



Associate Artist Role

Mermaid is committed to finding exciting, meaningful, sustainable and democratic ways to work with artists and communities, and that commitment hasn't waned during this pandemic. This scheme is, in part, a response to discussions that we have had with artists and freelancers throughout 2020 and also the wider conversation happening across the sector about how we can build an arts sector that is fairer, more adventurous and inclusive.

This is not a standard bursary or residency. This is about what happens if creative practitioners and artists are embedded in organisations and have enough paid time and brain space to work on their own practice.

Role Title: Associate Artist

Number of roles available: 4 part-time roles

Hours of Work: 20 hours per week

Contract type: Freelance or PAYE fixed term for 1 year (4 May 2021 to 30 April 2022)

Salary: €17,000 per annum, incl. holidays

What can successful candidates expect from the role?

This is an experiment, and we will be working flexibly with the appointed artists during the year to shape how the role will work. Successful candidates can expect:

- Weekly wages for 12 months from May 2021 to April 2022.
- Pay based on part-time hours (estimated at 20 hours per week).
- A flexible approach to contracting: we envisage these roles being PAYE (with associated holidays and contributions) but we can facilitate pay arrangements for self-employed artists where required or preferred.
- Access to the human and physical resources available at Mermaid such as space, technical team, and equipment, where availability allows.
- To attend and contribute to weekly staff meetings (approx. 1 hour per week), either online or in-person, and update colleagues on your work
- To contribute to strategic discussions about Mermaid's future
- To work closely with Mermaid's Artistic Director to create a support structure which empowers Associate Artists to interrogate, explore, and create their best work
- To attend regular TRANSFORM meetings with Artistic Director and other associate artists, either online or in-person



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- To continue with your own practice as you might have before, but with less financial pressure. There will be no obligation to share work publicly, though there are opportunities for this if Associate Artists wish to consider those
- To participate in the ongoing evaluation of the scheme. This is the first time Mermaid has opened a scheme such as this, so the process is an evolving one. Mermaid is committed to being responsive and reactive to the needs of Associate Artists during the process, and this will require dialogue from all involved.

Who are these roles for?

Mermaid seeks four outstanding professional artists of varying practices and disciplines.

The scheme is open to individual, professional artists, including: Actors, Architects, Choreographers, Circus/Street Arts Performers, Composers, Creative Producers, Curators/Programmers (working in an arts context), Dancers, Designers (e.g. set, costume, lighting), Directors, Dramaturgs, Facilitators (participatory arts, youth theatre), Film Artists, Literary Writers (e.g. novelists, poets), Musicians, Playwrights, Picture-book Illustrators, Singers, Visual Artists. The applicant does not have to earn their living exclusively from their work in the arts, but they must self-identify and be recognised by their peers as a practicing professional artist. If you are unsure whether your artistic practice makes you eligible, please get in touch with us at recruit@mermaidartscentre.ie.

We are interested in artists whose work is forward-looking and who may be struggling to find viable employment right now.

These roles are for individuals

- who have created and presented/shared/exhibited work in a professional context in the past 5 years or as recently as personal circumstances allowed
- who recognise that the industry needs to change and are excited and interested about the possibility of working with Mermaid Arts Centre to influence this
- whose practice lends itself to collaboration and participation and have an idea of who their work speaks to, is created for or is created with
- who want to be supported to have dedicated time to continue their creative practice over the course of a year and have a clear vision for their own projects and practice
- who want to use this time to build things which can support the sustainability of their career in the future.

Of the four roles, we anticipate appointing 3 Wicklow-based artists, with the fourth position left open to artists based in Wicklow or elsewhere in Ireland. Our final decision on the fourth position will be determined by the quality of applications received in response to the criteria set out in this pack.

Essential Requirements

- Professional experience of making and creating engaging creative artwork and/or experiences for audiences, participants, clients or others
- Some understanding of Mermaid Arts Centre and its work
- Openness to new ideas and different points of view
- Excellent listening and reflection skills



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- Ability to communicate about your creative practice

Desirable Experience

- Managing budgets, no matter how big or small
- Leading your own professional development
- Working with a diverse range of people
- A commitment to sustainability
- Embedding well-being into your practice

We particularly encourage applications from members of groups who are underrepresented in the cultural sector. Mermaid County Wicklow Arts Centre is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from people of all genders, nationalities, races, cultural backgrounds, ages, religions, languages, different abilities, sexual orientations or socio-economic statuses. Mermaid is committed to equality and diversity in the workplace, and to supporting our team with ongoing career development opportunities.

What does Mermaid Arts Centre expect from the scheme?

Our hope is that this never-before-experienced situation of having continuous financial support to be an artist will have a profound effect on our Associates' processes and ultimately their work, and that in part, this experiment could contribute some valuable evidence to the dialogue around Universal Basic Income for artists (and citizens at large!).

We propose to share impartial evaluation and a report on the scheme with stakeholders (e.g. Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media, the Arts Council, arts centres nationwide, strategically funded companies and others) so that the sector widely can benefit from the learning. Participating artists will be expected to be involved in evaluating the scheme throughout the year so that Mermaid can gather a practical sense of what has worked. This process of feedback and evaluation will be conducted by an external facilitator, who will conduct regular interviews with participants, individually and as a group throughout the process and its conclusion.

Some key reflections and points of evaluation may include:

- What happened when your daily artistic process was supported?
- Did your engagement with the arts centre change?
- Has the experience changed how you make work?
- What was the impact on the people involved? And on communities in Wicklow?
- Did it shake up the status quo?
- Should it be a regular way of working for Mermaid Arts Centre and arts centres in Ireland, generally?

How to apply

Applications are now open.

Please use the information in this pack to help inform your application. **We are asking interested individuals to submit a short application – your CV AND 1 side of A4 or a short film or audio file (max. 3 mins) that tells us about your creative practice and why you are interested in this role at Mermaid Arts Centre.**



If you have any access requirements or additional needs, please let us know and we will find a way to support and facilitate your application. We are committed to providing as much support as possible to individuals. If you have any questions or have any access requirements or concerns, please contact us via recruit@mermaidartscentre.ie.

You must submit your application to recruit@mermaidartscentre.ie by 5pm on Friday 2nd April 2021.

Recruitment Process

From the list of applicants, Mermaid's Artistic Director, and two members of Mermaid's team, will read, assess and debate all applications to create a shortlist. In the selection process we will be looking for (amongst other things) track record and/or potential demonstrated, balance of emerging and experienced artists, a balance where gender, race and socio-economic background are concerned, a diversity of artistic practice and which artists might most need this support.

Shortlisted candidates will then meet a panel for interview, which will include Mermaid's Artistic Director, a member of Mermaid's board and an artist colleague as an external panellist. During this process we will establish if this is the right opportunity for each individual and Mermaid, and after which, we will appoint our Associate Artists.

Timeline:

- Thursday 18 March – applications open
- Fri 2 April - applications close
- Tues 6 – Fri 9 April – shortlisting process
- w/c 12 April - applicants informed of decisions & allocated interview slots where applicable
- 21 - 23 April – interviews
- w/c 26 April - interviewees informed of decisions, and discuss contract terms with Mermaid
- Week commencing 4 May - contracts commence

Mermaid is core funded by Wicklow County Council and the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

