**Mapping Arts and Disability provision in Mayo, Clare & Galway City**

**Research Brief**

Mayo County Council Arts Service, Clare County Council Arts Office and Galway City Council Arts Office seek to engage the services of a suitably qualified and experienced individual or organisation to undertake an arts and disability research project on a contract for services basis.

The partner organisations have been awarded funding under the Arts Council’s an Invitation to Collaboration Scheme 2021 for a research and development project which focuses on mapping the provision of arts and disability practice throughout the counties of Clare, Mayo and Galway city and recommending a framework for the development of future work in the area of arts and disability.

The partners welcome proposals that demonstrate new, dynamic and exciting ways of conducting the research from suitably qualified and experienced individual artists, researchers, arts organisations or research teams.

**Why is this research needed at this time?**

Each of the partners have experience of delivering long standing local arts and disability initiatives involving collaborative projects and high-quality engagement for individuals and groups of people with disabilities, such as the Embrace Programme, Co Clare, Blue Teapot Theatre Company, Galway City, and the UPSTART initiative, Co Mayo.

The partners are also aware of national arts and disability programmes such as the Arts Council’s Arts and Disability Connect Scheme and initiatives developed by Arts and Disability Ireland.

Therefore, the intention of this research is to explore existing practice and initiatives and to propose a framework to support the development of arts and disability provision for the benefit of each of the partners, for other local authorities and for the wider arts and disability community.

A consideration of models of best practice could potentially, raise partners expectations of what is feasible and deliverable through working collaboratively in order to deliver ambitious programming and quality engagement that may be replicable elsewhere.

**Aims of the research:**

1. To map the provision of arts and disability practice across the three counties.

2. To identify barriers to sustainable arts and disability practice encountered by people with disabilities and disability resource organisations.

3. To develop a framework for future work in this area that responds to the needs of each county.

**Objectives of the research:**

1. Engage a researcher to carry out a mapping exercise of current arts and disability practice in counties Clare, Mayo and Galway City.

2. Consult with artists with disabilities, arts organisations, groups of people with disabilities, venue managers, local authority arts officers, support organisations such as Western Care, Brothers of charity and the H.S.E in the three counties.

3. Identify the barriers (Environmental, attitudinal, informational, systemic) encountered by people with disabilities when developing their arts practice.

4. Identify the barriers (Environmental, attitudinal, informational, systemic) encountered by Disability Resource Organisations in supporting people with disabilities in achieving sustainable arts and disability practices.

5. Research national and international models of practice, delivery and evaluation.

6. Propose a model for future development based on the research.

Please note that all consultation activity must be carried out in accordance with Government Public Health Guidelines in relation to Covid 19 - [Protect yourself and others from COVID-19 - HSE.ie](https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/protect-yourself-and-others.html) .

It is intended that the learning from the research will be shared widely online to other local authorities, the wider arts and disability community and other relevant public service providers.

**Partner organisations**

**Current Arts & Disability Provision in:**

**Mayo County Council Arts Service**

Mayo County Council Arts Service has established and been involved in a number of arts and disability projects and initiatives over the years and have a dedicated Arts and Disability Co-ordinator. Initiatives include **Luisne Arts Project** and the **UPSTART** programme. The Service was involved in the Arts and Disability Networking Pilot with the Arts Council and Arts and Disability Ireland which led to the Ignite Programme and delivered **Silent Moves**, a collaborative film project between artist Aideen Barry, dancer Emma O’Kane, Ridgepool Training Centre, Scannáin Technologies and Ballina Arts Centre.

In 2019, Mayo County Council's Arts Service developed the **Arts and Disability Network Mayo** in line with strategic aim 2.13 of the current arts plan which is to:

"Set up a networking group for disability groups and individuals to meet and collaborate."

The network is made up of artists, venues and organisations/groups that have participated in various arts and disability initiatives for example the **UPSTART** Programme. The network aims to work collaboratively in order to provide opportunities for people with disabilities in Mayo to participate in the arts as artists, workshop participants or audience members.

In 2020, with support from Creative Ireland the Service piloted **Kickstart**, a scheme to support individual artists with disabilities develop their practice.

**Clare County Council Arts Office**

In 2002 the Arts Office of Clare County Council introduced the **Embrace Arts and Disability Project** as a pilot project, available to all organisations working specifically with people with disabilities throughout the county. This project gave artists opportunities to work with members of the community they may not normally have access to. It also allowed participants to experience a variety of art forms over a specified period.

