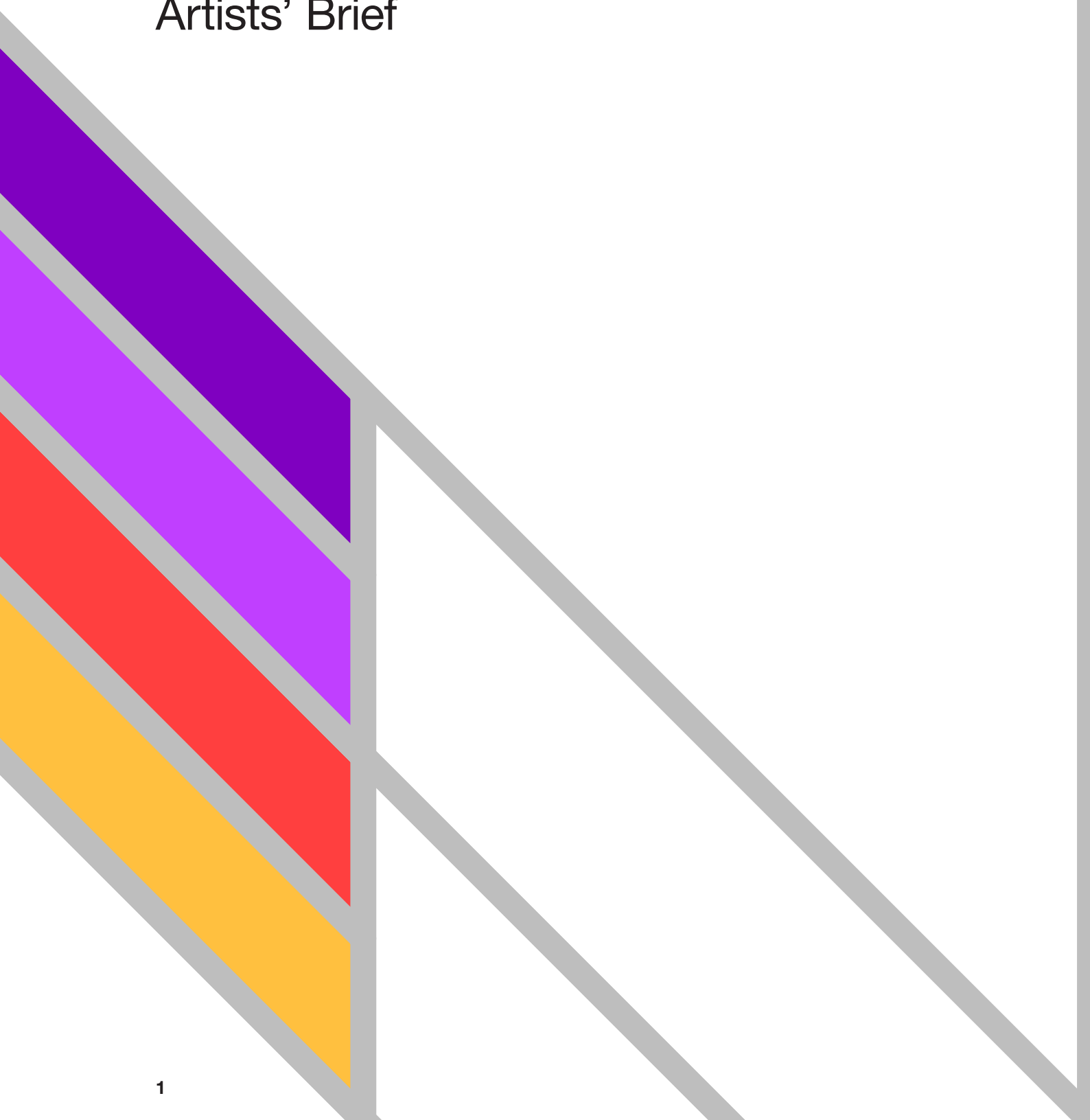


# Infrastructure

Fingal County Council's  
Public Art Programme  
2017 — 2021



Artists' Brief



## Infrastructure

Fingal County Council is embarking on a new phase of Public Art Commissioning utilising funds generated through the Per Cent for Art Scheme. *Infrastructure 2017 — 2021* is a local, national and international opportunity open to artists from all disciplines.

## Strands

*Infrastructure* is offered in 4 strands;

Public Art Awards,

Co-Productions,

Buildings and Public Spaces Artists Panel

People's Purchase.

