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INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC ART POLICY

This document presents Galway County Council's policy on public art. Our priorities for public art include the development of new commissions and public art programmes which will support professional artists and public engagement along with the stewardship and conservation of County Galway's public art collection to date. Galway county Council aspires to create a public art programme which is both recognised for its excellence and source of inspiration and pride for its citizens

This policy outlines our strategic approach to public art programming in County Galway, which is part of our overall arts and culture agenda. The policy applies to public art projects commissioned through the Per Cent for Art Scheme and includes our responsibilities in other areas of public art practice including donations; acquisitions; individual proposals such as those from private developers and community groups; commemorations and memorials; as well as de-commissioning.

Galway County Council's public art policy and programme is developed in line with Irish and international best practice.

BACKGROUND

Public Art in Ireland

Since the 1970s public bodies in Ireland have developed a wealth of public art expertise through the commissioning of professional artists to make new artworks connected public infrastructure projects.

The Per Cent for Art Scheme was first introduced in Ireland in 1978 when the Office of Public Works (OPW) commissioned new art projects based on the principles of Per Cent for Art. The Percent for Art Scheme is a funding mechanism which supports the commissioning of new works of Public art, allowing one per cent of the overall cost of a capital construction project to be ring-fenced and allocated for an art project in a variety of artforms.

In 1986, the Department of the Environment established a similar scheme, which was utilised by County Councils and the scheme was revised in 1996 and extended to all Government Departments and public bodies in Ireland with construction budgets. The publication of the Irish National Guidelines on Public Art: Per Cent for Art Scheme in 2004 which further advanced the scope and understanding of public art in Ireland. These remain the guiding principles under which the Per Cent for Art Scheme is operated nationally and locally.

Public Art in County Galway

Galway County Council has over 25 years of experience in the commissioning public art. Since the early 1990s we have commissioned over 15 public art projects in the county, ranging from permanent works to temporary projects, including those which focused primarily on creative public engagement as part of the process and/or final project outcome. As a local authority, we have also commissioned and curated a Visual Art Collection, which is on display in our public buildings across the county.

¹ Irish National Guidelines on Public Art: Per Cent for Art Scheme are available to download on https://publicart.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF_Folder/Public_Art_Per_Cent_for_Art.pdf

What is Public Art -

According to the Irish National Guidelines, Public Art.

- Creates a dialogue with a people, a time and a place.
- Can be of any form and can work within or across many art forms, such as visual art, dance, film, literature, music, opera, theatre and architecture; including all aspects of contemporary arts practice such as performance, live art, multimedia, video art, sound art, etc. Works under the scheme can be of any duration, temporary or permanent, and can be centred in an urban or rural context.
- Offer opportunities for collaboration across fields of knowledge, including science, planning, geography, sociology, archaeology, philosophy, etc. offering professional artists new possibilities to develop distinctive research and creative enquiries, which in turn have expanded the range of public art practice.

FUNDING

Per Cent for Art Scheme

The aim of the Per Cent for Art Scheme is to provide funding for public art commissions, specifically the creation of new artwork in the public domain. The Government decision of 1997 approves the inclusion in the budgets for all infrastructure and capital projects of up to 1% as funding for an art project, subject to limits as follows:

- For projects costing up to €2,550,000 may include an art budget of 1% of net construction costs i.e. €25,500.
- For projects costing between €2,550,000 and €6,300,000, an art budget of 1% up to a maximum of €38,000 is allowed.
- For projects costing between €6,300,000 and €12,700,000, an art budget of €51,000 is allowed.
- For projects costing in excess of €12,700,000, an art budget of €64,000 is allowed.

In 2019 the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht completed a review of the Per-cent for Art Scheme and this review resulted in changes to the funding parameters applicable to the scheme.

