Visual Artists Workspace Scheme 2025

Guidelines for Applicants

Deadline: 5.30pm (Ireland time), Thursday 12 September 2024

Note for people with disabilities or access requirements

The Arts Council makes every effort to provide reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities or access requirements who wish to submit an application or who have difficulties in accessing Online Services. If you have a requirement in this area, please contact the Arts Council's Access Officer, by phone (01 618 0200/01 618 0243) or by email (**access@artscouncil.ie**) as early as possible before the deadline.

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If you have questions about using the Online Services website, visit the FAQ section on our website: www.artscouncil.ie/FAQs/online-services/

If you have a technical question about the online application process and your question is not answered in the FAQ section, you can email onlineservices@artscouncil.ie or call the Arts Council on **01 618 0200/01 618 0243**.

If you have a query about your application that is not technical in nature, you should email or phone the arts team to which you are applying for funding. http://www.artscouncil.ie/Contact-us/Staff-and-adviser-lists/

To watch our YouTube guide on making an application, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a3xeZdZj3o

Getting help with your application

Key points to remember

- In order to make an application, you **must** be registered for an Arts Council Online Services (OLS) account. If you do not have one, you can sign up for one [here](). Please note that it can take up to **five working days** for a new user to be registered on OLS, so give yourself plenty of time to do this ahead of the deadline.

- We strongly advise that you read this document carefully before beginning the process of making your application.

- We also strongly advise that you start the process early, and give yourself **plenty of time** to make your application.

- We recommend that you aim to upload your application **at least forty-eight hours** before the advertised deadline. That way, if you encounter a technical problem, you will have time to contact us so that we can assist you in resolving it.

- Please note that, on account of the large volume of applicants using the online system on the last day of the deadline, we cannot guarantee that we can resolve any technical issues you may have if you contact us **after 2.00pm on the day of the deadline**.

- Please read the following checklist carefully:

☐ I have read and understand these guidelines.

☐ In the event that I have had an issue, I have contacted the Arts Council for assistance well in advance of the deadline.

☐ I have filled in all of the sections of the application form relevant to my application.

☐ I have prepared all required supporting material as set out in these guidelines, and have this ready to upload.

☐ I have asked someone else to check over my application to make sure there are no errors and that nothing is missing.

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1. About the Visual Artists Workspace Scheme

1.1 Objectives of the scheme

Objectives

The objective of the Visual Artists Workspace Scheme is to support artists' workspaces throughout the country to provide the best possible working environment for visual artists and, where feasible, to enable a level of subsidy for the artists working in these spaces.

Definition of a visual-artists' workspace that can apply for support through the scheme	**Visual-artists' workspace:** A workspace that accommodates at least four professional visual artists working on site.

The scheme is in line with the Arts Council's ten-year strategy (2016–25), *Making Great Art Work: Leading the Development of the Arts in Ireland* (see here: http://www.artscouncil.ie/arts-council-strategy/) which commits to ensuring 'a supportive working environment that addresses key points in the creative cycle by which art is made'.

1.2 Who can apply?

Applications are welcome from the following:

- Workspaces in the Republic of Ireland
- Workspaces dedicated to the support of professional visual artists
- Workspaces that accommodate **at least four** professional visual artists working on site
- Workspaces proposing to collaborate to share resources for the benefit of the visual artists working in their spaces
- Organisations/groups/collectives that have an established workspace.

Note: workspaces that are successful in their application to this scheme cannot have received or have applied to other Arts Council Awards or grant programmes for the same purpose.

As part of its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the Arts Council is committed to offering **equality of access, opportunity and outcomes** to all potential applicants regardless of their

- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Civil or family status
- Religion
- Age
- Disability

> - Race
> - Membership of the Traveller community
> - Socio-economic background.
>
> In this funding scheme the Arts Council particularly welcomes applications that are representative of the diversity of Irish society, including but not limited to any of the characteristics outlined above, and/or initiatives that deliver equitable opportunities or outcomes for those involved.

1.3 Who is the applicant?

The applicant is the workspace that will receive any grant offered and who will be required to accept the terms and conditions of that grant.

Any grant offered will only be paid into a bank account held in the name of the applicant.

