NETWORKING EVENT

Sustaining Collaborative Practice

NETWORKING EVENT

DATE: Thursday 19 November 2026

TIME: 9am-5pm

VENUE: Dance Limerick Performance Space

ADDRESS: St. John's Church, John's Square, V94 EP42

Intro 04

Schedule 06

Biographies 07

Info 14

Please note that this is an interactive PDF. You can click underlined text to skip to content or to access external links such as websites or email addresses

Please consider completing our surveys linked from the text and QR codes below.

Networking Event Feedback

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Survey

Intro

Create's Networking Event is an annual encounter of exchange and learning, providing a vital space for connection and discussion among artists, activists, researchers and other collaborators operating in the spaces between collaborative, socially engaged arts, community development, pedagogy, and politics. This event is a unique opportunity for those working in the field to meet with like-minded peers, to share and network, and learn from each other as well as leading voices in the field.

Each year we seek to engage with themes that are relevant to those working in socially engaged arts practice, providing artists, organisations and civil society with challenging and stimulating conversations that can inform future collaborations. We are delighted to work with partners Dance Limerick and The GAFF this year to offer this opportunity to meet, learn, share, and network together.

The title of this year's event is **Sustaining Collaborative Practice**. Together, we will explore how artists and communities can create long-lasting sustainable work together, and how artists can forge a life-long career.

NETWORKING EVENT

The programme of the day will include contributions from **Jasmina Ibrahimovic** from Rotterdams Wijktheater and the International Community Arts Festival (ICAF), who will present on her work with her local communities and what it means to host a global gathering of participatory, collaborative and socially engaged arts practitioners.

We will also discuss different models used by collaborative artists **Tobi Omoteso**, **Tanya Bridgeman**, and **Lucy Hyland** to build support systems, peer networks, and practices of self-care, and hear from a panel discussing different models which allow for sustaining, scaling or repeating work beyond short-term projects, with contributions from the **Boys in the Making** team, **Our Place** and **Run of the Mill**.

We will also hear from those with experience of working within the funding structures that shape and sustain collaborative arts practice, including **The Arts Council**, **Creative Ireland**, **Business to Arts** and **Michael Barron** from **NB Social Justice Studio**.

NETWORKING EVENT

Schedule

09.00–10.00	Registration & Networking
10.00–10.15	Welcome by **Damien McGlynn,** Director of Create
10.15–11.15	**Jasmina Ibrahimovic** from Rotterdams Wijktheater and the International Community Arts Festival (ICAF)
11.15–11.30	BREAK
11.30–12.15	**Artist-led Support Systems** with Tobi Omoteso, Tanya Bridgeman, and Lucy Hyland
12.30–14.00	Lunch & Networking held at **The GAFF**
14.15–15.10	**Sustaining Collaborative Practice Beyond Short-term Project Cycles** with Fiona Whelan, Dannielle McKenna, Kate Houlton, AlanJames Burns, Sinead McCann and Aisling Byrne
15.10–15.25	BREAK
15.25–16.15	**Funding Structures to Sustain Collaborative Practice** with Louise O'Reilly, Michael Barron, Ann O'Connor, Sheila Deegan
16.15–16.30	Wrap up & Close

Biographies



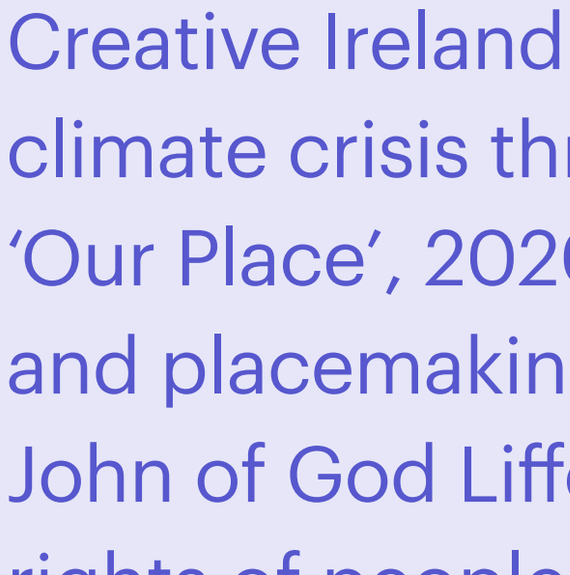
Michael Barron has been a social justice advocate since the 1990s, including as a youth and community worker, executive director, (of BeLonG To, EQUATE and The Rowan Trust), researcher, grant maker and volunteer. He has been involved in the Irish and international LGBTI+ rights movement and worked with people who are homeless, promoted sexual health and campaigned for equal access to education. This work has been facilitated through cross-community coalitions for social justice. Michael is deeply committed to the role independent funding can play when it works in partnership with others to achieve social justice.