## Selection

Commissions will be awarded by open competition and proposal fees will be paid to shortlisted artists. Selections will be made by panels comprised of artists, curators and public representatives from Fingal's Public Participation Network and Fingal County Council.

## Infrastructure supports artists in 4 principal ways

—  
Establishing a series of ambitious Public Art projects to take place throughout the county.

—  
Facilitating Co-Produced projects, which encourage active engagement between artists, community partners and local hosts.

—  
Purchasing artworks for a variety of buildings used by communities in Fingal, giving the opportunity for citizens to actively select contemporary artworks for their individual active spaces.

—  
Commissioning bold new artworks for the built environment and public spaces.

*Infrastructure* has been developed by Caroline Cowley, Fingal County Council's Public Art Co-ordinator and Curator Aisling Prior.

**“The Naul! Is it possible that you didn’t know the Naul? You don’t say you were in Milan and never saw the Cena!”**

— Samuel Beckett. *‘Fingal’*. *More Pricks than Kicks*, 1934

**“To be an artist, you have to move. When you stop, you are no longer an artist.”**

— Agnes Martin

## Introduction

With the *Infrastructure Public Art commissioning programme*, the critical role of the Local Authority in providing supports, and a knowledge base operating from ground level outwards, will be demonstrated.

The civic role of the local authority and the arts can be traced back to the Early Renaissance, to the powerful series of frescoes painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in 1338, titled **‘The Allegory of Good and Bad Government’**. Located in the council chambers of the Town Hall in Siena, the frescoes were commissioned by the town council, The Council of Nine. The series is considered one of the foremost secular paintings in the history of art. A utopian vision of urban and rural society, it illustrates a set of ideals by which to govern and thus to live, depicting paradigms of good ways of living in society, by championing industry, culture, the arts, agriculture and commerce.

For a number of years, Fingal County Council has established a reputation for facilitating unique opportunities for artists to explore its towns and communities in new and meaningful ways, and to tell stories about where and how we live now, through projects that have often exceeded expectations. The nature of many of these arts projects was perambulatory, or as one of our previously commissioned artists Dennis McNulty, put it, work was made by a means of a *‘derive’*, a meander through the many facets of the county.

The sheer scale and diversity of the county of Fingal has always required the artist to take a broad overview of its rural, urban and coastal profiles and by way of exploration, journey through them physically and metaphorically.

With *Infrastructure 2017 — 2021* we are extending invitations to artists to see anew, to visit and return, to listen to histories and people, tracing the patterns that make connections and comparisons between local and global, with Fingal placed as a microcosm of an ever-changing world

**Caroline Cowley**  
**Public Art Co-ordinator**  
**Fingal County Council**



**“The Naul! Is it possible that you didn’t know the Naul? You don’t say you were in Milan and never saw the Cena!”**

— *Samuel Beckett. ‘Fingal’. More Pricks than Kicks, 1934*

**Fingal is the third largest administrative county in Ireland, with almost 6% of the State's population living in the county. It has the most rapidly growing population in the country, currently estimated at 300,000 people.**

**The county is a pulse of economic and entrepreneurial activity. Dublin Airport is located in Fingal and the county is also home to many light industry and manufacturing companies especially in the pharmaceutical, technological and food production sectors.**

### **Urban and Suburban Fingal**

Swords, Thornleigh, Holywell, Balbriggan, Blanchardstown, Coolmine, Meakstown, Charlestown, Balgriffin, Kinsealy, Mulhuddart, Ongar, Hansfield, Carpenterstown, Porterstown, Sheepmoor, Clonsilla, Castleknock, Hartstown, Corduff, Phibblestown, Kilbarrack, Malahide.

With its proximity to Dublin Airport and its rich natural and cultural amenities, Swords is widely acknowledged as the county town. Future growth estimates that it will soon have a population of 100,000. Exciting developments are already underway in the planning of a cultural quarter for the town beginning with the newly renovated Swords Castle and the opening of a Civic and Cultural Centre in 2020. The town is eager to see more arts activity and arts presence in its centre and environs.