All documentation provided must be in the name of the applicant ensemble or group – e.g. if you apply to the Arts Council for funding under the name EXAMPLE STUDIO, all documentation, including bank and tax details, must be in that name. Variations such as EXAMPLE ARTS COLLECTIVE are not acceptable.

1.4 Who cannot apply?

Those who are not eligible to apply include the following:
- Individual artists
- Organisations currently in receipt of funding under the following Arts Council programmes: Strategic Funding, Arts Centre Funding, Partnership Funding
- Workspaces that receive funding through this scheme cannot receive funding for the same purposes through other Arts Council awards or grant schemes for 2025
- Workspaces with fewer than four working visual artists
- Organisations/groups/collectives that do not yet have an established workspace.

1.5 What may you apply for?

The maximum amount awarded to each successful application is:

€50,000

The scheme will award grants of up to €50,000 towards workspace costs – i.e. the running costs of the workspace, such as light, heat, rent, administration and/or appropriate management and artist-development costs.

A proportion of support up to a maximum of 20% of the total request may be directed towards essential repair and maintenance.

Total expenditure should include the core costs of maintaining and running the workspace.

Total income should include all income relating to the workspace.

Note: neither your income nor expenditure should include costs relating to public-facing activities – e.g. production, exhibitions, etc.

It is also important to reflect all in-kind support in both income and expenditure, so reflecting the full and true value of your proposal.

Note on artists' pay	The Arts Council is committed to improving the pay and conditions of artists. We have published a <u>policy</u> on the fair and equitable remuneration and contracting of artists. It is important that you read this policy in advance of making your application
Note on in-kind support	If you expect to receive in-kind support, you need to put a financial value on it so that the contribution it makes to the real value of your proposal is clear. You should think of in-kind support both as expenditure and as income: whatever amount you declare on the expenditure side, you should also declare on the income side. Time contributed by administrators or committee/board/artist members may not be reckoned as an in-kind cost.

Overall responsibility for the management of funds for the workspace will be taken on by the applicant.

> **Access costs for artists or participants[1] with disabilities**
>
> The Arts Council is committed to making our funding programmes and the work we fund accessible to everyone.
>
> The Arts Council takes the description of disability from Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which states:
>
> > 'Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.'
>
> You can include access costs within your application and there are two types that you can apply for.
>
> **1. Participant or personal access costs**
>
> These costs should remove barriers for artists or participants with disabilities who are delivering your proposal. For example:
>
> - You
> - The main artists, individuals, groups, or organisations involved in your proposal
> - Partners or collaborators
> - Production staff
> - Core staff or key administrative personnel
>
> Examples of support are, but not limited, to the following:
>
> - An ISL interpreter
> - Services of an Access support worker.
>
> **Note:** you can apply for these costs in addition to maximum amount available for the

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[1] The Arts Council defines participants as those who express themselves creatively by taking part in artistic activities.

award and include them in the total amount requested.

2. Costs for making your work accessible to others – audience access costs

We want to ensure that more people enjoy high-quality arts experiences and that everyone can access and enjoy the work we fund.

These are costs for making your work accessible to persons with disabilities and should be considered a normal part of your work.

Example of access costs to make your work accessible to your audience may be:

- Having an ISL interpreter for your event or performance
- Using an audio description service
- Making your website compatible with screen readers
- Producing exhibition materials in other formats such as in Braille or audio

What if the funding provided is less than I requested?

If you are offered funding that is less than you requested, we will discuss with you how you plan to deliver your proposed activity when reviewing the revised budget.

We do not expect you to dilute or remove any access support for making your work accessible to others that you have included in your application.

Note: include these costs in the total amount requested within the maximum amount available for the award.

How to apply for access costs

We need to understand why you are applying for access costs and how they meet the needs of your participants or your audience.

If you include access costs in your proposal, you must

- Show the costs in two separate lines where indicated within the application form.

    a) Line for personal or participant access costs only.
    b) A line for audience access costs only

Note: whether you use the Arts Council budget templates or your own budget document, the two types of access costs must be shown separately within your budget.

To see how we assess your application, see section 3 of the guidelines below.

