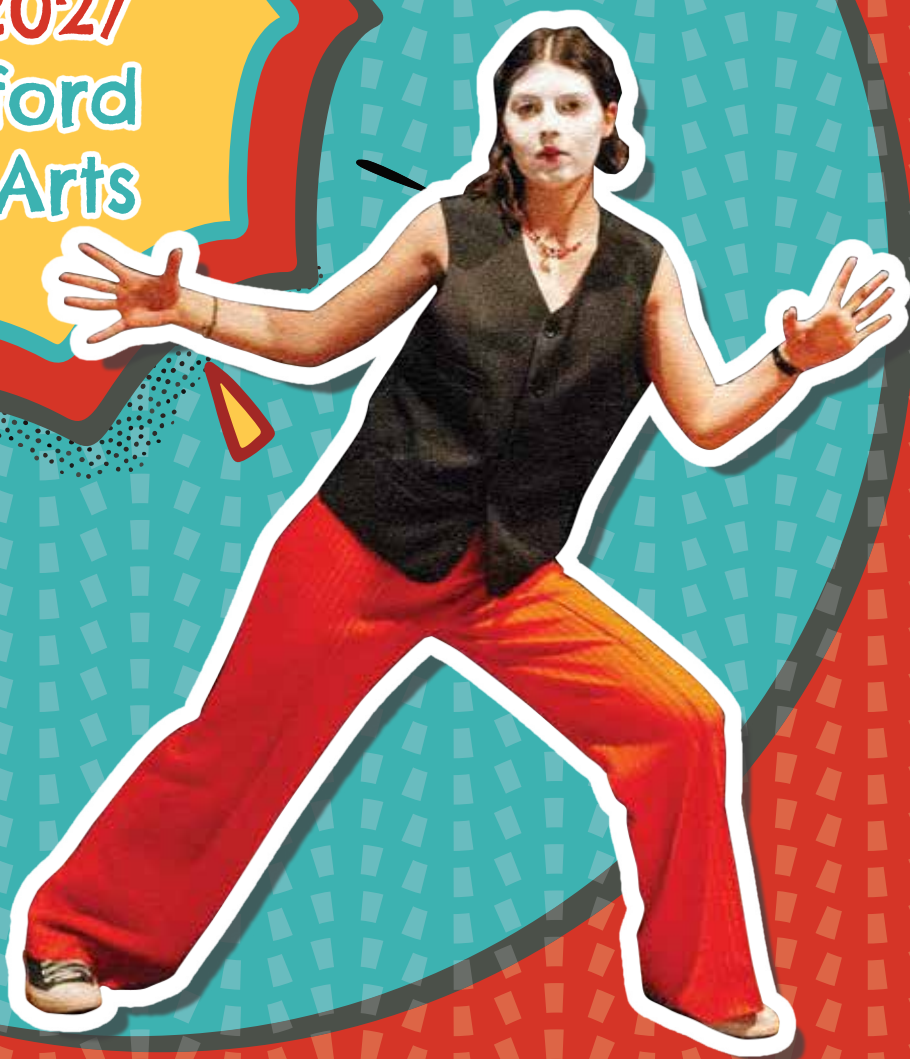


**Strategic Plan
2023-2027
Waterford
Youth Arts**





Foreword

We are excited to share with you our new Strategic Plan. Strategic Plan 2023-2027 will guide the development of Waterford Youth Arts for the next five years. Waterford Youth Arts has almost 40 years experience and expertise in providing excellent arts experiences and creative opportunities for young people and children in Waterford City and in that time, thousands of young people and children have been enabled to imagine, create and discover.

In 2021, our organisation began the process of developing a new five year Strategic Plan. This was created taking into consideration our funders requirements, the voice of young people who engage with the organisation, the needs in the community, former members, parents, volunteers, artists and practitioners, the staff team and the Board of Directors/Trustees. The purpose of Strategic Plan 2023-2027 is to share information about our vision, mission and values and the direction for our work over the next five years.

The Board has also commissioned a suite of additional documents to provide transparent information to all our stakeholders on the organisation's commitment to best practice; our proposed stages of development, what we have learned and our approach in our work; compliance with good governance; compliance with good employment practice and good financial management.