Blanchardstown, with a population of approximately 120,000 is one of the largest commercial and residential areas in the country and has a significant population of international newcomers. The ethnic diversity of the residents in suburban Blanchardstown and its hinterland is well reflected in the young school going population. Through the Per Cent for Art Scheme and the provision of new primary and secondary schools in Dublin 15, the rich cultural heritage of the new residents of the area has been celebrated. Blanchardstown is edged by the Phoenix Park, the Tolka Valley, the Royal Canal and Dunsink Observatory. It has its own dedicated arts centre, Draiocht and a busy public library. The Blanchardstown Centre, the Blanchardstown

Institute of Technology, the National Sports Campus and the National Aquatic Centre are key amenities of the area.

Balbriggan which has a population of 20,000 people, has a strong multi-ethnic identity. It is actively pursuing development of the town through the arts having had a previously strong studio presence in the area.

Balgriffin, Belcamp and Kinsealy rest to the edges of Malahide. South of the M50 are the new towns of Charlestown and Meakstown amongst others, and are characterised by housing developments and a large new retail centre.

### **Rural Fingal**

The Naul, Ballyboughal, Oldtown, Garristown, Lusk, Balrothery, Balscadden, Rowelstown.

The protection of the unique rural profile of Fingal is high on the Council's agenda. Controlling growth and careful planning of new developments, recognising the value of rural communities and re-affirming those communities' contribution to the overall richness and value of this vast county are just some of the ways by which the Council protects and supports rural life in Fingal. The Council has put in place a number of measures to mitigate the effects of climate change, by implementing a range of progressive biodiversity practices and green infrastructural policies. It is also committed to protecting and conserving the County's rich and diverse heritage in all its forms, preserving and activating places for future generations.

Rural Fingal is made up of villages most of which have a population of less than 1,000 people. The County is characterised by gently rolling countryside to the centre, extending upwards to the north of the county as you move towards Garristown and the Naul. The County's quality soils are extremely suitable for cereal production and horticulture, and its location makes it ideal for food production and agri-business, which flourishes in areas such as Rush and Lusk. Fingal County Council has committed to maintaining the delicate profile of these areas as an essential part of the

growth of Fingal both economically and culturally into the future. Key features of these towns include indigenous variations of vernacular architecture, and existing, well-used community halls like those in Rowelstown and Oldtown. Ballyboughal is celebrated for the Ballyboughal Hedgerow Society which delivers a number of educational talks on this important natural asset annually. The tradition of mumming also flourishes in this specific area.

### Coastal Fingal

Sutton, Bayside, Howth, Baldoyle, Portmarnock, Malahide, Rush, Donabate, Portrane, Loughshinny, Skerries, Balbriggan.

Fingal boasts 88km of coastline. Prominent visual markers on the coast are the twelve Martello Towers, Lambay Island, Ireland's Eye, Shennick, St. Patrick's Island and Rockabil. Previous coastal artistic activity has taken place with projects such as Fearghus Ó'Conchúir and Dan Dubowitz's Tattered Outlaws of History, the annual, award winning 'Resort Revelations' in Lynders Mobile Home Park, Portrane and an ongoing residency at the Loughshinny Boathouse.

Rush has a very active local community. On its main street there is a busy, award winning state of the art library and performance space. Rush was also once home to the impressive Kenure Park House of which only the portico remains. The local community has expressed its aspiration for cultural and social regeneration in the centre of Rush as there are a number of empty units along the main street which may have potential for arts activity.

Skerries, awarded Ireland's Tidy Town Overall Winner in 2016, has a long established arts festival, 'Skerries Soundwaves', and was the site of the famous Red Island Holiday Park. Portmarnock, the County's silver strand beach, is acknowledged as an area of outstanding natural beauty for the local and city visitor.

Malahide similarly is a pretty village which has grown in visitor numbers due to the major re-development of Malahide Castle. The village centre is currently developing a Public Realm plan

to further enhance the town's open spaces. Howth, a working harbour town, is also popular with tourists and day-trippers, walking the many scenic routes and the two piers, and taking boat trips over to Ireland's Eye. Its Martello Tower houses the Museum of Radio and the Howth Dublin Bay Prawn Festival is a huge annual attraction each Spring. Sutton, Portmarnock, Balbriggan, Donabate, Portrane and Loughshinny all have much loved scenic beaches.

### Community Generated Themes for Artists.

Artists are free to research their own ideas and thematics for artworks and projects. However, in order to inform the *Infrastructure* commissioning brief from the outset, a county-wide consultation process was carried out by the Arts Office of Fingal County Council in Spring/Summer 2016.

