

Project Arts Centre Programming Policy for Independent Artists and Companies

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About Project Arts Centre

Since 1966, Project Arts Centre has been a catalyst for radical artistic projects. We work with some of the most exciting artists making work today, both nationally and Internationally. We make space for artists to experiment, test and build something new at our home in the centre of Dublin, through our Digital Space, Project Portal, offsite with the community groups we work with, and on tour on the island of Ireland and across the world.

We present a year-round programme with a variety of contemporary theatre, dance, performance, music, multidisciplinary, digital, socially engaged, and visual arts which aims to connect with audiences in a variety of ways. The work in our programme looks to the urgencies of today, and emerging experimental and cross-disciplinary practices are prioritised. We place the artist and audience at the centre of our programming and work with artists/companies to ensure their work reaches the appropriate audience.

Our Spaces

We regularly programme eight spaces:

- The Gallery
- The Cube
- The Space Upstairs
- The Balcony
- The Billboard (mainly a marketing space, also a programming space)
- Project Portal (our digital space)
- Project Percolator (our multi-disciplinary incubation space)
- The Bar

Curatorial Team

Our Curatorial team are:

- **Sophie Motley** is Artistic Director and has overall responsibility for Project's programming. She is specifically responsible for programming the theatre spaces.
- **Marysia Więckiewicz** is Curator of Visual Arts and has responsibility for Project's visual arts programme.

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- **Adrian Colwell** is the Project Potential Access Manager and Creative Producer, working with emerging artists who identify within our four priority TEDI areas (Disability, Cultural Diversity, Sexuality & Gender Diversity and Socio-Economic Background), artists working in a community context offsite and access provision.

How Project Programming works

Project's programme is curated, which means we invite artists to participate in our various programme strands. We will generally make these approaches to artists who already have a relationship with Project, or whose work we have been engaged with over time. However, this is not the only way to engage with Project as an artist. We acknowledge the journey of an artist as they begin to engage with Project. As that journey begins, there are multiple entry points available, regardless of practice, background, or level of experience.

We do offer open calls for various opportunities, and these will always be advertised on our website and social media channels. All open calls will clearly articulate the process for application and the criteria for the opportunity, and all financial details. For more information on our Open Calls, follow us online or join our mailing list.

How to start a relationship with Project

The best way to start a relationship with Project is to invite us to see your work, whether in studio, live or online. We try to see as much new work as possible and connect with artists and communities. Our programme is informed by our research and work we see; however, it is not always possible for us to see everything we are invited to.

Before contacting us, we invite you to consider whether your work fits within our programme and why you would like to partner with Project.

Towards Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Woven through all our programming work are the commitments we have made in our policy Towards Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. We recognise that our connections with artists from a wide range of lived experience is a means not only of addressing inequality but also of enriching the artforms in which we work. While there are things we get right, we know there is always room to improve, to recalibrate, to learn.

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Visual Arts Programme

There are four strands of activity in which artists' involvement with Project's Visual Arts Programme takes place:

- **Exhibitions** - our programme includes minimum four major exhibitions per year, both group and solo projects.
- **Public Programmes** - a programme that may include discursive events, talks, workshops, performances and more; both standalone public programmes and those related to the exhibition programme.
- **Research** - supporting artists, emerging curators and thinkers to undertake new research and test ideas publicly, where useful.
- **Publishing** - a publishing platform, interwoven with the other strands of activity, to bring new work and new ideas into print.

The gallery programme is curated, and exhibitions are organised around a thematic trajectory, with the programme being developed by the Curator of Visual Arts. The programme is developed in collaboration with artists and is based on artistic quality, challenge and risk, and conceptual relevance. It is programmed with reference to the local and national arts ecosystem, engagement with current ideas and discourse, institutional partnerships and Project's capacity to support and produce proposed projects. Annual exhibition plans are put in place up to three years in advance, with the main planning and production taking place between 12 and 18 months in advance. **Because of this, the gallery is not available for rent for exhibitions.**

Have a look at our recent programme and see if you think your work fits. We seldom programme from unsolicited proposals but we are interested in seeing what you're up to and learning about your practice. Feel free to let Marysia know about your work or if you have upcoming exhibitions or events.

Performance Programme

Programme Strands

Project's performance programme is year-round and has four main strands:

- **Hosted Programme** - this is where artists/companies *rent* the Space Upstairs or Cube space for the presentation of work. Priority is given to new work which meets our artistic priorities. Generally, established independent artists/companies applying to the Arts Council for Project Awards or Arts Grant Funding will be encouraged to join this strand of our programme.
- **Presented / Guarantees Programme** - this is where Project will pay a guarantee (performance fee) for the presentation of a work by an

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artist/company. This strand of our programme is a priority for Project and in the coming years our focus will be on:

- international artists
- emerging contemporary practices
- cross-disciplinary & collaborative approaches to the creation of new work
- TEDI artists

Artists/Companies who are earlier in their career, applying for smaller-scale project awards, contemporary dance or circus artists or artists working in more experimental practice will be encouraged towards strand of our programme.