Revised Per Cent for Arts Budgets: Effective 1 January 2020 there has been a significant increase to the budgets for the scheme. These increases are outlined below and replace those detailed in section 4.2 of the “PUBLIC ART SCHEME: PERCENT FOR ART SCHEME – General national Guidelines, 2004”

- Projects below €5,000,000: 1% of the cost of the project to a maximum of €50,000 (1% of upper limit).
- Projects between €5,000,000 and €20,000,000: 1% of the cost of the project to a maximum of €125,000 (1% at median).
- Projects between €20,000,000 and €50,000,000: 1% of the cost of the project to a maximum of €350,000 (1% at median)
- Projects in excess of €50,000,000: up to €500,000 being 1% of the lower level scale and declining as projects increase in scale.

OLD PROJECT COST BAND	OLD MAXIMUM LIMIT	REVISED PROJECT COST BAND	REVISED MAXIMUM LIMIT
€0 – €2.55m	€25,500	€0 – €5m	€50,000
€2.55m – €6.3m	€38,000	€5m – €20m	€125,000
€6.3m – €12.7m	€51,000	€20m – €50m	€350,000
€12.7m +	€64,000	€50m +	€500,000

It is the policy of the Department that the “Per Cent for Art Scheme” would continue to be applicable to major new road projects. It does not apply to works which are required for maintenance/rehabilitation purposes or which address specific safety deficiencies.

In the case of new national road projects, Transport Infrastructure Ireland will advise local authorities in relation to the implementation of the Scheme. In the context of the regional and local road investment programmes only projects funded under the Strategic Grant Programme would qualify.

Where local authorities propose to allow for Per Cent for Art funding based on the revised parameters, this should be reflected in the preliminary project proposal submitted to the Department in accordance with the requirements of the Public Spending Code and the Department's Capital Appraisal Framework and the cost should be included initially in the preliminary project cost estimate at inception and further total project budget stages.

All local authority sections must ensure that the Per Cent for Art Scheme is included in the overall infrastructure project budget estimate, when applying to relevant Government Departments for capital funding. Section staff are also required to confirm the Per Cent for Art Scheme funding in writing with the public body or Government Department and to draw down the funding into Galway County Council's central Finance Code for Public Art. In line with the Irish National Guidelines on Public Art, Per Cent for Art Scheme funding is ring-fenced for the commissioning of new artworks, i.e. it is secured and not available for any other element of the infrastructure project.

These figures should not be regarded as an overall limit for art projects as in many cases there may be potential to supplement this with further funding secured from other sources, (e.g. private sponsorship and pooling of resources, etc.).

A comprehensive database will be developed listing all infrastructure projects for which funding has been awarded but commissions have not yet commenced. All proposals for public art commissions initiated within the County Council will be brought to the Public Art Management Group for curation and development.

Internal Capital Funding

Council led internally funded capital construction or infrastructure project projects may contribute funding towards the Public Art Programme and each will be considered on its own merits in terms of the monetary value to be allocated.

² Per Cent for Art Scheme – Revised Funding Parameters, Circular (RW 08/2020)

³ Irish National Guidelines on Public Art: Per Cent for Art Scheme, 4. Funding, 4.1 Stipulations, hardcopy page 21

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL'S PUBLIC ART PROGRAMME

Our Vision

To ensure that people who live, study, work and visit County Galway can experience high quality public art that is captivating, challenging and culturally diverse.

To explore, question, recognise and reveal the characteristics of County Galway in the twenty first century.

To develop opportunities for professional artists to engage with the county, making new art-work that responds to our landscape and communities as well as our local distinctiveness.

We will work to ensure that all Per Cent for Art funding is harnessed, which can be used to commission professional artists to make new work in all artforms, including temporary and time-based work.

Our Values

Galway County Council's policy and commitment to public art is underpinned by the following values:

Dialogue – To ensure all funding opportunities are captured and converted through our public art programme, which is informed by dialogue and collaboration with our staff across the local authority; with our Elected Members; with professional artists and with communities of interest and place.

Shared Purpose and Stewardship –Through the leadership of Galway County Council's Public Art Management Group (PAMG) a shared purpose and renewed stewardship of public art in County Galway is fostered.

Quality Commissioning – We strive to meet and exceed best practice in public art by improving our capacity to support the commissioning process as well as the final public art outcome. This includes forging productive links with commissioning expertise and resources regionally, nationally and internationally.

