

13<sup>th</sup> May 2024

**To: The Mayor and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council**

**Re: Panel recommendations: Festivals and Events Grant Scheme 2024/2025**

**A Chomhairleoir, a chara,**

Enclosed is a report and recommendations for investment in Limerick festivals and events under the Limerick City and County Council Festivals and Events Grant Scheme 2024/2025.

Total funding for the Festivals and Events Grant Scheme 2024/2025 is €208,000. The value of the Limerick City and County Council contribution to the grant scheme for 2024/2025 is €184,000. This year's fund includes a €24,000 contribution in partnership with Fáilte Ireland.

45 applications were received with a total ask of €600,209.97.

The expert independent assessment panel met on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2024 and considered all applications based on the guidelines and criteria for the festival and events grant scheme.

**Recommendations: Strand 1: Fund Available: €33,000**

- 27 applications were considered under this strand with a total ask of €170,050
- The assessment panel has recommended the allocation of funding to 12 successful applicants totalling €33,000.

**Recommendations: Strand 2: Fund available: €170,500**

- 18 applications were considered under this strand with a total ask of €367,209.97
- The assessment panel has recommended the allocation of funding to 15 successful applicants totalling €170,500.

**Recommendations: Strand 3: Fund Available: €4,500**

This award is intended to support a step change in the ambition and delivery of the festival.

- 15 applications were received with a total ask of €62,950.
- The assessment panel has recommended the allocation of funding to 2 successful applicants totalling €4,500.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Strand 1 – Delivery and Programming of Small Scale & New Festivals and Events

Festival/Event	District	Award
Feile Na Greine	Metro	€5,000
Ballyhoura Walking Festival	Cappamore-Kilmallock	€5,000
Limerick Literary Festival	Metro	€3,600
Prima Volta Weekender	Metro	€3,200
Catalyst International Festival	Metro	€3,000
Limerick Wild Geese Festival	Metro/ Adare-Rathkeale	€3,000
Castleconnell Halloween Frightfest	Metro	€2,200
Fleadh Cheoil Luimnigh 2025	All Districts	€2,000
The Limerick Opera Festival	All Districts	€2,000
The Shannonside History Festival	All Districts	€2,000
Amazing Lace 2025	Metro	€1,000
Maigue River Festival	Adare-Rathkeale	€1,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>€33,000</b>

### Strand 2 - Delivery and Programming of Medium and Large Scale Festivals and Events

Festival/Event	District	Award
Bualadh Bos Children's Festival 2024	Metro	€21,000
Fresh International Film Festival 2024	Metro/ Cappamore-Kilmallock	€20,000
Top 8   Hip-Hop and Street Dance Festival	Metro	€19,500
18th Polish Arts Festival	Metro	€18,500
Welcome to the Neighbourhood	Adare-Rathkeale	€17,500
Hear Say International Audio	Cappamore-Kilmallock	€15,000
Limerick Jazz Festival 2024	Metro	€13,000
Hunt Museum Un Bug-Liveable Biodiversity	Metro	€10,000
What Next Festival 2025	Metro	€8,000
Limerick Sings International Choral Festival	Metro/ Adare-Rathkeale	€8,000
EVA International	Metro	€7,000
Limerick Early Music Festival 2025	Metro	€4,500
Samhain: Limerick Halloween Festival	Metro	€4,000
Limerick Garden Festival	Metro	€2,500
Fleadh By the Feale	Newcastle West	€2,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>€170,500</b>

### Strand 3 – Festival Development & Sustainability

Festival/Event	District	Award
Feile Na Greine	Metro	€2,500
Welcome to the Neighbourhood	Adare-Rathkeale	€2,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>€4,500</b>

## Assessment Panel

An Open Call for applications to the Festivals and Events Grant Scheme was issued on Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2024, to close at 4pm on Wednesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2024, for Festivals and Events taking place between the 1st October 2024 and 30th September 2025.

The panel, which carried out the assessments, was composed of three Independent Experts with significant track records in the sector. The panel was chaired by an independent chairperson, with relevant experience of grant scheme evaluations and working with festivals.

