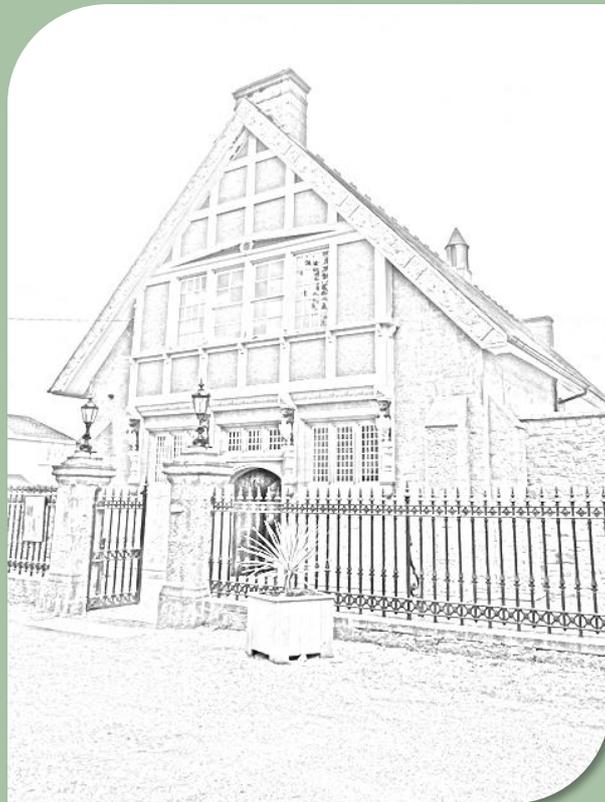


**Research Project on Theatre  
Residencies for Birr Theatre  
and Arts Centre.**

**Compiled by Mary Hanley  
2022**



## ***Purpose of the project.***

*Developing Birr Theatre & Arts Centre as a centre for arts residencies in the county is one of the aims outlined in their Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024. BTAC successfully hosted a dance residency with Legitimate Bodies Dance Company 2007 - 2013 and now wish to develop further residency opportunities for artists. The Purpose of this report is to assess the best options for the venue going forward in terms of making the venue available for Theatre residencies to professional theatre artists or a Theatre Company. This will enhance the artistic programme of the Centre, allow for its greater utilisation and enhance audience development.*

## ***Background to the Venue:***

Opened in July 2000 Birr Theatre and Arts Centre is a 220 seater capacity venue that is strategically placed in the centre of the town in a vibrant arts community. It has a staff of 6 and is led by Director Emma Nee Haslam. Its main funding sources are Offaly Local Authority and the Arts Council. Its programme of work includes professional theatre and music performance, visual arts, film, dance and workshops. It is also a space used for amateur productions including the long established Birr Stage Guild. It draws its audience from Birr and the surrounding regions of Offaly, Laois and North Tipperary. It is involved in the programme for the long running Birr Vintage and Arts Festival and in the past 20 years was core to the establishment of Hullabaloo! Offaly's Children's Arts Festival, *Scripts Ireland's Playwriting Festival*, *OFFline Film Festival & Birr Festival of Music*. In 2022 it will host the *MAKE 2022 programme organised by Theatre Forum*.

### *Defining a Theatre Residency:*

The five case studies show that there are a wide variety of theatre residencies ongoing in venues all across the country currently. The duration, purpose and funding of the residency may differ but they all have one thing in common in that they are all venues and arts organisations supporting an artist in their project for a period of time varying from a year to a few weeks.

### **Case Studies:**

The process of selecting the venues was based on initial discussion with Birr Theatre and Arts Centre Venue Manager and a decision to select five venues to look at based on the following criteria.

1. Similar in size and programming to Birr Theatre and Arts Centre
2. Have the experience of hosting a residency either currently or in the past.
3. The selection of venues to include those that hosted individual Theatre artists and Theatre companies.
3. Some to be regionally based.

The questions and issues explore in each case study were.

1. The number and type of residencies ongoing.
2. How the company or artist was identified and if a public call out was made.
3. Application process and assessment criteria.
4. Funding.
5. Support offered by the Venue in terms of Administration and Technical Support.
6. Schedule of work, agreement on time frames etc.
7. Accommodation costs and production budgets if appropriate.