- **Box Office Split Programme**

If we are unable to offer a guarantee due to financial constraints, timescale of programming decisions, we will offer a favourable box office split to an artist or company at an earlier stage of their career if the work meets our programming priorities. The split is usually 70/30 in favour of the artist or company.

- **Commissions & Co-Productions** - Project may invest in the development or production of a piece of new work by an artist/company based in Ireland or abroad. We generally will do this as a partner and the size of the commission depends on the scale of the work. Project will generally offer no more than three commissions/year. The input towards a commission is usually €2-5k and includes development space in The Cube.

Artforms Programmed

Music

We are excited by music artists who are creating work which fits with our values.

For our music programme, we will generally work with specific promoters or artists who understand Project's spaces and the contemporary nature of Project's programming, including those who wish to reach new audiences.

We do host album launches, and we programme whole-building takeovers where appropriate (i.e. Dublin Modular) and fitting with our Programming Priorities.

We present a lot of new music through our Project Potential Programme at events such as our Open Day and other digital commissions.

Do get in touch with Adrian or Sophie if you are a musician interested in making work in Project.

Circus & Aerial Work

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We are interested in connecting on this type of work provided it fits our programming priorities and is genuinely challenging form, but please be aware that our spaces have limitations in terms of rigging points for aerial work. The Cube has a height of 4.7m and The Space Upstairs has 6.8m to the bottom of gantries/lighting rig so we are only able to consider work of scale in the Space Upstairs that has sufficient funding behind it in order to facilitate rigging etc. We are not a bespoke aerial house.

Theatre

We present a busy year-round programme of contemporary theatre in both spaces, hosting contemporary, experimental, cross-disciplinary and multidisciplinary theatre works. We are looking for work which challenges what theatre should be, work which is confident, political, genuinely contemporary, work which is not writer-led, and genuinely experimenting with form.

New Writing, Scripts and Plays

We rarely present new plays, unless they are connecting with something genuinely urgent and experimental in form and/or content. If you are a playwright, then it is unlikely that your work will be programmed by Project unless it is radically challenging the norms and structure of contemporary theatre practice or is a key piece of the contemporary or post dramatic canon unseen in Ireland.

If you are an emerging artist/company with text as a base for your work, and have not had your work produced yet, then you are best to look to work-in-progress sharing programmes like Scene and Heard, before applying for Dublin Fringe Festival, or presentation in other theatres or spaces that do present new writing regularly i.e. The New Theatre, Bewley's, Glass Mask, Smock Alley, Cork Arts Theatre. We usually engage seriously with emerging artists and companies once they have been through these two steps, or similar internationally before moving to Ireland.

We do not develop new plays and do not accept unsolicited scripts. We do not programme amateur performing arts companies or stage schools.

Artists/Companies wishing to present productions of existing/classic/canonical texts will be considered on a case-by-case basis if the production concept fits with our values but are generally not a priority for our programme. We rarely programme work that has already been produced elsewhere in Dublin outside of festivals.

Spoken Word

We have presented Slams and spoken word events in the past and are excited to hear more from anyone working in this discipline.

Dance

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We have a busy contemporary dance programme and a committed audience for dance, and we are interested to hear from dance artists and companies. We generally will offer space in The Cube for a first performance, before looking at the Space Upstairs for one performance if an artist is being funded for their work for the first or second time.

- *Europe Beyond Access*

We are members of a European network for supporting disabled dance artists, or artists who have movement as the basis for their work. We have ringfenced funding to support emerging and mid-career artists. If you identify as disabled, and have a dance or movement practise, we would love to hear from you so please get in touch with Adrian or Sophie.

Street Dance & Hip Hop

We present battles 3–4 times a year with local and national artists i.e. Top 8, JAIVA, Battle of Zen.

We are always interested to hear from artists working in different street dance styles, and we would encourage you to get in touch with Adrian to introduce your work.

Festivals

For artists interested in being programmed in festivals, Project is a venue for the three main Dublin Festivals (Dublin Dance Festival, Dublin Fringe Festival, Dublin Theatre Festival).

We see Dublin Fringe Festival as a pipeline to the development of new work and artists, and we do our best to see a lot of work in the festival. Most Irish work presented in The Cube across the year has come from relationships built with artists who have presented at Fringe.

In addition, Project hosts several smaller scale festivals throughout the year including Live Collision, Music Current, New Music Dublin, Reception Dublin, Disrupt Disability Arts Festival.

For programming in these festivals, please contact them directly.

Socially Engaged Work

For artists who are interested in working through socially engaged practice, either with schools or communities, both on and offsite, you can contact Adrian Colwell to discuss your approach or idea. These projects are usually planned six to twelve months in advance of start date.

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There are also opportunities to deliver short, once off performances, projects and events through our annual Open Day, as well as open calls for engagement opportunities throughout the year.

Live Art

We are a home for Live Art in many forms, primarily through presentation of Live Collision annually.

Digital Art

We partner with BETA festival as an associate festival, and we're excited to hear more about new digital practises.

Ecologies

We are interested in work which takes the climate, green arts, and ecologies as a starting point.