1.6 What you may not apply for?

Activities and costs that you may **not** apply for include the following:

- Major capital costs cannot be applied for under this funding scheme (e.g. building work, purchase of major equipment, etc.)
- Funding for public activities (e.g. exhibitions, productions, etc.) cannot be applied for under this funding scheme
- Funding for core costs relating to non-workspace facilities (e.g. electricity or heating costs for a gallery) cannot be applied for under this funding scheme
- Activities that have already taken place or that will have commenced before a decision is made cannot be applied for under this funding scheme
- Activities that have already been assessed by the Arts Council, unless you demonstrate that you have significantly developed the proposal since previously applying **or** if the Council has specifically advised you to redirect your application to this award. Please bear in mind that such advice is not an indication of a successful outcome.
- Amounts greater than €50,000 cannot be applied for under this funding scheme.

1.7   What supporting material <u>must</u> you submit with your application?

Supporting material means material that is **separate from** and **additional to** your application form. This helps the person assessing your application to get a clearer understanding of your proposal. Please read the following list of what supporting material is required very carefully, as failure to comply with this is the most common reason for applications being deemed ineligible.

In order to be considered eligible for assessment for funding under the Visual Artists Workspace Scheme, you **<u>must</u>** submit the following support material **online**:

Required supporting material:

- A copy or evidence of your **tenancy agreement/lease for the workspace** for **the full year of 2025** (e.g. formal tenancy agreement, letter or email of agreement from landlord)
- A maximum of **five images that clearly show the workspace, studio**s **and any facilities**
- Detailed up-to-date **CV** (max. three pages) of the people who oversee or manage the workspace
- **A list of the facilities** and any **artist-development supports** that you provide to artists using the workspace.

Note: if you do not submit the required supporting material, your application will be deemed ineligible.

Additional material required in certain circumstances:

- **Access costs:** if you are seeking additional access costs to support work by individuals with access requirements or to support access to your work by audiences with disability requirements, please provide a document outlining these costs, and outlining how they have been arrived at. Please also ensure that you include this additional amount as part of your budget.
- **Animal Welfare Protection Policies and Procedures**: if your proposal involves working with animals, you must provide a copy of your Animal Welfare Protection Policies and Procedures.
- For **applications involving children and young people under the age of eighteen**: the Arts Council requires all individuals and organisations providing services (e.g. cultural, recreational, educational) to children and young people under the age of eighteen to have suitable child-protection policies and procedures in place. When making an

application, you **must** indicate in section 1 of the application form whether or not your proposal is relevant to this age group.

- If you answer 'Yes' to this question in the application form and your application is successful, as a condition of funding you will be required to confirm and demonstrate that you have suitable child-protection policies and procedures in place.

- If successful, you will be required to complete the Arts Council's Child Protection and Welfare Quality Assurance Self-audit at https://childprotection.artscouncil.ie/. Please visit www.tusla.ie for more information on Children First.

- You will also be required to update your details in the Profile Information tab in your Online Services account (do this by going to the 'Update your account' section).

- **For applications involving vulnerable adults**: when making an application, you must indicate in section 1 of the application form whether or not your proposal involves work with or for vulnerable persons. If you answer 'Yes' to this question, you are indicating that you will work with, or present work to, this cohort as part of your proposal, and that you acknowledge that you have familiarised yourself with and adhere to the *National Policy & Procedures on Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse** (see here).

* Please note that you may be asked to provide more evidence of adherence to these policies should your application be successful.

1.8   Eligibility

Your application will be deemed **ineligible**, and will not go any further in the process, if any of the following is true:

1. You miss the application deadline.

2. You fail to complete all of the sections in the application form relevant to your proposal.

3. You cannot apply as set out in sections 1.2 to 1.4 above.

4. You apply for an amount of funding greater than the maximum amount allowed for under the award to which you are applying, as set out in section 1.5 above (except where you are applying for an additional amount for participant or personal access costs).

5. You apply for an activity or purpose that you cannot apply for, as set out in section 1.6 above.

6. You fail to provide all mandatory supporting materials, as set out in section 1.7 above.

7. Your application is better suited to another funding programme offered by the Arts Council or by another funding agency (in this case we will redirect you to the more appropriate funding opportunity).

