

Arts and Culture Policy

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1 Summary

The Green Party Arts and Culture Policy advocates measures so that every Irish citizen and resident increase their engagement with Irish arts and our rich heritage and develop their full creative potential within equitable, healthy, and sustaining environments. Our policy highly values Irish culture, nationally and internationally in its continued commitment to develop thriving, equitable and sustainable Arts, Heritage and Creative Industry sectors.

Culture, encompassing the arts and creative industries, offers citizens and residents vital and inclusive opportunities to reflect and imagine better ways to live. Thus, our policy builds on international Green Party foundational ecological values to advocate the civil society UNESCO-endorsed Earth Charter (2000) as the overarching vision and integrated values education framework to guide Ireland's arts, heritage and creative sectors in coordinating inclusive creative activities to inspire citizens and residents to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015).

To support the immense and urgent cultural shift to an equitable, sustainable era, the Green Party Arts and Culture Policy recognises culture's important role as a pillar of sustainability.

Increasing ecoliteracy across arts, heritage and creative industry sectors with the Earth Charter (recognised by the UNESCO Chair for Education for Sustainable Development, ESD) empowers the arts and culture sectors' crucial leadership role to creatively and inclusively inspire diverse audiences and communities about the integrated social and environmental principles needed for a just transition and for enduring personal, collective, planetary and intergenerational wellbeing.

2 Key Policy Points

- 1 Advocating the people's Earth Charter (2000) as a civil society and UNESCO-endorsed ethical and systems literacy education framework to guide inclusive and coordinated creative responses to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015) and strategic cultural investment priorities of the National Development Plan.
- 2 Supporting arts, heritage and creative industry sectors in their efforts to reduce their carbon footprint by building on the work being done by the Green Arts Initiative Ireland.
- 3 Enabling artists and arts workers to pursue their careers with dignity by advancing the innovative BIA (Basic Income for Artists) scheme and continuing to support wellbeing supports initiatives, Safe to Create and Minding Creative Minds.
- 4 Providing appropriate pay and conditions for artists and arts workers and sustainable funding for arts venues.
- 5 Establishing a mechanism for evaluating, reviewing and improving Irish government agencies involved in the funding and development of the arts.
- 6 Supporting arts and culture in the community with business grants, investment in physical infrastructure, and developing night-time cultural activities.
- 7 Ensuring access to the arts for all by initiating a strategy and plan to set the goals for the Arts support programmes that can be provided by the State.
- 8 Providing assistance to the arts sector by introducing a State backed indemnity insurance scheme, and continuing the Section 481 tax incentives for the industry beyond 2024.

3 Policy

3.1 The Earth Charter to guide sector efforts for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Green Party advocates the UNESCO-endorsed Earth Charter (2000, EarthCharter.org) comprising 16 comprehensive principles organised under four pillars: 1) Respect & Care for the Community of Life, 2) Ecological Integrity, 3) Social & Economic Justice, and 4) Non-Violence, Democracy & Peace, as the overarching framework to increase fluency across the culture sectors, on the integrated ecological vision, values and language, all citizens and residents need to embrace to advance coordinated actions for an equitable, just and sustainable future and advance strategic investment priorities of the National Development Plan. The Earth Charter is foundational as a recognized ethical and ecoliteracy framework (systems learning) framework in the global shift in education toward Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as it combines the accepted values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with the environmental guidelines of the global IUCN (International Union for Nature Conservation). The Earth Charter aligns with the Irish Department of Education's strategy to upskill Irish citizens' and residents' formal and lifelong learning for the global shift in Education for ESD and national efforts to achieve the UN Sustainability Development Goals 2030. The guiding vision and principles of the Earth Charter explains why the Green Party fully supports the priorities in the National Development Plan, including strategic investment priorities to:

- Strengthen Ireland's reputation as a leader in the cultural arena through the development of a world-class network of sustainable cultural infrastructure through the National Cultural Institutions Investment Programme.
- Support inclusive place-making through investment in Regional Cultural Infrastructure, with a focus on sustainable and energy efficient infrastructural investment.
- Develop the Creative Industries and a vibrant Media Production and Audio Visual Sector through investment in Screen Ireland and the Media Commission.
- Safeguard our important cultural heritage through digitisation of the National Collections, which will provide new ways to interact with our rich collection of

artistic works and important historical artefacts, as well as providing increased opportunities to access the collections.