Multi-Disciplinary // Trans-Disciplinary // Post-Disciplinary Work

This is our lifeblood as Ireland's Contemporary Arts Centre; we want to know more about your work if this is how you identify. We see the future as cross-disciplinary, with artforms intersecting, and we are learning how to support this type of work.

Works-in-progress - All Disciplines above

Scratch Nights

Project Arts Centre is planning regular Scratch Nights in our smaller performance space. These are informal events where theatre-makers, performers, and other creatives share short works in progress, typically 15–20 minutes long, with a small audience in a relaxed setting.

These sessions give writers, directors, actors, dancers, and other artists the opportunity to test ideas, see their work performed live, and gather feedback to inform further development. Please follow us online for more information and open calls for Scratch Nights.

Project Potential Programme

Project Potential is the home for access and engagement work at Project Arts Centre.

The department supports artists and audiences from diverse backgrounds, with the aim of making Project Arts Centre a welcoming and inclusive space as well as reflective of the society we live in today.

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Project Potential works closely with all areas of Project Arts Centre, including the Communications, Front of House and Production departments as well as the Artistic and Visual Arts Programmes. This approach recognises access and community engagement as shared responsibilities across the organisation, guided by our Towards Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

There are three main programming opportunities through the Project Potential Programme:

- **Schools Residency Programme** - The Schools Residency Programme offers students in DEIS schools the opportunity to work with professional artists, both on and offsite, embedding artistic practice in community settings across the inner city. The aim of this programme is to build an appreciation for contemporary arts process and practice, to highlight programmed events and performances, and to facilitate young people engaging with the arts for the first time.
- **Artists working with Communities** - We support artists working offsite, so that communities can have the time and space to focus on process and where a socially engaged practice can be nurtured and explored. We also offer communities space to work and meet onsite, so that the work that happens outside the building has a place to land and be seen. Sometimes these projects are initiated through specific themes or interests, such as the Climate Emergency.
- **Open Day** – Each year, Project opens its doors to the public for an annual open day, offering a taster of our programme. This free event features a line-up of live performances, workshops, music, dance, DJs, film screenings, talks, and gallery tours, giving audiences an opportunity to experience the breadth of our artistic activity in an accessible and welcoming setting.

If you're interested in getting involved in any of the above aspects of the Project Potential Programme, please contact Adrian to arrange a conversation.

Cross-Curatorial Programme

Although Project has three primary programming areas (Performance, Visual Arts, Project Potential) there are points where they intersect, with all three curatorial staff contributing to smaller, shared programmes. These points of intersection include:

- **Project Portal** – This is our digital space, and we see it as a space to experiment with new thinking and forms of making work. It holds a wide variety of material, from film to music to new writing and sound works.

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- **Project Percolator** - This is our newest multi-disciplinary presentation and incubation space, located in our lower foyer. It will feature a range of work connected to our three core programmes, including documentation of community-based projects, work related to the gallery and performance spaces, and material that reflects other aspects of our activities.

Nightlife and Creative Community Programme

We have an active and busy bar space for Spoken Word, Launch Events, small live music events and DJs, and are actively looking to programme into the bar where possible.

Programming Priorities

To summarise, our Programming Priorities are:

- Work which is emerging, experimental, cross-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary.
- Work which challenges contemporary forms of theatre, dance, and live art.
- Work which responds to our diverse city and its communities.
- Work which responds to our four TEDI priority areas (Disability, Cultural Diversity, Sexuality & Gender Diversity and Socio-Economic Background)
- Work which engages with emerging discourse.
- Work which is not writer-led.
- Work which has not been produced before in Dublin (except in festivals i.e. DFF/DDF/DTF)

Contact Information

If you would like to have a conversation about working together, you can invite us to see your work. Consider first how your work fits with our artistic programme and why you want to work with us.

Contacts:

- Artistic Director, Sophie Motley: sophie@projectartscentre.ie
- Curator of Visual Arts, Marysia Więckiewicz: marysia@projectartscentre.ie
- Project Potential Access Manager and Creative Producer, Adrian Colwell: adrian@projectartscentre.ie

Your email/video/voice-note should include the following information (where relevant):

- Your Contact Details
- What are you contacting us about?
- Invitation to see your work including times/dates/ticketing info

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- Information about your project/work and why you would like to work with Project
- specifically.

NB Make sure to consider how your work fits with our artistic programme and our values.

Information on Commercial Hire of our Spaces

If you are not an independent artist/company and wish to speak to us about commercial hire of our spaces for events, please [click here](#).

Project has two theatre spaces, a gallery and a bar.

The Space Upstairs theatre space which seats up to 210 people.
We can provide technical support at additional costs and hire prices for 2025 begin at €1500/day. We provide discounts for charities / arts organisations.

The Cube seats up to 80 people and hire prices begin at €500/day.
We can provide technical support at additional costs and hire prices for 2025 begin at €600/day.

The Bar and Upper Foyer can be used as a space for book / album launches, spoken word and music events.

We can provide technical support at additional costs and hire prices for 2026 begin at €350/day.