



IN OUR TIME

Artists' Brief for New Programme of Commissions

IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME

South Dublin County Council's
Public Art Programme 2016 – 2019
under the Per Cent for Art Scheme

Contents

Introduction	1
Objectives	3
Context	4
IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME	
Programme of Commissions	10
Applying to the Programme of Commissions	16
Outline of the Assessment and Selection Process	17
Additional Information and Contacts	18

Introducing **IN CONTEXT 4** IN OUR TIME

IN CONTEXT 4 is South Dublin County Council's Public Art Programme for 2016 – 2019 under the Per Cent for Art Scheme. The programme will build on the fundamental principles and experience of 'IN CONTEXT 1, 2 and 3'. This programme continues South Dublin County Council's commitment, as the Commissioners, of progressive public art processes and practices (in all disciplines). The programme provides a platform for temporality and experimentation, and a supportive environment, which enables artists to explore new ideas and realise ambitious projects.

The vision for IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME is to develop a public art programme that acts as a gathering point and catalyst for social change¹. The Commissioners' ambition for this programme is that it reflects on the history of the South Dublin County, its present moment, and that it presents a platform for imaginings of our future. By inviting such proposals, through an open submission, the Commissioners are asking artists to drive the agenda for public art that will unsettle assumed, contemporary attitudes of what is possible in our world today. IN CONTEXT 4 aims to foster a supportive environment for artists throughout the commissioning process. It is anticipated, through this brief, that artists will respond to the experience of the County from a multitude of perspectives – for example, architecture and public realm, culture, environment, heritage, politics, sociology, sustainability, play and well-being to create visions for the future. For IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME, the Commissioners are seeking groundbreaking, experimental and radical approaches by artists through projects that foster dialogue, connection and exchange with communities of people and place.

'IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME' will assert the role of the 'artist as citizen' and the 'artist as leader' by asking artists to inspire a future for the County that is connected to a sense of place, community belonging and civic awareness. Relevant questions artists may find themselves thinking about are – what are the rhythms of South Dublin County seen through the eyes of both 'insider' and 'outsider'? What is the role of public art and artist in responding to this context? How might an artist tune into the myriad of dynamics and respond to the experience of the County – removing the unnecessary and allowing the essential to emerge?² Through an open brief across the art forms, artists will be supported with consideration for the time and duration necessary for extraordinary public art projects to emerge. In making their submissions, artists are asked to actively engage with the different communities of interest in South Dublin County. Imagined as a series of dynamic and ambitious public art commissions, IN CONTEXT 4 aims to gather temporary communities around inspirational ideas. Collaboration between artists and local, national or international partners will help to extend the depth of public engagement.

Fundamentally, the principles of IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME will support artistic ambition and have a meaningful engagement with the context of the County. In a sense, the commissions in all their different forms and presentations, will develop a community of artistic responses that speak to each other, and form a cultural mapping of sorts across South Dublin County.

South Dublin County Council's public art programme, IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME is informed by the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism's General National Guidelines for delivery of Per Cent for Art Schemes, published in 2004 ref: www.publicart.ie

A series of images by artist Dragana Jurisic entitled SUBTOPIAN BALLAD accompanies this briefing document. It further illustrates the context for South Dublin County Council's new programme of public art commissions: IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME.

¹ Out of Time, Out of Place: Public Art (Now), edited by Claire Doherty

² 'IN CONTEXT 3', essay by Cliodhna Shaffrey

Objectives

IN CONTEXT 4

IN OUR TIME

- To reflect on the role of the artist in society and the idea of artist as citizen
- To promote the value of community, connection and public engagement
- To develop a lasting legacy for the diverse and far-reaching communities of people and place in South Dublin County
- To invest in a per cent for art commissioning programme that supports artists (open to all art disciplines) to make groundbreaking, critically-engaged and compelling new work that engages with the dynamics of the context
- To support artists' in their ambition, providing the conditions necessary for the creation of new work and allowing for radical approaches that are relevant to public art now
- To support the artist in the research, development and realisation of artworks / projects / events / outcomes across the disciplines or through interdisciplinary practices
- To position the relationship between art and context at the focus of creative thinking and to support fluid interchanges between artists and communities of interest – people or place
- To enable the communities of people and place to become more familiar with and involved with risk-taking and experimentation in artistic processes; to provide opportunities for reflection on the personal, on environment and on questions of identity

Context

South Dublin County

One of three new local authorities to emerge in Dublin in 1994, South Dublin County, with Tallaght at its centre, spreads out to the foothills of the Dublin Mountains, borders the edges of the city and the nearby counties of Kildare and Wicklow. A place with a complex identity, intersected by motorways, housing estates, industrial parks, urban and rural divides, South Dublin County lies about sixteen kilometers southwest of Ireland's capital city, Dublin. The County is a suburban landscape covering an area of 222.74 sq. kilometres. Within its physical boundaries are the towns of Tallaght, Clondalkin, Lucan, Palmerstown, Rathfarnham, Adamstown, Terenure and Templeogue. New towns were built on rural villages, with the exception of Adamstown, from 1969 onwards. Characteristics and aspects of the rural remain in the villages of Brittas, Newcastle and Rathcoole.