The Panel Members were:

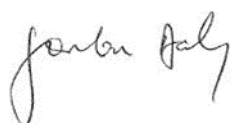
- Chairperson Úna Carmody is a senior arts consultant, with extensive experience. She is a former Chair of Dublin Fringe Festival and current Chair of Dublin Theatre Festival. She has worked extensively for the Arts Council in reporting and assessment and was the moderator for the process to select a new National Dance Company.
- Eva Birdthistle is Creative Communities Engagement Officer for Creative Ireland with Clare County Council. Eva has a background in arts curation and management, with over 9 years of experience managing festivals such as the Limerick Fringe, Spleodar Halloween Arts Festival, and Nenagh Children's Film Festival.
- Cliona Maher is Artistic Director of the Clonmel Junction Arts Festival and has over 30 years' experience working in the arts. Over her career she has worked as a creative producer, an arts manager, and a theatre practitioner in Ireland, the US and France.

The process was observed by Cllr. Gerald Mitchell, Mayor of the City and County of Limerick.

At assessment the panel made a number of observations and recommendations for the scheme which were taken on board by the Festivals and Events Team. They particularly noted the high quality and volume of applications and the pressure on the scheme fund. This year funding through Strand Three has been awarded to organisations that aim to broaden access.

The Council is requested to approve the allocations outlined.

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Gordon Daly

**Deputy Chief Executive, Economic Development, Enterprise & Tourism**

## Report on Panel Recommendations for Festival and Events Grant Scheme 2024/2025

### Strand 1: Delivery and Programming of Small Scale & New Festivals and Events

- 27 applications were received in this strand with a total ask of **€170,050**.
- The assessment panel recommended the allocation of funding to 12 successful applicants totalling **€33,000**.

The objective of Strand 1 is to support a diverse range of Festivals and Events from small, voluntary and community focused festivals to those wishing to establish a new festival. While the range of activities might be expressed in a variety of forms, the scheme's focus is placed on public engagement and cultural activities. The scheme also considers applications from Festivals and Events seeking funding to be invested directly in activities which complement and provide additional programming to other pre-existing Festival or Event activities which may not on their own be eligible.

Festival/Event	District	Award
Feile Na Greine	Metro	€5,000
Ballyhoura Walking Festival	Cappamore-Kilmallock	€5,000
Limerick Literary Festival	Metro	€3,600
Prima Volta Weekender	Metro	€3,200
Catalyst International Film Festival	Metro	€3,000
Limerick Wild Geese Festival	Metro/ Adare-Rathkeale	€3,000
Castleconnell Halloween Frightfest	Metro	€2,200
Fleadh Cheoil Luimnigh 2025	All Districts	€2,000
The Limerick Opera Festival	All Districts	€2,000
The Shannonside History Festival	All Districts	€2,000
Amazing Lace 2025	Metro	€1,000
Maigue River Festival	Adare-Rathkeale	€1,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>€33,000</b>

#### Féile Na Gréine

**€5,000**

Féile Na Gréine is a three-day grassroots festival of emerging and experimental music. The festival celebrates music and community in an attempt to provoke moments of joy in spaces and places across Limerick City. It is structured as a music trail, the event programme takes audiences across the city, visiting a range of small venues over the course of the weekend with each event is free for audiences. The programme is blended to include both physical events as well as a digital event.

**Ballyhoura Walking Festival 2024** **€5,000**

Established as Ireland's first-ever walking festival. The festival provides an opportunity to explore Ballyhoura's stunning scenery. Many of the walks are led by members of the Ballyhoura Bears Walking Club – who have in-depth knowledge of the area and its heritage, history, flora, and fauna and are suitable for all abilities. In an effort to enhance the festival experience, there is continued collaboration for the 4th consecutive year with the Joyce Brothers Festival.

**Limerick Literary Festival 2025** **€3,600**

In 2025 the Limerick Literary Festival celebrates its 41st edition and will focus on the theme of Diversity in every sense of the word. It will look at the diversity of literature featured in the festival, on the diversity of authors present and on diversifying our programme to extend their focus on other art forms.