Tanya Bridgeman (TAN) is an Irish-Bajan writer, performer and creative facilitator whose work explores folklore, identity, social justice and the natural world. Her practice spans spoken word theatre, verbatim performance and screenwriting. Her solo show GRETEL won Best Production and Best Performer at Dublin Fringe Festival 2026, reimagining Hansel and Gretel through the lens of county lines exploitation. Her other projects include These Waves Whisper, exploring climate grief and ocean storytelling, which she will continue developing in 2027.



AlanJames Burns (they/them) is a neurodivergent and environmental artist, curator and festival maker. Their practice is marked by socially engaged, and site-specific projects. The focal points of their highly collaborative practice are disability, the climate emergency, and the pursuit of a just society. Recent projects include; 'Disrupt Disability Arts Festival', an annual festival taking place at Project Arts centre and online; 'Divergently Together', 2024–26 a national Creative Ireland climate action project exploring the climate crisis through the perspective of disability; and 'Our Place', 2020–2024, a socially engaged sound art and placemaking project with Sinead McCann and St. John of God Liffey Services that champions the human rights of people living with intellectual disabilities.



Aisling Byrne (she/her) is an award-winning Writer, Director, Facilitator and Socially Engaged Artist working across theatre, film and community contexts. She is the founder and Artistic Director of Run of the Mill, and Co-Artistic Director Talking Shop Ensemble. As a facilitator Aisling collaborates regularly with a range of organisations including Create, Dublin Theatre Festival, Theatre Forum and Dublin City Council Culture Company.



Sheila Deegan is one of Ireland's leading cultural advocates and has spent more than three decades helping shape the artistic and cultural life of Limerick, while also rethinking the role creativity can play in civic life and local government. She now works at a national level in the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport, on an all of government programme Creative Ireland Programme. She leads out particularly across the Creative Communities initiative focused on how national and local government together can unlock culture, creativity and community connection at a local level.



Kate Houlton (she/her) is the Children and Young People's Producer at Heart of Glass, a community arts organisation based in the Northwest of England. They bring together artists and communities to make collaborative art, and provide support, resources and opportunities to artists and anyone interested in socially engaged practice. Kate leads on the Children and Young People's programme, supporting the creation of dynamic and ambitious enquiry led collaborations between artists, children, young people and their allies.



Lucy Hyland is a visual artist and creative wellbeing facilitator specialising in artist wellbeing and reflective practice. Her work explores the restorative potential of creative expression, and how slowing down, curiosity and play can reveal new sources of nourishment and possibility within artists' creative practice. Through creative facilitation, she creates held spaces where artists can step away from productivity, attend to their own experience and reconnect with their creative spirit. Recognising the emotional labour and competing demands of artistic work, she places particular importance on care, replenishment and resilience as essential elements of sustainable creative practice. Her approach draws on her background in art therapy, health and community development.



Jasmina Ibrahimovic is a Bosnian-Dutch theater director, dramaturge and teacher in the field of community arts. She is currently the CEO of Rotterdams Wijktheater (Rotterdam Community Theatre) and programmer of the International Community Arts Festival (ICAF) in Rotterdam. She regularly gives lectures and workshops to art schools in the Netherlands. Since mid 2016 she has been a board member of the oldest community theatre group in the Netherlands; Stut Theater, and of one of the most renowned site-specific theatre groups; PeerGroup.



Dr Sinéad McCann (she/her) is a multidisciplinary socially engaged artist, researcher and educator. For almost twenty years she has developed collaborative artistic projects exploring human rights, structural inequality and lived experience through partnerships with communities, researchers, artists and public organisations. Working through sustained cross-sector collaborations, McCann develops projects that are both artistically ambitious and socially relevant. Her practice spans performance, installation, theatre, immersive environments, multi-channel audio-visual works and radio. Across these forms, lived testimony and documentary material are central, grounding the work in real experiences and histories.