3.2 Supports for arts, heritage and creative industry sectors to reduce their carbon footprint

The Green Party supports the initiative by Green Arts Initiative in Ireland (GAII) for an all-of-government approach involving funders, local government and local authority stakeholders, government departments and agencies concerned with the arts, environment, sustainability, and climate action to evolve and align policies that embed sustainability, as defined by the UNESCO-endorsed Earth Charter, across the arts and culture sector's organisations and activities. Areas for consideration include:

(a) Increasing cultural understanding of the integrated vision and the social and environmental values needed for a just transition for an enduring equitable and sustainable future.

(b) Reducing environmental impact and address social challenges in an integrated way across the sector.

(c) Supporting "Green" events and relevant ecoliteracy training and mentoring initiatives to help creative practitioners and arts support organisations get started.

(d) Advocating for sustainable materials and production with inclusive social practices into initial brief/commission/funding of arts projects and as a criteria for funding assessments.

(e) Embedding sustainable materials and production methods should be included in the initial brief/commission/funding of arts projects and locking this into the funding as a criteria for assessment of suitable projects.

(f) Advocating for voluntary reporting on carbon emissions initially, tying these eventually into a requirement of funded arts organisations. Metrics used for measuring and monitoring carbon must be in line with best EU practice.

(g) Monitoring energy sustainability and waste in line with best practice film and television production; encouraging the use of toolkits adapted for film, theatre and music productions; advocating for sustainable energy companies, energy conservation techniques and data conservation guidelines.

(h) Supporting ways to educate and facilitate recycling; re-using and storage of props and sets used in films or theatre productions; and advocating re-purposing facilities for art materials to be included in any new venues and larger community arts spaces.

3.3 Enabling artists and arts workers to pursue their careers with dignity.

(a) Equitable, Just and Sustaining Living Wage: the Green Party is committed to an equitable, just and sustaining living wage for artists and arts workers in Ireland and will continue to advance the innovative BIA (Basic Income for Artists) introduced by Green Party Minister Catherine Martin as a pilot scheme in 2022.

(b) Safe to Create: A dignity at work programme introduced by Minister Catherine Martin. The aim is to impact change on the culture and practices of the arts sector to provide safer working conditions for artists and arts workers. This programme is managed by Irish Theatre Institute, on behalf of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and in partnership with the Arts Council, Screen Ireland and Minding Creative Minds.

(c) Minding Creative Minds: the Green Party advocates continued support for Minding Creative Minds -an organisation established to offer important wellbeing & support programmes to the Irish creative sector, including a 24/7 free dedicated phone helpline, free counselling sessions, financial assistance, consumer and legal advice, career guidance, life coaching and support for non-Irish nationals and their families.

3.4 Providing sustainable funding for artists, arts workers and arts venues.

The Green Party Manifesto 2016 pledged to doubling investment in the Arts to a total of €130 million. This has been achieved in 2022 and we pledge to continue this support and to ensure that sustainable funding is provided to arts centres, and the provision of proper pay and conditions for all artists and arts workers.

(a) Extending “multi- year funding” to more of the larger arts organisations, which would allow for longer term planning and ensuring that Arts organisations that apply for multi-year funding are not penalized in the event of an increase in living costs.

- (b) A match-funding scheme for arts organisations in rural and “peripheral” communities.
- (c) Reviewing planning legislation with a minimum of 2 per cent of space given over to artistic, cultural and creative use in all large-scale developments.
- (d) Investing in the physical infrastructure needed by artists and makers to create their work such as studios, work spaces, recording studios, and places to showcase their work such as galleries, theatres and markets, all of which are currently lacking
- (e) Culture Nights (an Arts Council initiative with the support of Local Authorities) and Cruinniú na nÓg (an initiative by Creative Ireland). Expanding and continuing these initiatives but directly supporting Arts centres to fund their programme of events so they do not have to do so from their own funds.
- (f) Developing multipurpose accessible venues nationwide to accommodate both daytime and night-time cultural and creative activities. Funding these venues to receive touring arts and culture initiatives.
- (g) Incorporating best practice from other countries in the Policy where appropriate, for example in France where Amazon can’t undercut book sellers.
- (h) Recognising the role that technology and innovation will play in the future of our artistic and cultural life, the GP will seek to form joint ventures between our enterprise and tourism bodies and our artistic and cultural organisations.
- (i) Ensuring that planning legislation should make room for artistic, cultural and creative space in all new public developments.
- (j) Ensuring every organisation, institution and venue that receives funding has a robust audience outreach programme. Locking this into funding criteria will ensure that persons from underprivileged and marginalised communities understand that Ireland’s arts community is stronger if they are part of it.