These stand alone documents can be sent on request or viewed on our website.

Lastly we would like to take this opportunity thank all those who contributed to this Plan, the funders who provide us with the resources we need to do the work, the community who support us, the staff & volunteers who carry out the work and all those past and present volunteers who gave of their time to serve on the Board and who supported the organisation to get where we are today.

From the Board



Photo credits: Henrique Silva; HK Stuart; Light-Sensitive Photography; Joe Evans; Mark Stedman Photography; Julija Fedotova

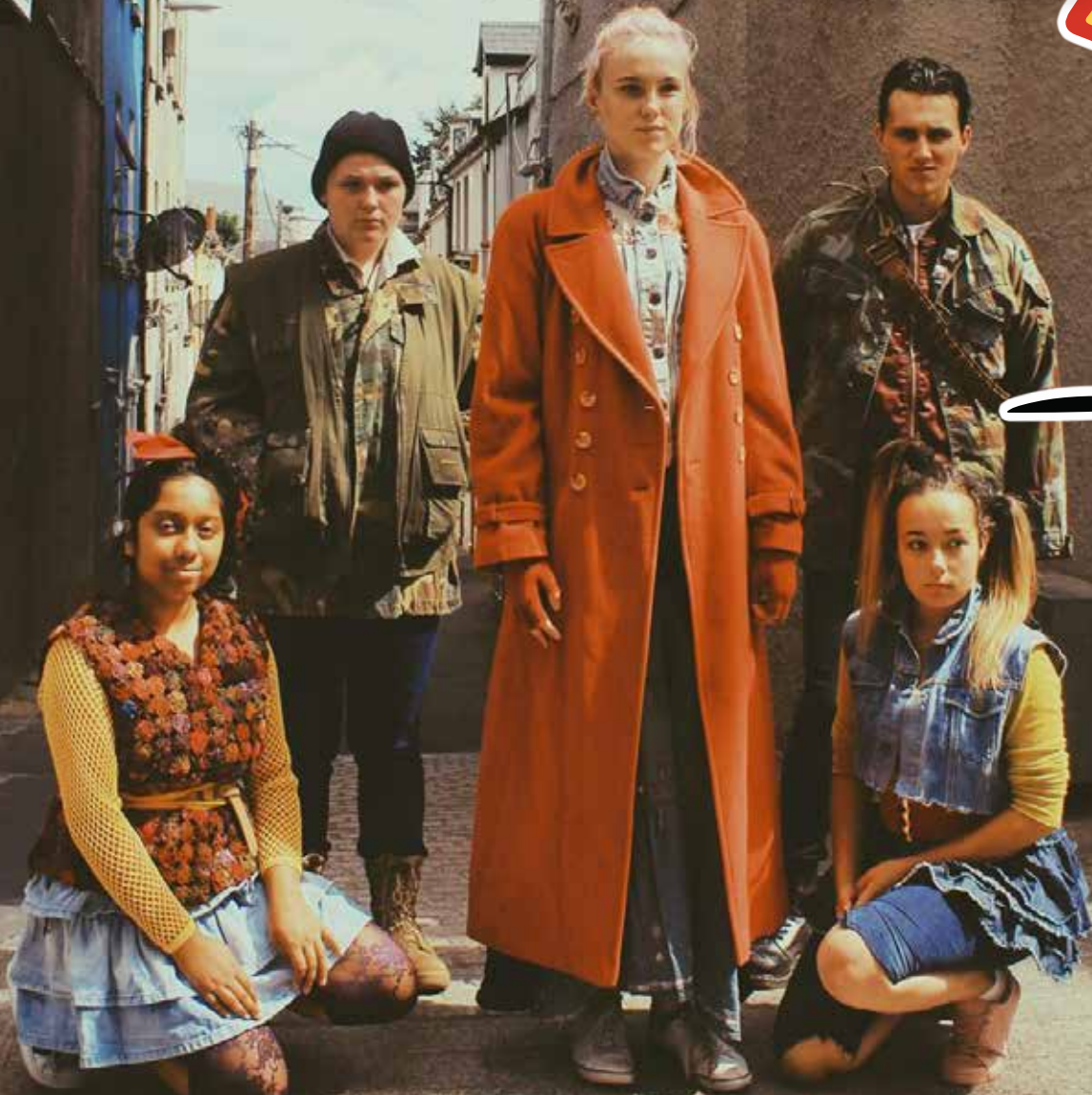
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‘...an important regional
arts resource organisation’