This consultation process comprised of a series of public presentations in Baldoyle Library, Swords Castle, Blanchardstown Library, Balbriggan Library and Rush Library in 2016. An online questionnaire was widely disseminated through the Council's Public Participation Portal and through Facebook and Twitter. These combined processes elicited helpful direction from the communities in Fingal.

The following themes, to serve as a guide, emerged as areas of consideration for artists

Future, Youth, Growth, Margins, Isolation, Community, Action, Agency, Leadership, Service, Urban Centres, Education, Commerce, Business, Sky, Aviation, Astronomy, Visit, Hospitality, Tourism, Movement, Migration, Newcomers, Ethnicity, Multiculturalism, Diversity, Home, Building, Neighbours, Friendship, Food, Nourishment, Earth, Open Space, Sea, Nature, Heritage, Folklore, Cultural Tradition, Biosphere, Ecosystems, Environment.

### Housing

With the continuing growth of its population, the demand for increased provision of high quality social housing in Fingal is extremely high. Providing social housing for those who are unable to provide housing for themselves is one of the highest

priorities of the County Council. Whilst Fingal County Council is actively increasing the stock of social housing to meet the long term housing needs of households on the local authority housing list, an applicant can expect to wait several years before the Council can offer a house.

And with the allocation of a new, long-awaited house or apartment comes a spirit of hope, adventure and community-building. This phenomenon presents a unique and meaningful opportunity for an artist to work with people to mark and celebrate this turning point in their lives. Fingal County Council's ambitious social housing programme, which places importance on innovation in housing design and of the public realm, provides a rich context for artists to create new artworks and projects over the coming years.

### Food

Food production and the associated agri-business, including seafood and coastal produce, is of key importance to the county. Fingal is the most important centre of food production in Ireland with the region supplying 60% of Ireland's total fruit and vegetables. High profile companies such as Keelings, Keoghs and Country Crest grow, distribute and export their produce from this base. There has been an increase in the availability of soft fruits and market vegetables for domestic consumption and export in the county.

Subsequently, designated food festivals have flourished recently, notably *The Flavours of Fingal* at Newbridge Demesne and *the Howth Dublin Bay Prawn Festival* each Spring. In recent curatorial practice food has allowed audiences to consider the essence of food production from the perspective of globalisation, food security in the landscape of climate change and the cultural, economic and historical significance of food production. With the rise of the artisan producer, located within traditional farming practices, and of the presence of over 800 allotment sites in the County, there is artistic potential for performance, exchange of ideas, transfer of knowledge and convivial hosting projects in the broadest sense to be enabled through *Infrastructure*.

### Tourism

Tourism is an important factor in Fingal, sustaining 200,000 jobs (one in four jobs in Fingal) across all sectors (transport, retail, entertainment and other services). Dublin Airport is a key driver of the sector – every one job created in the airport creates three to four in the region.

Malahide Castle and Gardens is Fingal's top visitor attraction. The oldest parts of the castle date back to the 12th century. It was home to the Talbot family for almost 800 years (1185 to 1975).

Newbridge House and Farm and Ardgillan Castle and Demesne are also open to the public and are much-used leisure and recreation amenities in the County.

Swords Castle has very recently been restored and re-opened as a civic asset and tourist draw. The famous Cobbe family planted an orchard in the 18th century planting cherries, plums and damsons and still holds the oldest surviving apple tree dating back to 1890.

The coastline of Fingal is another important visitors' attraction.

### Social Inclusion

As Fingal is a young, vibrant and growing county, the Council is deeply committed to developing a more socially inclusive society by promoting equality of participation and access. The role and activities of the Arts Office reflects this commitment, and expresses this in the Fingal Arts Plan, 2013 — 2017, "Rich in Land and Sea".

While much of the county is experiencing high levels of growth and prosperity, a profile of poverty and social exclusion, contained within the current Local Community Development Committee through SICAP Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme, has identified the following target populations for particular supports and resources; Children and young people, single parent families, unemployed people, Travellers, new ethnic communities, people with disabilities and older people.



Consultation feedback was strong from new communities that are recently identified by the extended urban profile of Fingal. These new communities are looking for their place within greater Fingal in order to better integrate within it and to establish their identity within the County. A desire for place-making strategies and the resourcing of innovative mechanisms to develop specific communities of interest emerged. *Infrastructure* aspires to starting long term conversations with the people of the new neighbourhoods in Meakstown, Charlestown, Stapolin, Millers Green, Ongar and beyond through engaged, sustained and embedded arts projects.

