh	Department of Foreign Affairs
Ioana Miron	Department of Foreign Affairs
Margaret Brennan	Department of Education
Karl Trueick	Department of Justice
Niall Healy	County and City Management Association
Tony Flynn	County and City Management Association
Carolyn Godkin	County and City Management Association
Fiona Creegan	Department of Rural and Community Development
Eddie Forsyth	Department of Rural and Community Development
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Catherine McGinty	Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
Louise Carrigan	Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
Martha Doyle	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Rosemarie Tobin	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Eleanor Masterson	Health Service Executive
Sarah Zacharia	Department of Defence
Kevin Galligan	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Ruth Mulligan	Dept of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

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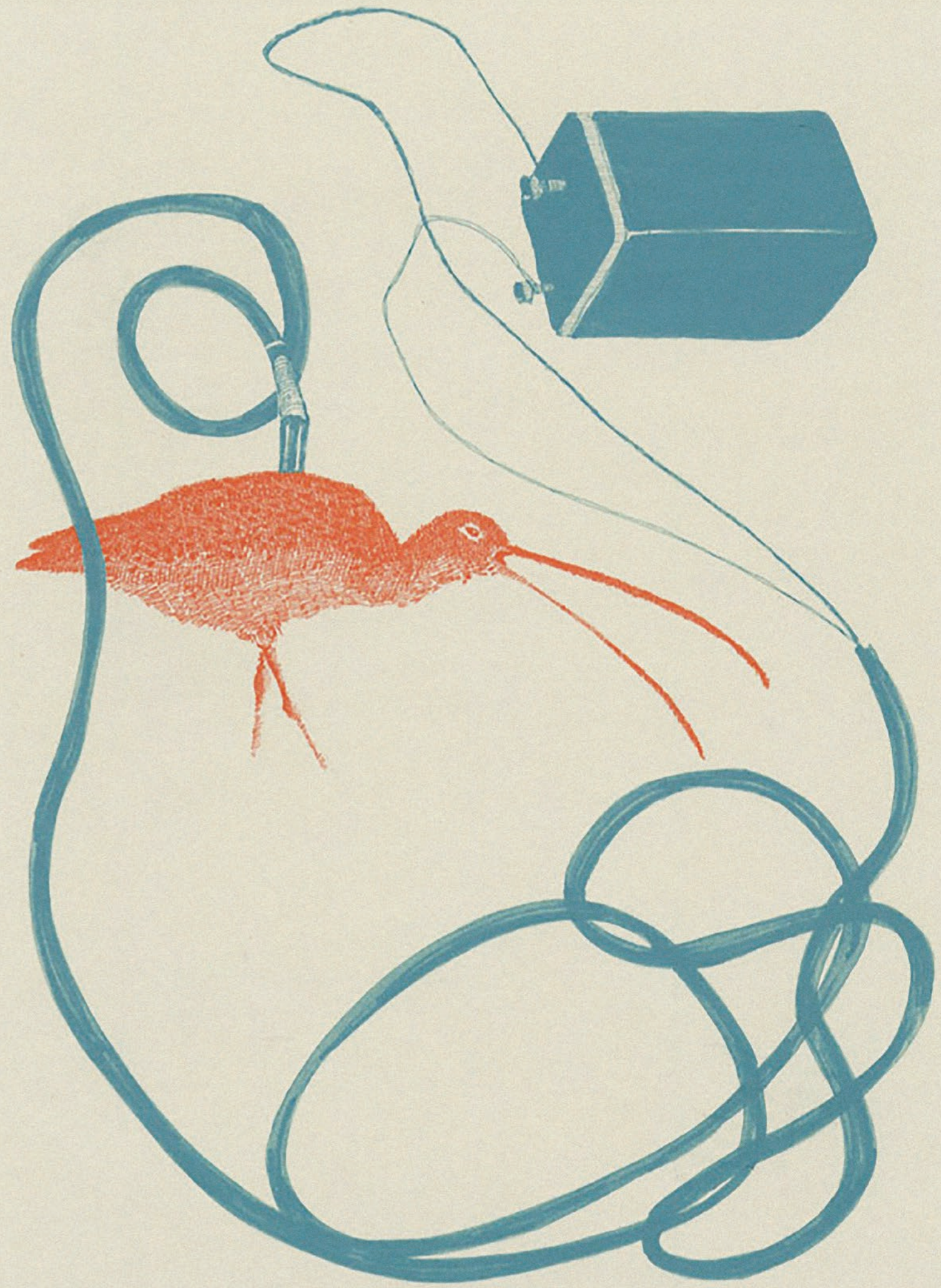
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The Hide Project by Garrett Phelan. Commissioned by Fingal County Council (2016) Rogerstown Park. Funded under the Per Cent for Arts Scheme. Photo by Garrett Phelan.



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