

14th January 2026

To: The Mayor, Príomh Chomhairleoir and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council

Ref: Grants Under the Arts Act Scheme 2026 recommendations

A Chomhairleoir, a chara,

Limerick City and County Council made available a total fund of €20,000 for the 2026 Grants Under the Arts Act scheme. The maximum grant available is €1,000. A report with recommendations from the assessment panel for the scheme is enclosed.

The Assessment Panel met on Monday 15th December 2025. 63 applications were received, representing a total ask of €55,554.56. The assessment panel has recommended the allocation of grants to 26 applicants as follows:

Arts Discipline	Applicant	District	Recommended Grant
Arts Participation	Down Syndrome Limerick	Metro	€800
	Polish Arts Festival	Metro	€1,000
Visual Arts	Graham Patterson	Metro	€900
	Julie Brazil and Sheila Richardson	Metro	€1,000
	Ciarán Power	Cappamore - Kilmallock	€700
	Limerick Art Society	Metro	€1,000
	Test Screen	Metro	€700
	Jacinta Sheerin	Other	€700
	Gavin Hogg	Metro	€700
	Sahaja Budzilla	Newcastle West	€700
	Hazel Garner	Metro	€500
Circus	Tony McCarthy	Metro	€650
Dance	Limerick Mental Health Association	Metro	€900
Theatre	Torch Players	Metro	€1,000
	The Southill Community Drama Group	Metro	€700



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

**Limerick City
& County Council**

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Cultúir, Réadmhaoine agus Foirgneamh Corparáideach
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Limerick City and County Council
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Music	Now and Then Media	Metro	€1,000
	The Limerick Opera Festival	All Areas	€700
	Broadford Youth Choir	Newcastle West	€700
Traditional Arts	Ballyhoura CCE	Cappamore - Kilmallock	€600
Literature	Lime Square Poets	Metro	€550
	First Wednesday Series (Dor Seifer)	Metro	€1,000
	Michael Potter	Metro	€600
Young People, Children and Education	Limerick Youth Theatre	Metro	€900
	Emerging Limerick Filmmakers	Metro	€600
	Big Shots	Metro	€700
Other	Blas International Summer School	Metro	€700
	TOTAL:		€20,000.00

The approval of Limerick City and County Council is requested to award grants as recommended.

Mise le meas,

Etain McCooey
Arts Officer | Creative Ireland Co-ordinator
Economic, Tourism, Culture, Property
and Corporate Buildings Directorate



Grants under the Arts Act scheme 2026 - Report and Recommendations

On 24th October 2025, Limerick Arts Office announced the open call for applications under the Grants Under the Arts Act scheme. The closing date for applications was 26th November 2025. A total budget of €20,000 is available in 2026. Grants under the Arts Act funding range from €100 to a maximum payment of €1,000.

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Criteria for selection

Limerick City and County Council offers grant funding to amateur, community or voluntary groups, or organisations, and individual arts practitioners, which in the opinion of the authority will stimulate public interest in the arts, promote the knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts or assist in improving the standards of the arts. In the Arts Act, the arts are defined as painting, sculpture, architecture, music, film, drama, dance, literature, design in industry and the fine arts, and applied arts generally. The awards can be used for the professional development of artists, the arts and increasing access to and participation in the arts.

Assessment

All Grants under the Arts Act applications are considered by an assessment panel, appointed by Limerick Arts Office, Limerick City and County Council. The Grants under the Arts Act 2026 panel met on Monday 15th December 2025 to assess and make decisions on all eligible applications, using the published criteria for assessment.

The Assessment Panel

The members of the panel were Siobhan Mulcahy (Chair), Ann Davoren and Mary Brady.

Siobhan Mulcahy is County Arts Officer at Clare County Council. Siobhan is an experienced Arts Manager with a demonstrated history of working in local government.

Ann Davoren is Director of Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre, Skibbereen, Co. Cork. Ann works with emerging and established Irish and international artists, curators and arts organisations to develop commissions, projects, publications, exhibitions, residencies and symposia.

Mary Brady is an independent Arts and Culture consultant specialising in arts strategy, artist development, and accessibility and participatory practice. Her extensive career spans over forty plus years, working across Ireland, the UK and within Europe. Mary has worked as Arts Officer for Laois County Council and Offaly County Council.

