

**John Coolahan Early Years Artist Residency**  
**OPEN CALL Guidelines**  
**The Ark**  
**May 2018 – April 2019**



We are looking for applications from professional artists of any discipline with an existing practice involving children in the early years. The chosen artist will be able to demonstrate a strong commitment and level of artistic quality in their work for this age range whilst also showing a clear vision for how they see this year-long opportunity with The Ark would positively impact their practice and artistic development.

2018 will be the inaugural year of this new residency. We aim to establish this as an annual opportunity with a different artist being selected each year.

This first year of the residency will run for 12 months from May 2018 to April 2019.

During the residency period the selected artist will develop and present a series of early years workshops for children aged 2-4 with participating accompanying adults as part of The Ark's programme.

The themes or focus for each of these workshops is purposely open as we wish for the chosen artist to have the freedom to explore ideas or themes that may be especially of interest to them and the development of their early years practice. We also wish to allow for the integration of any learning or refinement to the artist's approaches or ideas from month to month as the residency progresses. The artist may also, if they wish, choose to bounce of themes in other parts of The Ark's programme.

In addition to the opportunity to create and lead a yearlong early years workshop programme at The Ark, the artist will also be supported throughout the residency in the development of their own practice. This will include the opportunity to work with a mentor and to undertake relevant travel and training.

Key dates which the artist must be available are given below.

The chosen artist will be asked to reflect on their process and journey through the residency with blog-posts which will be shared on The Ark website at intervals during the year. The Ark will manage photographic documentation throughout the residency in line with our child-protection policy.

As with all work involving children, the selected artist will be required to undergo Garda vetting and follow to our child protection policy and health and safety guidelines during their time with The Ark.

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**Key dates:**

It is our intention to programme workshops created and led by our Early Years Artist in Residence at regular intervals through the year. This workshop programme will be called 'Seedlings' on The Ark website and our printed material.

The proposed pattern for the delivery of these workshops is monthly engagements on the first Saturday of the month and the previous Thursday. This structure is intended to create clarity and regularity for both artist and audience. It also aims to build-in time for the artist to reflect on workshops in between and devise new concepts or refine ideas before the next iteration.

The ideal dates are listed below. Please note, the first 4 months are currently set. We would like to also be able to set the subsequent dates but if necessary this is something we can discuss with the chosen artist.

The dates listed below total 18 dates. The residency fee allows for up to 24 total workshop dates so additional dates may be added in response to the programme or how the residency develops. This will be discussed and finalised with the artist during the course of the residency.

**Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sat 5<sup>th</sup> May 2018**

**Thurs 31<sup>st</sup> May and Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2018**

**Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> and Sat 7<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

**Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> and Sat 4<sup>th</sup> August 2018**

September/October 2018 - possible off-site workshops and/or possible travel and training time for artist.

Thurs 1<sup>st</sup> and Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2018

Thurs 29<sup>th</sup> November and Sat 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018

Thurs 31<sup>st</sup> Jan and Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2019

Thurs 28<sup>th</sup> Feb and Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019

Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> and Sat 6<sup>th</sup> April 2019

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**Budget:**

The total overall fee to the artist is €7,550

[This is broken down as:

Planning/meeting fees @ €1,100

Development fees per month of workshops @ €1,650

Up to 24 dates of workshop engagements @ €4,800]

Payment will be made in instalments during the residency agreed in advance with the artist.

Materials: any materials or other resources needed for delivering the residency workshops will be covered within reason to be finalised with the selected artist and depending on the particular needs of their art form.

Expenses: There is a limited transport and parking allowance for the artist. Unfortunately, for this inaugural year of the residency accommodation cannot be covered.

Mentoring: There is an allocation in the budget for mentoring for the artist. This allows for up to 4 meetings between the artist and a chosen mentor across the year.

Travel and Training: Proposals for travel and training opportunities that will support the artist's development and relevant to their early years practice up to a max of €1,000 will also be discussed and finalised with the selected artist.

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### **About The Ark**

The Ark is a dedicated cultural centre for children. We create opportunities for children, along with their families and friends or with their school, to discover and love art. Through our work with leading Irish and international artists children can enjoy performances in our unique child-sized theatre, view engaging exhibitions or participate in creative workshops.

You can read more about us at <http://ark.ie/about>

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### **FAQs**

- **What kind of artists are we looking for?**

We are looking for artists who have experience with children in the early years who are excited about the possibilities of creating and presenting a year-long workshop programme for that age range with The Ark and can see long-term benefits to their practice from this experience as well as the other aspects of the residency including mentoring and travel/training support.