## Case Study 1. An Tain

**Facilities at An Tain:** 3 spaces. Main performance space, studio space, rehearsal space.

**Two types of residencies:** Theatre Company and individuals.

### Theatre Company : First residency:

Quintessence Theatre was founded in 2015 as the inaugural theatre company in residence at the Táin Arts Centre putting it in the position of being one of the few venues in the country to have a Theatre Company in residence.

It came about by public call. Some conditions applied.

1. Had to be local and based in Louth.
2. Had to produce three shows annually, one of which would be a classic in the main Theatre, another off-site show, and a third piece devised for the Basement Gallery.

**Funding arrangement:** Given use of the venue and rehearsal space. 100% box office takings from shows. Work produced was professional work.

Venue Director Paul Hayes acted as mentor and executive Producer.

Company subsequently got funding through Project Funding from the Arts Council and are currently based in Droichead Arts Centre and are in receipt of €20,000 residency funded by the Arts Council.

### Theatre Company: Second Residency:

**Encore.** This company was already engaged in Community work and already performing their end of year work at the venue. This then developed into a residency and the agreement was that they were given rehearsal space free 3 days a week, a performance week on main stage, tech support, marketing and 100% box office. Professional theatre companies also gave them free workshops and facilitation when visiting and putting on shows at the venue.

## Individual artist residencies and funding:

Currently An Tain has 5 residencies with payments of €6000 each of different artistic nature. An open call is made on them and below the call out for 2023.

*"Whether you are a filmmaker, a writer, musician, visual artist, dancer, actor or performer, our creative residencies offer space and time to develop your practice while being supported by a financial stipend. Applicants must be from or based in Co. Louth. Applications from individual artists and/or collectives working in any artistic discipline are welcome. The resident practitioners will be provided with studio space for three months and a living stipend for the same period. Living accommodation is not included in the residency. Candidates will be shortlisted by interview process based on CV, proposal portfolio, and references. A panel of successful candidates will be created, and residency places will be offered as they become available throughout 2023."*

**Funding: Arts Council through annual funding**

## Case Study 2. Backstage Theatre

**Facilities at Backstage. Main Auditorium and Studio Space.**

**Types of Residencies: Individual Theatre Residencies.**

*The Theatre Residencies at Backstage are through the Activate Residency Programme: The residencies are by a public call out. There is no stipulation that they must be from or residing in Longford. They are required to send a CV, Proposal and simple budget and how it will be spent. The residencies arose from an initial residency by Maisie Lee who helped frame the nature of the residencies from an artist's point of view. Maisie was on an Arts Council funded residency of €20,000. The residencies are about the development of the artists and their work and at the end of the period of time there can be a "sharing" or work although this is not compulsory. The residencies are funding by Arts Council annual funding to the venue and Creative Ireland. The residencies offer the following*

- 1. Access to the studio space for one or two weeks with limited additional access to the main stage.*
- 2. Technical and admin support and artist mentorship.*
- 3. A budget/fee of up to €5000 to support the development of work. A contribution towards accommodation costs if required.*

*The residencies to date have been mainly early development work. Connecting with professional companies who are visiting or professional artists working at the venue has also proved to be an important part of the process. Residencies have included writers and directors collaborating together with actors on the early development of a script, young theatre makers, musicians and performers collaborating on new musical theatre, and choreographers working with dancers on a new dance piece.*

*The process involved is as follows.*

- 1. An open call out.*
- 2. short listing of applications.*
- 3. Panel assessment and awarding of residencies.*

**Funding:** Creative Ireland Longford and Arts Council through annual funding.

*Feedback from some of the artists currently working on their projects.*

*"Interaction and conversations with other artists in residence working in the building was very important as was having a professional space to work in. Mentoring from the venue Director was greatly appreciated as was the admin and tech support. **"Goran Puppeteer"***

*The residencies are of one or two week duration which may seem short but all the artists were happy with the arrangement. One artist said that he would prefer if his residency was broken into two one week periods to allow for initial work then redrafting of script and then a return to the work for another week.*