In 2004 the programme was significantly expanded following an independent evaluation. It was re-launched as **Embrace – Arts and People with Disabilities****Programme**and has been re-juvenated with new artists and organisations participating. In 2019, Tara Brandel, Dancer/Choreographer and Director of the renowned **Croí Glan Integrated Dance Company** facilitated Integrated Dance workshops entitled **Boga Boga**for members of the public of all abilities.

In 2019, the Embrace programme received an Arts Council, Invitation to Collaboration award to commission **The Vision Symphony’** an innovative participatory music project for and by musicians with visual impairments and the **Irish Memory Orchestra**. The core aim of this project was to create opportunities for musicians with visual impairments to engage with composer Dave Flynn to inform a new composition exploring themes of vision and through techniques of memorisation to perform live with a professional orchestra. Partners on this project included NCBI, National Council for the Blind Ireland, Dublin City University and Glór Theatre, Ennis.

**Galway City Council Arts Office**

Galway City Arts Office provides ongoing assistance and support to the **Blue Teapot**. Blue Teapot is a multi-award winning, Theatre Company, Performing Arts School and Outreach programme for people with intellectual disabilities at the forefront of arts & disability in Ireland.

It is the only professional, intellectually disabled acting ensemble that trains and performs at the highest level, on the main stages of Ireland’s major arts festivals and is an accredited provider in the West of Ireland of performing arts training with programmes leading to QQI awards at Level 3. **Blue Teapot Performing Arts School** is an accredited provider of training for people with intellectual disabilities. Founded in 2010, it was specifically set up to address the needs of those learners who want to gain formal training and certification in QQI creative modules.

**Role of the Partners**

The role of the partners will be to:

* Agree a brief for the researcher at the beginning of the project.
* Recruit a researcher.
* Provide information concerning arts and disability practice in their own operational areas.
* Provide contacts for key individuals/organisations in their operational areas.
* Provide all relevant documentation and other supporting materials.
* Host progress meetings.

Mayo County Council will act as the lead partner organisation.

**Scope and Expectations of the Research**

**Scope**

The scope of this research is informed by the description of arts and disability practice contained in the Arts Council’s Arts and Disability Policy and Strategy 2012-2016. [http://www.artscouncil.ie/Publications/Arts-participation/Arts-and-Disability-(2012-2016)-Arts-Council-Policy-and-Strategy\_2951314223/](http://www.artscouncil.ie/Publications/Arts-participation/Arts-and-Disability-%282012-2016%29-Arts-Council-Policy-and-Strategy_2951314223/)

**Research Expectations**

The researcher will be expected to:

* Schedule and meet with all partners for an initial briefing meeting [This meeting may be arranged remotely due to the current restrictions in place].
* Conduct consultations and research in counties Clare, Mayo, Galway city and elsewhere as appropriate.
* Conduct meetings with partners and stakeholders to discuss progress of the research.
* Identify and present a selection of national and international case studies with a focus on the delivery of high quality, ambitious, innovative, and experimental arts and disability programmes and how these are evaluated.
* Propose a framework for the development of future work in the area of arts and disability taking into considerationthe different needs of each county.
* Write and submit a draft evidence informed report with recommendations, for feedback from partners.
* Submit a final edited report with recommendations that is publication ready. (The researcher will provide text - visual content and design will be the responsibility of the partners)
* Deliver a presentation of the research results with recommendations on ways to address barriers at a stakeholder meeting at the end of the project.

**Research Outcome**

A report containing a comprehensive overview of arts and disability practice to date in Mayo, Clare and Galway city, with a clear articulation of the challenges to sustainable arts and disability practice faced by people with disabilities and by resource organisations in aiming to support people with disabilities to achieve this ambition. The report will also present a series of case studies based on national and international models of best practice in the area of arts and disability. The report should conclude with a proposal on how the partners can progress work in the area of arts and disability into the future.

**Timetable**

It is envisaged that this research project will begin in July 2021 and progress as follows:

* July 2021, Briefing meeting researcher and partners.
* July/October 2021, research and consultation meetings/interviews, counties Clare, Mayo and Galway city.
* September 2021, midway meetings, researcher and partners.
* October/November 2021, completion of draft report.
* December 2021, completion and sign off on the final report.
* January 2022, completion of project evaluation report.

[These dates may be reviewed if any unavoidable delays occur due to the current public health crisis].

**Budget**

Submitted budgets should not exceed €15,000, inclusive of all expenses and VAT. Please supply a budget as outlined below in ‘Submitting your proposal’.

**Reporting**

The researcher will be required to provide status reports to the Project partners in line with a schedule agreed at the outset of the contract.