2. How to make your application

2.1 Register with the Arts Council's Online Services

All applications must be made through the Arts Council's Online Services; applications made in any other way (by post, fax or email) will not be accepted.

You must have an Online Services account to make an application. If you do not already have an Online Services account, sign up by filling out the registration form here: https://onlineservices.artscouncil.ie/register.aspx.

Within five working days you will be emailed a unique ARN (Artist Reference Number) and password that you can use to sign in to Online Services.

Requirements for using Online Services

Note: you will need to use a computer or laptop to submit your application. Our Online Services website does not work on phones or tablets.

Your computer and Internet browser will need to meet the following requirements to use Online Services successfully:

PC	Windows 7 operating system or a newer version of Windows *with* browser versions: Microsoft Edge (v.94) or Firefox (v.27) or Chrome (v.33), or a newer version of any of these browsers.
Mac	Mac OS X v10.5 Leopard or a newer version of Mac operating system *with* browser versions: Safari (v.3.1) or Firefox (v.27) or Chrome (v.32) or Microsoft Edge (v.94), or a newer version of any of these browsers. **Note:** if Safari 11 prevents the upload of documents, use a newer version of Safari or use a different browser such as Firefox, Chrome or Microsoft Edge.

Note: you will also need to have Microsoft Word (Desktop) or OpenOffice Writer installed to complete the application form itself. OpenOffice Writer is free software that can be downloaded here: https://www.openoffice.org.

OpenOffice Users

Please refer to our video *Using OpenOffice to download, complete and upload the application form* at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iT9XxgmgoEo

You **must** use OpenOffice Writer version 4.0.1 or earlier. More recent versions of OpenOffice Writer than 4.0.1 have changed how our application forms appear when they are submitted through Online Services.

Important notes for Apple Mac users

• Note the section in the YouTube video (at 1 min. 20 secs; link provided above) that deals with the issue of downloading version 4.0.1 on Macs with the operating system Mac OS Mojave or an earlier version installed.

- You cannot download OpenOffice 4.0.1 onto a Mac with the operating system Mac OS Catalina. If your Mac has this operating system or a newer version installed, you will have to download and use OpenOffice version 4.1.9 or newer.

If you cannot meet, or do not understand, any of these requirements, please contact us for advice as far as possible in advance of the deadline.

Give yourself enough time to complete the application

You should become familiar with the Online Services website well in advance of the deadline and in advance of preparing an application. It is likely that there will be heavy traffic on the site on the final afternoon of the closing date. You should prepare your application and submit it well in advance of the deadline.

Upload times can be much longer than download times. It may take longer than you think to upload your supporting materials.

Getting technical support

If you need technical support while making an online application, you can contact the Arts Council by emailing onlineservices@artscouncil.ie or by phoning 01 6180200/01 6180243. We recommend you report any technical issues with us well in advance of the deadline. Please provide a contact phone number and make sure that you are available to receive a return call from us.

We deal with queries on a first-come first-served basis.

Please note that there is often a high volume of calls as the deadline approaches and that technical-support calls received after 2.00pm on the closing date may not be resolved before the deadline.

2.2   Fill in the application form

If you have not already done so, download the application form for the award you wish to apply for. The application form is a Microsoft Word (Desktop)/OpenOffice Writer document that you fill in offline (on your own computer). The application form includes guidance on how to fill in each of its sections.

Note: the application form is formatted in such a way that the Arts Council can extract information from the form for assessment purposes. It is **very important** that you type inside the grey boxes in the form, and that you do not delete them and/or type outside them. If you do this, the form will not upload properly.

2.3   Prepare any supporting material required for the application

You are required to include supporting material with your application. For example, this might include a CV or samples of your current work – e.g. text, video, images or sound recordings (see section **1.7 What supporting material must you submit with your application?**).

You must submit all such supporting material online – if necessary, you should scan or save material in electronic format.

Acceptable file formats

The following table lists file formats for supporting material.

File type	File extension
text files	.rtf/.doc/.docx/.txt
image files	.jpg/.gif/.tiff/.png
sound files	.wav/.mp3/.m4a
video files	.avi/.mov/.mp4
spreadsheets	.xls/.xlsx
Adobe Acrobat Reader files	.pdf

For convenience, gather together all the files you need in an accessible location on your computer.