*"The benefit to the venue of these residencies is that the artists and venue get to work together many for the first time and get a chance to get to know each other and for the venue to become familiar with the artist's work. This can sometimes lead to something longer and more meaningful and is important for the venue to be there at the developmental stage of work. Mentoring of the artists and advice on where to go to progress the work and apply for further funding streams are also important."**Venue Director"***

### *Examples of Residencies undertaken with feedback from the artists.*

#### **Monday 26th to Friday 30th July (One week)**

Theatre maker Andrew Flynn worked on the development of a stage adaptation of Donal Ryan's 2018 Booker long listed novel, 'From A Low and Quiet Sea'. Andrew worked collaboratively with author Donal Ryan and five actors to find a theatrical treatment that best served the characters, stories and landscape of the novel.

*Feedback from Andrew on the residency:*

*"The Activate Residency was a fantastic experience. It provided myself and Donal a really positive, supported and productive development phase. The residency at Backstage will have been pivotal in helping to develop and shape a project I am confident will eventually be realised to full production. This residency programme is vital in the support of artists". - **Andrew Flynn***

#### **Monday 16th to Friday 20th August. (One week)**

Ultan Pringle and HK NI Shiordain spent one week writing and developing the first draft of a new musical which focused on disability. In the first four days of residency the artists focussed on piecing together and writing the first draft of the show, creating and refining songs and exploring and shaping the world of the show. On the final day of residency, they

presented, alongside two singers a song cycle from the piece and sample scenes of the finished first draft

"At a time when making art felt impossible, Mona and her team in the Backstage Theatre created an oasis of calm and creativity in Longford and as a writer I have felt and do still feel incredibly grateful, lucky and emboldened to have had a chance to luxuriate in it. My hope would be that in the future more and more theatre makers and artists have the chance to experience the joy and creative oasis which the Backstage and the Activate programme have to offer." **Ultan Pringle.**

### **Eimear Reilly: Monday 4th to Friday 9th October (One week).**

Eimear worked with director Pat Kiernan, actors Bláithín MacGabhann, Raymond Keane and multi camera operator and lighting designer Michael Hurley on the final development of her new play 'The Spin' and presented a sharing of her debut play to a small audience in the round.

### **Residency run over a number of week-ends plus 4 days**

***Roisin Whelan: Sat 28/Sun 29 Aug, Sat 4/Sun 5 Sept, Sat 16/Sun 17 Oct, Sat 13th to Tues 16th Nov (3 weekends plus 4 days)***

Roisin worked on the development of a collection of three short solo pieces for film. Inspired by the windows designed by Kim En Joong in St Mel's Cathedral, the strong movement connection created by use of colour, light and shape. Roisin worked with three dancers and a Longford musician during this residency.

***See Appendix 1.***

### Case Study 3. *Smock Alley*

**Facilities: Main stage area and very limited office space.**

#### Residency 1: Kate Ferris Director in Residence.

An existing relationship had already been established. A Memo of understanding was drawn up.

As a Creative Producer where the idea stems from herself (Ann Clarke model.) She was free to select the projects to work on.

The residency afforded her a year to hone her skills. She will also mentor 5 other up and coming producers. Also as part of the project she is working with dramaturg Thomas Conway on discovering the skills of selecting scripts. Space is a limitation in Smock Alley and Kate works from home and uses the venue occasionally. She also meets with Venue Director Lucy who mentors her and also she sees the shows at the venue and a creative relationship is built up to bounce ideas off each other. Her residency is very much about her development as a producer.

Feedback from Kate Ferris. Kate Ferris speaking on the success of this residency felt it was a wonderful opportunity to develop her work and further her skills in the area of producing. She found it stimulating to work with both Thomas Conway and Director of the Venue Lucy. She did think that having an existing relationship with the venue or venue management was a bonus in her case. She felt that her residency also enhanced the work at the venue and the artistic discussions between herself and the Venue Director were stimulating and of benefit to them both in terms of having a sounding board to bounce ideas off. She has gone on to work at the Gate Theatre as a Producer.