**Application process**

**Submitting your proposal**

Please apply in writing via email and include the following:

* Outline of the planned approach to this work and proposed research methods.
* Outline suitability for the role: C.V, relevant experience, letters of support, examples of writing and research publications, and any other information deemed relevant.
* Detailed timeline envisaged to carry out the work, outlining stages, schedule and delivery dates.
* A budget which indicates how you will use the funding with headings including, but not limited to: researcher’s fee and any other fees, Resources, (e.g. rental of venues, supply of materials etc.) Transport/ travel/ accommodation costs, access costs, VAT, if applicable.
* Please supply supplementary information to support your application via email, for example, a short description of relevant previous projects, copies of photographs/audio or visual documentation, press reviews, publications, etc.
* Names and contact details of two relevant referees.

All information should be compiled into one Microsoft Word document and clearly marked with your name and contact details. The Microsoft word document should be written in 14 point font and not exceed 10MB and should be emailed to Damien O’Connor, Mayo County Council Arts Service doconnor@mayococo.ie with the subject: *Mapping Arts and Disability provision in Mayo, Clare & Galway City*

**Proposals must arrive no later than 4:00 pm on Tuesday 1st June 2021**

For further enquiries please contact Damien O’Connor, Mayo County Council arts office on 094 906 4363 (Tuesdays and Wednesdays only) or doconnor@mayococo.ie .

If it is considered that any question or request for clarification is of material significance, both the question and the responses will be communicated by email to all those who have expressed an interest in the project. To facilitate inclusion on this circulation list, please register your interest in the project to: doconnor@mayococo.ie by **20th May 2021.**

**Selection Process**

* All submissions will be assessed by the partner organisations or their chosen representative(s).
* Applicants may be short-listed based on their submissions
* Short-listed applicants may be called to interview online on the week beginning June 14th 2021.
* The selection panel will be made up of representatives of the partnership and an independent expert in arts and disability.
* The partners reserve the right to ask for clarity of information or to reconsider elements such as delivery procedures, budget, time schedule or any such factors deemed necessary for a successful outcome.
* The partners reserve the right not to proceed with any proposal under this invitation and to consider other appropriate courses of action.
* The decision of the selection panel is final.

**Assessment Criteria and Scoring**

Applications will be evaluated by the project partners against the following criteria:

* Evidence of relevant research experience – including evidence of strong research and analytical capability to synthesise and report data, both verbally and through writing. (300 marks)
* Evidence of specific experience in and/or understanding of arts and disability practice. (250 marks)
* Communication skills with the ability to communicate across diverse sectors. (250 marks)
* Value for money. (100 marks)
* Evidence of capacity to deliver within the timeframe. (100 marks)

**DEADLINE 4pm on Tuesday 1st June 2021**

**For further enquiries please contact Damien O’Connor, Mayo County Council arts office on 094 906 4363 (Tuesdays and Wednesdays only) or doconnor@mayococo.ie.**

**Requirements**

The appointed researcher will provide up-to-date tax clearance certification, to remain valid for the duration of the contract.

The appointed researcher will be required to hold professional indemnity insurance with a reputable insurance company.

Proposals received after the deadline of 1 June 2021 will not be accepted under any Circumstances.

In line with Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), Mayo County Council is required to ensure that contracts issued to anyone whose work brings them in contact with children are meeting their obligations under the Children First Act 2015.

Any appointment will be made in adherence to Mayo County Council’s Child Protection Policy, Mayo County Council Arts Service Child Safety Statement and Mayo County Council’s Health & Safety Statement and Garda vetting will be a requirement of the contract.

If your proposal involves working with vulnerable persons, you must submit an acknowledgement that you adhere to the National Policy & Procedures on Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse (see <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/socialcare/safeguardingvulnerableadults/> )

**Freedom of Information**

Mayo County Council is a Freedom of Information (FOI) body. When submitting information, applicants should indicate what parts of their submission are commercially sensitive and what parts they consider should be kept confidential should the Council receive a FOI request relating to the submission. Mayo County Council undertakes to use its best endeavours to hold confidential any information provided by you in this submission subject to the Council’s obligations under law including the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003. Should you wish that any of the information supplied by you in this submission should not be disclosed because of sensitivity, you should, when providing the information, identify same and specify reasons for its sensitivity. Mayo County Council will consult with you about this sensitive information before making any decisions on any Freedom of Information request received. In the event that Mayo County Council decides to release particular information provided by you, you will have the option of appealing the Council’s decision to the Information Commissioner. Please note that in the event that no information is identified by you as sensitive, with supporting reasons, then it is likely to be released in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Acts.