

Progress Report



An Introduction to the Report

On behalf of the Creative Ireland Programme, I am delighted to present a review of our work during 2020. Without a doubt it was an extremely challenging year for all. While it was filled with loss for so many, and it is important that we remember in particular the tragic loss of so many of our fellow citizens, I believe there is also a wider recognition of the value of our arts, culture and creativity to individual, community and societal health and wellbeing. The additional funding allocated by Minister Martin allowed us with our partners, through the Creative Ireland Programme, provide greater support to engage our citizens in creative initiatives that enhanced their lives and contributed to their wellbeing.

Tania Banotti

Director the Creative Ireland Programme

The report can be navigated by scrolling or simply using the Up and Down arrows on your keyboard



2020 A Creative Response

Why do we do this?

Who do we work with?

A Year in Statistics

Economic Development Samhlú 2020

International Initiatives

Climate and Sustainability

Creative Youth

Cruinniú na nÓg 2020

Creative Communities

Reimagine

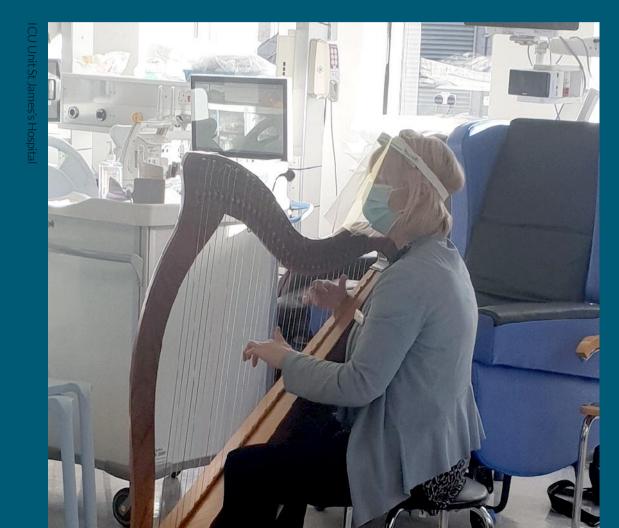
Health and Wellbeing

Creativity in Older Age

Covid Care Concerts

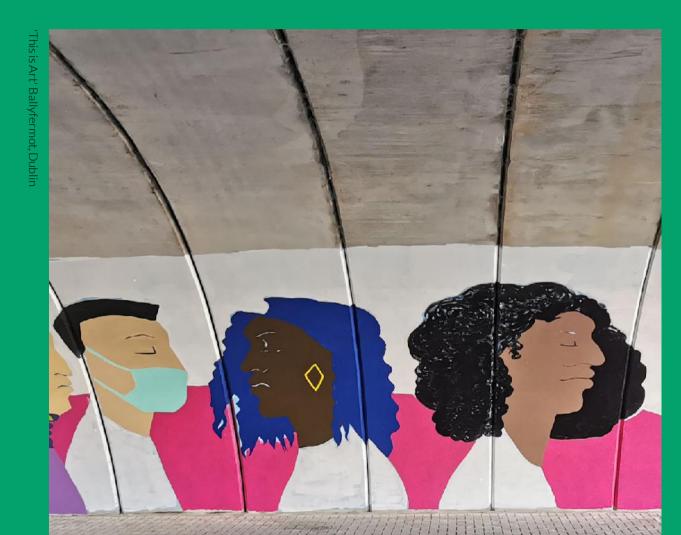
2020 A Creative Response

As a nation we have long recognised the powerful contribution that creativity can make to our health and wellbeing. The Creative Ireland Programme's work in 2020 should be seen through the prism of the emergency brought about by COVID 19. In a time of national crisis, the Creative Ireland Programme worked at speed and with agility to activate creative programmes that helped participants to combat isolation, create social cohesion and enhance a sense of wellbeing. Working with partners in government and local authorities, we supported the work of communities, cultural practitioners and other organisations to create initiatives that targeted citizens who were particularly impacted by the pandemic.



Why do we do this?

