

Mayo County Council Arts Service

Mayo County Council Arts Office Role in relation to music:

Where possible, Mayo County Council endeavours to:

- support and add value to existing services
- develop programme which addressed gaps in service
- provide master-classes and support beyond the capacity of most music organisations
- initiate development in geographically rural areas or under-provided for areas.

N.B: The delivery of the school curriculum for music is the responsibility of the Department of Education.

Current Music Provision

A number of music initiatives are already operated by the Arts Office:

ANNUAL PROGRAMME:

Music is integrated into the following components of MCC's annual programme Bealtaine (Festival of Creativity in older age), Force 12 Writer's Festival , EXCEL (Youth Arts Programme). EXCEL Youth Arts programme in November supported young people involved in music with masterclasses for: Mayo Youth Orchestra, Achill Pipe Bands, Bófield Ceilí Band & Cantoraí Umhaill (youth choir). There are also workshops for guitar, percussion, DJ and electric guitar.

The Summer Music Series

Mayo County Council's Summer Music Series runs throughout the month of July with an eclectic programme of diverse music events across the county. Ten concerts are organised in churches and community halls and all types of music are included: blues, jazz, classical, world, traditional, singer-songwriter, folk etc.

PRIMARY SCHOOL'S PROGRAMME:

Primary School's programme: Mayo County Council offer six week co-funded programmes which include music in classroom. The initial contact is through an experiential workshop.

The Arts Office has also run experiential workshops for teachers in partnership with the Mayo Education Centre.

MUSIC INSTRUMENTS:

➤ Percussion Instruments for Primary Schools:

A highly innovative scheme was launched in December 2002 by the Arts Office in association with the Mayo Education Centre. Seven sets of percussion instruments were secured through funding provided by the Arts Council. The instruments are suitable for children of any age up to 13. The Mayo Education Centre is the key lending agency for the instruments and retains five sets for direct use in primary schools throughout the county, enabling the schools to borrow the instruments for a school term. The remaining two sets are available through the County Arts Office and

the Linenhall Arts Centre for use in community and outreach workshops. Over 55 primary schools have availed of these instruments.

➤ **Post Primary & Adults:**

In 2004 three full sets of samba instruments were acquired: two sets are available for use in post-primary schools in the county (again, through the Mayo Education Centre) and one set is retained by the arts office for use in communities throughout the county.

INFORMATION, ADVICE & GRANTS:

➤ **Music Recording Assistance Awards:**

These awards were initiated in 2002 following the very successful Careers in Music Seminar (2001). There are four awards annually of €800 and all genres of music are covered. Applications are assessed by external, expert panels.

➤ **Music Recital Awards:**

These awards are intended to assist non-professional music organisations to give a public recital of their work.

➤ **Mayo County Council & Liam Walsh Awards:**

These annual awards are open to practitioners of all art forms, including music. The awards are intended to assist artists in their own professional practice. The primary award is €5,000 and the secondary award is €5,000.

INFORMATION & ADVICE:

The Arts Office sends regular information to musicians and those interested in music. This information is mostly about awards, opportunities, festivals and events which might be of interest.

**MUSIC PROGRAMMES SUPPORTED BY MCC:
EDUCATION & TUITION**

Tobar – is a community music programme, based in rural communities, using instruments which people may have at home and also mentoring musicians within communities. This is a partnership project with Mayo County Council and Mayo VEC.

WhistleBlast Quartet – this programme brings classical music to primary schools and communities. The programme involves workshops, composition and two performances – one in the school and one for the wider community. The programme is funded by The Arts Council, Mayo County Council and the National Concert Hall.

Funding:

The Arts Office also provides annual revenue funding to professional arts organisations which promote music as part of their remit. Through Arts Acts Grants, MCC supports festivals county-wide, which promote music and run workshops (eg. Ballina Street Festival, Sonas, Feile Chois Cuain etc). The Arts office also supports a number of residencies associated with festivals, which deepen the effect of the festival and ensure a more long-term approach to development.

Mayo Music Development Strategy Position Paper

Priorities:

The following priorities underpin the Arts Service of Mayo County Council:

- access and participation
- enhancing skills and capacity in the local arts sector
- leading public awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts

Approach:

All future programmes will continue to:

- be developed in partnership
- be mindful of the social inclusion agenda
- be long term, sustainable and incremental
- demonstrate high artistic quality

Shift towards Service Provision

It is most likely that over the life of the next Arts Plan, MCC Arts Office will consolidate the learning to date and *move from being a programmer to a service provider*. With regard to the upcoming plan, the implications are that there will be a strong focus on:

- consolidating more formal structures within existing programmes in order to ensure their sustainability into the future.
- clearly articulating an agenda around structure-building and shared ownership in any new programmes developed, with a stated time frame related to MCC Arts Office involvement in any particular role.

It may take the life of the next plan to get these partnership structures up and running effectively but once they are up and running, the MCC Arts Office role within those structures will be related to its area of expertise i.e. making contributions regarding the achievement of high quality artistic input.

Music priorities

Mayo Co. Council Arts Office will:

- continue to *provide information, advice and grants* to musicians/ the music sector
- work in *partnership* with other appropriate individuals, organisations and agencies in order to develop and enhance:
 - the promotion of high quality live music performance
 - artform development/ opportunities for professional development
 - music tuition and education programmes

In working towards these priorities, Mayo Co. Council Arts Office will emphasise *access and participation* for a *diverse audience* to a *diversity of genres and styles* mindful of the *social inclusion* agenda that informs all of the work of the County Council. As well as providing services to musicians and music organisations, the Arts Office will specifically target

- *geographically isolated communities* where a lack of music provision has been identified (including children/ schools within those communities)
- *teenagers and older people* throughout the county
 - o as makers and composers of music
 - o as an audience for a diversity of high quality music

How will these priorities be addressed?

- Information/ Advice/ Grants**
- Promotion/ Performance**
- Enhancing existing activity through the development of the artform and generating new opportunities for professional development**
- Education and Tuition**

Besides the existing grants and awards available for recording, recitals and artistic development, MCC will provide opportunities for:

- the creation of new work through the Public Art Programme
- art form / professional development through:
 - o development bursaries
 - o master-classes

Excel:

MCC Arts Office will continue to run the Excel programme with additional focus on:

- o Structure –links with other arts organisations/ venues
- o Potential links to high quality live music performance
- o A strategy for progression i.e. teenagers who wish to continue to develop musically into their twenties and beyond

The development of a schools based music education/ tuition programme

It is highly unlikely that the Arts Office would be involved in the setting up of a music school, however it will explore the potential for a service-based model of music delivery in the county, probably on an out-reach basis. A pilot programme would be set up to test efficiency and appropriateness.

- ***Sustainability is crucial.***
- ***It is unfeasible that this would be run through MCC or funded solely by MCC therefore a partnership would need to be established.***

Advanced tuition:

MCC Arts Office would commission a mapping exercise that will include research into the level of demand for advanced instrumental tuition (i.e. those who currently have no local route for progression/ remain static/ travel to Dublin or elsewhere for advanced tuition)

Other Areas:

As identified in the County Development Strategy, the Arts Office will undertake the compilation of an Arts Directory for the county as part of the next Arts Plan. This will include musicians, music teachers, composers and music promoters.