



ARTS, CULTURE, MEDIA AND HERITAGE

**Our plan to support artists
and creators as a thriving
part of our society.**

Labour ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



ARTS, CULTURE, MEDIA, AND HERITAGE

Our Mission is a society that recognises the value of our artists and creators, their incalculable contribution to the cultural and social landscape, wellbeing, quality of life and our international reputation and we commit to funding their success as a thriving part of our society.

Labour has a proud track record of supporting and transforming our arts, culture, media, and heritage, and we have an ambitious plan for the next five years that will:

- » Invest in the Arts and our artists.
- » Provide spaces for artists.
- » Develop new national cultural institutions.
- » Protect and promote our cultural heritage.
- » Rebuild the night-time economy.
- » Promote a diverse media landscape.
- » Support Irish creators and screen production.

INVESTING IN THE ARTS

Funding from the Arts Council is vital to support our artists but too many still cannot access. Labour will increase funding to the Arts Council to €200 million per annum and ensure that the Arts represent a viable career, and our artists can continue to contribute to our cultural and social landscape. Building on this funding we will:

- » Provide a permanent Basic Income for the Arts scheme and expand it to increase access, starting with younger artists. The pilot has been successful by providing economic security and facilitating creative freedom.
- » Deliver reforms to the tax and welfare system to better support artists with a living income, recognising their status often as freelance independent contractors, and their production and service costs.
- » Address barriers for disabled, LGBTQIA+ and ethnically diverse artists and art workers as recommended by the Safe to Create Amplify report.
- » Seek to expand Arts Council support to a broader range of artists.
- » Ensure proper enforcement of copyright law so that artists, be they writers, musicians, painters, composers or designers, benefit from the revenue streams arising from their work, and protect their intellectual property from AI.
- » Publish a comprehensive and inclusive National Music Strategy to bring stakeholders together and promote the continued growth and success of the Irish music industry and seek increased airtime for Irish artists on licensed radio stations.

- » Support the development of digital arts in the fields of audiovisual content, gaming, and animation.
- » Develop a new National Cultural policy framework for the next decade and increase funding for Culture Ireland.

SPACES FOR ARTISTS

Our artists need more spaces. Culture can't compete with capitalism! Labour has a comprehensive plan to ensure active state support for saving and growing artists' spaces.

Over the past 20 years, we have seen a hollowing out of arts and cultural spaces in Dublin city and in many urban areas. At last count, we've identified as least 52 closures in Dublin in that time and these losses have struck a serious blow to the cultural fabric and energy of our city.

The reality is that artists' studios and venues don't stand a chance when competing against commercial interests. We need to change that. A number of new and exciting places have also emerged over the years, and we need to ensure that we support them to survive and to thrive.

Map and match artists' demand with the supply of empty space.

Labour will establish a new Culture Infrastructure company to actively plan for and ensure the adequate provision of artist space starting in our cities and expanding across the country, following on from the examples in Arizona, Sydney, and London.

In Dublin where we have many non-residential state- and privately-owned long-term vacant buildings, an office vacancy rate in excess of 17% and thousands of mothballed planning applications, the city needs a mechanism to map out existing appropriate, vacant space and to connect artists to developers and landowners. This would be for both meanwhile-use and long-term leasing. It would also enforce the new 5% cultural and social planning requirement of all large-scale residential developments. Similar actions are needed across the country.

Expand the Space to Create scheme for Local Authorities.

Labour will greatly expand the Space to Create scheme with a new set of rules. While the €9m scheme for the Dublin City Council area announced last year is welcome along with the €6m spread across Local Authorities this year, these amounts will deliver a small number of places. We want to see the vision that saw the purchase of Buckingham Fire Station in the 1990's, which remains to this day the only DCC-Arts Council owned artist space in Dublin City. The development of the Odlum's flour depot will be another great example but we need so much more. Labour will provide an additional €25m for the acquisition of buildings for artists' spaces and ongoing funding for the Cultural Infrastructure Company.



Give Artists' organisations the opportunity to purchase their buildings.

Labour will introduce low-cost State backed cultural mortgages and loans, specifically targeted at arts organisations, and intended for the purchase and/or retrofitting of buildings.

Protect existing cultural commercial operations.

Labour will introduce Cultural Conservation Orders on buildings after 20 years of established cultural use. This mechanism would mean that in the event of a proposed change of use or sale, the order would carry significant weight in the planning application assessment.

Provide emerging artists' groups with funding for leases.

Labour will introduce specific funding streams for the leasing of buildings and an explicit provision on the need for space to create. To date, Arts Council programme funding tends to rely on a lease or license leading to a chicken and egg scenario whereby without access to a license or lease, artists are unable to qualify for the funding.