Public Art Expertise – We understand that working collaboratively to transform artists ideas into realised projects in the public realm takes time, patience, attention to detail and specialist expertise.

Diversity – We seek creative ways to support new voices, cultures, artforms, ideas and commissions, including our communities from a range of social backgrounds, ethnicities and traditions.

Innovation – We are committed to commissioning work with professional artists that is of its time and is informed by its location and unique context in the county.

PUBLIC ART MANAGEMENT GROUP

The main aim of this policy is to outline a clear framework for future public art commissions, in collaboration with our stakeholders - from our staff and our Elected Representatives, to artists, arts organisations and local communities.

This policy is supported by the leadership and guidance of our Public Art Management Group (PAMG); who's main role is the focus on the development of the following:

- Public Art Policy
- Public Art Programme including new commissions
- Public Art Engagement

Specific role of our Public Art Management Group (PAMG) is to:

1. Approve a strategic approach for the delivery of a public art programme in county Galway; ensuring the public art policy and programme reflect the objectives set out in Galway County Arts Plan, Culture and Creativity Strategy and the Galway County Development Plan.
2. Maintain an overview of all public art procurement, management and funding,
3. Devise and approve relevant commission briefs for artists,
4. Approve and appoint a selection panel for assessments,
5. Consider (twice yearly) and assess proposals for donations, civic contributions and commemorations from external sources or from within Galway County Council,
6. Provide support to the Galway County Arts Office and any appointed Public Art Curators, particularly in the development of a Five-Year Public Art Programme

Composition of the Public Art Management Group

- Chairperson (Director of Service)
- Galway County Arts Officer
- Appointed Director of Service
- Senior Planner
- Senior Engineer/Planner/Architect (Member of Regeneration Team)
- Three Elected Members
- Three external artistic experts

Public Art Expertise

The three external art experts will have:

1. A background in different art forms, to reflect public art practice and the Irish National Guidelines on Public Art.
2. An understanding of contemporary art and a track record in public art practice.
3. At least one of the three arts experts will be a practising artist (from any art form).

Partnerships

A strong Public art programme is an ideal opportunity to build partnerships with additional external expertise, including professional artists, curators, art organisations, international public art agencies, and third level institutions that have an interest in public art practice and its potential in County Galway. Opportunities to research and develop partnerships arise with key local and national organisations including National Transport Authority, National Roads Authority, Railway Procurement Agency, Office of Public Works, etc.

Arts organisations including artists' representative bodies (such as Dance Ireland, Poetry Ireland, Theatre Forum, Visual Arts Ireland, Create, Galway Film Centre, Contemporary Music Company, Irish Architecture Foundation etc) are also considered as potential partners.

Universities and Third Level Institutions with a commitment or relevance to public art, both theory and practice, will be considered as potential partners in terms of research and development. This could include colleges engaged in practice and research in the areas of the professional arts in all artforms as well as planning, sociology, etc.

Pooling Funds

Funding awarded under the Per Cent for Art Scheme ranges from very small amounts to the maximum allocated so to commission artworks relating to each individual infrastructure project would not be feasible and would not give scope for the development of a coherent Public Art Programme in the county. Therefore, and in line with the Irish National Guidelines on Public Art, the pooling of funds will continue in County Galway so that more significant public art programmes and commissions can be undertaken.

Funding will also be used for wider programming such as public engagement, documentation, etc. A percentage of each project budget will be allocated towards necessary project management costs and managed by the Arts Office. In the case of a programme of commissions, these amounts may be pooled to ensure the most cost-effective use of our resources, including time and funding.

COMMISSIONING and PUBLIC ART PROGRAMME

Public Art Programme

Galway County Council's Public Art Programme includes commissioning artists under the Per Cent for Art Scheme as well as all other Council funded public art projects. The programme also incorporates our policies regarding proposals for donations, commemorations and memorials, as well as research and development, public engagement, documentation and evaluation.

The Public Art Programme will also give scope for supporting initiatives of the Arts Office relation to public art as well as independent/artists initiated public art projects.

Research and Development of Public Art Programme

Research is considered to play a vital role in the ongoing development of public art policy and programmes which are of national and international relevance. A Five-Year Public Art Programme will be developed through engagement and collaboration across sections of Galway County Council by the Public Art Management Group as well as with external expertise and partners.

⁴ Irish National Guidelines on Public Art: Per Cent for Art Scheme, 4. Funding, 4.3 Pooling, hardcopy page 21 (PDF page 17)

⁵ This amount shall not exceed 12% in any case.

Public Engagement

Public engagement is a key element of a creative and distinctive public art programme. Our work in this area will include developing awareness and advocacy within the County Council as well as dialogue and links with our wider public.

Public engagement will include promoting awareness of the programme as well as individual commissions, artworks and artists as follows:

- Dialogue and mediation – engaging with artists and the public, as well as with our staff and Elected Members
- Public consultation and stakeholder development
- Public relations through social media, press, radio, television etc
- Presentations and seminars including internal staff meetings and information sessions on contemporary public art
- Distribution and sharing of documentation

The Commissioning Process

Procedure for the management of our public art programme will reflect the Irish National Guidelines for Public Art: Per Cent for Art Scheme as well as best practice nationally and internationally. Public art projects can be developed through several commissioning options as outlined in the National Guidelines on Public Art, including a) open competition b) limited competition and c) direct invitation. Galway County Council PAMG intends to use the most suitable commissioning process taking into account various challenges relating to budgets and resources.

The commissioning process includes the following elements and will be managed by the Arts Office as directed by the PAMG and includes the following:

- Creation of Artists Briefs.
- Shortlisting and selection of artists.
- Commissioning contracts and
- Management of commissions

Selection of Artists and Panels

In keeping with best practice, Galway County Council aims to ensure that the procedures used to select artists are transparent and accountable. The method of selection will depend on the scale and the nature of the public art commission and will be made based on the most suitable selection process. Clear criteria for selection will be included in our published Artists Briefs, to guide both artists and our Selection Panels.

Selection panels will be appointed by our Public Art Management Group to undertake the short-listing and selection of artists for commissions. Selection panels will consist of no less than three people and no more than nine. Panels will have a majority of art expertise including independent professional artists, practitioners and curators. The Arts Officer will oversee all Selection Panels including developing clear terms of reference and guidelines.

Selection Panels will typically be composed from the following (depending on the nature of the commission):

- Galway County Arts Officer
- Public Art Curator
- Two members of the Public Art Management Group including one Elected Member
- Professional Artists
- Independent curators and other public art professionals
- Technical expert such as Architect, Engineer, Planner, etc
- Representative of the community, neighbourhood or area

If issues regarding critical interpretation, site choice, structural requirements or other matters arise, the Selection Panel may at its discretion, meet with the artists before making a final decision.

Proposals for Permanent Work including Donations

Proposals to donate or commission artwork to be sited on Galway County Council land or property will be considered twice a year and will be subject to assessment by a special Selection Panel appointed by the Public Art Management Group (PAMG). This panel will meet twice yearly if required.

Galway County Council recognises that from time to time public art proposals are brought to the attention of various sections within the local authority. Proposals of this nature will be considered in the same way as donations and will be assessed twice a year. Potential donors will be advised that Galway County Council must have a curatorial role in the selection of artists.

The PAMG is responsible for delegating assessment of these proposals to a Selection Panel referred to above.

Proposals for donations and external commissions to be placed within County Council jurisdiction (excluding developer-led initiatives that are developed in partnership with the Planning Department) must include the following information:

- A statement of intent as to why the work is being proposed or offered
- Details of artist, including C.V and images of past work
- Visualisation of the proposed artwork including relevant technical drawings
- Proposed location for the artwork including plans
- Technical details regarding fabrication and installation including Engineer's Report if required
- Value of the artwork and confirmation of funding and source of funds
- Care and maintenance requirements and compliance with health and safety regulations
- Note if planning permission will be required

Galway County Council may request further information, as deemed necessary, to make a considered decision on the proposal. Criteria for assessment will include artistic merit, quality, prior relevant experience of the professional artist(s), suitability to the site and context, cost implications (if relevant) and on- going maintenance, etc.

Accepted donated work will be subject to a formal agreement outlining the responsibilities of both Galway County Council and the donor. It should be noted that donations will be subject to normal planning and development conditions as defined in Galway County Council's County Development Plan. A formal agreement or contract will be drawn up setting out the conditions for the acceptance of donations including the responsibilities of each party (Galway County Council, donor or sponsor, artist, outside contractors, etc.).

Appeals

Appeals will only be considered where a claim is made that the Selection Panel's consideration of a proposal was procedurally unfair, unreasonable or inadequate. The Local Authority will then re-check procedural matters. No appeals will be considered on the grounds of the panel's aesthetic evaluation of an existing or proposed work.

All work will be subject to the County Council Public Art Decommissioning Guidelines.

COMMEMORATIONS AND MEMORIALS

Is permanent art the best way to remember? The Public Art Management Group recognises the sensitivities regarding communities who wish to permanently mark individuals' links or contributions to society, the county or an area.

However, there is need to respect and understand the nature of Galway as a county. The impact of placing permanent statues and memorials on the county's landscapes, towns, villages and in parks must be considered, as do questions such as 'who and what should be commemorated'?

The need to remember and note the contribution or circumstances regarding a person or group of people can be addressed in many ways and permanent art is not necessarily the best way to do this.

Therefore, it is recommended that no sculptural commemoration or monument should be accepted or commissioned until twenty years after the death of the individual/s or event.

The Arts Officer / Public Art Curator will advise on other [temporary] forms of commemoration such as Bursaries, which are considered more appropriate to the memory of deceased people, providing inspiration and active encouragement to those still living.

[Careful consideration will also be given to selecting a dedicated site to commemorate people who have made significant contributions to the cultural, economic or social life of the county. Nominations for inclusion in this commemorative site will be considered every three years.]

CARE AND CONSERVATION

Galway County Council has over the last 25 years commissioned an extensive collection of permanent artworks in public spaces across the county, as well as our Visual Art Collection.

At present the Conservation and Heritage Officer has a small budget for repairs of historic sculptures and monuments. The County Council has an obligation to itself, artists and the public to maintain works in its care and collection. Therefore, it will be important to establish the extent and nature of our collection and to make adequate provision for its maintenance and conservation.

Public Art Register

As a commissioner, we are committed to developing and updating Galway County Council's Public Art Register. This will include permanent work in the ownership or care of Galway County Council and will also include temporary art projects developed through our Public Art Programme.

Our Public Art Register will include [where applicable]:

- Name of artist(s)
- Title of artwork
- Technical details – artform, materials, dimensions, date
- Artists statement / short description / intention of work
- Location
- Budget
- Images and documentation of performance etc
- Maintenance notes

Maintenance and Decommissioning

A programme of maintenance and decommissioning will be established based on the information gathered through the development of our Public Art Register. This policy will be applicable to our current collection as well as all new permanent works commissioned or received by the County Council. Procedures for re-siting and if necessary, the decommissioning of permanent artworks will be developed, in line with national and international best practice. In order to support our maintenance and decommissioning programme, it is intended that a deduction will be made from budgets for all new commissions. This follows the precedents of the Office of Public Works (OPW) who have established a similar policy.

DOCUMENTATION AND REVIEW

The documentation of public art is important for care of our collection, as well as in house information sharing and public engagement. This includes permanent as well as temporary artworks. Documentation can include photography, DVD, recordings, publications etc across all artforms.

The public art policy and its delivery will be reviewed periodically by Galway County Council's Public Art Management Group (PAMG) during the Five-Year Programme.

Website

It is intended to use www.Galway.ie to feature current and past public art policies, programmes, commissions and our collection along with information from our Public Art Register.

For more information please see: <http://www.galway.ie/en/services/artsoffice/publicart/>

TERMS OF POLICY

This policy was adapted at a Full Council Meeting of Galway County Council on 14th December 2020 and is in place from 2020 to 2024.

Kevin Kelly
A/Chief Executive
Galway County Council

Sharon O'Grady
Galway County Arts Officer
Galway County Council

TBC
Chairperson SPC

Date: _____