*Funding: Arts Council under Theatre Artist in Residence €20,000 with €2000 venue....€2000 local authority*

## Residency 2: Company residency: Fight2Flight Company....Peter Gowen

This residency is an established residency at the venue and as part of the residency the company is given 2 slots for shows per annum. The most recent work included Country and Irish by Pat McCabe...collaboration and development of that work. Forum Fridays. This was developed during lockdown and dealt with relevant issues on welfare for actors issues.

This residency is not funded as such but the company get a deal or split on shows and is given Technical support and admin support. There is no desk space for Peter to work in so again most of the work is done from home. Artistic discussion and mutual agreement on work undertaken is part of the venue artist relationship. He also gets mentoring and advice and support for seeking further funding for projects.

Funding: Box Office splits on show and Tech and admin support

## Case Study 4 Cavan County Museum and Cavan Arts Office.

### Residency 1: Company Anu Theatre Company.

The residency was with Anu theatre company who are based in Collins Barracks and was very much site specific and project specific. Anu are based in Collins Barracks in Dublin but did work closely with the Museum to develop and create a piece of work called Zero House which was set in the trenches at the Museum. The concept was conceived by both the museum and the company. The Museum gave technical and admin support to the project and sourced costumes and props. The production included a dance piece and was staged over 2 days with a limited amount of people at each show.

**Funding:** The project was funded by the Theatre Artist Residency programme through the Arts Council and Creative Ireland. It was a once off payment and had a 6 month lead in period before staging.

### Residency 2: Cavan Arts Office.

Individual Playwriting residency currently underway as a pilot initiative in 2022. It is aimed at supporting two theatre artists whose work explores question and ideas that are of compelling interest to our life and times. It is geared towards theatre makers working of fresh ideas to create new theatre. There are two awards of €3,000 each over a 3 month period and include a desk space in the Townhall Cavan

**Funding:** Arts Council budget to Arts Office.

**See Appendix 11**

## Case Study 5. Mermaid Arts Centre

### Residency 1: Individual Residency: Janet Moran.

Janet already developed work at the venue so her artist in residency programme was a continuation of this. Her residency was funding through the Arts Council Theatre Artist in Residency scheme and the Venue was fully involved in the application process. A programme of works was fully set out.

Funding: This residency is funded through the Arts Council Theatre Artist Residency programme.

### Feedback from Janet Moran

*"The residency is, quite honestly an amazing thing. The best thing is that it allows you to plan for the year and also to be able to take the time to do your work and not have to take every job that comes in. Also the breadth of it is a great opportunity. I'm mentoring people, starting on a community project and developing a new work. It also meant that I had a part time salary that was paying for my time for all the admin work around touring **Looking for América** and preparing my new show for a production next year. The flexibility of it is brilliant too and of course, building on the relationship with the arts centre. It's honestly been the best thing for me."*

**Residency 2: Transform Residency Programme:** This is a very unique and new form of residency in Ireland in a regional venue. Four artists are placed on the payroll for a period of one year. They are given the title of Associate Artists and paid €17,000 per annum for a 20 hour week. The time is spent on the development of their own work.

Extract from their call out.

*"Mermaid seeks four outstanding professional artists of varying practices and disciplines. The scheme is open to individual professional artists, including: Actors, Architects, Choreographers, Circus/Street Arts Performers, Composers, Creative Producers, Curators/Programmers (working in an arts context), Dancers, Designers (e.g. set, costume, lighting), Directors, Dramaturgs, Facilitators (participatory arts, youth theatre), Film Artists, Literary Writers (e.g. novelists, poets), Musicians, Playwrights, Picture-book Illustrators, Singers, Visual Artists. The applicant does not have to earn their living exclusively from their work in the arts, but they must self identify and be recognised by their peers as a practicing professional artist."*

