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**Annual Directors'  
Report & Audited  
Financial Statements**

Financial Year ended  
31 December 2019

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Company Information

CHAIR

Brian Lavery

DIRECTORS

Lynda Carroll  
Maria Corbett  
Catherine Cotter  
Carol Fawsitt  
Dr. Anne Looney  
Tomm Moore  
Prof. Anne O’Gara  
Gerard Smyth

CEO AND DIRECTOR

Aideen Howard

COMPANY SECRETARY AND GENERAL MANAGER

Al Russell

AUDITORS

Whelan Dowling & Associates  
Block 1, Unit 1 & 4, Northwood Court  
Santry, Dublin 9

BANKERS

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7/12 Dame Street, Dublin 2

SOLICITORS

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3 Clanwilliam Square  
Grand Canal Quay, Dublin 2

BUSINESS ADDRESS

11a Eustace Street  
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Dublin 2

COMPANY NUMBER

222774

CHARITY NUMBER

CHY 11334

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER

RCN 20030827

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## Foreword

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Welcome to The Ark's annual report for 2019. In that year, which came on the cusp of our quarter century, The Ark delivered one of the most ambitious and successful years in its history, combining an innovative and delightful artistic programme with our impactful work to promote children's right to culture nationally. The bar has been set high.



Four years ago, The Ark developed a new strategy for the period 2017–2020, which wove our multiple areas of endeavour together into a unified plan. 2019 marked the latest year in which we have used that plan to deliver on our mission to “spark childhood imagination and create cultural engagements that last a lifetime.”

As usual, creating excellent art for children was at the forefront. At a time when there is intense competition for children's attention, The Ark continued to create new, ground-breaking works for young audiences.

With *Peat* and *The Haircut!*, we commissioned and staged two world-premiere live performances. *Scrapefoot* devised a new type of narrative installation experience that reimaged how we could use our building. (Our original architects probably didn't anticipate audiences exiting our third-floor gallery via a slide through the balcony wall.) These productions, and others, brought world-class Irish talent into the children's arena, where we hope they will continue to practice for years to come.

The Ark's beautiful building serves only as a launching pad for our work. In 2019 we took to the streets, and to venues scattered throughout Temple Bar, with *BIG BANG Dublin!*, a festival collaboration of Irish and European musicians, and the pioneering *Right Here Right Now! Festival of Children*. The latter demonstrated our ability to fuse our artistic work with our public advocacy, where we continue to ensure children (and their right to culture) are seen, heard, and represented in Irish society. Behind the scenes, we continue to make major strides in corporate governance.

We're compliant with the Charities Regulator's governance code, and developed gold-standard policies to guide our operations and to protect children who engage with The Ark. Our hard-working trustee directors deserve credit here. They may be Oscar nominees, prize-winning poets, legal scholars, esteemed educationalists and corporate risk experts; they also roll up their sleeves and put in long hours.

Our supporters have recognised this. We're extremely grateful to our major public sector funding partners – The Arts Council, the Department of Education, and Dublin City Council – for increasing their investment in the The Ark, which allowed us to reach more children in 2019.

As we closed the year, we entered a major partnership with the global professional services firm BDO, who committed to working with The Ark in 2020, our 25th birthday year. We're thrilled to have this support and excited about what the relationship will bring.

We're also grateful to Mason Hayes and Curran, Trilogy Technologies, and our many individual donors whose support helps The Ark to reach children in disadvantaged areas, and living in Direct Provision, who might not otherwise have the opportunity to engage with the arts.

The bedrock for this is our loyal audiences, whether as school groups or families, whether led by teachers and principals or guardians and grandparents. That community is served by our artists. We're proud to develop the practice of arts for children – regardless of where the output eventually appears – with

additional measures like our collaborative coffee mornings, and our Early Years Artist Residency. This residency, in memory of our sorely missed board member, Professor John Coolahan, entered in its second year in 2019 by branching from visual arts into theatre.

Finally, thanks are due to The Ark staff. This dedicated crew climbed mountains in 2019, and continue to step up their pace in 2020. As the year unfolded contrary to expectations, they developed new digital-first operating models and demonstrated remarkable flexibility. Their work is a source of intense pride for all of us associated with The Ark.

It's difficult to reflect on last year without nostalgia for an easier time, before the complications that 2020 would bring. Like many organisations, The Ark has concerns about the future, but we also appreciate that we are able to quickly adapt what we do, to serve our audiences and the children of Ireland. Reflecting what The Ark achieved before the Covid-19 crisis makes clear how we're in a strong position to chart a brave way forward.