Engaging young people from across the different communities and demographics in Fingal, with a special emphasis on working towards engaging young boys and young men, (who are most often disengaged by the arts as illustrated by Dr Emer Smyth of the ESRI at the Places Matter Conference in Jan 2017) is of particular interest. Innovative, creative and imaginative arts interventions and arts projects using new media such as digital arts, social media and street arts towards increasing real possibilities for participation and access in the arts for those who want to be involved, will be supported through *Infrastructure*.



## Infrastructure Artistic Principles

—  
To enable highly considered, fully researched and pertinent art projects, where adequate time, curatorial support and expertise will be provided by Infrastructure.

—  
To trust the art process and place artists at the centre of the commissions programme.

—  
To foster greater connections with communities in Fingal.

—  
To promote exploration, in all its forms, of Fingal as a county.

**“To be an artist, you have to move.  
When you stop, you are no longer  
an artist.”**

— *Agnes Martin*

Infrastructure 2017 — 2021 is comprised of 4 strands. Artists may submit for multiple strands.

## Strand 1 Public Art Awards

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The Public Art Awards will be made by a Two Stage Open Competition. Up to three major Public Art Awards of up to **€75,000** each will be made to artists over the life of the commissioning programme.

The Public Art Awards will be made to artists proposing particularly ambitious, inspiring and challenging ideas for projects, interventions, artworks and cultural events, of international significance, in Fingal. Experimentation, innovation and working with the myriad of resources found in the county are encouraged.

Shortlisted artists will be given time to develop a worked-up and budgeted proposal for the second stage of the selection process and will be paid a fee of **€1,000** on receipt of second stage proposals. The Client reserves the right to invite the shortlist of artists to attend an interview as part of the second stage.

Final project ideas for all commissions will be agreed and signed off between the selected artists and the Fingal Public Art Co-ordinator. The Client reserves the right not to award a commission after the second stage. Artists applying for Strand 1 must submit a non-binding indication of the budget required, which may be up to **€75,000** incl VAT.

## Strand 2 Co-Productions

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Co-Productions will be awarded by Two Stage Open Competition. Up to five commissions with budgets of between **€15,000** and **€30,000** will be awarded through Strand 2.

Co-Productions will be context led and will be authored and produced in collaboration with a local community partner or a host group. An element of risk taking is implicit in these commissions, which should aim to empower the collaborators and invite critical discourse in the field of socially engaged practice.

Experimental ways of developing new partnerships and engaging new collaborators and audiences are actively encouraged. Artists are not expected to have identified a community partner or host at this first stage of the process. *Infrastructure* / Fingal County Council will assist shortlisted and selected artists in making contacts and establishing relationships with people from existing community development and arts organisations, individuals and voluntary groups active in the Fingal area. A list of community groups in the County will be available.

Artists can also bring together new groups of individuals or ‘communities of interest’ to work with them on a project.

Artists shortlisted into the second stage will be expected to research and develop a detailed and budgeted proposal, for which a fee of **€700** will be paid.

In some cases and at the discretion of the Client, a pilot scheme may be awarded to a shortlisted artist as a means of supporting artistic experimentation and investigation. Final project ideas for all commissions will be agreed and signed off between the Artist’s and Fingal County Council’s Public Art Co-ordinator.

Artists applying for Strand 2 ‘Co-Productions’ must submit a non-binding indication of the budget required, which may be in the region of between **€15,000** and **€30,000** incl VAT.

### **Strand 3**

#### **Buildings and Public Spaces Artists Panel**

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Shortlisted artists, selected through this open competition process, will be included on an Artists Panel, which will be active from 2017 to 2021. Artists applying to be considered to make an artwork for Strand 3 do not have to nominate either a location or a budget at this first stage.

From this Artists Panel, various commissioning processes will be implemented to select an artist to make work for, or in relation to, a particular building or a public place over the course of the *Infrastructure* programme. In some cases, artists may be directly appointed to a commission. A proposal development fee will be paid to all shortlisted artists.

Strand 3 'Buildings and Public Spaces' presents opportunities for artists from across artistic disciplines, to work closely with the Fingal County Council Architects/Planning Department and the public/private sector at various stages throughout construction of new builds across the County. Artists may be engaged to commence work as part of a design team, or to make an artwork, in any art form, for when construction is completed.