The panel commented that there was a very high standard throughout, making it a highly competitive process. The panel also recommended that Limerick City and Council consider an increase in future funding, to enable the building of capacity around current provision and to support strategic development. Grant aid is awarded according to the Limerick Cultural Strategy: A Framework 2016-2030.



Recommendations

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TOTAL:			€20,000.00

Grant Recommendations

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Down Syndrome Limerick

€800

Arts Participation

Down Syndrome Limerick will host expressive dance classes to allow their members with Down Syndrome to engage with the arts in way that is comfortable, safe and expresses emotions. As members struggle with fine motor and speech skills, expressive dance is a very popular and fun way for them to express themselves.

Polish Arts Festival

€1,000

Arts Participation

The Philosopher's Hat project engages bilingual Polish children and Limerick families in facilitated philosophical enquiry and visual arts, exploring identity and belonging. Participants will co-create a large-scale collage, fostering creativity, reflection, and intercultural understanding. The project will promote public participation, support local artists, and strengthen Limerick as cultural hub through an inclusive and interactive arts experiences.

Graham Patterson

€900

Visual Arts

The artist has been invited by Curator Caimin Walsh, and environmental activist Pat O'Connor, chair of the Castleconnell River Association (CRA), to develop a cinematic work, responding to Pat's work in preserving the salmon population in the River Shannon. This piece of film will both document and help in highlighting the cultural and heritage aspects of this work to a wider audience.

Julie Brazil and Sheila Richardson

€1,000

Visual Arts

This will be a joint art exhibition in the Coach House in The People's Museum in Limerick City in the Spring of 2026. The exhibition will showcase work created from two awarded artist residencies in the Burren, Co. Clare and in Cill Rialaig, Kerry during 2024 to a Limerick audience.

Ciarán Power

€700

Visual Arts

This will comprise of a group exhibition that examines the relevance of painting as a contemporary artistic practice in the context of Limerick. It will feature the work of six Limerick-based artists. This exciting collective body of work represents over three generations of visual art practice in the region.



Limerick Art Society

€1,000

Visual Arts

The Limerick Art Society's Art Appreciation Programme is aimed at broadening understanding, increasing enjoyment and deepening appreciation of the visual arts through a series of audio-visual presentations by practicing painters. The Programme is designed to complement the many other activities of the Limerick Art Society.

Test Screen

€700

Film

Test Screen are now running a four-month screening programme that will support filmmakers. This will expand upon their sold-out alternative cinema events and strengthen Limerick as independent film community. Question and Answer sessions at the end of each screening will inform and facilitate information sharing.

Jacinta Sheerin

€700

Film and Workshops

The short film 'Anomaly' follows fictional characters Helen and Nuala as they await their 20-week scans in a maternity hospital. Their warm connection shifts when Nuala's controlling husband arrives, exposing disturbing coercive dynamics. It is intended that the film will be brought on tour to healthcare settings. Funding application was towards editing and production.

Gavin Hogg

€700

Visual Arts

The artist will stage an exhibition of new work in Spacecraft Project Space, Limerick. This work will focus on printmaking processes, collagraphs and Japanese woodblock printing. The source material for these new works will be sketchbooks that have been developed over the last number of years.

Sahaja Budzilla

€700

Visual Arts

Sahaja, a Limerick based artist, will exhibit over 50 new sculptures and paintings as his first solo exhibition in 6 years in Working Artists' Studios in February 2026. The grant is to facilitate the creation of a portfolio of imagery from the exhibition to be used to promote and showcase his work in Limerick and further afield.

Hazel Gardiner

€500

Visual Arts

Through this new project the artist will expand their painting practice into textile installation, sound, and performance, developing a short-run event/exhibition in Limerick City. This event will create an interactive, immersive experience through evocative soundscapes, fabric-based spatial transformation, and painting.

Tony McCarthy

€650

Circus

In growing John McCarthy's Circus Bar website, this project will see further digitalized circus memorabilia from Tony's late grandfather's circus archive, while helping to fund the yearly cost in keeping the website live. The website has successfully culturally engaged with audiences while showcasing a fresh vision of the development of the circus arts in Ireland and abroad.