Creative Ireland is an all-of-government culture and wellbeing programme committed to the vision that every person in Ireland should have the opportunity to realise their full creative potential. During this very difficult year we believed in the creative agency of individuals, local authorities and government departments to work together to implement creative programmes that made an important difference to the lives of citizens.



Who do we work with?

We utilised the skills and expertise of our local authority creative partners. They devised creative programmes that directly answered the needs of their communities. We also collaborated with national partners to deliver a suite of programmes that were supported by new resources made available to counteract the impacts of the pandemic Partners included the Design and Crafts Council Ireland, Healthy Ireland, Ealaín na Gaeltachta, the HSE, Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), Libraries Ireland, TG4, RTÉ, and the Arts Council.



A Year in Statistics 1/2

260

schools applied to participate in the Creative Schools initiative of which 164 were successful. No reduction in interest!

314

schools participating in the Creative Schools initiative alongside 150 exiting schools were supported by 119 Creative Associates

756

teachers reached by Creative Youth CPD initiatives (Primary School TAP = 338; Post Primary JCT = 418)

1,366

projects and initiatives, delivered by the 31 local authorities by Creative Communities, including 516 for Cruinniú na nÓg

54

countries reached by Cruinniú na nÓg. Expanded its reach from Ireland into countries across 6 continents

A Year in Statistics 2/2

€920,000

was invested in 230 creative heritage projects delivered predominantly through local authority Culture & Creativity Teams

253

hospitals and care facilities received funding to support health and wellbeing creative initiatives

200

concerts in 102 care homes/nursing homes with 30 musicians being employed, all funded for special 'COVID care concerts'

346,500

people engaged with Modern Day Mummers on Facebook. The #BeCreative call out reached 235,480 on Instagram and Shine Your Light reached 119,769 on Facebook

162,000

viewers tuned in to watch Samhlú on TG4, all across 53 countries with 9.2 million impressions on Twitter

840,000

views of Shine Your Light on RTÉ social media



Economic Development

With support from the Government's July Stimulus Package the Creative Ireland Programme worked with partners in Creative Youth, Creative Communities and the broadcast sector to deliver cultural programming for the events, creative and broadcast sectors whose employment opportunities had been decimated by the pandemic.

€3.8 million for a cultural and creative sector stimulus fund

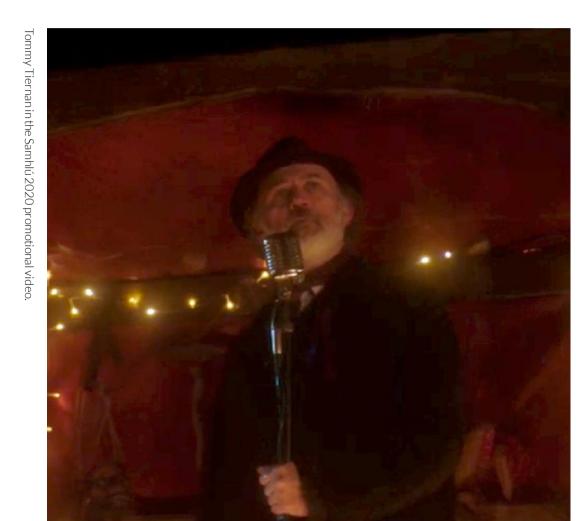




Samhlú 2020

This diverse showcase of culture and creativity broadcast on TG4 on 15th December 2020 featured performances from Shane Hennessey. Moxie, Slow Moving Clouds, Julie Feeney, Morgan Bullock, David Geaney, Rónán Ó Snodaigh, Varo and Catherine Young Dance. Riverdance composer Bill Whelan's new original composition Samhlú premiered during the broadcast. The programme was interwoven with six short films featuring the artists of Waterford Walls, the Modern Day Mummers of County Leitrim, Catherine Young Dance, and the short films Lackeen, Fiach and An Irish Goodbye. Shot over a week in Roundstone, Galway, the production employed 106 film making employees and featured the work over 126 artists.