*"What does Mermaid Arts Centre expect from the scheme.*

*Our hope is that this never-before-experienced situation of having continuous financial support to be an artist will have a profound effect on our Associates' processes and ultimately their work, and that in part, this experiment could contribute some valuable evidence to the dialogue around Universal Basic Income for artists (and citizens at large!). We propose to share impartial evaluation and a report on the scheme with stakeholders (e.g. Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media, the Arts Council, arts centres nationwide, strategically funded companies and others) so that the sector widely can benefit from the learning. Participating artists will be expected to be involved in evaluating the scheme throughout the year so that Mermaid can gather a practical sense of what has worked. This process of feedback and evaluation will be conducted by an external facilitator, who will conduct regular interviews with participants, individually and as a group throughout the process and its conclusion. Some key reflections and points of evaluation may include:*

*What happened when your daily artistic process was supported?*

*Did your engagement with the arts centre change?.*

*Has the experience changed how you make your work.?*

*What was the impact on the people involved and on communities in Wicklow. ?*

*Did it shakeup the status quo?.*

*Should it be a regular way of working for Mermaid Arts Centre and arts centres in Ireland generally.*

## Additional discussion with Offaly Arts Office, Arts Council, Creative Ireland and Scripts Playwriting Festival

Following on from conversations with Offaly Arts Office, Creative Ireland Offaly and Arts Council of Ireland regarding the setting up of theatre residencies at Birr Theatre and Arts Centre all were in favour of and supportive of such a venture. Some issues that were raised were

1. Whether the company or artists would be Offaly based.
2. Creative Ireland Offaly whilst open to applications did feel that the residencies would need not just to be theatre based programmes but across arts disciplines.
3. A new five year plan is being initiated for Creative Ireland Offaly and so this is an opportune time for ideas and input from Birr Theatre and Arts Centre moving forward with residencies.

The Arts Council of Ireland is very much in favour of and encourages artists based projects and residencies and funding applications in the future should include such projects. In relation to this it would be wise to document and evaluate the process when submitting funding requests.

During my discussion with Scripts Festival Director Angela Ryan Whyte she outlined the background to the Festival and explained *that since its inception Birr Theatre and Arts Centre has been very much part of the partnership and organisation of the Festival. Scripts presents an exciting opportunity for playwrights to have their work nurtured, developed, and performed. Each year there is a public callout for new plays 15 minutes in length, Following a rigorous selection process three are chosen for further development. The chosen playwrights then go to Birr for a week long mentorship with Eugene O'Brien. The plays are then staged as rehearsed readings by a team of professional actors in the festival finale at Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, In 2022 the competition received 130 entries which is a good indicator of its appeal.*

*Since the format for the competition and festival is currently under review it is an ideal opportunity to consider the offering of a residency to enhance the progression of the winning work and allow the winning entry to undergo further development*

*Considerations for Birr Theatre and Arts Centre engaging in a Residency programme.*

1. *Type of Residencies. Director in Residence: Producer in Residence: Company in Residence no fund: Company in Residence funded:*
2. *Identifying a suitable company or Director.*
3. *Space at the venue*
4. *Additional work and draw on resources and time of Venue Manager. Also time and resources required in making applications, acquiring funding, making call out, interview process and setting up of residency with memo of understanding etc.*
5. *Overseeing the project and evaluation.*
6. *Technical and administrative support.*
7. *Funding of the residency.*

## Recommendations.

*Option 1: Theatre Residency with a fund of €6000 offered in association with Scripts for the further development of the winning script.*

### *Considerations:*

*There is an existing relationship between the venue and the Festival. The awarding of a Residency would build on and enhance this relationship.*

*The offer of a Residency to one of the winning entries enhances the value of the Scripts Festival Awards making it more attractive for writers of new work.*

*It removes the need for a callout and evaluations process.*

*It allows for the development of the work which is not available to the winning entry at the moment.*

*A further development on from this then might be an application for funding under Project work from the Arts Council. The Venue Manager at Birr Theatre and Arts Centre could act as mentor at this point and offer valuable assistance in an application process.*

*This residency could commence in early 2023 as a pilot project with one of the winning entries from 2022 perhaps giving the Residency the title of Scripts Awards Residency.*

*When considering the length of the residency as in one or two weeks it is worth considering the views of some of the artists who have worked on residencies in the past mainly that a two week residency broken into two one week periods with a time break in the middle might be more beneficial for the development of a theatre piece as it allows for a period of rewriting and redrafting in between without a time constraint.*