The Arts Council/
An Chomhairle Ealaíon, 2016



Who We Are

Waterford Youth Arts

- ➔ is the home of the arts for young people in Waterford
- ➔ is one of the largest and longest established youth arts organisations in Ireland (est. 1985)
- ➔ is a celebrated Youth Theatre
- ➔ is home to The Lit Young Writers Festival
- ➔ is youth-led, welcoming, safe and inclusive
- ➔ is informed by youth voice

This Plan is aligned with national policy in Ireland and international frameworks, notably *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures*; *Children First 2015*; *Making Great Art Work 2016-2025*; *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*; *National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making*.

Waterford Youth Arts has always engaged with stakeholders to evaluate the impact of our work and develop future actions. The development of this Strategic Plan was no different. It has been informed through consultation with our stakeholders, during a facilitated process by Sarah Bates Evoy in 2018-19, supported by SICAP Waterford Area Partnership. This process helped to lay the groundwork for the organisation to identify priorities for the future. The Board and staff then engaged in a planning process with a consultant Glynis Currie in 2021 – 2022 and Strategic Plan 2023-2027 was completed along with the development of other supplementary documents.



Our Mission

To be a resilient organisation, dedicated to the creativity and artistic expression of young people and children, creating opportunities for young people and children to collaborate with artists and practitioners, making art that excites and inspires them.

Our Values

To be safe organisation, with access for all, where young people are supported and encouraged to explore their creativity and potential

To be an inclusive organisation where young people feel safe, valued and included.


To be youth-led, where the voice of young people and children influences planning, projects, and people

To be a place of learning and development for young people, where emerging artists are nurtured and supported in the making of their art



Outcomes

- ➔ Communications skills
- ➔ Creativity and imagination
- ➔ Confidence and agency
- ➔ Planning and problem solving
- ➔ Resilience
- ➔ Relationships
- ➔ Emotional intelligence



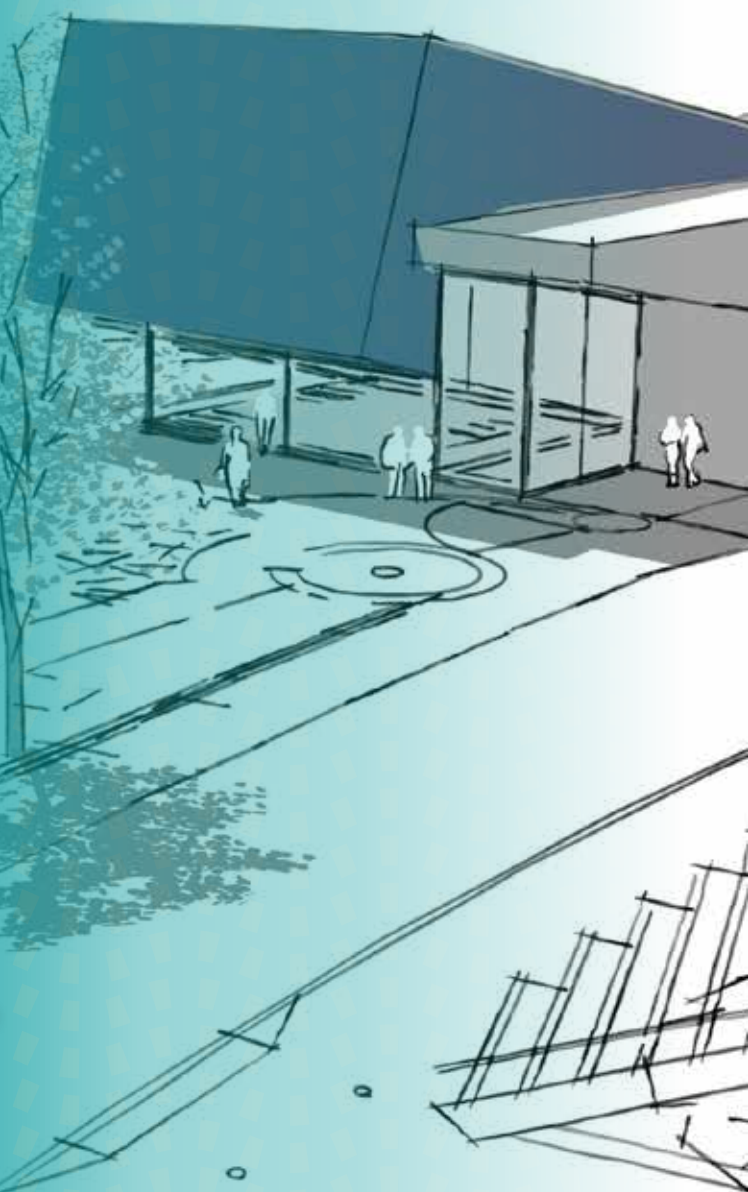
Waterford Youth Arts is one of the largest and longest established youth arts organisations in Ireland. In 2025 we will be celebrating our 40th anniversary year. We have worked through many challenges and have survived many changes in the operational environment that surrounds our work. Throughout that time, thousands of children and young people have been enabled to create art, to make theatre and explore their creativity in collaboration with professional artists and practitioners.