3.5 Establishing a mechanism for evaluating and reviewing Irish government agencies involved in the funding and development of the arts.

ARTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND: *While the Green Party is fully supportive and appreciative of the work being done by the Arts Council, it believes that the services it supplies to the arts sector should be regularly reviewed. Areas for review would include:*

- (a) **The funding application process for artists.** Assessing the application process and advocating for the provision of clear and simple information on its website for arts grants funding and for providing information to artists on grants available at local, national and levels (similar to Citizens Information Resources).
- (b) **Arts Council advisors.** Assessing the overall value of advisors that are engaged by the Arts Council, the cost effectiveness of such advisors including the benefits or otherwise of a complex Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) begun in 2022 to engage advisory services.
- (c) **The funding of arts centres.** Assessing the funding application process. Features of the process to be reviewed would include the value of a system whereby staffing for arts centres is assessed as part of core costs such as electricity and phone is punitive on staffing and thus on the programme arts centres can provide to the public and on the support they can give to artists.

Rationale: Covid-19 has highlighted not only the precarious economic viability of artists, it has also highlighted the lack of sustainable support for arts centres and arts workers. It has exposed the fact that arts centres have been dependent on community employment scheme workers and contract staff as the mainstay of their core employees and that they have been for many years unable to hire in-house staff like sound engineers, projectionists, health and safety officers, education managers, curators, maintenance staff. This has had the ripple effect of impacting on the support they can give to artists and particularly emerging artists, community groups, new communities and schools.

CULTURE IRELAND:

The Green Party will continue to advocate for increased funding for Culture Ireland, the Irish state agency was established in 2005 to promote and advance Irish Arts internationally and is funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture. Minister Catherine Martin pledged over 800,000 euro to Culture Ireland in 2023 and pledged to work toward the Global Ireland aim, to double Ireland's global cultural footprint by supporting Irish artists to present work to audiences worldwide. Culture Ireland creates and supports opportunities for Irish artists and companies to present and promote their work at strategic international festivals and venues. They also develop platforms to present outstanding Irish work to international audiences, through showcases at key global arts events, including the Edinburgh Festival and the Venice Biennale.

LOCAL COUNCILS:

Ensuring that local authorities allocate sufficient funding to allow the fulfilment of long-term strategic cultural and arts planning and that there is greater parity between the levels of funding given to artists and arts venues by local councils.

STATE BOARDS:

Continuing the progress that Minister Catherine Martin has achieved in bringing about better gender representation and diversity in Ireland's arts, culture, sport and media sectors.

3.6 Supporting arts and culture in the community

- a) Expanding the capital improvement programme 'Re-Imagining our Public Spaces' which currently involves funding local authorities to adapt, equip or otherwise improve public spaces cultural and events activities, and to incentivise the private sector to activate appropriate private spaces for public attendance at artistic, cultural and entertainment events.

An expansion of the programme would include investing in local physical infrastructure needed by artists and makers to create their work such as studios, work spaces, recording studios, spaces for music and dance schools. It would also give specific financial support to people who are trying to create an arts business; exploring arts spaces with the OPW; looking at incorporating art rooms/stages as well as sports fields into any new school building plans.

- b) Supporting the development of night-time cultural activities by continuing to review and revise the current licensing legislation to facilitate late night openings for bars and venues across the country to enhance and revitalise our night time culture and economy and to providing the supports needed to appoint Night Mayors for our major cities (in the GP Manifesto)

Rationale: Catherine Martin: "The Department is of course concerned about the impact of falling numbers of nightclubs on night-time culture. It is a vital part of our lived experience and particularly impacts on young people. The Department is in regular contact with members of Give Us the Night, who keep us informed of developments (and are part of the NTE [Night-Time Economy] Implementation Group) and help us to understand the challenges facing the sector."