There are many facts contributing to South Dublin County's fragmented sense of place and identity. The County is a melting pot of rural, residential and industrial areas, which are intersected by fast-paced motorways, bypasses and fly-overs. So how does one move through it? Tallaght is the County's main centre, with services, shopping, residential and cultural amenities. It emerged as 'edge city', a 'peri-urban place', long after the building of major housing schemes that relocated inner city dwellers to the new city suburbs in the 1960's, '70's and '80s. These new communities surrounding Tallaght village were, in the early days, geographically and socially quite isolated. With the development of Tallaght as a Town Centre in the 1990's and with the LUAS now up and running, there is greater connection, between South Dublin County and Dublin City Centre.

The population of the County is approximately 265,205 people, 41% of which is under the age of twenty five. Many different 'publics' and communities of interest stake their ground here. There are 300 active community groups in South Dublin County. Arts activity and participation is characterised by the strong presence of amateur,

voluntary and community organisations, representing 60% of the make-up. For example, there are brass bands and youth bands in existence since the 1980's, like Clondalkin Youth Band or the Golden Eagle Marching Band, literary and performing arts groups like Ballyroan Writer's Group, Neilstown Youth Theatre, and Tenderfoot, Tallaght's award-winning theatre programme for transition years, Saggart Arts and Heritage Group and more. Tallaght is a cultural hub of activity showcasing 40% of the arts activity in the County. Elsewhere, Clondalkin, Lucan and Rathfarnham show strong levels of participation in the arts with 17% of arts activity happening in each of these three areas.



Alana and Lois, twelve year olds and best friends since they were four years old. Alana's parents moved to Ireland from Bosnia and Lois's are from Nigeria. Adamstown is a new town style development in South Dublin County. About 50% of the populations are non-Irish. – Dragana Jurisic, photography commission.

South Dublin County like any other County needs at its core a sense of community identity and belonging. The County is not a very connected place – all roads lead to Tallaght. A lack of good public transport and infrastructure across the County results in parts of the County being inaccessible. New towns like Adamstown have suffered from a lack of facilities and services. Communities across the County continue to identify locally: neighbourhood and a sense of community pride are important. South Dublin County Council's projects like the 'Villages Initiatives' seek to address imbalances in the public realm,

to improve the aesthetic of villages across the County. Within urban settings children and teenagers need spaces for interaction, play, recreation and activities in order to feel freedom and to grow. South Dublin County Council are keen to see how cultural projects could encourage environments where interaction and play can take place.

As individuals and citizens, we seek a sense of pride and connection with our local community. South Dublin County is a very diverse place, socially, economically and culturally. Yet we can see the overwhelming results of active citizenship in the County – what happens when entire communities of people feel empowered by a sense of social justice? Nowhere is this more apparent than in North Clondalkin when local communities returned a resounding YES vote to the Marriage Equality Referendum that was the largest nationally.

In 2016, there are one hundred and twenty different nationalities living in South Dublin County. As a place, it experiences consistent growth in the numbers of new residents settling in the County, including many new nationalities, both immigrants and refugees. Across the County, high numbers of people identify with a first language that is not English or Irish. Larger proportions of its population have a different faith-base when compared with the rest of Ireland. New faiths here include Islam and Orthodox Christian. The Travelling Community is represented in high numbers with 37% of all Dublin-based travellers living in South Dublin County. Multiculturalism is everywhere to be seen in the County. New Irish communities in South Dublin County come from a variety of backgrounds with cultural strongholds in the centre regions, including African, Nepalese, Polish, Eastern European and Russian in Tallaght and Clondalkin, and Indian communities in Palmerstown and Lucan. With many second and third generation immigrant families settled in the County, there is a space to reflect on how art may bridge intercultural and intergenerational connections.