This is a yearlong opportunity and so it will require a significant degree of commitment on behalf of the selected artist. For this reason we are looking for professional artists of any discipline who have an existing practise with children in the early years and can demonstrate their commitment to this area of arts practice.

This opportunity is unfortunately not suitable for artists still studying or those who have very recently graduated or those artists with an established practice with a different age range who are new to early years work.

- **What information should I include in my application?**

We are keen to learn about your experience to date as an artist and in particular your work related to children in the early years, why this area of work is important to you as well as your interest in the scope for your development as an artist offered by the residency. We'd love to see examples of your work (images, film clips, audio samples, reviews etc.) so please include them in your application via web links and/or file transfer links (e.g. Dropbox or WeTransfer). Please don't include CVs or other additional documents as the panel will only see your application form.

- **Is there a word count/time limit?**

Please limit your answers to 250 words per question as indicated on the application form. Think about the key facts/values/ideas you want the panel to know and make those clear in your answers.

- **How will the panel assess the applications?**

The panel will review each application in relation to the following key criteria:

- *Demonstrated existing professional early years arts practice*
- *Artistic quality*
- *Enthusiasm and commitment to the development of your early years arts practice*
- *Quality of ideas and how you see them engaging children aged 2-4*
- *Clear vision for the potential impact of this residency on your career as an artist*

- **How many places are there?**

One artist will be chosen for this residency in 2018

- **Can I apply if I haven't connected with The Ark before?**

Yes, absolutely. We strongly encourage all artists of any discipline interested in the residency and the area of early years arts practice to apply.

- **What do you mean by early years?**

Early years is generally defined as children aged between 0 and 6. We are interested in receiving applications from artists with an existing practice with children in any part of that age range. However, it is important to note that for this residency with The Ark the focus will be children aged between **2-4 years** only.

- **What do you mean by Travel and Training?**

The residency offers support for the selected artist to undertake travel to another location. This is to enable the artist to receive input of knowledge or experience which is fitting to their early years work and would be beneficial or nurture the further development of their artistic practice. The travel proposed by the artist can be to another location in Ireland or overseas within the limitations of the budget.

The type of experience suggested by the artist for travel and training could include participating in formal or informal training (for example training in Aistear the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework) or it could involve setting up an opportunity to see or experience relevant or inspiring early years performance/exhibition/workshop programmes in other locations, meetings with other early years artists/programmers/experts in other locations or other relevant opportunities. It could be a combination of some of these possibilities or another idea entirely that you think is right for you and your practice.

The travel and training does not all have to take place in one trip as long as it is possible within the budget limitations.

For the purposes of the application form, the artist isn't required to give absolute concrete travel and training plans but we would like to see the kind of vision you have for this aspect of the residency and how it would benefit you. We are open to the possibility that your initial ideas presented in the application form may evolve during the course of the residency and are open to re-working those plans with you over time.

- **What do you mean by mentoring?**

To further support your development over the course of the residency we will support up to 4 meetings with you and a mentor over the course of the residency year, within a budget limitation. The precise type of mentorship that may suit you will depend on various factors including your discipline, where you currently are in terms of your career, what your goals are and what you consider to be the areas of your early years practice you would most benefit from in terms of this extra support.

Bearing all those variables in mind, we would like to hear the type of suggested mentor you would like and why you feel that would be a good choice for you.

Suggested mentors for example could include someone who could challenge your growth in an aspect of your artistic discipline you wish to develop through the residency. Or they may be someone who has a particular perspective in terms of early years child development or education. Or it could be someone with expertise in group facilitation or leadership who could help you develop this area of your work.

We are excited to hear your ideas for what would best work for you and are open to suggestions not mentioned here.

- **Can I apply for this residency if I'm not based in Ireland?**

Unfortunately no. This opportunity is for artists based in Ireland only.

- **How accessible is The Ark?**

The venue is fully accessible and we welcome applications from artists with a disability. Please get in touch with us if you would like to discuss your accessibility needs.

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### **To apply:**

To apply, simply complete our online application form [here](#) or download a Word version of the application form [here](#). Completed Word versions of the application form should be emailed to [TheArkDublin@gmail.com](mailto:TheArkDublin@gmail.com)

### **Applications must be received by 5pm on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018.**

The Ark selection panel will include Aideen Howard, Director and Aisling O’Gorman, Creative Arts Manager and one external panellist. The panel will select one artist for the residency in 2018.

The shortlist will be confirmed by Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Shortlisted artists may be requested to attend an interview which will be scheduled shortly after 27<sup>th</sup> March.

We aim to ensure the application and selection process is straight forward and fair. If you have any questions about the process, or the residency in general, please email Aisling O’Gorman at [aisling@ark.ie](mailto:aisling@ark.ie)