We are committed to the long term sustainability of the organisation and to ensure that our work in the future is protected and informed by all of our experience to date. This Strategic Plan sets about charting the course of the work of Waterford Youth Arts over the next five years, whilst remaining responsive to emerging needs; always informed by the voice of children and young people. Waterford Youth Arts is fully committed to complying with our funders requirements and compliance with good governance.



Goals 2023 - 2027

1. Deliver innovative projects, programmes and experiences that meet the needs of young people and children, creating opportunities to collaborate with professional artists and practitioners.
2. Develop sustainable and secure infrastructure for the arts for young people
3. Develop strong working links and partnerships with local, national and international networks and organisations in the making of young people and childrens art.
4. Committed to the empowerment and inclusion of young people through youth voice
5. Good practice, resilient organisation for the future





Goal 1

Deliver innovative projects, programmes and experiences that meet the needs of young people and children, creating opportunities to collaborate with professional artists and practitioners.

Aim

Supporting children and young people to build greater confidence and agency, communication skills, creativity and imagination; resilience; emotional intelligence; capacity to build relationships and develop their potential to progress onto further opportunities.

Objectives

- Deliver quality arts programmes
- Make positive youth contributions to community events
- Participate in national, European and international projects and events
- Engage skilled artists and practitioners

Goal 2

Develop sustainable and secure infrastructure for the arts for young people.

Aim

Secure permanent tenure of city centre home dedicated to youth arts with rehearsal and performance spaces and staff resources that will support the creative potential of young people.

Objectives

- ➔ Secure and resource permanent home
- ➔ Provide industry standard equipment and resources
- ➔ Resource additional staffing

Goal 3

Develop strong working links and partnerships with local, national and international networks for youth arts.

Aim

Waterford Youth Arts will work collaboratively with youth projects, arts organisations and educational bodies to advocate for greater recognition and resources for young people and children's art making.

Objectives

Working in collaboration with others to

- research and advocate for greater resourcing of youth arts in Ireland
- facilitate and support cooperation between youth arts organisations and networks
- work with the sector in professionalisation of youth arts

Strengthen links at local level

- youth and community sector
- primary and post primary schools
- arts sector in the region

Goal 4

Committed to the empowerment and inclusion of young people through youth voice.

Aim

Through policy and practice, provide support to strengthen and develop young people's participation, leadership, voice and visibility.

Objectives

- Support and develop Youth Advisory (Members) Committee
- Facilitate Youth leadership
- Support young people facing challenges
- Support young people to design, programme and run their own projects

Goal 5

Good practice, resilient organisation for the future.

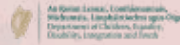
Aim

Waterford Youth Arts will be an organisation that operates from best practice and has security of long-term resourcing and increasing staffing to undertake its work.

Objectives

- Support and training for staff
- Good governance and compliance
- Effective management
- Succession planning
- Accessing funding
- Raising our profile

Funding Partners



Programme Partners



Waterford Youth Arts CLG

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www.waterforyoutharts.com

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