**Prima Volta Weekender 2024** **€3,200**

Prima Volta Weekender 2024 is a multicultural music and arts festival showcasing underground Irish talent celebrating diversity, fostering community, and promoting Limerick as a cultural destination. Taking place over three days in venues across the city, the Weekender festival offers a rich tapestry of music, art and talks that are building on a 10-year legacy from Prima Volta Weekender 2014 funded by Limerick City of Culture in 2014.

**Catalyst International Film Festival** **€3,000**

Catalyst International Film Festival is dedicated to amplifying diverse voices; normalising diverse collaborations; and promoting new standards of filmmaking where diversity and inclusion are regarded as standard practice. They want to promote a more inclusive industry and films screened will promote gender equality, diversity and inclusion whether in content, key creative roles or crew.

**Limerick Wild Geese Festival 2025** **€3,000**

This festival is a French-themed event held in a historical venue in the city with live music and dance performances and an afternoon of historical re-enactments, live performances, food, games and entertainment for all ages in the Hunt Museum.

There will also be a walking tour focussing on historical sites associated with the Sieges of Limerick. The creation of an associated online map will be shared with all participants and a parade and ceremony supported by the Defence Forces followed by the performance of a specially commissioned piece of music at King John's Castle, and animations on Nicholas Street.

**Castleconnell Halloween Frightfest 2024** **€2,200**

The Fright Fest Scary Trail involves the creation a trail of scary props, visual projections, music, sound effects and lighting all within a locality providing a spooky Halloween atmosphere which adds to the unique experience for all ages.

There is also a series of ancillary events including historical guided tours, children's historical treasure hunt, local arts/crafts/heritage exhibition, school outreach program, launch of Castleconnell Great Houses project which provide a full week of entertainment for visitors.

**Fleadh Cheoil Luimnigh 2025**

**€2,000**

Fleadh Cheoil Luimnigh is an annual week-long festival that strives to preserve and promote Irish traditional music under the umbrella of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. This annual event is a positive and well received cultural event on the community calendar with competitions and events all organised and ran on a volunteer basis. It encourages participation and attendance of all ages.

**The Limerick Opera Festival –Riverfest on-street Arias**

**€2,000**

The Limerick Opera Festival create opportunities for everyone to enjoy operatic performance, recitals and workshops since 2019. They engage new and existing audiences across the City and County of Limerick and wider Mid-Western Region. This includes collaboration with other organisations to reach out to different audiences. The festivals on-street Arias will take place during Riverfest 2025.

**The Shannonside History Festival**

**€2,000**

Limerick Civic Trust will host its second annual history festival, the Shannonside History Festival in cooperation with the Limerick Museum, International Rugby Experience, University of Limerick, and Mother Macs pub to bring a number of events based around Limerick's history, as well as events covering national and international history spanning around 15 events in total.

**Amazing Lace 2023**

**€1,000**

The Amazing Lace symposium will bring together people interested in lace making as a craft and an art from Ireland and overseas. The emphasis will be on promoting Limerick lace. This will involve a symposium on the history of Irish laces, lace preservation and education and a series of lacemaking workshops in Limerick lace and 2-3 other Irish laces (Carrickmacross lace, Clones lace, Borris lace or Headford Lace)

**Maigue River Festival**

**€1,000**

The Maigue River Festival promises to be a fun and action-packed event designed to help communities engage, understand, experience and enjoy the natural riches of rivers and river life. The festival will animate Croom Town Park and involve all ages in a range of practical hands-on, fun and education-based activities focusing on biodiversity, water and climate science.

## Strand 2: Delivery and Programming of Medium and Large Scale Festivals and Events

- 18 applications were received with a total ask of **€367,209.97**.
- The assessment panel has recommended the allocation of funding to 15 successful applicants, totalling **€170,500**.

Limerick has experienced the transformative effect of Festivals and Events in communicating a new set of values, offerings and identity to the world. Therefore, the objective of Strand 2 is to support a diverse range of Festivals and Events to enhance the programming and delivery of festivals and events in Limerick. While these might be expressed in a variety of forms, the scheme's focus is firmly placed on public engagement and activities that feature culture strongly in their overall programme.