Prioritise cultural and social use for vacant buildings not suitable for homes.

Labour wants a Culture/Social First policy for all public buildings currently not in use and/or intended for disposal or conversion to key worker housing. It is unconscionable that there is no active estate management policy mandated across all state agencies and state companies, and a culture/social first policy should be compulsory for organisations with unused publicly owned properties such as the HSE and An Post.

Promote the creation of artists' co-operatives or other formal structures.

Labour will provide dedicated financial and administrative supports and incentives to help arts co-operatives to form to be able to take on leases and manage them over a sustained period of time.

NEW NATIONAL CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Our national museums, galleries, libraries, and music halls are repositories of our cultural heritage, and provide a window to our past, present and future. Their work is complemented by the tremendous variety of other centres across the country.

Labour supports the development of a National Women's Museum to illustrate how women have been represented through history and tell their stories and looks forward to the recommendations of the advisory committee feasibility report. We will also develop the public facing part of the GPO as a cultural hub.

It is nearly three decades since the landmark National Cultural Institutions Act passed into law in 1997.

Labour believes now is the time to explore the creation of new national cultural institutions and we will establish a project board to develop proposals for venues, located outside of Dublin to showcase the following themes of Irish culture:

- » Irish song, dance, and language.
- » Food history and the gastronomy of our island.
- » Industrial heritage and the trade union movement.
- » Irish science and exploration.
- » Our island's nature and biodiversity.
- » International and domestic sport.

This is not an exhaustive or final list of themes, and there are existing collections, museums, attractions, and bodies representing parts of these, but the purpose of the new institutions would be to curate a national representative collection and experience of each. These would be destination sites and provide for balanced regional cultural representation.

Labour will drive progress for an Irish National Design Centre, embed design principles into infrastructural development, and consider new measures to support the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland including placing it on a statutory footing.

OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE

Labour will seek the repatriation of Irish historical artefacts and antiquities housed in international museums and institutions while developing programmes for exchange and loans. As part of our plans to protect our national cultural heritage we will:

- » Provide dedicated annual funding for the Built Heritage Investment Scheme and Historic Structures Fund to protect, restore and preserve properties representing our vernacular architecture and industrial heritage.
- » Continue to invest in the National Archives, storage facilities, and the digitisation of records.
- » Develop an inclusive programme of Commemorations for the next decade.

Labour will safeguard our cultural, built, and natural heritage. We will update the Heritage Act of 1995, ensure there are heritage teams in each local authority, preserve traditional skills, develop a national centre of excellence, and invest in research.



THE NIGHT ECONOMY

Labour will develop a thriving night economy and expand existing initiatives to bring vibrancy back into our towns and cities' nightlife. We will:

- » Give people greater choice in how they enjoy the nighttime and support cultural institutions to stay open later into the evening.
- » Reform licensing laws to allow for more flexibility in opening hours and the variety of places that can sell alcohol, create an annual nightclub licence, and transfer responsibility to the Department of Culture and Arts.
- » Review and update noise management regulations for a compatible and harmonious relationship between the night economy and urban residents.

MEDIA AND PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING

Public Service broadcasting is a vital part of our democracy, and Labour will ensure a robust funding system is maintained for RTÉ and TG4. We will review the current RTÉ settlement in its final year and the operation of the TV licence fee and introduce a reformed funding model in line with the recommendations of the Future of Media Commission.

Labour supports media plurality and will review the efficacy of recent journalism schemes for local radio and newspapers and ensure funding when provided supports reporting and coverage of local democracy and justice. We will review the Broadcasting Levy and protect digital access to free to air radio.

SCREEN PRODUCTION

In the 1990s, Labour's vision transformed the Irish film industry, and we will continue to build on that legacy. We will introduce an audio-visual media services directive content levy of at least 5% and ringfence the funding for domestic production including Irish language productions to showcase Irish cultural content and stories. We will continue the principle of using Sound and Vision funds to promote climate action, live music broadcasting and Irish language content and expand it to include collective bargaining and trade union recognition.

Labour will increase investment through Screen Ireland to ensure the continued production of high-quality indigenous films, TV shows and documentaries, alongside the development of Irish performers and Irish language programming,

Labour will further review Section 481 to ensure it remains internationally competitive to support national and regional production and the inclusion of Irish music creators. We will bring the pay and terms and conditions of performers and crew up to the standards in place in peer countries and make receipt of Section 481 relief conditional on offering quality employment in which workers' rights are upheld and respected.



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