€1.3 million creative broadcasting fund



Samhlú



MENU

International Initiatives

To maximise the potential for international engagement, we partnered with the Department of Foreign Affairs to promote #CruinniúGoesGlobal to the diaspora through Ireland's global embassy network. Consulates in New York and Chicago actively promoted Céilí in the Kitchen with our partners in Áirc Damhsa amongst our diaspora communities. The céilí tutorials also proved a major hit with nursing home residents in Sacramento! Later in the year we folded the RTÉ Shine Your Light solstice initiative into the Department of Foreign Affairs #ToBelrish project, which reached out to those unable to return home to Ireland for Christmas.

Solstice Dance at Knowth | RTÉ Shine Your Light







MENU

Climate and Sustainability

"Support Creative Ireland in engaging the public on climate change through the creative and cultural sectors initiative"

Programme for Government - Our Shared Future.

While the influence of the pandemic can be seen throughout the Creative Ireland Programme in 2020, concerns around climate change also motivated us to develop policies around how creativity can change thinking about this vital issue. Central to developing a new strand of activity was the Creativity and Climate Change workshop in November. The Creative Ireland Programme gathered together key decision makers in departments and agencies dealing with climate change together with representatives of creative organisations and academics. Together, they explored how creative community-based projects can activate positive behavioural change and provide participants with a sense of agency and engagement in a topic which can sometimes seem overwhelming.

Kilkenny Acorn Project







MENU

Creative Youth

At the heart of the Creative Youth Plan is the conviction that knowledge and creativity should be equal partners in the formation of our children, supporting them to become creative, active citizens.

Engagement with the arts, culture and creativity can develop young people's creative capacities and instill a life-long love of all things creative. It can also support the development of attributes such as resilience and empathy. Engagement can contribute to the development of transferable skills by enabling young people to be inventive, to solve problems, to work collaboratively, and to think conceptually. Such skills are increasingly important for continuing education and future economic activity.

Murroe-Boher Scouts



MENU

Creative Youth

Integrating creativity into young people's education is not just about using specific parts of the curriculum or the timetable (through subjects like visual arts, drama or music). It is also about using creativity as an instrument for education and learning generally. Through the Creative Ireland Programme we are helping schools to embrace creativity as an activity in itself and as a support in the holistic development of future generations. We recognise the need to facilitate this engagement within each young person's home and community, while also seeking out, and listening to, the voice of children themselves. Our key ambition and focus remains to:

- Expand young people's access to creative initiatives and activities;
- Focus on the **inclusion** of every child; and
- Support **positive and sustainable** outcomes for children and young people through creative engagement across formal and non-formal settings.

Junk Kouture - Do Your Own Sting



Creative Youth

In 2020 and with targeted investments, we continued to support initiatives which enabled a greater experience of the arts, culture and creativity in daily life in up to 788 schools, and to support the entire school community to recognise and appreciate their individual and collective creativity and how it can enrich their learning journey.

The Scoileanna Ildánacha/Creative Schools initiative (managed by the Arts Council) welcomed a further 164 new schools to the programme. Separately another 72 schools came together to form 21 new Creative Clusters to work collaboratively on projects of common interest. The journey embarked upon by hundreds of schools all over Ireland through Scoileanna Ildánacha/Creative Schools and the powerful effect it can have on young people was captured by a TV documentary commissioned by the Creative Ireland Programme and broadcast by RTÉ during 2020 (available on the RTÉ Player).





Creative Youth

We supported new avenues to creative activities for young people. We supported the continuing development and growth of Narrative 4's *Story Exchange* initiative which brings young people together to exchange stories from their own lives, breaking down barriers in order to understand each other on a deeper level. Narrative 4 trained and mentored 12 youth workers who work with Traveller and Roma young people – a section of society whose voices are not often heard – to empower them to tell their stories and challenge the stereotypes held by the wider community (see here).

The Creative Ireland Programme continues to work with Youth Theatre Ireland to support the development of youth theatre and drama. In 2020 we supported a collaboration with national autism charity As I Am to develop A Handbook for Youth Theatre Facilitators: Supporting Young People on the Autism Spectrum. It gives youth theatre facilitators the confidence to deliver workshops which are inclusive of young people with autism and other neurodiverse conditions, and aid their involvement in theatre and drama (see here).

Creative Youth Statistics

164 new schools

added to the

Creative Schools Programme

Creative Youth initiatives

reached a total of

788 schools





MENU

Cruinniú na nÓg 2020

Cruinniú na nÓg 2020 was a virtual event. With over 500 events online, it offered greater access to more participants in Ireland and overseas than ever before. It became our most successful Cruinniú to date, and has created a new model by which to deliver Creative Ireland Programme events in the future. Many local authorities created content that still exists on-line and continues to deliver engagement opportunities for young people through return visits to sites. Hosting Cruinniú online enabled us to reach out to our young diaspora and to showcase the creativity of young people at home to an international audience.

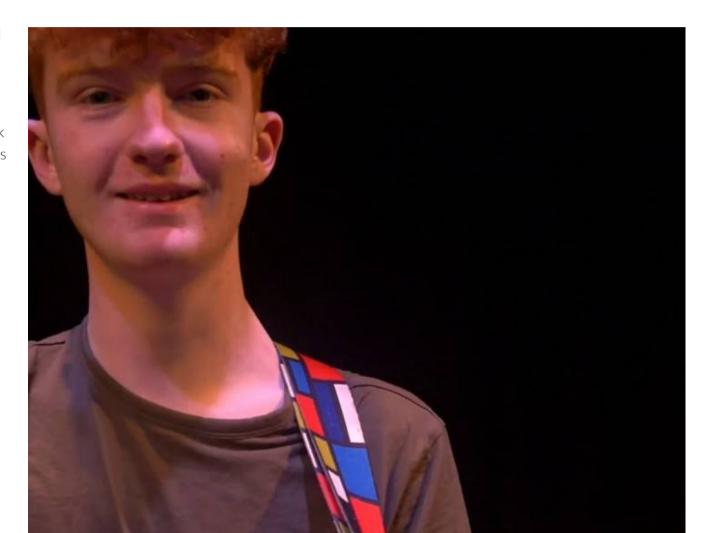
516 online events created for Cruinniú na nÓg



Cruinniú na nÓg 2020

In 2020 Cruinniú na nÓg engaged effectively with the hard to reach teenage audience as evidenced in this wonderful open mic session from The Glens Centre in Manorhamilton and *Music from me Gaff* in Dublin.

The transition to online presentations enabled the fast-track development of new skills amongst our programme partners and has provided them with the capacity to deliver more virtual events in the future.



Cruinniú na nÓg 2020

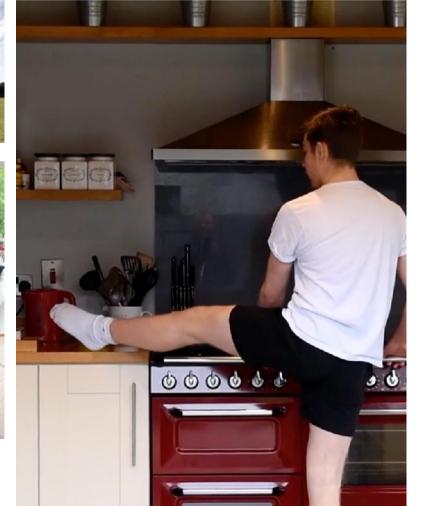
To kickstart the project the Creative Ireland Programme devised a series of nationwide creative calls to action with key strategic partners, such as:

- Céilí in the Kitchen (together with Áirc Damhsa).
- Let's Go Fly A Kite (with the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland).
- Pop Up Poetry for 'Lil Peeps for the under 4s with the Branar Theatre Company.
- Become a Young Story Keeper (a supported collaboration between Fighting Words and Great Lighthouses of Ireland).
- Coding for Cruinniú Create a Video Game App (with Whizz Kids Training).
- My Creative Life podcasts with RTE Radio Jr.

Cruinniú na nÓg expanded its reach from Ireland into 54 countries across six continents







Left Top: Let's Go Fly A Kite | Bottom: Cruinniú na nÓg Roscommon | Right: Dancing by Distance

Cruinniú na nÓg 2020 Highlights

Dancing By Distance – this dance film created by 25 young dancers around the country provided an emotional and highly charged evocation of the challenges of isolation.

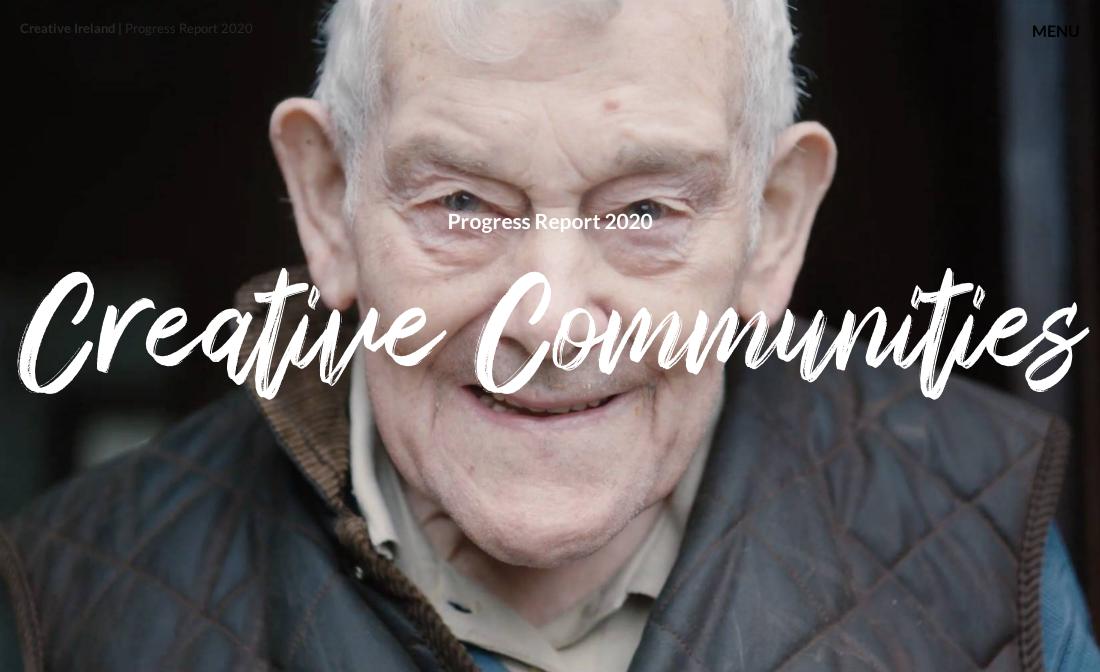


Cruinniú na nÓg 2020 Highlights

The We Create Magic rap film in which the irrepressible children of the Cappabue National School in West Cork energetically expressed what creativity means to them and their lovely community. They featured on CBS Good Morning America!

You can see the feature on CBS Good Morning America here.





Creative Communities

Creative Communities is a partnership between central and local government which acknowledges that local authorities play a leadership role across infrastructure, place-making, enterprise, culture, community development, tourism and the environment. Working collaboratively, the Creative Communities pillar in the Creative Ireland Programme seeks to harness the potential this provides to deploy creativity as a strategy for wellbeing, social cohesion and economic success.

850 creative projects supported by the Creative Ireland Programme and delivered by local authorities to their communities



MENU

Creative Communities

Local authorities have an extensive track record of community engagement through arts, culture, heritage, and library services among others. Such services are fundamental to developing a wider creative economy and society. The Department for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and local authorities have agreed a common *Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018-2022* framework for each local authority. These strategies are unique to each local authority, reflecting the breadth of cultural and creative work being undertaken in each area, the vision and values of each local authority, and their strategic priorities.

230 creative heritage projects delivered through local authority Culture & Creativity Teams Screenshot from Modern Day Mummers



Creative Communities

In 2020 the Creative Ireland Programme led an interim review of Creative Communities in partnership with the County and City Management Association (CCMA), with a view to refining and strengthening the delivery of Creative Communities in the coming years. The interim review concluded that Creative Communities has substantially enhanced the reach of local authorities by increasing impact and visibility, and creating opportunities for communities through 2,658 projects across Ireland in 2018 and 2019 alone which would not have been supported by other funding streams. Exchequer funding and the integrated national-local model have been important catalysts in the initiative, enabling local authorities to strengthen pride of place and a sense of belonging that helps to make our cities and counties more attractive places to live and work. Click here for Creative Communities report.

Creative Communities Interim Review Report Cover

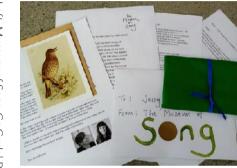


Creative Communities

Creative Communities helped local authorities to support community health and wellbeing through creative engagement. This was most evident during COVID 19 when it was difficult to maintain people's sense of connectedness to each other and to place. It was acknowledged that typical community engagement in creative and cultural activities was fundamentally disrupted for the foreseeable future.

Local authorities were invited to submit proposals for initiatives in collaboration with colleagues working to support the Age Friendly and Healthy Ireland programmes under the new Creativity in Older Age fund announced in July 2020 by Minister Catherine Martin. This fund was designed specifically to counteract the social side-effects of the pandemic. Sixteen local authorities from around the country delivered a suite of innovative and engaging projects including Carlow Streams Singalong Sessions, Kildare COVID19 Notebook Project, Modern Day Mummers (Leitrim) and Covid Care Concerts (Waterford). In a challenging year, we have seen first-hand how creativity and the arts can deliver improved outcomes for our citizens' health and wellbeing ensuring a sense of belonging and social cohesion.

eft: Museum of Song, Co Cork | Right: Roundstone, Co Galway





Creative Communities

Under the Government's July Stimulus Package, the Creative Ireland Programme provided additional funding of €1.75 million to local authorities to broaden the range of supported disciplines and genres, and to provide additional opportunities for public engagement with artistic, cultural and creative activities. The cross-cutting expertise available in Culture and Creativity Teams, and their ability to move quickly in a focused and efficient manner, ensured continued stimulation of the cultural and creative sector in local communities.

Projects delivered through this investment package highlighted the connectivity, richness and diversity of work being delivered by creatives living locally. A wonderful example of the scale of what was achieved in 2020 is *Ardú Cork*, a street art initiative celebrating Cork city's traditions, history, resolve and art. The project was designed as a means of re-invigorating the city as a safe space during COVID 19, whilst also exploring the phenomenal story that was Cork in 1920 and now. The murals received an overwhelming positive response from the public and have added vibrancy to the cultural landscape of Cork by revitalising parts of the city centre. More info on Ardú here.







Reimagine

This community place-making programme delivered by the Irish Architecture Foundation (IAF), with support from the Creative Ireland Programme facilitates communities across Ireland to co-create and co-design solutions to challenges identified in their local built environment. It connected architects and architectural expertise in seven towns and villages around Ireland. In 2020 the IAF launched www.reimagineplace.ie as a central portal for place-making to harness the agency of communities across Ireland to amplify their potential in a way that can transform physical, social, and psychological wellbeing. This programme links with and further connects a number of government policies and stakeholders, such as Collaborative Town Centre Health Check, Town Centre First and initiatives such as the Heritage Council Initiative Town and Village Renewal Scheme, and the Irish Walled Towns Network, demonstrating the power of architecture to contribute to, and be a catalyst of, positive change, social cohesion and wellbeing.

Irish Architecture Foundation Reimagine.







Health and Wellbeing

Ireland recognises the powerful contribution that the promotion of creativity through the arts, culture and heritage can make to our health and wellbeing.

Initiatives in such diverse areas as music and dance, visual art, reading and poetry, museums and nature contribute to societal creativity and stimulate positive health and wellbeing. The core proposition of the Creative Ireland Programme is that participation in such activities drives personal and collective creativity, with significant implications for individual and societal wellbeing. The Creative Ireland Programme is a wellbeing strategy for people.

Behind the Frontlines, St James's Hospi



Health and Wellbeing

Interventions based on arts, culture and creativity in community and healthcare settings have been shown to improve people's health, and to contribute to the prevention of a variety of mental and physical ill health as well as the management of a range of long term conditions. Such interventions are often low-risk, highly cost-effective and can help staff in their work. There is an emerging awareness in Ireland that approaches based on arts, culture and creativity can make a significant contribution to addressing a number of the pressing issues faced by our health and social care systems. However, as with many issues straddling the intersection between very different professional sectors, the process of cultural change can be challenging. The all-of-Government Creative Ireland Programme is committed to supporting this process of change.