Thank you for taking the time to read along with us. The arts allow all of us, and especially children, to make sense of the world around us, and to come to understand ourselves. As we look to the future, when that world is confusing and uncertain, that power is all the more important.

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**Brian Lavery,**  
Chair

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## 2019 in Numbers

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# 33,051

children and their grown-ups  
attended both school and family  
events in The Ark in 2019.

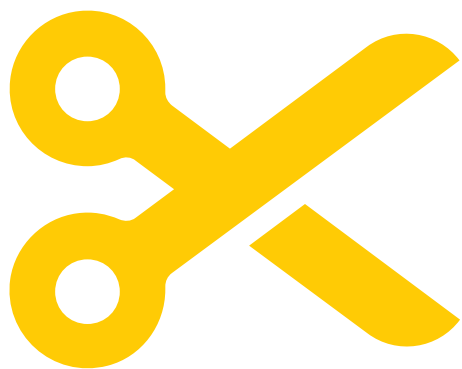
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**2 BRAND NEW**  
CHILDREN'S FESTIVALS



**315** AT THE  
**BABY**  
**BOPPING BABIES RAVE**

**30** EUROPEAN  
**ARTISTS**  
PARTICIPATING  
IN **PUSH+ LABS**



**11 SNIPS, SEVEN CHOPS,  
TWO SPLASHES AND ONE SHAVE IN**

## **The Haircut!**



**20** EXCAVATED  
OBJECTS IN  
**PEAT**



**34** **KILLER**  
**TUNES**  
PLAYED AT  
**DRACULA'S DISCO**

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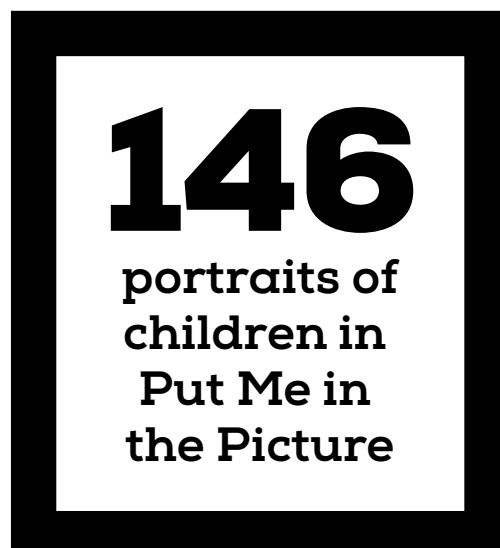
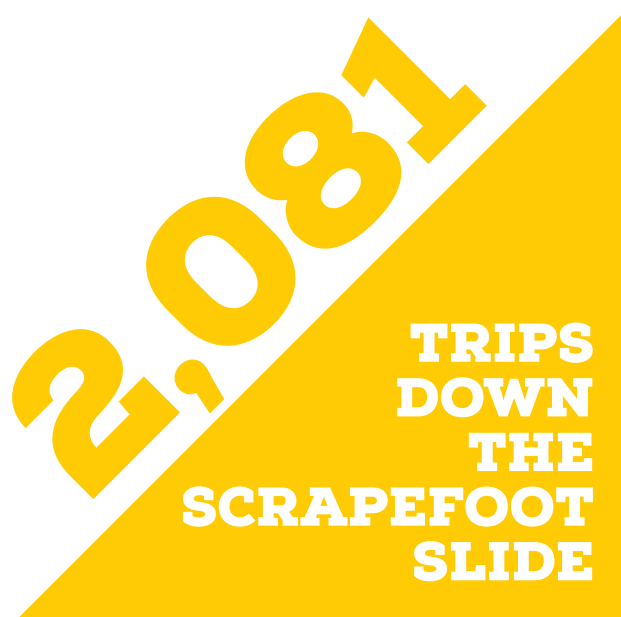


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**153 TEACHERS**  
SUPPORTED IN THEIR  
professional development

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198 STICK FRIENDS  
GIVEN OUT AT  
STICK BY ME



# Introduction

The Directors present their annual report and audited financial statements of The Ark Children's Cultural Centre for the year ended 31 December 2019. The Ark is a registered charity and hence the report and results are presented in a form which complies with the requirements of Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102. The Ark's annual financial statements are also produced in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities and not-for-profit entities as developed in the UK in 2005 (SORP) which is accepted as best practice in Ireland.