The scheme seeks applications from medium and large organisations, festivals and events including those proposing new festivals or events. The scheme accepts applications from those seeking funding to be invested directly in cultural activities which compliment and provide additional programming to other pre-existing Festival/Event activities which may not on their own be eligible.

Festival/Event	District	Award
Bualadh Bos Children's Festival 2024	Metro	€21,000
Fresh International Film Festival	Metro/ Cappamore-Kilmallock	€20,000
Top 8   Hip-Hop and Street Dance Festival	Metro	€19,500
18th Polish Arts Festival	Metro	€18,500
Welcome to the Neighbourhood	Adare-Rathkeale	€17,500
Hear Say International Audio	Cappmore-Kilmallock	€15,000
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Fleadh By the Feale	Newcastle West	€2,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>€170,500</b>

**Buladh Bos Children's Festival 2024****€21,000**

The Bualadh Bos Children's Festival is Limerick's only festival aimed exclusively at children and their families. It is a key part of the mid-west's cultural offering and a flagship festival within the programme of the Lime Tree Theatre and Belltable. It focuses on high quality, professional performances and workshops for children by local, national and international artists and companies.

**Fresh International Film Festival****€20,000**

Fresh Film's mission is to inspire, nurture and celebrate excellence in young people's film. The 29th edition will explore the transformative power of cinema within an evolving global landscape. It will showcase films from young filmmakers worldwide, share innovative developments and celebrate emerging voices on film.

The festival includes; a school's programme, screenings and workshops, a young filmmaker's programme with special film events, careers in film, Ireland's Young filmmaker of the Year Awards and international screenings. The Reel Exchange international delegate programme involves meetings, events, workshops and a co-production with Limerick based young filmmakers.

**Top 8| Hip-Hop & Street Dance Festival****€19,500**

A festival that is strongly rooted in Limerick with a live in person event to build a sense of community, showcasing artists to authentically express and share their art forms across all cultures and backgrounds, achieving national recognition for Hip-Hop as a high level art form in all four elements: Art, Music, Dance and Voice by celebrating this vibrant creative community in Limerick City while creating a platform to nurture local artists.

**18th Polish Arts Festival (PAF)****€18,500**

PAF is run in association with partner organisations Lime Tree Theatre| Belltable, The Hunt Museum, Limerick City Gallery of Art and Irish World Academy of Music and Dance as well as other local arts and community organisations. They commission work by Limerick-based Polish and Irish music and visual artists and reach out to the diverse communities from Limerick and beyond with an engaging, ambitious and exciting cultural offering of visual art, music, films, performances, community projects and workshops including a bespoke PAF KIDS Day.

**Welcome to the Neighbourhood****€17,500**

Welcome to the Neighbourhood is the annual festival of contemporary art in Askeaton that sees International and Irish artists in residence in the town. Featuring a strong community based series that allows the artist to immerse themselves in the unique history and everyday life of Askeaton while activating and presenting new cultural projects that connect with the locality and community.



**HearSay International Audio Arts Festival****€15,000**

Now in its 8<sup>th</sup> edition, the HearSay International Audio Arts Festival celebrates and inspires the cross-disciplinary world of creative audio and brings the world's finest audio artists together in an immersive rural setting, where the Ballyhoura community engages with them in a spirit of adventure and collaboration. The festival will showcase creative audio makers from sound art, film sound, radio docs, new music and audio fiction with over 100 events taking place in unconventional locations from apple farms, living rooms, local shops and public realm settings.

**Limerick Jazz Festival 2025****€13,000**

In 2025, the festival will include international, national and local artists who will perform in local venues such as Belltable and Dolans with a weekend of up to 12 high quality performances while seeking opportunities to showcase Limerick Jazz in new non-traditional performance spaces. There will be an expansion of free events in locations throughout Limerick city to attract new audiences and tourists to the festival.

**Hunt Museum Un Bug-Liveable Biodiversity****€10,000**

The Hunt Museum will hold a conference on culture and biodiversity which will be an engaging, educating and inspiring look at the world of bugs and their importance to our daily lives. This will include insect surveys followed by community engaged workshops creating beautiful bugs in fimo (clay) all culminating in the unveiling of a new community created sculpture.