Limerick Mental Health Association

€900

Dance

Following on from their initial dance project, Limerick Mental Health Association will now build upon this with a series of dance workshops. This project is designed to use dance as a means of supporting mental health, with each session centred on connection, confidence-building, the joy of movement and music, and the creation of a supportive, creative space for self-expression.

Torch Players

€1,000

Theatre

'Dancing at Lughnasa' will be presented at the Belltable, on the 10th to 14th of March 2026. A second play will also run throughout the year. A 50 year anniversary exhibition showcasing 50 years of Torch Players will run at the Limerick City Museum during the month of October.

The Southill Community Drama Group

€700

Theatre

The Southill Community Drama Group is writing a short film with a theme of isolation and loneliness. The group will meet each week to plot and devise, then draft and edit the final piece. They will shoot a short film in January in Southill to complete the project.



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Now and Then Media

€1,000

Music

Under the auspices of the 2026 H.I.P.S.T.E.R. series, Now and Then Media will bring internationally renowned medieval music singer and scholar Dr Katarina Livljanic for an in-person workshop. The workshop will be based on performing a medieval solo and ensemble music.

The Limerick Opera Festival

€700

Music

The Catherine Hayes Anniversary Concert will take place on International Women's Day 2026. The tribute concert will be in honour of Limerick's 'Irish Nightengale', Catherine Hayes and her trail-blazing opera career. There will be a stirring aria from Bellini, Donizetti and cherished Irish art songs. Set in St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, the evening will bring together accomplished vocalists and a pianist.

Broadford Youth Choir

€700

Music

Broadford Youth Choir will tour Rome for St. Patrick's Day 2026, to represent Limerick by participating in performances and celebrations with the Irish College. The Choir will meet with Italian educational establishments and will visit historical and educational sites. This event will see over 50 young people travelling to take part.

Ballyhoura CCE

€600

Traditional Arts

Ballyhoura CCE are developing a professional website for the Joyce Brothers Music Festival, hosted in Kilfinane each October, which celebrates the Joyce Brothers collections. The site will feature digital archives of performances, original manuscripts, educational resources, and festival information, making this invaluable cultural heritage accessible to global audiences, researchers, and musicians.

Lime Square Poets

€550

Literature

The Lime Square Poets are dedicated to fostering connections among Irish poets through a weekly virtual poetry open mic and reading series. Hosted from Limerick, their efforts are conducted via a dedicated website and social channels, showcasing work, attracting a global audience, and encouraging collaboration and continuous learning.

First Wednesday Series (Dor Seifer)

€1,000

Literature

The First Wednesday Series is a monthly in-person poetry gathering on the first Wednesday of every month at the White House Bar in Limerick. The events begin with a featured poetry reading by an emerging/established poet, followed by an hour-long open mic session.

Michael Potter

€600

Literature

The Robert Burns Night 2026 will take place at Dolan's Venue, Limerick and will mark the world-wide festival night celebrating Scotland's national poet. Haggis and tatties, pipe and violin music, recitals of Burns' poetry and other Scottish traditions will feature on the night. First held in 2005, this will be the event's 21st anniversary.

Limerick Youth Theatre

€900

Young People, Children and Education

The collaboration between Limerick Youth Theatre and Avista (formerly known as the daughters of Charity Service), returns for its fourteenth show at Belltable on 26th and 27th March 2026 for two performances. The Creative Show presents 'A Night at the Theatre' written and directed by Myles Breen.

Emerging Limerick Filmmakers

€600

Young People, Children and Education

This project will see members of Emerging Limerick Filmmakers being mentored by local filmmaker and musician Shane Serrano. This project will see them develop, produce and realise a music video for Limerick-based band Neptune Blood.

Big Shots

€700

Film

Big Shots will host regular Film Nights which support regional Cinema, Documentaries, Music Videos, and Fine Art Motion Film. These events will cater to anyone working with a camera and this project "Shot for Shot" competition will run in conjunction with these events.

Blas International Summer School

€700

Traditional music

The Blas Summer School will bring guest artists to Limerick City Centre to perform in Dolan's for their City Centre Gala Concert. This concert will bring and showcase high-quality traditional music from the University of Limerick's Irish World Academy of Music and Dance into the public domain.