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# The Ark's Strategic Objectives

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Informed by the principle that all children have a right to participate in the arts and cultural life, in 2017 The Ark launched a new strategy for the period 2017 – 2020. This document set out our ambitions for this four-year period, creating a roadmap for the next phase of The Ark's work to create opportunities for children to discover and love the arts.

In 2019, we continued to be guided by the four priorities outlined in that strategic plan: **excellence, engagement, sustainability** and **advocacy**. Happily, we made great strides across all four areas. We increased our artistic activity with two new Ark premieres, two brand-new festivals, and a variety of international work; we enhanced our building and our programming, making both more accessible to all children; and we advocated locally, nationally and internationally for children's right to culture.

The following sections of this report outline The Ark's accomplishments, and the challenges we faced, in 2019.



## 1 Excellence

### GOAL

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Create brilliant art experiences for children

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The Ark is founded on the principle that all children, as equal citizens, have the same cultural entitlements as adults. Children deserve the very best art and culture. We want to encourage and resource artists to make outstanding and experimental art for children through properly supported and remunerated commissions, productions and professional development. We want to work more closely with teachers to further enhance children's experience of art at The Ark and in their schools.

## 2 Engagement

### GOAL

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Ensure that more children experience art through The Ark

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In the knowledge that participating in art enhances learning, development, wellbeing, belonging and confidence, we want to create more opportunities for children, and those who support them at school or at home, to make and share art. We want to deepen our engagement with those who currently know and attend The Ark and to diversify our audiences by working to address the inequalities and to overcome the barriers that prevent participation by others.



## 3 Sustainability

### GOAL

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Build the infrastructure and capabilities that ensure The Ark's future as a cultural centre and resource for children

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We want to put in place the best management and governance practices to enable The Ark to be a thriving cultural organisation for children for years to come. We want to strengthen our financial position to allow us to deliver the best work for more children, to reach out more widely, to retain the best people and to ensure a vibrant, viable future for The Ark.

## 4 Advocacy

### GOAL

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Advance children's right to art and culture

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In the belief that children have a right to art and culture as part of their learning and development, we want to advance this right within our own organisation and in wider society. We want to promote the right of the child to be heard by developing a considered methodology in The Ark and by advocating for its societal value.







FILA  
Rhino  
FILA

Peat



## STRATEGIC DELIVERY REPORT

# 1 Excellence

## GOAL

Create brilliant art experiences for children



Left: *Peat* by Kate Heffernan. Photo by Ros Kavanagh.

Above: *The Haircut!* by Wayne Jordan & Tom Lane.  
Photo by Ros Kavanagh.

## OBJECTIVE 1

**Continue to commission artists at work in Ireland and abroad to make innovative, ambitious and meaningful work for children who are between the ages of two and twelve.**

The Ark believes that children deserve great art that reflects their lives today, and so we constantly commission for future productions. In 2019, The Ark commissioned several pieces of new work for children, as well as developing and presenting work that had been commissioned in previous years.

*“Equal parts whimsy and wake-up call ... long after the show has finished, you might still be musing on the extinction of the giant Irish elk or ... on how friendships endure.”*

★★★★ Peter Crawley on *Peat*, The Irish Times, March 2019.

In 2019, The Ark was proud to present two world premieres – *Peat* and *The Haircut!* – both of which were commissioned and produced by The Ark. In both cases, The Ark encouraged respected leading artists to make work for children for the first time, and to broker new and exciting artistic collaborations.

The story of two friends who dig a hole, the things they bury and the things they find, *Peat* brought together the Stewart Parker Trust's Emerging Playwright Award Winner Kate Heffernan and experimental theatre-maker and director Tim Crouch.

Meanwhile, acclaimed theatre director Wayne Jordan and composer and sound designer Tom Lane joined forces on *The Haircut!*, a modern-day retelling of the Irish myth of Labhaird Loingseach (the king with donkey's ears) through words and music.

*"Adults will enjoy it as much as their young companions ... a win-win for all comers to the kingdom."*

★★★★ Sara Keating on *The Haircut!*, The Irish Times, October 2019.

In 2019, The Ark commissioned artist Lucy Hill to create an interactive exhibition for a broad age range, based on ideas developed through her practice as The Ark's John Coolahan Early Years Artist-in-Residence

for 2018/2019. The Ark also supported the development of two existing commissions: a new piece of non-verbal theatre by Carmel Winters for children in their early years; and a stage adaptation by Anna Carey. We look forward to seeing these projects come to fruition in the near future.