Dannielle Mc Kenna is the Project Manager of Rialto Youth Project and has worked with the project since 2009. Dannielle is committed to empowering young people and fostering positive change through the values of youth work and social justice. With a deep belief in the potential of every young person Dannielle, strives to create inclusive, supportive, and equitable spaces. The Rialto Youth Project has always approached youth work from a community development perspective. It has insisted that addressing issues of inequality and exclusion in community and society is essential in the practice of youth work and supports young people to become creative agents of change in their own lives.



Ann O'Connor is Head of Participatory Arts at the Arts Council. She previously worked as an arts consultant and creative producer across multiple sectors, and held arts development roles with the HSE South, Cork 2005: European Capital of Culture, Sligo County Council and Blue Drum. She was also a cross-border development worker with Irish Rural Link. In her current role, Ann manages policy, development and funding programmes that support a wide range of participatory, collaborative and socially engaged arts practices.



Louise O'Reilly is Chief Executive of Business to Arts and has over 20 years' experience developing mission-led cultural initiatives and partnerships across the arts, business and civic sectors. Her career has focused on building cross-sector collaborations and creating the conditions for arts and culture to thrive, including helping to establish Dublin City Council Culture Company, supporting the international expansion of Science Gallery, and developing interdisciplinary research at Accenture's The Dock. A former Board member of Create and the Irish Architecture Foundation, she now leads Business to Arts' work to encourage responsible private investment in the arts, strengthen organisational sustainability and support the development of Ireland's cultural sector.



Tobi Omoteso is a Nigerian-Irish dancer, choreographer, festival director and collaborative artist whose embedded practice uses Hip-Hop culture as a framework for long-term co-creation with communities across Limerick City. As Festival Director of Top 8, supported by the Arts Council and now in its 15th year, Tobi has built and sustained a platform where local communities, emerging non-professional creatives and international practitioners come together through year-round multidisciplinary events that establish shared authorship, creative agency, belonging and cultural exchange. As a choreographer and performer, Tobi's work has been presented across Ireland.



Dr Fiona Whelan (she/her) is an artist, writer and educator based in Dublin. Fiona's arts practice is committed to exploring and responding to systemic power relations and inequalities through long-term collaborations with diverse individuals, groups and organisations. These processes are rooted in complex relational networks and typically accumulate over time through a series of public manifestations, including text-based, visual, performative and dialogical artworks that position the practice of listening centrally. Fiona is also Programme Leader of the MA/MFA Art and Social Action at NCAD.

NETWORKING EVENT

Info

Satellite Artist Meet-up: 18 November

We are delighted to work with The GAFF and Limerick artists Gillian Kenny Shinnors and Carey Long to offer an Artist Meetup as a satellite event to our Networking Event. The Artist Meetups are a monthly gathering for artists and creatives (of all disciplines) providing a space to connect, share ideas, build creative networks and offer support. Pioneered by Limerick artists Gillian Kenny Shinnors and Carey Long, in partnership with The GAFF, Spacecraft, and Wickham Street Studios.

For students, emerging artists, and established practitioners, the Artist Meet Ups foster an intergenerational and culturally diverse conversation. Each 90-minute session is loosely themed, often focusing on informal networking, peer discussion, funding information, events promotion with opportunities for knowledge-sharing and collaboration.

The Artist Meetup will take place on Wednesday 18th November, the evening before Create's Networking Event, at The GAFF and is open to those attending the Networking Event. The event is offered free of charge, on a first come first serve basis. There are limited places for this event. Please register your place by emailing spacecraftlimerick@gmail.com no later than Monday the 16th November, 9am.

Venue and Accessibility

Established in 2013, Dance Limerick is a dedicated centre for art where movement and choreography are at the centre of the work. They create opportunities for artists, individuals and communities, to discover and participate in dance.

Dance Limerick is an 11-minute walk from Colbert Train Station. The Performance Space is wheelchair accessible.

There is limited paid parking and an accessible parking slot in John's Square. There are also bike racks available in the square.

If you require assistance for your visit, please do not hesitate to contact the Dance Limerick team at info@dancelimerick.ie

The GAFF building at 30 Lord Edward Street is a fifteen-minute walk from Dance Limerick. The newly renovated building is fully accessible with wheelchair access and accessible bathrooms.

It is important to us that as many people as possible have an opportunity to experience our event. Those with financial, access or other requirements are invited to contact Create on info@create-ireland.ie to discuss how we can best support you to attend. Irish Sign Language (ISL) interpretation will be available upon advance request. Create will provide hand sanitiser and masks at registration.