- c) Supporting a Community Arts Programme in every town in Ireland. Community Arts can empower participants to reach their full potential as members of their community, by arousing curiosity, developing self-efficacy, building capacity to create and imagine collectively, and strengthening a sense of purpose and belonging to the community. Community Arts always starts with conversations and those conversations need to continue throughout any process that evolves. It can begin with small workshops, where people try different things. Supporting people in the Community Arts process is a long-term investment in strong and solid community development. This organic citizen and resident led Community Arts model reflects the Green Party Community Development model which is in the current Programme for Government. Community Arts participants can influence and direct their own community's wellbeing and cohesion. Meaningful creative programmes happen when relationships develop, conversations are ongoing and participants are supported and resourced. It is about people discovering and using their voices creatively. Community Arts is about empowerment.
- d) Exploring new initiatives such as Virtual Arts Centres to address the lack of opportunity for new and emerging artists and to provide a platform where community arts groups and professional artists could showcase dance, music video and Virtual Reality projects.

3.7 Ensuring access to the arts for all

The Green Party commits to ensuring that all school children will have access to Arts appreciation and performance classes from the earliest age; that Arts schools and colleges will be properly resourced for both Irish and international students; that Arts facilities and infrastructure will be supported across the country; and that appropriate resources will be provided by the State to support access to the arts for all, as set out in the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1946) and reiterated and expanded upon in the Earth Charter (2000) for newer understanding of what advances personal, collective, planetary and intergenerational wellbeing for a just, equitable and sustainable era.

The Green Party commits to the implementation of the actions recommended in the 'Life Worth Living report on the Arts and Culture Recovery task force' and to fully engage with 'Project Ireland 2040' which sets the vision and strategy for the development of our country, including social and cultural

development, and provides for the enabling investment to implement that strategy.

The Green Party also commits to honouring the Arts in Education Charter 2012 (due for revision in 2024).

3.8 Providing assistance with insurance and energy schemes

The Green Party is committed to providing assistance to the arts sector by:

- a) Providing affordable insurance options to arts and culture groups and the introduction of a State backed indemnity scheme.
- b) Supporting artists and arts venues address the crippling effect of rising energy bills in 2022.
- c) Continuing the Section 481 tax incentives for the industry beyond 2024. We will also engage with key stakeholders on these incentives to ensure they operate efficiently and in the best interests of the country.

4 References

1. Earth Charter: <https://earthcharter.org>.
2. Brief summary of the people's and UNESCO-endorsed Earth Charter's importance in providing the integrated principles for the early international Green Party movement in the 1990s: <https://youtu.be/yXaxRuegn4Q>
3. Overview of Earth Charters' long road to relevance for a cultural shift toward an equitable, just, and peaceful future: <https://earthcharter.org/podcasts/mary-evelyn-tucker/>
4. [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: https://sdgs.un.org/goals](https://sdgs.un.org/goals)
5. Irish Dept of Education report on its 2nd National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development - ESD to 2030 in which the arts will have an important role <https://assets.gov.ie/228330/c69895a6-88f0-4132-b6d1-9085a9c31996.pdf>
6. <https://theatreforum.ie/green-arts-initiative-in-ireland/> Supporting Irish arts organisations to reduce their environmental impact
7. Safe to Create> The programme introduced by Minister Gáthar Martin to ensure <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/df269-safe-to-create-programme-leading-the-way-to-removing-damaging-norms-in-the-arts-sector-for-the-benefit-of-all-arts-workers/>
8. <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/470a8-minister-martin-addresses-female-representation-and-equality-in-irelands-arts-culture-sports-and-media-sectors-on-international-womens-day/>
9. The Green Party Manifesto: https://www.greenparty.ie/sites/default/files/2022-03/GREEN_PARTY_TOWARDS_2030-WEB-VERSION.pdf
10. Re-Create <https://recreate.ie/> a thriving social enterprise making art materials and educational supplies affordable and accessible to every sector of the community for all kinds of creative purposes.
11. The [National Planning Framework](#) and the [National Development Plan 2021-2030](#) combine to form Project Ireland 2040. The NPF sets the vision and strategy for the development of our country to 2040 and the NDP provides the enabling investment to implement that strategy: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/09022006-project-ireland-2040>.
12. <https://artsineducation.ie/wp-content/uploads/Arts-In-Education-Charter1.pdf>