Bealtaine Festival
An Age & Opportunity arts initiative

Age & Opportunity

Emerging Artist Bursary 2025

Deadline: 12pm, Wednesday 2nd July 2025

Information for applicants

Age & Opportunity believes that the arts is particularly important and beneficial as we age and has long been a supporter of artists of 50+.

At its core, our work promotes the participation and representation of older people in the arts, including providing professional development training opportunities for artists across generations, as well as supporting arts networks and best practice in relation to the arts and older people.

We also run the Bealtaine Festival, Ireland's only festival dedicated to celebrating the arts and creativity as we age which is 30 years old in 2025.

Emerging Artist Bursary

Age & Opportunity recognises that many people don't have the time or resources to take up artistic practice when they are younger. For these artists, getting older enables a freeing up of responsibilities, allowing more time for pursuing existing and new artistic interests.

The Age & Opportunity **Emerging Artist Bursary** aims to encourage, support and celebrate older artists who are at an early stage in their career. We would like to celebrate the determination and achievements of someone in the second half of their life who has embarked on a full-time artistic path with a view to becoming a professional artist.

Age & Opportunity is funded by HSE SPORT IRELAND the arts council an chomhairle ealaíon funding the arts

Examples of what the Emerging Artist Award can be for:

The Bursary is specifically intended to afford time and space for an outstanding emerging artist to **develop their practice** through **buying time (and/or materials) to focus on their artistic work**.

It is our hope that this Bursary would lead to a presentation at Bealtaine 2026/2027, although we recognise that this may not be possible in all cases.

Please note that there is a separate award Age & Opportunity **Professional Development Artist Award for artists of 50+ who wish to further develop through training, residencies etc.).**

Who is an Emerging Artist?

For the purpose of this award, we could define an emerging artist as someone who may meet any of the following criteria:

- Is in the **early years** of establishing a professional career (see guidelines on definition of professional artist);
- May have **returned to third level education** to pursue and artform;
- Has some artistic experience but has **yet to receive a formal showcasing** invitation or media attention;
- Might still be **in the process of mastering their practice**.

However, 'emerging' is a hard word to define in this context, and all applicants must state why they classify themselves as an emerging artist through the application form.

What is a Professional Artist?

While there is no one definition of a professional artist, there are a number of guideline criteria that can be used:

1. Do you work in any of the areas of visual art, architecture, music, media, performing art, literature, circus, community art, traditional art, public art, film and spectacle or related areas?
2. Do you have regular practice as an artist?
3. Do you earn or attempt to earn a living from your art practice?
4. Do you have a degree or diploma from a 3rd level institution?
5. Are you a member of a professional representative body such as: Visual Artists Ireland, Film Director's Ireland, Association of Irish Composers or equivalent?
6. Does your CV clearly show a professional career (however early in this case)?

One Bursary of €1,000 will be made to the successful applicant.

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Call for Applications

Application Process:

Those wishing to apply for the Emerging Artist Bursary should submit the following:

- The application (online or via email)
- CV
- 3 samples of work (images/videos/files. Writing samples should be no longer than 2 pages long).
- A letter of support/recommendation from a professional organisation or professional artist. This might include a letter from an arts venue or organisation, gallery etc. supporting a potential showcase.

Applications should be submitted via the online form no later than **12 noon, Wednesday 2nd July 2025.**

Any queries relating to the Bursary may also be directed to by email to arts@ageandopportunity.ie , including requests for assistance with filling out the application form.

We aim to communicate final decisions by August 2025. 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.

Eligibility Criteria:

The Age & Opportunity Emerging Artist Bursary will be offered to a professional artist, (working in any artform) aged 50 + **based in the Republic of Ireland** who:

- Is at an **early and pivotal stage in their career** as demonstrated in their application (as demonstrated through the application form and CV);
- Is working in any artform and **based in the Republic of Ireland**;
- Has a demonstrated **intention to pursue a professional practice** (see above).
- Acknowledges they are solely responsibility for ensuring they have Public Liability Insurance cover.

Selection Criteria:

Please note, applications will be assessed by an Age & Opportunity appointed panel according to the following criteria:

- Strength of **track record** [career path/achievements/ambitions] to date or potential as indicated through your CV (however emerging);
- Artistic quality and ambition as evident through your **supporting material;**
- Demonstration of **how this Bursary will** benefit/contribute to your development as an artist;
- Demonstration of **intention to showcase** your work at Bealtaine 2025/2025*;
- Personal **letter of support/recommendation** from a professional organisation or professional artist.

Health & Safety

Applicants should understand that they are responsible for their own Health & Safety during any activity undertaken associated with this award, though Age & Opportunity's Safety Statement will be shared for information. The successful recipient will be required to sign a short contract form that asks for adherence to general Health & Safety legislation.

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.

Our vision is an Ireland where all older people can be more active, more visible, more creative, more connected, more confident, more often.

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 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.

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