## OBJECTIVE 2

**Invest in artists (and their companies) at various stages of their careers to develop and enhance their long-term professional practice for children.**

In 2019, The Ark continued to invest in artists through our artist-in-residence programmes. Our John Coolahan Early Years Artist Residency recognises the importance of the arts in early childhood, by nurturing and supporting the development of professional artists in this emerging sector. Our monthly *Seedlings* workshops are core to the residency, while we also provide opportunities for development, support and learning through mentoring and travel/training.

In March, Lucy Hill, our inaugural John Coolahan Early Years Artist-in-Residence, completed her year developing and exploring the creation of visual arts work for children aged 2-4. Lucy marked the end of her term by hosting a talk at The Ark along with her residency mentor, Dr. Christina Macrae of Manchester Metropolitan University, to celebrate and reflect on their experiences together. This event drew a packed house of 75 artists, teachers, early childhood educators, parents, and arts practitioners.

**Right:** *The Haircut!* by Wayne Jordan & Tom Lane.  
Photo by Ros Kavanagh.







In May, theatre practitioner Joanna Parkes became The Ark's second Early Years Artist-in-Residence, devising and delivering a series of interactive drama workshops for children in their early years to enjoy with their grown-ups. Many of Joanna's activities encouraged expression and empathy through imagination and play, including a workshop called 'Suzy Deezy's Feeling Sneezy'. Children and their guardians heard about how Suzy was unwell and in need of help to prepare a party, encouraging them to find ways to help a friend in need.

2019 was also the first full year of our participation in *PUSH+*, a three-year artist and art-form development project funded by EU agency Creative Europe. Throughout the year, The Ark worked with colleagues from Imagine (Scotland), Aaben Dans (Denmark), Krokusfestival (Belgium), and Scenekunstbruket (Norway). Running until 2021, *PUSH+* aims to address underrepresented stories in performance art for children, by stimulating dialogue and initiating new artistic ideas and performances around three themes for young audiences: Home, Failure and Different Bodies.

In 2019, the project developed the skills of 30 participants – eleven dancers; five directors; nine theatre makers/performers; three playwrights; and two composers – through two eight-day labs, one residency and one festival visit to Showbox in Oslo, which presented award-winning and experimental work for young children. In January, The Ark selected and supported three Irish artists – Mollie Molumby, Eoin Lynch and Jane Madden – to attend the first artists' lab in Edinburgh, focusing on the theme "Home".

In June, this was followed by the Home Residency, in which four European artists collaborated on a piece of work called *Happy Feet* over two weeks in Hasselt, Belgium. In September, the second *PUSH+* Lab took place in Hasselt, this time on "Failure", and was attended by Ireland-based artists Sarah Baxter, Orlaith Ní Chearra and Mónica Muñoz Marín. From this, Sarah Baxter was one of four European artists selected to participate in the Failure Residency, hosted by The Ark in January 2020.

Throughout the year, The Ark also continued to support artists with an interest in creating work for children through The Ark Artists' Club, our free scheme to support artists and provide opportunities to develop their practice. We also hosted three Artists' Coffee Mornings during the year to develop our relationships with artists and connect them with each other.

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**Above:** Joanna Parkes. **Right:** Artists participating in the *PUSH+* Home Lab in Edinburgh. Photo by Jassy Earl.









## OBJECTIVE 3

### Present the best of Irish and international art for children throughout the year.

The Ark sustained year-round presentation of work by Irish companies and produced two new Irish commissions: *Peat* by Kate Heffernan; and *The Haircut!* by Wayne Jordan and Tom Lane. For both shows, The Ark successfully attracted local and international programmers to attend, with the aim of creating touring opportunities to bring this new Irish work to a wider audience of children. As noted under Objective 1, Irish critics and media widely celebrated the quality of these productions.

We also found new ways of co-presenting and co-producing with Irish companies. Over the summer, we partnered with acclaimed company ANU Productions for the first time to create *Scrapefoot*, a walk-through visual art experience for ages 6+ that explored the origin of the Goldilocks story. This immersive show saw The Ark's gallery transformed into a cottage in the woods in the middle of a storm. We also worked with Fishamble: The New Play Company, Little Bigtop and CoisCéim Dance Theatre to develop new work for children as part of *Still Loading...*, a mini-programme of works-in-progress presented by The Ark Children's Council during our inaugural *Right Here Right Now! Festival of Children*.