Behind the Frontlines, St James's Hospita



Creative Ireland | Progress Report 2020

Health and Wellbeing

This Creative Health and Wellbeing initiative seeks to ensure that diverse, well-informed and sustainable forms of creative interventions focused specifically on improving health and wellbeing are available and accessible in community and healthcare settings. The focus is on:

- Ensuring recognition of the health and wellbeing benefits and value from creative engagement;
- Strengthening collaboration between the sectors involved in arts, culture, creativity, social care and health; and
- Developing positive health and wellbeing outcomes by delivering well-informed and sustainable creative interventions.



Health and Wellbeing

A number of significant steps were taken as part of this initiative which began in early 2020. In March, the Creative Ireland Programme in partnership with Healthy Ireland organised a public talk to explore the differing perspectives and experiences regarding the value of creative activities to mental wellbeing outcomes, and to identify opportunities for collaboration and the key challenges from health and creative perspectives. It was apparent after this event that a particular focus on older people would yield early progress.

A follow-up event in partnership with Healthy Ireland and the HSE explored the value and good practices of creative activities to mental health and wellbeing in older people.







Creativity in Older Age

During 2020, the adverse impacts of the pandemic on the mental health and wellbeing of older people became particularly apparent. In response, the Creative Ireland Programme organised and funded a series of creativity-related, mental wellbeing initiatives in community and/or residential care facilities. The Creativity in Older Age scheme sought to support positive ageing, mitigate the negative impact of social cocooning and social distancing, and/or develop and establish new forms of creative engagement for older people consistent with public health guidance.

€500,000 fund allocated to new creative projects targeted to alleviate isolation and anxiety in the elderly



Creative Ireland | Progress Report 2020

MENU

Creativity in Older Age

The Creative Ireland Programme called upon the expertise of national partners who had key competencies and experience of working with older people. These included Age and Opportunity, the Irish Hospice Foundation, the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA), Waterford Healing Arts Trust (WHAT), Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing at St James's Hospital (MISA) and Sing Ireland.

In addition to the national programme, our local authority partners around the country delivered 25 creative projects for older people including: a *Community Notebook* project in Kildare; *Modern Day Mummers* in Leitrim; the publishing and recording of a 77 year old's diary in Meath; and the recording of films based on the memories of older age residents in care homes in Galway.

Read more here.





Creativity in Older Age

Commenting on the leading role of local authorities, Minister Catherine Martin said: "The enthusiasm and energy behind the projects that will be delivered by the local authorities is extraordinary. They are truly imaginative and are innately responsive to the needs of their community. I am delighted to be able to support such thoughtful and engaging projects for our older citizens."

اre Programme , Irish Museum of Modern Art الماحية

Funding to support health and wellbeing delivered creative initiatives into over 250 hospitals and residential care facilities





Covid Care Concerts

With support from the Creative Ireland
Programme, 200 Covid Care Concerts were
delivered by the Mobile Music Machine in response
to the many social challenges presented by COVID
19. Led by cellist Gerald Peregrine, a suite of
professional opera singers and musicians
performed live classical music concerts outside
residential care homes throughout the country in
2020.



Covid Care Concerts

Working in strict adherence with HSE guidelines, free concerts were delivered by a number of Ireland's best known classical performers in the gardens and through the open windows and doors of care houses.

The concerts have been a great success particularly at a time when families are not in a position to visit and the residents have lost access to all their occupational therapy such as arts, crafts and music. Care-givers reported a positive response to the concerts amongst both patients and their fellow coworkers. Many of the residential units visited have requested return visits and have sought to establish a regular live classical music programme for service users. Between June and December 2020 the Mobile Music Machine employed 30 professional musicians to deliver the concerts in residential settings in Dublin, Dun Laoghaire, Wexford, Waterford, Kerry, Kilkenny and Kildare.





Thank you...

To find out more about the Creative Ireland Programme please go to www.creativeireland.gov.ie