



**Title:** Public Art Commission: Westport Town

**Commissioner:** Mayo County Council

**Location:** Westport town

**Timescale:** between June 2021 and June 2022

**Deadline:** 31st May 2021

**Budget:** €35,000

# Public Art Commission - Westport

## Artist Brief

### Overview

Artists are invited to submit proposals for a public art commission in Westport, County Mayo. This commission is a unique opportunity for a professional artist(s) to collaborate with the local community of Tubber Hill, Westport on a public art project. Proposals are welcome from both individuals and collaborative artistic teams. This commission is part of Mayo County Council's Public Art Programme, funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Per Cent for Art Scheme. The purpose of the Per Cent for Art Scheme is to commission artists to create new work. This commission is open to all art forms including visual arts, dance, film, literature, music, theatre, digital arts, performance, live art, multimedia, video art, sound art, socially engaged, participatory, research based etc. Proposed outcomes can be ephemeral, temporary, or semi-permanent in a nature.

### Vision for the commission

The commissioner seeks proposals that will:

- Involve artist(s) working collaboratively with the local community to coproduce/ co-design a public artwork / project that will be made available for a wider audience to experience.
- Create an environment of creativity, dialogue and experimentation.
- Create a dynamic conversation between audiences, communities, site and context.
- Represent the very best of contemporary public art practice in the public realm.
- Be innovative in its approach to engagement.
- Give artists the time to develop new work, dedicate time to research and develop new ideas.

### Community Engagement

It is intended that the commission will be participatory in nature and the local community will be directly involved in the creative process. The commissioner is open to both traditional and new and innovative forms of engagement and recognises that artists work with communities in a wide range of ways e.g. workshops, creative consultation, interviews, collaboration on research, digital platforms, collaborative spaces online etc. The artist(s) will receive support in identifying and contacting local residents and communities.

A survey was carried out to gather the views of residents in the Tubber Hill area from which a number of themes, topics and desired impacts have emerged. The survey findings could be considered as possible starting points to ignite dialogue and consultation with the community at the research phase of the project. For survey findings please see **Appendix 1**. Please note this is not an exhaustive list and that artist(s) will work directly with the community and context to develop the content and direction of the public art project.

Please note that all community engagement activity must be carried out in accordance with Government Safety Guidelines in relation to Covid 19. The artist will follow public health advice, including advice on social distancing, travel restriction etc. Up-to-date advice on restrictions are available at this link: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/>

### Commission

This is an open competition for professional practicing artists / arts team working in all artforms and recipients will be selected based on their submission.

Where circumstances determine, short-listing and interviews may be organised to assist in selecting the most suitable proposal.

**Eligibility:**

The following eligibility criteria apply:

- Professional practicing artist(s).
- Artists working in all artforms welcome to apply.
- Artists at all stages of their career.
- Incomplete Submissions will not be eligible.

**Budget:**

The total budget for this commission is €35000. Artists should outline appropriate fees for themselves and other collaborators, bearing in mind the Arts Council's Pay the Artist Policy:

<http://www.artscouncil.ie/about/artists-pay-policy>. Artist(s) must submit a detailed budget breakdown in their proposal including travel, expenses, materials, production and consultation activities cost etc.

**Timescale:**

Open call advertised	12 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
Information session for artists	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
Deadline for questions/ clarifications	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2021
Application closing date	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2021
Interviews / presentation *	2 <sup>nd</sup> week June 2021
Successful artist informed	3 <sup>rd</sup> week June 2021
Contract signed	Early July 2021
Work completed by	June 2022

Commission to be complete by end of June 2022. Artists should propose their own timeline within this timeframe.

\*A shortlist may be formed, and candidates may be invited to an interview / presentation online.

**Submissions:**

Submissions should be sent via email and in one PDF attachment. Hardcopy submissions will not be accepted. Please ensure large files (over 1MB) are submitted via wetransfer (wetransfer.com). Images should be no smaller than 150 dpi and not exceed 300 dpi. Email submissions will be presented to the selection panel in digital format.

**Deadline for submissions:** Monday 31st May 2021.

**Submissions must contain the following:**

- Textual description outlining the approach to the commission and process.
- Reason you are applying for this commission and how it relates to your practice.
- Approach to community engagement and involvement.
- An up-to-date and relevant C.V.
- Examples of recent relevant work (web links or e-file).
- Proposed timeline.
- Possible outcomes and how these would be experienced or presented to the public.
- Detailed budget breakdown.
- Outline how the commission will be documented as a permanent record (process and outcome).

**Incomplete Submissions will not be considered.**

### Selection Criteria:

- Relevance of the proposed project to the social, physical and cultural context of the receiving community and locality.
- Proposed approach to community engagement and involvement.
- Artistic Quality (ambition and originality of concept).
- Track record of artists. Ability to deliver the project and realise a quality outcome (or potential for emerging artists).
- Clarity and practicality of the proposal.

### Selection Panel:

The selection panel will consist of independent arts expertise, Mayo County Council and local community representation. Mayo County Council retains the right not to commission if a selection is not recommended by the judging panel.

### Note:

- Artists selected may be required to provide an up-to-date tax clearance certification.
- Garda Vetting and Child Protection: It is a legal requirement that all persons working with children, young people and vulnerable people are subject to Garda Vetting. In accordance with national child protection policy, Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, awarded recipients working with children must have a child protection policy, proper procedures and a children's safeguarding statement in place.
- Artists need to ensure they have their own Public Liability insurance if creation of artwork involves the public.
- If studio space / workspace is required, the arts office will be able to assist in finding a suitable space.

