Bealtaine Festival
An Age & Opportunity arts initiative

Age & Opportunity

Professional Development Artist Award 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.

Professional Development Artist Award

Age & Opportunity recognises that artistic practice is a lifelong journey and demands continued upskilling, training and resilience.

As such, the Age & Opportunity **Professional Development Artist Award** aims to celebrate lifelong learning by encouraging and supporting professional* artists of 50+ who wish to further develop their career and practice through specific activities to meet their development needs (training, research, etc.). The award also aims to publicly demonstrate the value of older artists.

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

Please note this award is not intended to support formal third or fourth level education.

The following guidelines outline typical professional development opportunities and are taken from the Arts Council's Professional Development Award Guidelines.

Examples of Professional Development Opportunities:

Creative Development Supports	Career Development Supports
• Workshops • Specialist Courses • Master classes • Research Projects • Residencies • Attendance at seminars/conferences	• Strategic/ financial planning • Promotional supports • Presentation or digital skills • Proposal Writing

Please note that there is a separate Age & Opportunity **Emerging Artist Award for those who are early in their career and wish to simply continue their practice.**

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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?

For this award in particular, we are requesting that **applicants are a member of a professional representative body** such as: Visual Artists Ireland, Film Director's Ireland, Association of Irish Composers or equivalent, or that their CV clearly shows a professional career.

One award of €1000 will be made to the successful applicant.

Call for Applications

Application Process:

Those wishing to apply for Age & Opportunity Professional Development Artist Award should submit:

- The application (online or via email)
- CV
- 3 samples of work (images/videos/files. Writing samples should be no longer than 2 pages long).
- Confirmation letter from an organisation or individual in respect of a training/upskilling opportunity.

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

Any queries relating to the award may also be directed to by email to arts@ageandopportunity.ie .

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 Professional Development Artist Award will be offered to a professional artist, (working in any artform) aged 50 + **based in the Republic of Ireland** who:

- Has membership of a **professional representative organisation** or equivalent (i.e. Visual Artists Ireland, Film Director's Ireland, Association of Irish Composers etc.);
- Is working in any artform and **based in the Republic of Ireland**;
- Has a demonstrated **intention to develop** their 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.

- Strength of **track record** [career path/achievements/ambitions] as indicated through your CV;
- Artistic quality and ambition as evident through your **supporting material;**
- Demonstration of the **need for training** and development;
- Demonstration of **how this opportunity/course will benefit your creative practice**;
- **Quality of training/development** opportunity (as evidenced by information on the opportunity, trainers etc.).

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 advice.

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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