Sites, places and budgets will be agreed with the Public Art Co-ordinator as they arise. Strand 3 will also provide opportunities for artists to be commissioned to work on major new developments in the County whereby the private developer is required to allocate an agreed percentage of the overall development and construction costs to the creation and production of new artwork(s) in the built environment.

### **Strand 4**

#### **People's Purchase**

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Since its establishment in 1994, Fingal County Council has been building an impressive collection of artworks for its public buildings. The People's Purchase will expand Fingal County Council's existing art collection further into the community in new and democratic ways.

In direct response to the public consultation process, where significant interest in the making and exhibition of contemporary paintings and other visual artworks was demonstrated, *Infrastructure* will continue to support the creative process, and will also facilitate the curation and purchase of artworks by representatives of community groups and other stakeholders for a range of community and public buildings across Fingal.

A fund of up to **€50,000** is being created for communities of interest to curate and purchase artworks for their own community centres and for other local public or meeting spaces.

On receipt of images and examples of artworks from submitting artists through this open process, *Infrastructure* will assist a range of community groups from across the county to begin the process of curating and purchasing artworks for their individual community spaces and other public buildings. These groups will be supported by a professional curator through the process.

In order to nurture and support the making and collecting of artworks by artists from the County, a fund of 25% of the total Strand 4 budget is being allocated to purchase artworks made by Fingal artists. This includes artists who were born, live, work or study in Fingal.

Artists submitting artworks for consideration for the People's Purchase must send images of available artworks and the prices of same.

## Eligibility

*Infrastructure* is an international, national and local opportunity. It is open to artists from across all art forms. Commissioned artists must be tax compliant and will be required to provide a Tax Clearance Cert and relevant insurances. Where an artist is working with children, Garda vetting will be required.

## Selection Criteria

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The quality of an artist's previous work or the demonstration of an applicant's artistic potential. (Special consideration will be made where a submission is being made by an emerging artist)

—

Cultural value for Fingal

—

The potential to attract international audiences and critical attention

—

Innovation and new ways of thinking and engagement

—

Potential of project to connect meaningfully with new audiences

—

Feasibility

## Selection Process

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Commission procedures are in line with the 'Public Art; Per Cent for Art Scheme. General National Guidelines', 2004

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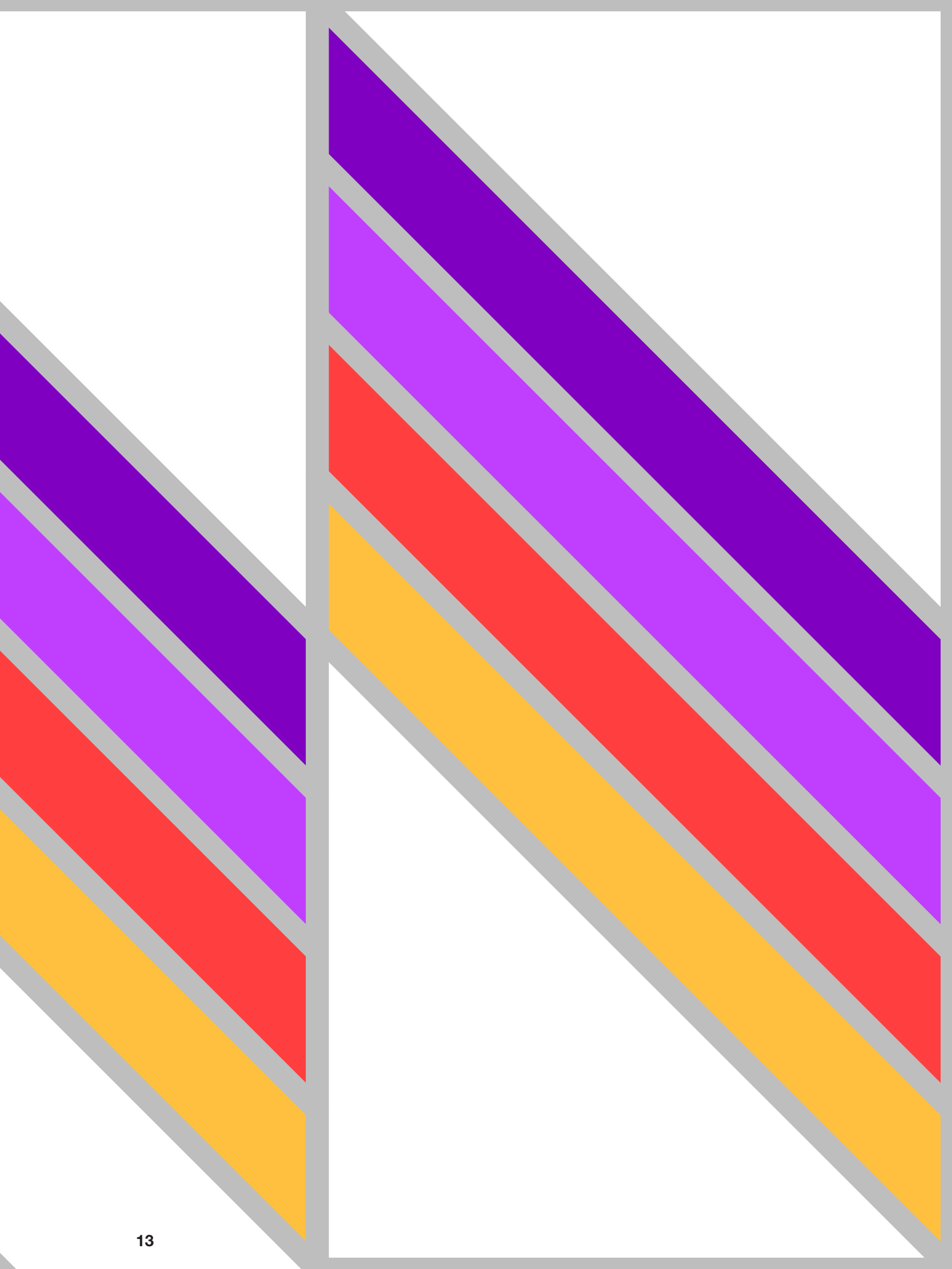
The application process is designed to be as 'artist friendly' and flexible as possible.