Transport

Trains from Dublin (Heuston) to Limerick (Colbert) run every hour. There are also trains connecting Limerick to Galway, Cork, Waterford, etc. For timetables and more information about Limerick (Colbert) train station, see here (irishrail.ie/en-ie/station/limerick-colbert).

In addition, bus route 300 of the Green Bus (dublincoach.ie) travels between Dublin city and Limerick (Arthur's Quay). It departs every 30 minutes.

Locally, the nearest bus stops (for city buses) to Dance Limerick are at Upper and Lower William Street.

For those wishing to travel by car, we have set up a carpool (www.groupcarpool.com/t/2sjvb6) for this event, to allow potential passengers and drivers to connect.

Accommodation

There are many options for accommodation in Limerick City and varying price points. Accommodation options include:

- The Old Quarter Townhouse
- Limerick City Hotel
- Absolute Hotel Limerick
- The Bedford Townhouse
- George Limerick Hotel
- Limerick Strand Hotel

Lunch and Refreshments

The lunch provided will be vegetarian, with options provided for other dietary requirements. Please let us know when booking if you have any additional dietary requirements. Coffee, tea and water will be available at breaks — we encourage attendees to bring a reusable cup/container with them.

Sustainability

As part of our commitment to sustainability, we will not be printing posters or programmes for this event. These items will be available online and can be accessed easily via QR codes which will be provided at the venue. Please direct any questions you have about the event to Create at info@create-ireland.ie.

Create

Create is Ireland's national development agency for collaborative arts, enabling artists and communities to create exceptional art together. Our mission is to model, develop and advocate for the conditions which enable collaborative arts practice to flourish and for artists and communities to be supported in creating work of depth, meaning and purpose together. As a national resource organisation, we offer supports both for artists working in social and community contexts, and the communities with whom they collaborate. These include professional development, mentoring, project development support, commissioning and project opportunities as well as conducting research and leading advocacy for the field.

create-ireland.ie

create national development agency for collaborative arts

Dance Limerick

Established in 2013, Dance Limerick is a dedicated centre for art where movement and choreography are at the centre of the work. We create opportunities for artists, individuals and communities, to discover and participate in dance.

Our purpose is to inspire curiosity, creativity and connection through dance. We believe dance empowers and enriches us as individuals, as communities and as a society. Our ambition is for Dance Limerick to be a place for dance and a hub of creativity for our artists and for all those with whom we engage. Through dance we support artists and the public alike to be curious, to be creative and to connect with each other and to what matters in the world about us.

dancelimerick.ie

DANCE LIMERICK

The GAFF is founded on the core principle that artistic engagement and creative activity are fundamental rights for everyone. Our mission is to enrich the lives of artists, communities and audiences in Limerick and the Mid-West through an open and inclusive approach.

With equality, diversity and inclusion as core values, we support multidisciplinary art projects through collaborative practice between artists and some exceptionally marginalised communities. Projects in recent years have included work led by some of Limerick's leading artists, delivering programmes in collaboration with youth and community groups in Limerick and throughout Munster.

thegafflimerick.com

create

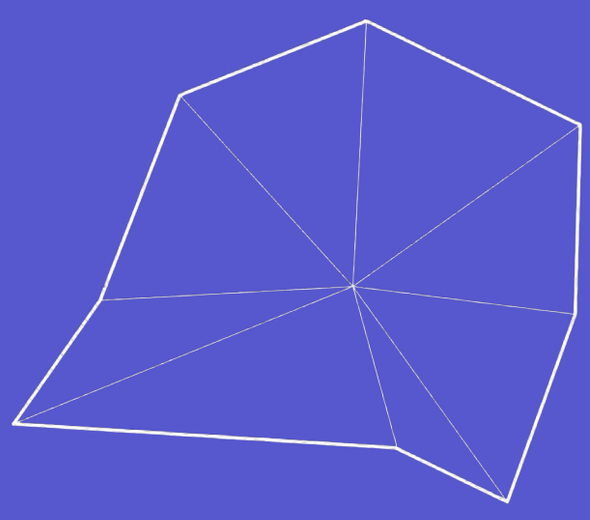
create national development agency for collaborative arts

the arts council an chomhairle ealaíon

funding the arts

DANCE LIMERICK

WICKHAM STREET STUDIOS



spacecraft

THE GAFF

clarelynchdesign.com