### For further information:

Aoife O'Toole, Acting Public Art Coordinator, Mayo County Council,

Email: [aotoole@mayococo.ie](mailto:aotoole@mayococo.ie), T: 094 9064376.

**Deadline for queries is 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021.**

**Closing date for receipt of application 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021.**



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo  
Mayo County Council



An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage

Funded through the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Per Cent for Art Scheme.

## Appendices

### 1. Findings from survey with local residents

A survey was carried out to gather the views of local residents in Tubber Hill from which a number of themes, topics and desired impacts have emerged. The survey findings could be considered as possible starting points to ignite dialogue and consultation with the community at the research phase of the project. Please note this is not an exhaustive list and that artist(s) will work directly with the community and context to develop the content and direction of the public art project.

*Topics, themes and local points of interest:*

- Greenway (Old Railway Walk) an outdoor amenity that links the communities along it. Represents themes of sports, being active, outdoors and healthy lifestyle.
- Scenic area, one of the highest points of Westport with views of the surrounding landscape and sea. The modern town of Westport is connected to the landscape beyond in this area.
- Encouraging a sense of place and identity
- Future connections to people and place / Establishing community ties / bringing together different elements in the community
- Local History: Tubber Hill derives its name from a historical local well 'tobar' located close by.

*Impact of Public Art project, top five impacts selected:*

- Inspire creativity
- Enhance the experience of a public space
- Build civic pride and bring community together
- To spark dialogue, share opinions and conversations
- To create neighbourhood identity
- To represent residents and their lives

### 2. Information on local points of interest identified in the survey

*The Old Railway Line Walk – the Westport Greenway*

The Westport Greenway, also known as The Old Railway Line Walk, An Bealach Glas and Westport Slí na Sláinte opened in 2010. It is a 2.5km walking and cycling trail which links Westport's two urban areas: the town centre and the Quay Area. The Westport Greenway follows the route of the old railway line which was used to transport goods to and from the ships at the Quay to the town's railway station and beyond. Today it offers users a safe, traffic-free cycle and walkway. The routeway has impressive views of Croagh Patrick and Clew Bay. A large proportion of Westport town population live along the greenway and it is used for leisure and school travel. Along the greenway is the Westport Skate Park, astro-turf pitch and playground.

*Tubber Hill – Tobar*

The place name Tubber Hill comes from 'Tobar', the Irish for well. There is a well located at the top of Tubber Hill Street (Tober Hill on maps), across the Leenane road at the entrance to the railway walk. It is known locally as Tobar Aoidh Bour (Deaf Hugh's well) after the man who according to local folklore was responsible for digging the well.

Local history, changing times and society are also reflected in the nearby historical sites including the old workhouse and 'The Rockies' a burial site for unbaptised babies.

### 3. Tubber Hill Housing Development

Tubber Hill Housing Development was in two phases in 2008 and 2016. Overall, the housing development consists of 64 social, affordable and voluntary housing units comprising of apartments and houses ranging in size from four bedrooms to one bedroom. The development is adjacent to the new primary care centre, the Town Greenway and located at one of the highest points of the town with views of Croagh Patrick and the surrounding landscape. The housing scheme was designed to be immediately accessible to off road walking and cycling routes into the town centre schools, playgrounds and the Quay. The Tubber Hill development represents a merging of the old and new as it is located close to the original streets in the town including Peter Street, High Street and John's Row. The housing units were designed to maximise on solar heat and light gain and enjoyment, thus reducing need for heating and lighting. They are also very well insulated thus reducing carbon emissions caused by heating.

### 4. Westport Town Overview

Westport is a picturesque and vibrant town, it is a planned 18<sup>th</sup> century estate town conceived and built under the stewardship of the Browne family who resided in Westport House. The town is a blend of traditional and modern, with many outstanding features, most notably its civic spaces such as the canalised Carrowbeg River and the town's main civic space the Octagon. It is located on the shores of the Clew Bay, surrounded by incredibly beautiful countryside and the majestic Croagh Patrick.

Westport has a strong vibrant community, there is a great sense of civic pride and volunteerism with many different voluntary groups. The Westport community work together to continuously improve the local environment. The town has an active arts, heritage and cultural community with a range of festivals and events. There are also two arts venues with the Westport Town Hall Theatre and Custom House Studios and Galleries. Westport has won title of Ireland's Tidiest Town on three occasions in recent years, 2001, 2006 and 2008. In 2012 Westport was privileged to be assessed by the Irish Times to be 'The best place to live in Ireland'. Westport is a popular holiday destination with a wide choice of accommodation, restaurants, pubs and shops.

### 5. Useful Links

Link to map designed to support this brief:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ed5b421696f744329211fb32d17c1d38>

Mayo County Council Public Art Programme

[www.mayo.ie/arts/public-art/past-projects](http://www.mayo.ie/arts/public-art/past-projects)

Westport Town Map

<https://townmaps.ie/westport-town-map/>

Westport Smarter Travel map

<http://www.westportsmartertravel.ie/assets/greenway-town-map-a3.pdf>

<http://www.westportsmartertravel.ie/gallery.html>

Westport Town & Environs plan 2010 – 2016: <https://www.mayo.ie/getmedia/966c3568-c0df-4eef-bbbb-670065c67ef7/1-Document1,28982,en.pdf>