***Funding stream: Arts Council funding to the Venue but requesting supplementary funding for accommodation etc through Scripts Festival application under Festivals, Creative Ireland Offaly and Arts Office Offaly.***

*Option 2: Theatre Residency with a fund of €6000: A two week residency for €6000 or two one week residencies at €3000 each*

*Considerations in establishing the residency.*

*\*The residency could be a call out to Offaly based artists or if it was felt that this might be restrictive then Midland based artists, and that becomes a requirement in the application process **or** it can be a general call out to artists from anywhere in the country. If Creative Ireland funding from Offaly County Council is going to become a part of this funding process or indeed Offaly Arts Office funding is sought then how the artist's work would resonate in the local area might be an important consideration.*

*\*The Residency programme should be given an identifying title that becomes recognisable and associated with the Residency into the future.*

*\* A clear evaluation procedure for selection. Will this be a panel of three as in Backstage or a marking process as with Cavan Arts Office. In any case there needs to be a clear marking or selection process.*

**Process:**

- 1. A public call out.*
- 2. Application procedure and guidelines. Needs to be clear in terms of what is on offer.*
- 3. Evaluation or interview process.*
- 4. Appointment, contract or memo of understanding.*

*Funding stream: Arts Council funding to venue, Creative Ireland Offaly and Arts Office Offaly.*

*Option 3 : Company Residency funded by the Arts Council under its Residency programme.*

*The Annual Residency application process by the Arts Council allows for a Residency programme of one year working with an artist. In the case of Birr Theatre and Arts Centre I would be suggesting working with an artist who might have a company formation already established or have presented work at the venue previously. Artists that come to mind as being suitable to approach are Big Guerilla Productions/ Seamus O'Rourke or Irene Kelleher and John McKenna who tour with their own work. The Residency would consist of the artist presenting some of their work at the venue throughout the year, working on a new piece of theatre and mentoring an emerging director in the local area to present a community based piece of theatre. For the artist it is a means of expanding the audience base for their work and for the venue the presentation of high quality professional work.*

*With the opening of the new venue in Tullamore this might also be an ideal opportunity to work in association with the Arts office in terms of such an artist being able to present work in both venues. Since the application is a process that involves a venue, the Arts Office and the artist it is a very collaborative process.*

*Two Important considerations in this process if an application is successful are*

- 1. Clear outline of the programme of work and time frame.*
- 2. outline the payment structure and also clarity on production budgets.*

*All details of the scheme are available on the Arts Council website see below.*

*<https://www.artscouncil.ie/funds/Theatre-artist-residency-scheme/>*

*Funding stream: Arts Council Theatre Artist Residency Scheme & Offaly Arts Office. Closing date Feb.*

*Option 4: Company in Residence not funded:*

*It is possible for Birr Theatre and Arts Centre to offer use of its facilities for a Theatre Residency to a company without any additional funding. This would be done on the basis of that company having an agreed use of the theatre space for performance and rehearsal at certain periods of time to be agreed on and receiving either a 100% box office on shows or a 90/10% split. The use of the space for rehearsal would be free of charge as would technical and admin and pr support. This is based on the An Tain model and the Smock Alley model as outlined in this report.*

*However for this option to work well it would be a consideration as to whether the company should be locally based or within commuting distance. The company that came to mind was Beluga Theatre Company whom I did approach and attempted to make contact with but received no reply. This company engages in children's theatre and as the Hullabaloo Festival is an Offaly initiative it would certainly sit well in that context. Again within the emergency of two venues in Offaly it would be beneficial to have a company creating work for children within the county.*

*Again there would need to be a memo of understanding drawn up and a clear outline of time frames and agreed programme of work to be created and presented.*

*Funding stream: Box Office split, Creative Ireland Offaly, Offaly Arts Office, Hullabaloo Children's Festival.*

*Appendix 1 Sample Memo of Understanding.*

**Residency Programme**  
**Memorandum of Agreement**

**Venue** Backstage Theatre

**Artist** \_\_\_\_\_

**Activate Aims and Objectives**

- 1 Afford the artist time and resources to collaborate with other Artists and Mentors in the research and development of new work.
- 2 Offer any promotional or technical advice or support necessary to the development of the work.
- 3 Facilitate, where necessary, engagement with audiences and communities of interest to inform the Artist's research.
- 4 Nurture new relationships and a deeper engagement with Artists, with a view to forging long term interactions and partnerships.
- 5 Cultivate a stronger programme of arts activities and participation for the venue and the sector.

