

Bealtaine Dawn/Dusk Chorus Flagship Choir 2023

Deadline 5pm, Monday 20th
November, 2023



Information for applicants

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.

Our Arts programme aims to support and provide resources for artists, arts participants/audiences and arts organisations. We do this through our annual Bealtaine Festival, and our Resource and Development Programme.

Bealtaine Festival

Bealtaine is Ireland's national festival which celebrates the arts and creativity as we age. Bealtaine is at the centre of Age & Opportunity's Arts programme and will celebrate its 29th year in 2024. Next year, we will also begin a new 3 year theme of *Lust for Life* – celebrating our emergence from the Covid-19 pandemic and the joy of connection that the arts can bring between generations, families and friends. The theme also references Iggy Pop's iconic punk-era song giving the theme different layers of interpretation (joy, energy, pop culture, subversion, etc.).

Bealtaine 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 marking the beginning of the festival.

In 2010, we decided to grow the event by bringing choirs, active retirement groups and older people together across Ireland to sing at Dawn in a scenic location. We began a partnership with Sing Ireland and Active Retirement Ireland. We also invited choirs to organise Dusk Chorus events around the country at the close of May to mark the end of the Bealtaine Festival.

Due to the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 we presented virtual Dawn chorus events with our chosen flagship choir. In 2022 and 2023 we returned to an in-person celebration with events in Galway and Waterford.

Bealtaine Flagship Choir

In 2024 we once again invite choirs all around Ireland to organise their own Dawn/Dusk chorus events. One choir will be chosen as a flagship choir to perform for the Flagship Dawn Chorus taking place at the start of the festival.

For this flagship event the Bealtaine Festival wishes to showcase a choir that celebrates the Bealtaine spirit in some way. Maybe they are intergenerational and diverse in their membership. Maybe the choir champions the arts or creativity as we age. Or they have been staging Dawn/Dusk Chorus events for the past number of years.

Call for Applications

Age & Opportunity's Arts Programme invites applications from choirs to fill the role of Bealtaine Festival Flagship Choir for the Dawn Chorus event in 2024. **We especially invite members of marginalised or under-represented groups to apply.** We are also particularly interested in seeing applications which take an interdisciplinary approach to the Dawn Chorus event.

Age & Opportunity invites applications for the Bealtaine Flagship Choir, whereby the following conditions will apply:

The Flagship Choir will:

- Commit to the date appointed for the Dawn Chorus, usually the first Sunday in May (please note that for 2024 we are asking interested choirs to suggest a time for it to take place).
- Secure a scenic location for the Dawn Chorus in their locality (and an alternative for rain cover).
- A Dusk Chorus may also be arranged at the discretion of the choir, however Age & Opportunity will support one event.
- Promote the event in their locality through local and social media.
- Access any additional supports through the local Arts Office, Age Friendly Programme Manager, and any other relevant organisations.
- Work with the Age & Opportunity and Sing Ireland teams in relation to the logistics of the Dawn/Dusk Chorus event [please note that the overall organisation of the event is the responsibility of the choir].
- 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 and Sing Ireland will:

- Provide PR around the event and help promote it as a Bealtaine Festival event through local, national, and social media.
- Provide travel and fee costs, within an agreed budget.
- Provide logistical support for the Dawn Chorus.
- Provide audio-visual support for the Dawn Chorus within an agreed budget.
- Assist the choir in developing links with the local Arts Office, Age Friendly Programme Manager, and any other relevant organisations.
- Document the event.

Application Process & selection criteria

Those wishing to apply for the Bealtaine Flagship Choir should complete the application form and save it using the choir name. Any supporting documents should be submitted separately, also using the choir name i.e. BealtaineChoir.doc.

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria and applicants should pay special attention to these when completing the application form:

- Demonstration of commitment to the spirit of Bealtaine as reflected in the proposed idea for the event.
- Track record as a choir (i.e. that you have been together and performing for a length of time).
- Inclusion of people aged 50+ in the make-up of the choir.
- Demonstration of diversity by the choir (either intergenerationally, culturally, geographically etc.).
- Confirmation of availability in May and reasoning for suggested date and time of the event.

Applications should be submitted to the Age & Opportunity Arts Administrator, Jessica Burton-Restrick, arts@ageandopportunity.ie no later than **5pm, Monday 20th November, 2023**.

Assessment

Please note, applications will be assessed by an Age & Opportunity and Sing Ireland appointed panel.

- Applicants will be assessed on the selection criteria and the questions answered on the application form

- Incomplete applications will be disqualified

Any queries relating to the Dawn Chorus may be directed to the email as above, including requests for assistance with filling out the application form.

We aim to communicate final decisions by the end of November 2023. Should a large volume of applicants be received, this timeline may be adjusted to provide additional time to review all applications. All applicants will be kept notified of any changes or updates.

Equality, Human Rights, and Diversity

Please note that Age & Opportunity welcomes applications from all communities, and particularly encourages artists from underrepresented communities to apply.

In line with the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, and in line with our core funders, Age & Opportunity is committed to ensuring that it takes positive policy measures and commitments to promote equality of opportunity for all those living in Ireland, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller Community. Furthermore, Age & Opportunity notes the ground of socioeconomic background as a further basis for which equality of opportunity must be guaranteed.

As such, Age & Opportunity is committed to increasing the diversity and inclusion of our work.

More Information

Age & Opportunity

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.

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 Active** 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 and year round resource and development initiatives designed to support artists, arts participants and arts organisations. Bealtaine is Ireland's national festival, which uniquely celebrates the arts and creativity as we age.

Sing Ireland

Sing Ireland: Leading, Enabling and Connecting Communities of Singers in Ireland. Enhancing life through singing.

Vision

A nation that is fully immersed in quality group singing experiences. People living on the island of Ireland will value, recognise and experience the life-changing ability that singing has to impact on their health, creativity, and well-being.

Sing Ireland develops and supports all forms of group singing in Ireland. It does this by providing quality experiences through activities led by Sing Ireland and by supporting the work of our members and the wider choral sector.

Sing Ireland strategic objectives are as follows:

- Youth singing development
- Maintaining and developing the choral eco-system through training, supports and networking opportunities
- Embracing collective singing of all types
- Maintaining and developing a strong organisational structure/sustainability

Sing Ireland activities include:

- Developing and promoting group singing in Ireland
- Offering mentoring and masterclass opportunities to conductors
- Running the Annual International Choral Conducting Summer School
- Giving training and supports to primary and secondary school teachers
- Organising singing days and workshops
- Producing and promoting the Irish Youth Choirs' courses and concerts
- Providing information and advice