South Dublin County has lasting evidence of early Christian heritage. Most of the villages of South Dublin County are located on the sites of important ecclesiastical settlements e.g. Tallaght, Clondalkin, Newcastle, Saggart, and Rathfarnham. A well-preserved round tower in Clondalkin sits impressively within the curving street pattern of today's bustling village. The tower reflects the line of the original monastic enclosure. Located beside the River Camac, between



the Liffey and the mountains, the foundation of Clondalkin's first monastery dates from the late 6th or early 7th century. Elsewhere in the County, heritage helps define South Dublin, as a community. Heritage is inherited from preceding generations and created afresh for future generations. The Liffey, the Dodder, and the Poddle were once primary sources of water for the city of Dublin and its growing suburbs. The impressive weir at Firhouse marks the location where the old watercourse for the city tapped into the Dodder River. The presence of mineral springs on the Liffey and Dodder also led to the development of a number of socially popular spas in the 19th century.

The Grand Canal, the River Liffey, the River Dodder and the Camac are also important fisheries.

In our thoroughly urbanised and fast-paced lives, proximity and a connection to nature become ever more important. South Dublin County is a place where the urban and rural unexpectedly meet. The Dublin Mountains, which define the south eastern boundaries to the County, can be seen from most parts of the lowland plains and offer panoramic views over all of the Dublin. Green plains are never distant – visible from the LUAS and rising upwards from the urban sprawl. The low-lying patchwork of fields and ancient hedgerows gently step downwards towards Tallaght offering visual respite and recreational opportunities for citizens of the densely populated areas. On these lower slopes, a necklace of broadleaf, conifer and mixed woodlands extends from the Hellfire Club to Saggart Hill. The unique habitats and species within the Glenasmole Valley itself also resulted in this area being designated as a significant area of conservation. The lower slopes of the valley are clothed in woodlands, which support areas of unique habitat such as calcareous springs. On the upper slopes, areas of dry orchid-rich grassland occur with wetter areas of species-rich grasslands in drainage channels. Rare plants and bat species also occur, making this valley a special area of biodiversity within the County. Streams such as the Dodder, the Cot, and the Slade also feed the twin reservoirs on the floor of the valley, which supplies water to parts of Dublin.



This is all part of the situation – some of the ‘facts on the ground’ and the ‘pointer’s’ for the County. How does South Dublin County stake a claim for its different communities of interest to make a sustainable future?

The Commissioners’ and the Curators’ approach to IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME is to create the framework for artists to reflect on the situation of the County. Artists are asked to respond to themes and issues that are prominent in our time, gathering temporary communities around an inspirational idea that aspires to a legacy. The best intention is to keep an openness and fluidity about this brief to attract the unexpected, the radical and the most ambitious artistic proposals.

Art critic Claire Doherty proposes that the elements of a ‘situation’ – a set of conditions, locations, people, circumstance and moments in time – are the key concepts in 21st century art. Her writings and curatorial projects explore the ways in which contemporary artists contribute to the ‘lived experience of a place’ while also disrupting us and working to ‘shift the ground beneath our feet’. South Dublin County provides any number of diverse situations for contemporary artists to explore, respond to and create art in.

IN CONTEXT 4

IN OUR TIME

Programme of

Commissions

Commissioning Strands

Strand 1 – Projects Awards

The Commissioners would like to offer flexibility with a range of funding available for innovative proposals. Each project value can be set between €15,000 and €50,000, fees and operating budget inclusive. This provides scope for budgets to be relative to the nature and scale of the proposed artistic commission. All costs relating to the commission must be detailed in the application. See further information in submissions section below.

Strand 2 – Evaluation Commission

Through this commission, it is hoped to create a space for reflection, feedback and dialogue between the Commissioners, the commissioned artists and the different communities of interest. The maximum available for this opportunity is €20,000 for a two-year period during the commissioning process: fees and operating budget inclusive.

Overview of the Commissioning Process

- The commissions for IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME will be procured through a competitive open submission process. Artists will submit proposals in response to the brief, and to the specific strand criteria. Artists will work closely with, and receive support from the Arts Office towards realising these significant commissions in the County.
- Artists are invited to propose projects for either of the two commissioning strands: Strand 1 – Project Awards or Strand 2 – Evaluation Commission.

