

Bealtaine Festival

An Age & Opportunity **arts** initiative

Open Call:

Bealtaine 2020 Dawn & Dusk Chorus Flagship Choir

Deadline: 16th August 2019



Images clockwise; Dawn Chorus Dublin (Bealtaine 2018), Dawn chorus Donegal (Bealtaine 2009), Dawn Chorus Ringsend, Dublin (Bealtaine 2012), Dusk Chorus, Temple Bar, (Bealtaine 2019).

Information for Applicants

Age & Opportunity invites applications from choirs to fill the role of Bealtaine Festival Flagship Choir for the Dawn and Dusk Chorus events, in 2020, Bealtaine's 25th anniversary year. Please read these guidelines and complete the application form.

About Age & Opportunity and the Bealtaine Festival

Age & Opportunity is the national organisation that provides a range of opportunities for older people who want to get more involved in arts and culture, sport and physical activity, civic engagement and personal development.

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Our aim is to inspire people aged 50+ to live a dynamic life in which they are more active, more visible, more creative and more connected. We work with local communities and organisations across the country to run a range of programmes and activities in three key areas:

- Age & Opportunity Arts provides opportunities for us to engage more in arts and cultural events and initiatives
- Age & Opportunity Sport is designed to get us more active and participate in recreational sport and physical activity
- Age & Opportunity Engage offers a range of workshops and learning initiatives for our own personal development as well as opportunities for us to play an active role in our community.

Age & Opportunity Arts is our dedicated arts and culture programme running throughout the year in local communities all over Ireland. We host a range of different creative initiatives including the annual Bealtaine Festival which takes place throughout the month of May, and is delivered in partnership with communities and organisations nationwide. Bealtaine is Ireland's national festival which uniquely celebrates the arts and creativity as we age.

About the Dawn & Dusk Chorus

The first Dawn Chorus event took place on Culdaff beach in Donegal as part of the 2009 Bealtaine festival. Following this extraordinary debut the Dawn Chorus developed into a nationwide event with choirs all over the country taking part each May. In 2010, we initiated a partnership with the Association of Irish Choirs (now Sing Ireland) and Active Retirement Ireland designed to grow the event even further by bringing choirs, active retirement groups and older people together across Ireland to sing at dawn, in a scenic location.

In 2018 composer Tom Lane was commissioned to create a piece of music especially for the Dawn Chorus – and the result – *The Little Waves of Breifny* was performed by choirs all over Ireland. In 2020, *The Little Waves of Breifny* will once

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again be celebrated as part of the Dawn Chorus, in addition to a programme of the choir's own choosing.

Also part of our 2018 Bealtaine festival we introduced the Dusk Chorus for the first time, allowing choirs more scope in scheduling an event. Again in 2019 this proved very popular and in 2020 we hope choirs will choose to hold a dusk chorus if a dawn chorus is not possible.

In 2019, after a very competitive open call, Age & Opportunity selected Aspiro in Carlow as the first ever Bealtaine Flagship Choir. Aspiro held two very successful events over the course of the festival, as well as performing in the St. Patrick's Festival.

About the 2020 Flagship Events

Flagship Dawn and Dusk Chorus

Following the success of the inaugural flagship choir in 2019, Age & Opportunity once again invites choirs to apply to be the Bealtaine Festival choir for 2020 and its 25th anniversary. The Flagship Dawn Chorus takes place at the start of the festival (in the choir's own locality and organised by them) and at the Flagship Dusk Chorus taking place at the end of the festival, possibly in Dublin city. These dates are yet to be confirmed, but will be weekend dates near the beginning and end of May.

St. Patricks Festival

In addition to these two flagship events, there may also be an additional component for the Flagship Choir. In 2019 we collaborated with Ireland's largest festival, St Patricks Festival, previewing the Dawn & Dusk Chorus programme at the parade on March 17th. We hope to once again showcase the Bealtaine Festival Choir as part of the festivities in March.

The Bealtaine Festival Choir

For these flagship events the Bealtaine Festival wishes to showcase a choir that celebrates the Bealtaine spirit in some way – it may be that they are

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intergenerational, (one of Age & Opportunity's strategic priorities), or that they are championing creativity as we age or that they have been staging their own Dawn Chorus events for the past number of years.

The flagship events are also key to the Bealtaine Festival because offer the momentum of being natural opening and closing points to the festival as a whole. They also have the potential to be high profile events which hopefully will secure local and national media attention. Key supports will be given to the chosen choir, as outlined below.

Applicant Guidelines

The choir will:

- Commit to the dates appointed for the Dawn or Dusk Chorus and St Patrick's Festival, once confirmed.
- Work with the Bealtaine Festival team in securing an appropriate location, funding and PR for the event in their locality.
- Commit to performing Tom Lane's composition *The Little Waves of Breffny*, as well as their own programme.
- Agree to make representatives available for PR or marketing opportunities, outside of the event itself as well as supporting the Bealtaine marketing campaign where possible.

Age & Opportunity will:

- Provide a workshop with Tom Lane, in respect of performing his composition.
- Provide logistical support through our dedicated project assistant.
- Provide audio visual support for the event, within an agreed budget.
- Provide travel costs, within an agreed budget.
- Provide PR around the event.
- Document the event.

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Assessment Criteria

- Demonstration of commitment to the spirit of Bealtaine.
- Track record as a choir, (ie that you have been together and performing for a length of time).
- Include older people in the make-up of the choir.
- Diversity demonstrated by choir, (either intergenerationally, culturally, geographically etc.)
- Confirmation of availability on agreed dates.

The Dawn & Dusk Chorus is presented in partnership with Sing Ireland.

Age & Opportunity's Bealtaine Festival and Arts Programme is funded by the Arts Council.