In April, we delivered the inaugural *BIG BANG Dublin!*, a new international festival of music for children, part of The Ark's involvement in another Creative Europe Project. The three-day festival featured a series of music gigs, workshops, installations and engagement projects.

Both of these new festivals, *BIG BANG Dublin!* and *Right Here Right Now!* provided high-profile opportunities to showcase international work of the highest quality, in dynamic festival contexts.

A testament to our achievements in 2019, The Ark received a nomination for the Judges' Special Award at the 2019 Irish Theatre Awards, "*For engaging with a wide range of theatre makers, challenging them to create sophisticated work for young audiences, sometimes for the first time.*"



## OBJECTIVE 4

**Invest in teachers by expanding our continuing professional development programme, in Irish and in English, to enhance their learning in the performing and visual arts and to contribute to their capacity to become arts leaders in their schools.**

To develop The Ark's CPD offering for teachers, we worked closely with the Department of Education PDST division (Professional Development Service for Teachers) and agreed a joint action plan for the 2019/2020 school year. On foot of this, The Ark secured increased investment from the Department and delivered four training days for PDST members. This included the STEM Team and the Wellbeing Team in June, and two days with the full PDST Primary teams in October. In November, Dr. Niamh Shaw facilitated a day with the STEM team to incorporate drama and creativity into the re-design of the PDST STEM summer course.

In addition to delivering summer courses for teachers in music, visual arts and STEM, and a CPD course in "Gaming in the Classroom", The Ark worked with dance artist Emma O'Kane to develop a new teachers' CPD course on dance and movement. Meanwhile, in February The Ark hosted the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland Education Panel's CPD workshop. The Education Panel came together and reflected on their experiences, learning from each other and taking part in up-skilling workshops.

*"The artists had a very clear understanding of arts in the context of the primary school curriculum and the workshops were fun and engaging."*

Orla McKiernan, PDST, on CPD workshops, October 2019.

**Right:** Teachers participating in a Visual Art CPD Summer Course with Jole Bortoli.











## STRATEGIC DELIVERY REPORT

## 2 Engagement

### GOAL

Ensure that more children experience art through The Ark



**Left:** Children at the *Right Here Right Now! Children's Rally* in Meeting House Square, June 2019. Photo by Mark Stedman.

**Above:** Children's Council members consulting on the design for *Right Here Right Now!*

### OBJECTIVE 1

**Listen to children's view of our work and employ participative decision-making by children in The Ark in relation to children's cultural needs and our artistic programme.**

Established in 2016 to bring children into The Ark's decision-making processes, The Ark Children's Council offers a unique opportunity for a group of fourth and fifth class children to gain special access to events at The Ark for a full year, and to take part in workshops that provide input on The Ark's work. Pioneering this form of child consultation and participative practice was a key element of The Ark's 2017–2020 Strategy and has had a revolutionary impact on The Ark's work.

The Council is mentored and guided by The Ark's Artist-in-Residence Shaun Dunne, a playwright and expert drama facilitator. They work together over the course of the year, engaging with and responding to The Ark's programme. 2019 marked the fourth year of the Children's Council, with the largest group so far, now comprising 40 students for the 2019/2020 school year. This group and its predecessor for 2018/2019 informed and influenced The Ark's programme and practice, both organisational and artistic, throughout the year by sharing their ideas, opinions and feedback.

Supported by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, The Ark commissioned Deirdre Hogan and Shirley Martin from University College Cork's School of Applied Social Studies to study the Council, and publish their findings in a report entitled "Evaluating the Operation and Impact of The Ark Children's Council." In March, The Ark curated a symposium on Child Consultation & Participative Decision-Making, to inspire others to engage children in their artistic practice and decision-making. The highly successful and sold-out event was attended by 109 people, including representatives from Baboró International Arts Festival for Children, Branar Téatar do Pháistí, Project Arts Centre, Draíocht Arts Centre, as well as The Arts Council and many individual artists.

As part of our first *BIG BANG Dublin!* music festival for young audiences in April, The Ark delivered the BIG BANG Ambassadors' Project, which allowed a group of 12 children to attend all of the festival's events, to represent The Ark by making public announcements at shows, to meet musicians performing at the festival, and to offer their feedback to inform future festivals. The group comprised members of that year's Children's Council, as well as alumni from previous years.

Extending our child participation practice, *Right Here Right Now! