



**Age &
Opportunity**



Arts & Creative Charter for Older People

The Arts & Creative Charter for Older People aims to increase and enrich the experiences and confidence of older arts participants, audiences and artists in their engagement with arts organisations in Ireland.

In displaying this Charter, we set out our commitments in relation to engaging with older people.

These are our values:

- **Participation** of older people as artists, audiences, creators, critics, teachers and learners — understanding that this is essential to all aspects of healthy ageing;
- **Respect** for the dignity, shared humanity, identity and individuality of older people from all communities and backgrounds, and for the cultural leadership that older people can provide;
- Enabling the **agency** of older people through their proactive inclusion at all levels of our organisation;
- **Understanding and promoting older age** as a time for adventure, learning and exploration, as well as relaxation and enjoyment.

These are our guiding principles:

- Embracing equity, inclusion and non-discrimination;
- Embracing the diversity, experience and possibilities of older age;
- Rejecting all attempts to categorise, patronise or ghettoise older people;
- Encouraging and supporting older people to achieve their creative potential;
- Encouraging and promoting intergenerational engagement and contact between diverse communities of older and younger people;
- Safeguarding the human rights of older people as enshrined in national and international law.



These are our commitments:

- 1 We **welcome** older people.
- 2 We **eliminate barriers** to older people's participation in and enjoyment of our activities and aim to ensure that our buildings, online activities, programming, communications and information are as **accessible as possible** to the broadest range of older people.
- 3 We seek the **active participation** and feedback of older people in relation to all that we do.
- 4 We **reject ageist language** and commit to communicating clearly and openly with and about older people.
- 5 We create and **support opportunities** for diverse communities to collaborate and create together in all aspects of our work.
- 6 We invest in older people's **creativity and involvement**.
- 7 We foreground the participation and **value of older people** in our communications.
- 8 We ensure that all our employment, commissioning, funding, volunteering, learning and collaboration opportunities are **fair and inclusive** of older people.

Process & Background

Age & Opportunity began the process of developing an Arts & Creative Charter for Older People in 2019. A steering group meeting was held in December 2019 with arts organisations interested in guiding and advocating for this new Charter. To support the development of The Charter, Rowena Keaveny and Julie Spollen of Anam Beo produced a discussion document which gave an overview of the policy context and how it might impact on policy and practice.

While the onset of the pandemic delayed plans, an early draft of The Charter was completed in 2020. A co-design group was brought together made up of representatives from the arts sector and older people, including older artists. This group continued to meet throughout 2020 and 2021 to give feedback on The Charter and advise on how it would be implemented.

A draft Charter underwent public consultation in 2021 through a survey which received 376 responses. Later that year, a small, representative number of art organisations were invited to feedback on potential supports needed for implementation of The Charter, and in 2022, The Charter was completed ahead of a pilot programme with invited arts organisations.

During this time, Connect the Dots, a stakeholder and community engagement firm, was brought in to consult on and facilitate the original co-design process, while the final Charter had input from diversity consultant Maureen Gilbert.

Co-Design Group

Organisations

Arts & Disability Ireland (ADI)
Clare Arts Office
CREATE
Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA)
MISA Creative Life Centre
The Library Service of Ireland
Waterford Healing Arts Trust (WHAT)

Individuals

Liam Burke
Pauline Cummins
Maureen Murray
Mary Nunan
Cathy Roche

See full biographies below.

Age & Opportunity

Age & Opportunity is the national organisation working to enable the best quality of life for us all as we age.

Age & Opportunity Arts is a dedicated programme which supports the participation and representation of all older people in cultural and creative life in Ireland. We do this work by supporting and resourcing artists, arts audiences and arts organisations and encouraging involvement in arts activities by people all over Ireland. We also aim to raise the standard, knowledge-base and visibility of the arts and older people sector.

Our Arts programme comprises a range of initiatives and events, the biggest one of which is the annual, high profile, and month-long Bealtaine Festival, which takes place in May throughout local communities all around Ireland. We also deliver a comprehensive support programme of initiatives designed to resource and develop the arts and ageing sector in Ireland.

Information on Resources and Training

On signing this Charter, organisations will receive a resource document which contains links to useful reports and supports from Age & Opportunity and beyond. This is a living document which will be updated and circulated as needed. Age & Opportunity is also committed to developing and providing training modules to support organisations signing up to The Charter. Participating organisations will be kept updated on the development and availability of training.



Stakeholder & Co-design Group Biographies

Liam Burke

Liam Burke has been a displaced Galway man for most of his life. Born in Tuam, with deep Connemara roots, his family moved to Tipperary when he was 4. His initial education was with the Christian Brothers in Thurles and the Cistercian monks in Roscrea. This was followed by Hotel Management at Cathal Brugha Street, Business Studies at Trinity College, Drama Studies at Rathmines and a Higher Diploma and Masters in Theatre Directing at UCD. He has been a participant in the Irish Theatre Institute's 'prime' Project and the Irish Theatre Forum's 'Next Stage' Project. In between times, he has been a food and beverage controller, an executive assistant manager, a hotel manager, stage manager/actor, film actor, head chef, catering manager, restaurateur, corporate catering company owner, chef instructor, teacher, and theatre director. These various events happened in Ireland, UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Pauline Cummins

Pauline Cummins' performance and video work examines the human condition from a feminist perspective. She collaborates with artists and communities in public sites and situations. A retrospective of her video work, *Between One and Another*, was held in CCI Paris 2012. Her performance as The Duchess of Leinster and as Lord Edward Fitzgerald, was part of 'These Immovable Walls-performing Power', Dublin Castle 2014. She was one of 16 selected visual art performers in 'Future Histories' 2016 at the historic Kilmainham Gaol, Dublin. Her work is in the permanent collection of The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin.



Maureen Murray

Maureen Murray retired early from the Central Bank in 2010 and over the years has been involved in the amateur drama scene in Dublin, both performing and directing, as well as dabbling in textile arts. Since she retired, she has been in a few professional theatre productions including a month long season at the Edinburgh Theatre Festival with Junk Ensemble and Brokentalkers in 2016. With a lifelong interest in textiles, both traditional and modern, she is now involved with the revival of Irish Crochet Lace and a founder member of The Liberties Weavers. Maureen came to Age and Opportunity as a volunteer during the Bealtaine Festival in Dublin and is a strong believer in the value of older people in society as both teacher and student.

Mary Nunan

Mary Nunan is a contemporary dance artist – choreographer, performer, writer, mentor. Her professional career began when she joined Dublin Contemporary Dance Theatre (1981-1986). She was founder Artistic Director of Daghda Dance Company (1988-1999) and Course Director of the MA Contemporary Dance Performance at the UL (1999-2016). Throughout her career she has created a substantial body of solo and ensemble choreographies and improvisations that have been performed at national and international venues. Mary was Bealtaine dancer-in-residence in 2017. Her most recent solo 'The Movement' was commissioned as part of this residency. It marked the beginning of a new phase in her work.

Cathy Roche

Cathy Roche has enjoyed a career in marketing and events management. Her love of art prompted her to set up and run a successful charity art auction, driving her to launch her business, *Art Impressions*. Through her new business, she conducted private guided tours at the National Gallery, The Hugh Lane Gallery and The Book of Kells exhibition; she aimed to bring the enjoyment of art to as many people as possible. A lifelong learning student, Cathy completed a Certificate in Women's studies at NUIG, a Diploma in The History of European Painting at Trinity College Dublin and a Certificate in Visual Art Practices at NCAD. Now retired, she is pursuing a joint honours degree in English Literature and Irish Studies at University College Dublin.

Arts & Disability Ireland

Arts & Disability Ireland (ADI) is the national development and resource organisation for arts and disability.

Clare Arts Office

Clare County Council's Arts Office aims to support artists in the community and support community access to quality arts.

Create

Create is the national development agency for collaborative arts in social and community contexts. Its work initiates cross-sectoral national and international partnerships which support artists and communities to co-create work of depth, ambition and excellence.

IMMA

IMMA is Ireland's National Cultural Institution for Modern and Contemporary Art. Its diverse and ambitious programme comprises exhibitions, commissions and projects by leading Irish and international artists, as well as a rich engagement and learning programme which together provides audiences of all ages the opportunity to connect with contemporary art and unlock their creativity.



MISA Creative Life Centre

The Creative Life Centre at Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing, St James Hospital, Dublin, promotes and highlights the creativity of older people, enabling them to express themselves through art, sculpture, poetry, literature, music and drama. It includes a volunteer network of all age groups, but primarily of older people themselves. The Centre interfaces closely with employee groups, retirement organisations, charities, local community centres, schools and colleges, locally and nationally.

The Library Service of Ireland

Libraries Ireland is managed by Libraries Development, LGMA on behalf of the Public Libraries. It is supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

Waterford Healing Arts Trust (WHAT)

WHAT leads the development of arts and health nationally by providing information, resources, training and advice, and managing the resource website artsandhealth.ie, developed with Create and funded by the Arts Council.



Marino Institute of Education
Griffith Avenue, Dublin, D09K4P6
Ireland
t +353 (0)1 805 7713
e arts@ageandopportunity.ie

ageandopportunity.ie

A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital. Registered in Ireland No: 284318. Charity No: CHY 12365. Registered Charity No: RCN 20036010.