**Residency Proposal**

*Short summary of residency plan*

**Residency Schedule**

*Outline of dates/ space proposed*

**Backstage Theatre Supports / Finances**

Backstage will offer a financial investment of €----- to the Artist to support the fees payable to artists and any production costs associated with development of the work

Backstage will give the Artist and collaborators access to the studio at Backstage for ---- days from ---- to ----. Backstage will provide the Artist with accommodation for --- people for --- nights.

Backstage can also offer the following supports, where necessary:

Administrative support (*such as the management of payments to guest artists etc*).

Technical and production support by way of access to theatre production team and theatre equipment. (*Please note any additional equipment required, over and above that available at the theatre, must be provided at the Artist's own expense*)

Guidance on marketing and publicity and audience development

Guidance / mentoring / artistic feedback of artist's individual artistic research and development

Introductions / networking and advocacy in Longford and the arts sector.

**Resident Artist, is responsible for the following:**

- The delivery of any research and development outlined in the original residency proposal.
- The engagement and remuneration of any guest artists and/or collaborators as outlined in the residency proposal. Resident Artists should employ best practice in the pay and treatment of any artists engaged and comply with rates and standards recommended by resource organisations.
- The procurement of all rights necessary to produce and perform this work. No performances of the work should infringe any of the provisions of the copyright or other law and the work should not be defamatory to any person, firm, or company. The Artist will fully indemnify the theatre against any cost, claim or demand arising out of the breach of warranty
- Acknowledgement of the support of Backstage Theatre during the development phase in any subsequent PR relating to the work at production and presentation stage.
- Effective and timely communication with the Artistic Director and all other venue team members to ensure resources can be made available.
- Full compliance with all COVID Protocols and all health & safety policy & procedures of the theatre.

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Artistic Director  
Backstage Theatre

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Resident Artist

## **Cavan County Council Playwriting Opportunity 2022**

### **Application Form**

#### **About/Vision**

Cavan County Council is delighted to announce the Playwriting Opportunity as a pilot initiative in 2022. The Playwriting Opportunity is aimed at supporting two theatre artists whose work explores questions and ideas that are of compelling interest to our life and times. We are interested in hearing from ambitious, innovative theatre makers who are researching and working on fresh ideas to create new theatre. This is a research and writing award allowing space and time to create.

There will be two awards of €3,000 in 2022. The award will include access to desk space in a communal area. The successful applicants will be motivated by one of the following:

- Themes on contemporary culture(s).
- County Cavan – its borders, character, cultural identity, and memory.

The opportunity will provide the selected playwrights with:

- a bursary award of €3,000
- a desk at Townhall, Cavan for a three-month period in 2022/23.

#### **Selection Criteria:**

**To establish your eligibility for this opportunity, we will be assessing your application on the following criteria. Please ensure that you have addressed each of these criteria in this application.**

#### Criteria for eligibility

The successful applicant must be undertaking research and development in an area of contemporary theatre practice.

The successful candidate must be County Cavan based and demonstrate the value and the need of working in an arts centre dedicated to making and showing artwork.

- The successful candidate is asked to provide a lecture/talk to other professional and amateur theatre practitioners on their creative process and to acknowledge this opportunity in future programmes. The time and date for this will be agreed with the Manager.

#### **Eligible candidates will be scored as follows:**

- Track record in writing or making theatre – 20 marks
- Quality of Work - original, distinctive, demonstrating ambition, innovation, and relevance to one or more of the thematic areas – 20 marks
- Recent work and activity – 20 marks
- Quality of proposal – 20 marks
- Expressed need and value of working in an arts centre – 20 marks

## Cavan County Council Playwriting Opportunity

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Nationality</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Website</b>	

**Q1:** Please give us a **general description** of your theatre practice (max. 200 words).

Please type your answer below. The text box will expand.

