



managed by Michelle Cahill, Lian Bell & Mermaid Arts Centre

FAQs

What is a Gap Day?

A Gap Day is where you as a freelance theatre maker get the chance to take time out from what you are doing and dedicate a day to the creative research and thinking that you haven't had the chance to dive into yet. It's up to you what you spend the day doing – reading, writing, thinking, drawing, walking, dreaming. Whatever you don't normally have time to do; whatever you think is needed. The exciting thing about a Gap Day is that even though it seems like a small offer, it's a pragmatic opportunity for breathing space and creative thinking.

Why does a theatre maker need a Gap Day?

When was the last time you got to indulge your creativity for a day?

Maybe you've not had much chance to be creative in the past while and you'd love a gap in the daily grind.

Maybe you're working at other jobs to make money and you need a gap in the day job.

Maybe you're taking care of other people, young or old, and need a gap to reconnect with your creative practice.

Maybe you're too busy jumping from the practicalities of one project to the next to take time to think and you need a gap in a busy schedule.

Maybe there just isn't enough money in the budget to dedicate to thinking time on a project and you need a gap in the flurry of getting ready.

Maybe you're at a low ebb and need a bit of support and encouragement and you need a gap in the downtime.

What do I get with Gap Day?

You'll get

- a stipend of €220.00 to cover your time per Gap Day (we offer between one and three Gap Days per participant)
- access to a room for you in an arts centre or cultural building local to you
- a chance to meet the director or a senior staff member of your hosting organisation for an informal chat
- a light lunch
- a small stipend for you to pay an Artist's Friend for an inspiring conversation
- four monthly optional drop-in online gatherings for Gap Day participants to meet each other, with a small stipend to cover your time to attend these gatherings

- optional access to one-to-one coaching to help you make plans and put your plans in motion
- access to a series of local creative thinking gatherings around the country.

What is an Artist's Friend?

While your Gap Day is all about you and what you need and want to do, we know that having inspiring conversations can be a huge benefit. Because of this, we'll be giving each Gap Day participant €65.00 to pay for a chat with an Artist's Friend. It might be a regular collaborator who gets your brain fired up, it might be an artist you haven't had much chance to work with yet, it might be someone you've admired from afar but never got to talk to. It might be in person or online, and it might happen on your Gap Day or sometime around it. It's up to you. We can help you with introductions and can help you make a plan to get the most out of the conversation, if you need.

What if I need a bit of extra support?

We have a small fund to support artists who need a bit more help to be able to take full advantage of their Gap Day to the fullest. This could include physical access supports, support staff, childcare, home help, and may well be something we haven't thought of. You can outline what you would need in your application, and if you become a Gap Day participant, we'll work with you to make it happen.

Who can apply for a Gap Day?

Any professional freelancer working creatively in the making of theatre and performance on the island of Ireland who needs a bit of time to think. That includes directors, deviser/makers, writers, designers, production managers and creative producers – and there may be other roles that fit the bill. Essentially, anyone who has a prime creative role in the making of theatre or performance. We aim to be inclusive, so if you are not sure if you're eligible, ask us rather than assume you aren't!

The programme is not currently open to artists and makers working primarily in other disciplines than theatre. Theatre artists in receipt of the Basic Income for the Arts are welcome to apply – Gap Day is about more than just money!

Gap Days are designed for individuals. If you would like to work with another person or people on your Gap Day, that is up to you – however you will still be receiving a single Gap Day stipend for your time. That said, you might want to bring a collaborator in as your Artist's Friend.

If you previously applied for, or were given, a Gap Day in the past, you still are eligible to apply for this round of Gap Days.

We welcome applications from people of all genders, nationalities, races, cultural backgrounds, ages, religions, languages, different abilities, sexual orientations or socio-economic statuses. We want to hear from artists who are parents and carers. We particularly encourage applications from members of groups who are underrepresented in the cultural sector, and actively want to support them. More diversity = better theatre!

Can I choose when it will happen?

As part of the application, you can outline up to six days that you are free during the Gap Day period Mondays-Fridays between Tuesday 7 November 2023 and Friday 9 February 2024. We'll work with you to settle on dates that suit you. Depending on demand and number of Gap Days available, you may be offered between one and three Gap Days.