On location within the city and county the museum pop up will showcase demonstration on making of bug hotels, bird feeders and wormeries for people's compost bins. There will be a culture and biodiversity conference with Mary Immaculate College and the Limerick Biodiversity Office.

**What Next Festival 2025****€8,000**

Dance Limerick present's the 8th edition of the What Next Dance Festival, an annual platform celebrating adventurous new dance and connecting audiences and artists in Limerick. The festival embraces local community and highlights limerick as a destination of dance for national and international visitors. Central to this edition will be the presentation of the Céilí Afro Dabke Ukrainian dance event. This will be a mixture of dance forms from Ireland, Africa, Palestine, and Ukraine coming together through the universal language of dance. There will also be an event about community integration and the joy of dancing together celebrating diversity and unity.

**Limerick Sings International Choral Festival 2025****€8,000**

The 2025 will include concerts, workshops, choral trails around the City and Region as well as an outdoor chorus to be held in a popular tourist attraction. The festival will provide a high level of opportunities for local and visiting singers to work with experienced choral professionals. A choral composer/ conductor and acclaimed vocal ensemble will join for workshops and performances.

**EVA International****€7,000**

The 41st EVA International is Ireland's largest visual arts event, presenting the work of Irish and International artist. It will be taking place in multiple venues and public sites across Limerick city attracting attract audiences to visit free exhibitions, live events, and educational programmes.

**Limerick Early Music Festival 2025****€4,500**

Limerick Early Music Festival 2025 with the theme of Scéalta (Stories), will engage the public through mainstage concerts, family and youth-oriented music, and multimedia and theatrical performances. The festival will celebrate 1000 years of music from diverse cultures, female and underrepresented composers, languages and styles from multiple global traditions. This will bring together a diverse pool of musicians and actors of local, national and international renown for inspiring performances of the highest calibre

**Samhain: Limerick Halloween Festival****€4,000**

Lumen Street Theatre will present a three day programme including story-telling, street performances, swim in the Shannon and lantern making workshops. On the expansion of their educational strand they will be working with diverse communities of interest within their location at 16 Roches Street. There will be an offering of masterclass workshops to communities who will then perform at the culmination of the festival which will animate the medieval quarter of the City after dark.

**Limerick Garden Festival****€2,500**

Limerick Garden Festival on Sunday, 15th June 2025 at the Milk Market will feature an exciting plant, garden and food market with an array traders from all over Ireland. There will be garden expert talks throughout the day and many opportunities for gardeners, their families and friends to enjoy, engage and experience all things gardening. This will include garden educational elements, demonstrations and masterclasses.

**Fleadh by the Feale Traditional Music Festival****€2,000**

Held in Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick, Fleadh by the Feale is the only Traditional Music Festival in Limerick City and County held over five days. Each year they promote and teach traditional Irish music while actively engaging with spectators and participants of all ages through involvement in culture while supporting social inclusion.

### Strand 3 – Festival Development & Sustainability

- 15 applications were received with a total ask of **€62,950**.
- The assessment panel has recommended the allocation of funding to 2 successful applicants, totalling **€4,500**

Strand 3 seeks to fund actions to support the long-term sustainability of Festivals/Events. This strand aims to support the development of organisational structures such as the carrying out of feasibility studies; business plan development; reviews of governance structures; development of new Festival/Event concepts; marketing and audience development strategies; brand development; clustering initiatives which support collaboration through shared resources and/or expertise amongst two or more Festivals/Events. This award is intended to support a step change in the ambition and delivery of the festival.

Festival/Event	District	Award
Feile Na Greine	Metro	€2,500
Welcome to the Neighbourhood	Adare-Rathkeale	€2,000

#### **Feile Na Greine**

**€2,500**

This funding has been awarded in line with the aim to broaden access to the festival in regards to fulfilling the objectives of the Good Night Out Campaign. The campaign mission is to create a safer and more accountable music, arts and cultural spaces.

#### **Welcome to the Neighbourhood**

**€2,000**

The funding awarded will be used on education as per the organisations application, to develop organisational policies towards increased accessibility and inclusion.