**Q2:** Please tell us what you are currently working towards. This could include researching, interviewing, writing and editing new work for theatre. It might involve working with other theatre or arts professionals. Please include a treatment and or a scene from a previous theatre work.  
(max. 400 words).

Please type your answer below. The text box will expand.

**Q3:** Please outline how access to a shared workspace for 3 months and a financial award will support your current theatre practice.(max. 200 words).

Please type your answer below. The text box will expand.

**Q4:** Please describe your theatre practice over the past 5 years. (max. 400 words)

Please type your answer below. The text box will expand.

**Q5:** Please state the project you would undertake if successful in this application.  
(max. 200 words)

Please type your answer below. The text box will expand.

**Enclosures Checklist:**

Please read fully and carefully the following specifications for supporting documentation.

**Material and Information: Required fields/material marked \*.**

- Completed application form\*
- Up-to-date CV. \*
- Writing: an example of your writing. No more than one scene. A brief synopsis of a play that you have written. Where the scene is in the play?\*
- Reviews and other media: 2-3 scans of recent and relevant reviews (optional).
- Programme if relevant. Pages that feature your work only. (optional)
- Additional Information (optional and please specify).
- A letter of support from a relevant person or organization.

If you wish to send hard copy programme or text with your application, they can be posted to the address below. To have your documentation returned by post, include a stamped addressed envelope with adequate postage.

We cannot take responsibility for any materials lost or damaged so please do not send publications of which you do not have extra copies.

**Please note the following before returning your application form and supporting material. Deadline: 11 July 2022 Applications cannot be accepted after this date.**

Please submit your application to ‘**Scholarship Opportunity 2022**’, **Cavan County Council Arts Office, Farnham Centre, Farnham St, Cavan, H12C9K1** or by email to [dmcdermott@cavancoco.ie](mailto:dmcdermott@cavancoco.ie).

If you have queries about your application email [dmcdermott@cavancoco.ie](mailto:dmcdermott@cavancoco.ie) on or before Friday 5 July 2022.

Please Note: All information submitted to Cavan County Council will be held in the strictest confidence in line with GDPR guidelines and data will only be used in the context of evaluating 2022 applications. By submitting your application, you are agreeing to Townhall Cavan and Cavan County Council Arts Office contacting you directly in relation to this opportunity.

Signed:  Date:

## Summary:

*I have outlined a number of options that Birr Theatre and Arts Centre may wish to engage in going forward and I have no doubt that whatever option or options they decide on a residency will enhance the professional programme of work at the theatre.*

*While there may be restraints in the amount of space and resources at the venue It is clear that there is a strong creative force evident in the work being carried on there. The Venue Director has a clear understanding of the development process in theatre and a willingness to engage in same. Most importantly she has the skills and capabilities to mentor artists in the creation of new work as evidenced by her involvement in Scripts and has the experience of supporting and engaging with established companies and artists.*

*A Theatre Residency will build on the previous experience of the Dance Residency and encompass a different art form.*

*Hosting a residency is a learning process but can be a stepping stone and building block to working in a new way and new relationships can be forged. These new relationships can sometimes grow into more long term partnerships.*

*From the artists perspective it affords them the time, space and resources to develop their own work and to collaborate with other Artists and mentors as well as engaging with new audiences and communities.*

## *Acknowledgements.*

*Emma Nee Haslam, Director Birr Theatre and Arts Centre, Amanda Pedlow Heritage Officer Offaly County Council, Sally O'Leary Offaly County Council. Angela Ryan Whyte Artistic Director Scripts Festival Birr, Paul Hayes, An Tain, Mona Considine Backstage Theatre Lucy Ryan, Smock Alley Theatre, Val Balance, Arts Council, Catriona O'Reilly Arts Officer Cavan County Council, Savinia Donohoe Cavan County Museum, Julie Kelleher Mermaid Theatre, Janet Moran, Kate Ferris and the artists I met working on residencies during my visit to Backstage Theatre.*