- Artists' proposals are invited for temporary public art projects and no permanent works of art are envisaged.
- Artists are not required to be living in or from the County and may work with artists/collaborators from elsewhere in the County, Ireland or internationally. This is with the exception of applying to the Evaluation Commission; individuals and team applying to this strand must be based-in or living and working in Ireland.
- Artists may apply from outside of Ireland, as well as from Ireland, and while artists are not expected to live in the county, they will be in regular contact, making regular visits.
- Projects commissioned under IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME are not tied to any specific geographical or electoral area or to site or scheme. Applicants are asked to consider the 'pointers' provided in the brief. The 'pointers' are intended to give an introduction and initial grounding to the context of South Dublin County. Artists may fully depart from this information to find their own points of departure.
- The Commissioners and Curators of IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME see South Dublin County as an aerial map of diverse communities, recurrent patterns and themes, distinctive places and possibilities. Applicants making proposals to the programme of commissions are asked to reflect on the 'experience of' the County and to respond with innovative, radical and risk-taking approaches.

Timescale

All projects will be realised between the three-year timeframe of 2017 – 2019. Applicants are asked to propose their timescale within this period. The Arts Office will activate the commissions at different points in consultation with commissioned individuals / teams.

Support

The public art programme will be supported by South Dublin County Council Arts Office, who will work across the programme managing contractual agreements, communications, marketing, timelines and budgets. Artists will be supported by a Programme Curator(s) whose role is specifically focused on support to artists in the creation of ambitious new work, logistics, building relationships

and communications with artists and groups in the county. The Programme Curator(s) will produce an additional programme of curatorial and artists' supports introduced across the programme.

Strand 1

In Context 4 – Projects Awards

Interaction with South Dublin County

Proposals should show a clear willingness to engage with the County and its communities. This condition is made in order to create a direct link between the public art programme, the artist and the County as a site of production and a place of different communities. In order to ensure that IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME commissions are not all concentrated in one area of the County, artists will be asked to indicate the type of place, context or situation in which they would like to work. The programme will be organised to spread the commissions across the County. The Arts Office (and where relevant other County Council staff) will be consulted in this process, as well as shortlisted artists.

Artforms

- The Project Award commissions can include work in any of the recognised art forms architecture, dance, film, literature, music, opera, theatre and visual arts and can be achieved through once-off interventions, residencies, collaborative projects, interdisciplinary responses and time-based work.
- The proposed process must involve artists (making new work) as the central aspect of the commission. Curators, artistic directors and creative producers may also make proposals.

Criteria

- Artistic quality and originality of ideas / proposals
- Potential to engage with the situation and context in innovative, radical and risk-taking ways
- Artistic ambition / potential of artist
- Proposed process and public engagement

- Feasibility and how the proposed funding costs relate to the production of the commission
- Track record / potential of the artist(s) to develop, manage and deliver the project in proposed time and budget

Proposals

- Proposals should include a written response of between two and three typed pages
- Artistic concept and intentions (including a summarising paragraph)
- Context or proposed nature of place
- Intended process/nature of intervention
- Proposed timescale
- Outline plan for how artists will engage with communities of interest
- How the proposed commission will relate to the context
- How the commission will be achieved. This should include an outline of known / projected technical or health and safety issues and licenses that the artist / arts groups will need and how it is intended to achieve these
- Proposed budget which should include where relevant:
Summary breakdown of costs to include (inclusive of VAT): artists will be asked to supply quotations and confirmation of costs at shortlisting stage
 - Artist's / team member fees
 - Development costs
 - Production costs
 - Interaction with communities/localities
 - Insurances and other related costs
 - Contingency
 - Total value of proposed commission

Supporting Documentation

- Examples of relevant work (including film, images, scores, recordings, transcripts, visualisations) can be provided in hard copy or on CD / DVD / USB
- Summary biographies of team members and CVs (to include all key members of the team if applicable)
- Those applying must submit four copies of their proposal and a loose-leaf copy should be supplied to facilitate photo-copying.

Please note that artists are not expected to have fully developed ideas or have an in-depth knowledge of the County

Strand 2 IN CONTEXT 4 – Evaluation Commission

The Commissioners consider evaluation to be a vital and inherent part of the ongoing commissioning process. Therefore, there is a separate strand to prioritise this piece of work and to invite proposals by way of an open call.

Through this commission it is hoped to create the space for ongoing reflection and active dialogue between the Commissioners, the artists and the different communities at play. The evaluation will be undertaken, as an interactive process and will be built in from the outset. The learning will be used to help improve and develop the commissioning process along the way. The evaluation will provide another level of support to the commissioned artists. The Commissioners are particularly interested in creative and original approaches to the evaluation strand.

Expectations

It is expected that the person(s) awarded the evaluation commission will:

- Devise, structure and manage a creative framework allowing for ongoing evaluation throughout the commissioning process. It will be informed by, and give consideration to, the vision and aspirations for IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME. The Commissioners will be especially interested to see new, creative ways of building-in critical reflection, as well as points of communication, connection and interaction between the various projects.

