

Roscommon Arts Centre - Arts Centre for All Policy - We're Your Arts Centre

Strategy Implementation & Action Plan

Introduction:

We are on a journey to work with our artists, community and potential audiences to overcome barriers regarding accessibility, inclusivity, and cultural diversity. We are determined to develop and nurture meaningful relationships with them to ensure that the space we have created at Roscommon Arts Centre is inclusive and welcoming to everybody.

In 2024 we began to focus on EDI through developing our organisational capacity and financial resources thanks to the financial support of the Arts Centre Capacity Building Support Scheme. This action plan takes our current strategy and examines its objectives through the lens of equality, diversity and inclusion. We will review this plan annually, and make changes based on learning, in consultation with those with a range of lived experiences.

The aim of our Arts Centre for All action plan is to ensure that the arts are something in which everyone can participate and in which they can see themselves reflected in.

This plan has taken these initial stepping stones and actions in 2024:

- Engaged the services of a part-time freelance contracted Creative Producer whose aim is to develop and implement an Arts Centre for All Policy and EDI Action Plan
- Ringfenced a dedicated budget for - Capacity Building: Towards a More Diverse and Inclusive Arts Space
- Staff of the Arts Centre and Roscommon County Council Arts Office took part in an EDI Workshop delivered by Mother Tongues
- The Creative Producer has begun to engage with the LGBTQ+ community through Roscommon Foroige and Roscommon Pride committee, creating activities to support the first Pride in the county in August 2024. Consultations and workshops have taken place in the arts centre, with further engagement plans made for 2025
- Working with Artist Paul Curley, develop Know Before You Go Guides for the Arts Centre Accessibility Document Suite
- Beginning conversations with Curator and Visual Artist Alan James Burns on creating opportunities for artists with disabilities to be programmed as part of our Gallery programme and how to work with artists with disabilities

- Working with Mother Tongues to programme workshops where migrant families have opportunities to meet and feel part of our community, as well as creating professional development opportunities for artists.
- Beginning conversations with Foroige on expanding our engagement activities to Roma and Brazilian communities for 2025
- Reviewing our programme to identify areas we can improve our programming and outreach
- Reviewing the accessibility of our language about our venue on our website and programme to ensure audiences have easier and increased access.
- The Creative Producer has completed Safe to Create training modules in Active Bystander, Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace, and Addressing Unconscious Bias
- Engaged with artist Lorna Donlan creating opportunities for migrant women to participate in workshops, feeding into further participation for 2025. Included participation of women from the traveller community.
- Repeating our 2023 audience survey so that we can gain further insights on the profile of our audience, and participating artists

Among our key learnings to date are:

- Good EDI programming and activity takes time and can require additional access budgets.
- We need to take incremental steps and build our knowledge base so that we can ensure high quality outcomes for everyone.
- We can centre the artist and the audience in order to learn about their needs.
- We need to work at a practical level to make sure EDI policy is embedded in a real world sense i.e. our annual planning, logistics, production and general event operations.

Our Strategic Plan

We have 4 priorities and 11 distinct strategic goals grouped under 4 headings:

<i>Priorities</i>	Strategic Goals
<i>Arts</i>	We aim to create a vibrant, quality and inclusive programme, that supports the growth and development of all the artforms we work in, appeals to many tastes and traditions, and that resonates with all ages.
	Support the creation of quality work with emerging artists and independent practitioners making work for young audiences and for disabled audiences and their families/caregivers, supporting those artists to take the work further afield
	Continue to focus on accessibility, inclusion and diversity to ensure our application and assessment processes are accessible to all, giving further opportunity to under-represented artists who have not had opportunities previously, and to provide continuously relevant programming for our audiences
<i>Artists</i>	To fulfil our ambition to make Roscommon Arts Centre a vibrant creative hub, and Roscommon a county in which artists can thrive and have a successful career

	<p>Support artists whose practice will activate new audiences, new ideas, and new challenges</p>
	<p>Activate a more regular dialogue with artists working in Roscommon to understand their evolving needs, ensure they are aware of RAC facilities and supports, and to ensure that our accessibility accommodations are supporting and including “new voices” - artists from underrepresented communities, as well as audiences from those communities</p>
Audiences	<p>Audit our audiences annually to benchmark developing diversity and work to identify and develop authentic connections with individuals and groups in culturally diverse and marginalised communities that we have been failing to reach before now; and to ensure we continue to support relevant and reasonable accommodations</p>
	<p>Identify and hire a Diversity, Equality and Inclusion specialist to work with the community on a diversity and inclusion strategy for RAC. This work will include projects with at least two communities of interest in Roscommon</p>
	<p>Grow audiences for visual arts.</p>

Governance	Feed into other relevant work of Roscommon County Council, such as the Migrant Integration Strategy, the Arts Plan, the Inclusion Team, the Local Authority Integration Team and more.
	Activate the place-making projects in the town and integrate RAC in the local developments for way-finding, driving transient traffic to be activated, allowing us to use our outdoor spaces more.

Our implementation plan for our Strategy incorporating a clear EDI lens

<i>ARTS: PRIORITY ACTIONS</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>EDI lens</i>
<i>Work with artists to increase more diversity in the programme</i>	<i>2025 onwards</i>	<i>Protect time to research and engage new artists</i>	<i>2025 in conversations with LGBTQ+ artist Rob Heaslip</i>
<i>Work with artists to increase more diversity in the Visual Arts programme</i>	<i>2025 onwards</i>	<i>Increase visibility of disabled artists, identifying artists who are working in this area</i>	<i>Working with Alan James Burn to exhibit wheelchair user and user of eye gaze technology David Parnell in Visual Arts space</i>
<i>Continue to focus on accessibility, inclusion and diversity</i>	<i>2025 onwards</i>	<i>Protect time and resources to find new</i>	<i>Working with Alan James Burns to make the VA programme more accessible</i>

		<p><i>programming</i></p>	<p><i>Reflect on programming to date, identify gaps which we can work towards meeting.</i></p> <p><i>All staff complete Safe to Create training and signed the Code of Behaviour in line with good practice</i> https://www.safetocreate.ie/code-of-behaviour/</p> <p><i>Creative Producer complete Safe to Create: LGBTQIA+ Inclusion for Leaders & Board Members, Disability Awareness training and other relevant training.</i></p>
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Indicators: In the next three to five years -

- *See more EDI specific programming, at least two per year in auditorium*
- *See more EDI specific programming, at least two per year in visual arts gallery*
- *See more programming on gaps we have identified of communities who are not currently visible in the programme, at least one per year*
- *Creating more accessible arts experiences for all audiences*

ARTISTS: PRIORITY ACTIONS	Timing	Resources	EDI lens
Creating annual residency opportunities for artists	2024 onwards	Protecting funding in Arts Council Application	Brazilian artist Tatiana Santos was awarded AIR for 2024, continue to give migrant artists opportunities annually
Creating professional development opportunities for artists	2024 onwards	Protecting funding in Arts Council Application, protecting time to create partnerships	RAC partnered with Mother Tongues to train Spanish artist Raquel Montero Calero, in 2025 will work in the region to deliver workshops to migrant families. 2025 onwards look to develop new partnerships
Activate a more regular dialogue with artists working in Roscommon to understand their evolving needs	2024 onwards	Protecting funding in Arts Council Application, protecting time and resources to carry out work	2024 Re-activated Artists Cafe to invite artists to meet 2024/2025 carry out an audit of artists in the region 2025 carry out survey of needs of artists 2025 onwards improve professional development and social opportunities to meet the needs of artists

Indicators: In the next three to five years -

- We are working with one migrant artist in residence annually, aim to programme these artists
- Increase number of migrant artists we are working with each year, aim to programme/ work with at least one new artist per year
- Create at least one new professional development and social opportunity per year which specifically speaks to the need of artists

AUDIENCES : PRIORITY ACTIONS	Timing	Resources	EDI Lens
Audit our audiences annually to benchmark developing diversity and work to identify and develop authentic connections with individuals and groups in culturally diverse and marginalised communities	<i>2024 onwards</i>	<i>Protect budget for role of Creative Producer</i>	<p><i>2024 identify one community to work with - LGBTQ+, Ukrainian and traveller</i></p> <p><i>2025 - continue work with this community plus Roma and Brazilian through support from Foroige</i></p> <p><i>2026 - continue develop - identify if any other groups want to engage</i></p>
Identify and hire a Diversity, Equality and Inclusion specialist to work with the community on a diversity and inclusion strategy	<i>2024 onwards</i>	<i>Protect budget for role of Creative Producer</i>	<p><i>2024 Creative Producer employed and part of remit develop Policy, Action Plan and began engagement with community.</i></p> <p><i>2025 onwards funding dependent continue this work</i></p>
Grow audiences for visual arts	<i>2025 onwards</i>	<i>Protect budget for role of Creative Producer. Protect time and resources for community to engage</i>	<p><i>2025 VA programme includes</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. exhibition to celebrate Roscommon's first Pride, engaging community who haven't engaged with VA programme before</i> <i>2. Working with Tom Meskell for community and artists to be part of install for exhibition Basking</i> <i>3. Work with disabled artist for first time David Parnell and develop engaged specifically around this</i>

			<p>4. Working with migrant and traveller women to be part of an exhibition <i>Cut From The Same Cloth</i></p> <p>Reflect and plan on how to bring new audiences from 2026 onwards</p>
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Indicators of Success in the next three to five years -

- At least one new community who hasn't engaged with the arts centre, participating in a new project per year
- See increasing numbers of new communities participating as direct result of strategy and action plan
- At least one new community who hasn't engaged with the visual arts programme, participating per year

Governance: PRIORITY ACTIONS	Timing	Resources	EDI lens
Feed into other relevant work of Roscommon County Council	<i>2025 onwards</i>	<i>Protect time for conversations and engagement</i>	<i>Look at relationship and project building with local plans such as the Migrant Integration Strategy, the Arts Plan, the Inclusion Team, the Local Authority Integration Team and more.</i>
Activate the place-making projects in the town and integrate RAC in the local developments for way-finding	<i>2025 onwards</i>	<i>Protect time for conversations and engagement</i>	<i>Identify individuals, communities, organisations with which to work and develop relationships and projects</i>

Indicators of Success in the next three to five years -

- At least one new relationship built and project meeting the needs of a local government strategy or plan
- At least one new relationship built with a new community and project meeting the needs a local community