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Worked up proposals are not sought at this stage of the commission process.

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Selected artists will be resourced and paid for proposal development.



## Application Process

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**Artists may submit for multiple strands. To apply for any of the opportunities offered through *Infrastructure* Fingal County Council's Public Art Commissioning Programme 2017 — 2021, please visit the programme website where you can download an Application Form and guidelines of submission requirements.**

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**Deadline for completed submissions;  
5pm Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2017.**

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**[www.fingalarts.ie/infrastructure](http://www.fingalarts.ie/infrastructure)**

## In-House Public Art Group

—  
Dr Gerry Clabby  
Heritage Officer

—  
Caroline Cowley  
Public Art Co-ordinator

—  
Íde de Bairtiseál  
Senior Executive Officer, Community, Culture  
and Sports

—  
Betty Boardman  
Senior County Librarian

—  
Mary Egan  
Senior Executive Officer Housing

—  
Imelda Hickey  
Senior Executive Planner

—  
Denise Madden  
Capital Finance - Community, Culture & Sports  
Department

—  
Fionnuala May  
County Architect

—  
Rory O'Byrne  
Arts Officer

—  
Pat Queenan  
Principal Community Development Officer

—  
Paul Smyth  
Senior Executive Economic Enterprise and Tourism

—  
Annette Sweeney  
Senior Executive Architect

—  
David Storey  
Senior Executive Operations

## Selection Panel

Selection will be made by a panel comprising  
a combination of the following people;

—  
Valerie Connor  
Artist, Curator and Academic.

—  
Caroline Cowley  
Fingal County Council Public Art Co-ordinator.

—  
Dr Declan Long  
Co-Director of the MA 'Art in the Contemporary  
World', lecturer in Faculty of Visual Culture, NCAD.  
Turner Prize judge, 2013.

—  
Rory O'Byrne  
Fingal County Council Arts Officer.

—  
Aisling Prior  
Independent Curator, former Public Art advisor  
to the Arts Council and Artistic Director, Breaking  
Ground, Ballymun.

—  
Representatives of the relevant PPN  
(Public Participation Network).

—  
2 members of the In-House Public Art Group.

—  
Art Form specific artists.

## Contact

For further information about *Infrastructure*  
please contact;

Caroline Cowley  
Public Art Co-ordinator  
Fingal County Council  
Arts Office  
Community, Recreation & Amenities Department

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**w:** [www.fingalarts.ie/infrastructure](http://www.fingalarts.ie/infrastructure)