Eligibility

The brief is open and artists / arts organisations / curators / artistic directors / creative producers / arts facilitators and educators are invited to apply. Applications may be made by individuals or a team. Applications may be made only by individuals or a team who are based-in or living and working in Ireland.

Timescale

It is intended that the evaluation commission will be awarded alongside the other IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME commissions and last for a two-year period.

Proposals

Applicants are invited to submit:

- Curriculum Vitae of no more than two typed A4 pages and to include two referees
- A maximum of three typed A4 pages providing:
 - A statement of interest
 - A summary of thoughts and ideas outlining the creative approach
 - An outline plan to engage with the various actors in the evaluation
 - Budget breakdown
 - Proposed timeline
- Supporting documents and materials relating to their previous work in this area (videos, images, documents, transcripts, film, visualisations should be supplied by DVD or USB)

Criteria

- Demonstration of originality, clear-thinking and a creative approach
- Feasibility and ability to deliver
- Ability to communicate and collaborate with others
- Past record of work

Applying to the Programme of Commissions

Briefing and Information

A briefing meeting will be arranged for artists, writers, filmmakers, musicians, artistic directors, curators, creative producers, arts and culture groups, community groups. Presentations and a questions and answers session will form an important part of this gathering. The meeting will take place at RUA RED, South Dublin Arts Centre, Tallaght, on Wednesday 19th October 2016, at 10.30am.

For more information contact: info@incontext4.ie

Submissions

Artists or teams making an application are required to submit a proposal and provide supporting documentation and material relating to previous work. Written elements of proposals must be provided in hard copy and an accompanying copy on disc (CD/DVD/USB) is also advised.

Address for applications

Applications should be marked and delivered to:
IN CONTEXT 4 – IN OUR TIME
Evaluation Commission OR Project Awards
Arts Office
Library Headquarters
Unit 1
The Square Industrial Estate Tallaght
Dublin 24
Ireland

Closing Date for Both Strands

12pm Friday, 2nd December 2016.

Late submissions WILL NOT be accepted.

Outline of the Assessment and Selection Process

1. Initial short-listing by panel of peer selectors.

A shortlisting process will be undertaken by a peer selection panel, members of which will be drawn from relevant artform disciplines and fields of working as appropriate to the applications e.g. film, music, collaborative arts etc.

2. Final short-listing by nominated selection panel (which will include peer representation)

It is recommended that the selection panel will include:

- the Arts Officer
- two representatives of SDCC's Public Art Working Group (one will be a public representative)
- two artists / arts professionals, as appropriate to the shortlisted applications
- the two Public Art Advisors / Curators for IN CONTEXT 4, who will share one vote
- the Independent Public Arts Consultant
- a non-voting chairperson

3. Interview for short-listed applicants

Short-listed applicants may be interviewed by a four-person panel, the likely composition of which will be:

- the Arts Officer,
- one public representative from the SDCC Public Art Working Group
- one artist / arts professional
- the Public Art Advisors / Curators for IN CONTEXT 4

Additional Information

Contact and Submissions

Applicants are welcome to make enquiries regarding commissions. These can be directed to the Arts Office by email to: oscannell@sdublincoco.ie. For detailed terms and conditions please visit the website www.incontext4.ie

Website

A website has been developed for IN CONTEXT 4, www.incontext4.ie. This provides additional information on South Dublin County with references, videos and useful links. It will also be updated with news on the commissioning process and as projects are developing.

Publication

A publication documenting IN CONTEXT 4 with images and critical texts will be published by South Dublin County Council on completion of the four year programme.

Documentation and Evaluation

Each commission will be comprehensively documented to facilitate promotion and also as a legacy and record of the work. Ongoing evaluation of the programme will be undertaken to assess areas of achievement or potential improvement.

Contract

A contract will be agreed and signed between South Dublin County Council and the appointed individual or team.

People

Public Art Advisers and Curators In Context 4

Claire Power and Aoife Tunney.

South Dublin County Council Public Art Working Group

Orla, Scannell – Arts Officer, Economic, Enterprise
and Tourism Development

Anne Byrne – Administrative Officer, Housing, Social
and Community Development

Claire Cummins – Executive Engineer, Land Use, Planning
and Transportation

Nicola Conlon – Executive Planner, Land Use, Planning
and Transportation

Bernie Meenaghan – Acting County Librarian, Economic,
Enterprise and Tourism Development

Peader O Caomhanaigh – Arts, Culture, Gaeilge, Heritage
and Libraries Strategic Policy Committee

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