Can I choose where will it happen?

Yes! Depending on your location, we will host your Gap Day(s) at a venue near you. As part of the application, you can outline arts centres or cultural organisations near you that you have an existing relationship with, or ones that you would like to have a relationship with. We invite you to think strategically and use this as an opportunity to engage with places you don't yet know. In certain cases, the Gap Day team may suggest you a different venue. We will let you know in good time of your Gap Day where you will be working, and facilitate introductions with a member of staff, if you don't already know them.

At the end of this document, you can find a list of previous Gap Day hosts to help you think about where you'd like to be hosted. If you'd like to be hosted by a place that is not on the list, that's great. We always like expanding our Gap Day host relationships.

How will Gap Days be allocated?

Gap Days will be allocated and managed by the Gap Day Manager Michelle Cahill, the Gap Day founder Lian Bell and the Mermaid Arts Centre Director Julie Kelleher. They will make a selection based on the diversity (in terms of types of practice, work to date and location), and our ability to facilitate them (in terms of logistics and timing). Depending on the number and diversity of applications, we may allocate up to three Gap Days per applicant. This is at the discretion of the Gap Day team.

What else do I need to know?

The Gap Day team and Mermaid Arts Centre will be sharing some of the work that happens during the programme on social media. You will be asked at the end of your Gap Day to write a (very) brief outline of what you did during the day that may be shared this way.

If you are hosted in a local venue, remember that you are a visitor, and you must take care of all your belongings as neither the venue nor the Gap Day team are responsible for any damage or loss.

Who is managing the programme?

The administrator of Gap Day is Michelle Cahill who is working in collaboration with Gap Day founder Lian Bell and Julie Kelleher, Director of the Mermaid Arts Centre in Bray. The Gap Day programme is funded by the Arts Council of Ireland.

How can I apply?

[Fill in the short online form HERE.](#)

Applications are open until 5pm on Monday 9th October 2023.

Any further questions? Email Julie Kelleher on director@mermaidartscentre.ie

Previous Gap Day hosts by county

Antrim

Crescent Arts Centre
Lyric Theatre
The MAC
Sonic Arts Research Centre
Strand Arts Centre
Vault Studios
Young at Art

Armagh

Armagh Marketplace

Carlow

Visual

Clare

Courthouse Gallery & Studios
Glór

Cork

Corcadorca
Everyman Theatre
National Sculpture Factory

Derry/Londonderry

Echo Echo Dance
Flowerfield Arts Centre

Donegal

An Grianán Theatre

Dublin

Abbey Theatre
The Ark
Axis Ballymun
Civic Theatre
CoisCéim
Contemporary Music Centre
CREATE
Dance House
dlr Lexicon

Draíocht

Dublin Fringe Festival
Dublin Theatre Festival
Gallery of Photography
Gate Theatre
Glasnevin Cemetery
Irish Museum of Modern Art
Irish Theatre Institute
Mill Theatre
Pavilion Theatre
Rua Red
Smock Alley Theatre
Temple Bar Gallery & Studios
VR Ireland

Galway

An Taibhdhearc
Áras Éanna
Baboró
Branar
Druid
Galway International Arts Festival
Town Hall Theatre
University of Galway

Kerry

Siamsa Tíre
Ivyleaf Theatre
St John's Theatre

Kildare

Riverbank Arts Centre

Kilkenny

Monkeyshine

Laois

Dunamais Arts Centre

Leitrim

The Dock

The Glens Centre

Limerick

Belltable
Friar's Gate Theatre

Longford

Backstage Theatre

Louth

Droichead Arts Centre

Mayo

Ballina Arts Centre
Westport Town Hall Theatre

Meath

Solstice Arts Centre

Roscommon

Roscommon Arts Centre

Sligo

Hawk's Well
The Model

Tipperary

Nenagh Arts Centre
South Tipperary Arts Centre

Waterford

Garter Lane
Theatre Royal

Wexford

Wexford Arts Centre

Wicklow

Mermaid Arts Centre

Also, the following organisations have expressed an interest in being a Gap Day host in the future:

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre, Offaly
KCAT Arts Centre, Kilkenny
Dance Limerick

Ballinasloe Town Hall Theatre, Galway
Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre, Derry/Londonderry