Submitting URL links

Instead of uploading material directly, you may provide links to material hosted on streaming platforms that do not limit access through financial subscription. To do this, copy the URL (the full address of where your material is hosted) into a Microsoft Word/OpenOffice Writer or PDF document and upload it as a weblink-supporting document.

While not an exclusive list, examples of acceptable sharing platforms would be YouTube, Vimeo, SoundCloud, Bandcamp.

Please note that we will not accept links to the following sources:

- File-sharing sites – e.g. Google Drive, OneDrive
- Social-media platforms – e.g. Meta, Instagram
- Your personal website

Note: assessors will only view materials in the URL links that you provide. It is important that you check that any links in the document work **and** that they bring the viewer to the correct source to be able to access and view your supporting material.

Please do not flag your material as 'private' as it will not be accessible for the assessment. Change the settings on your video to 'unlisted' if you do not wish the application supporting material on your YouTube channel to be publicly viewable.

Naming files appropriately

Give all files that you intend to upload filenames that make it clear what they contain or represent – i.e. it should be clear from the filename whether the document is a CV, a sample text or a review of previous work.

Please submit supporting documents in separate, appropriately named files.

Good filenames for an applicant called Jack Russell	russelljack Architecture Project application.doc
	russelljack performance clip.mp4
	russelljack Architecture Project budget template round 2.xls
	russelljack youtube link.doc

The total combined limit for all supporting material uploaded with a single application is **40MB**.

2.4 Make your application online

To make your application online, you go through four main stages. Click **Save draft** at the end of each stage. You can come back to your application and revise it at any time before you finally submit it.

2.4.1 Choose a funding programme and download application form

To start a new application, click the **Make an application** button on your home page, and follow the prompts to choose the funding programme you wish to apply for and to give your application a unique reference by which to identify it. At this stage you can also download the application form (if you have not already done so).

2.4.2 Request funding amount

At this stage specify the expenditure and income related to your proposal, and the amount of funding you are requesting. The **Amount requested** should equal the **Total expenditure** minus the **Total income**. The final figures you enter here should be the same as those you enter in section 3 of the application form.

2.4.3 Upload application form and supporting material

Follow the prompts to upload your completed application form, CVs, images and any other required supporting material (see section **1.7 What supporting material must you submit with your application?**). You do not have to upload everything at the same time. You can save your application as a draft and come back to it later.

Note: if you have completed your application form as a **.docx** file and you are confident that your application form is filled in correctly (including typing inside the grey fields) but Online Services displays a message saying 'Cannot upload form', please try saving it as a **.doc** file and uploading it again.

2.4.4 Submit application

When you are satisfied that you have uploaded everything you need to support your application and have ticked the declaration, click **Submit**.

Once submitted, your application cannot be amended. Do not submit your application until you are completely satisfied.

You should receive two emails. The first will be issued immediately your application is received by the Arts Council. The second may arrive a few minutes later and will contain your application number, which will be used in all correspondence relating to this application. **Note:** it is important that you contact onlineservices@artscouncil.ie if you **do not** receive the second confirmation email containing the application number.

3. Processing and assessment of applications

3.1 Overview

The Arts Council considers all applications, makes decisions and communicates these to applicants in accordance with set procedures. The aim is to ensure that the system for making awards is fair and transparent.

3.2 The assessment process

All applications received are processed by the Arts Council as follows:

1 After you submit your application, you should receive two emails:

- The first will be sent immediately and will acknowledge your application.

- The second should arrive a few minutes later. It will contain your application number, which we will use in all correspondence about your application.

Note: these emails only mean that our online system recognises that you have submitted an application. They do not mean that your application is eligible to be assessed.

If you do not receive the email with your application number, contact onlineservices@artscouncil.ie

2 Your application is checked for eligibility. Please see section **1.8 Eligibility** above.

3 Adviser(s) and/or staff make an assessment of the application, which is then scored by the executive.

4 The executive reviews all applications and recommendations, and makes decisions based on the scores.

5 Decisions are communicated in writing to applicants.

6 Decisions are noted by Council.

Time frame

The Arts Council endeavours to assess applications as quickly as possible, but the volume of applications and the rigorous assessment process means that it will take approximately twelve weeks from closing date to decision.

3.3 Criteria for the assessment of applications

- **Support of member artists**

    Evidence that your workspace provides access and services that helps artists to support their practice. Evidence will assist you in providing high-quality support – e.g. your facilities, conditions and/or developmental supports. Please refer to any policies for diversity and inclusion that you have in place.

- **Unique need for your facility and services in your local area**

    Evidence of the unique need for this specific provision in your local area, referencing, where appropriate, other similar organisations in your area.

- **Governance and management**

    Evidence of good governance and management of the workspace, appropriate to scale (e.g. profile of the committee or board and the existence of a management structure).

- **Budget feasibility**

  Clear evidence of the ability of the workspace to deliver the proposed activities within the budgetary plans provided in the application.

3.4 Scoring process

The Arts Council will score applications for the Visual Artists Workspace Scheme 2025. This scoring system is intended to provide clarity to applicants in terms of how their application has been evaluated against the assessment criteria. The scores offer an indication as to the extent to which applications are deemed to have met each criterion.

Assessors will consider applications using their professional judgement based on the information provided within the application, their knowledge of your workspace, their knowledge of the wider arts landscape, and the competitive context in which all applications are evaluated.

Assessors may award a score against the criteria to the nearest 0.5.

The scores to be used are as follows:[2]

Numeric score	Word value	Explanation
6	Exceptional	The application addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion comprehensively and in an exemplary manner. There are no shortcomings whatsoever. This score is reserved for the very best elements of applications and will be used very sparingly.
5.5		At the top end of 'Excellent'.
5	Excellent	The application addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion convincingly and successfully. It provides all the information and evidence needed, and there are no concerns or areas of weakness.
4.5		At the top end of 'Very good'.
4	Very good	The application addresses the criterion very well. It gives clear information on the evidence needed. Any concerns or areas of weakness are minor.
3.5		At the top end of 'Good'.
3	Good	The application addresses the criterion well, although some improvements could be made. It gives information on nearly all of the evidence needed, although there are some gaps.

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[2] These explanations have been adapted from the EU's Creative Europe Cultural Projects Assessment Guide.

2.5		Between 'Sufficient' and 'Good'.
2	Sufficient	The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are weaknesses. It gives relevant information, but there are several areas where detail is lacking or the information is unclear.
1.5		At the bottom end of 'Sufficient'.
1	Poor	The application provides very little evidence or relevant information in the context of the criterion, and is not compelling or persuasive in a competitive-funding context.
0	Inadequate	The application fails to address the criterion or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.

How do scores relate to funding offers?

Scores will play a significant part in the making of funding offers, with the scores determining which applications are recommended for funding. Funding amounts will reflect the overall budgetary context in which the Arts Council is operating, along with the competitive nature of the scheme.

As part of our ongoing relationship-management process, scores will also be used to inform discussions with workspaces on areas where they are doing well and where there might be scope for improvement. We do not disclose the identities of other applicants or share information with applicants about the scores achieved by other applicants.

3.5 Outcome of applications

All applicants are informed in writing about the outcome of their application.

If your application is successful, you will be sent a letter of offer detailing the amount of funding you have been awarded and the terms and conditions of the award. You will also be told how to go about drawing down your award.

The Arts Council receives a large volume of applications, and demand for funding always exceeds the available resources. Eligibility and compliance with application procedures alone do not guarantee receipt of an award.

Unsuccessful applicants are not eligible to apply for another Arts Council award to undertake the same activity. If the Arts Council feels that the proposed activity would have been more suited to a different award programme, an exception may be made. In such circumstance you will be informed in writing.

You may request your assessment from Arts Council staff.

Appeals

Applicants may appeal against a funding decision on the basis of an alleged infringement or unfair application of, or deviation from, the Arts Council's published procedures. If you feel that the Arts Council's procedures have not been followed, please see the appeals process at http://www.artscouncil.ie/en/fundInfo/funding_appeals.aspx or contact the Arts Council for a copy of the appeals-process information sheet.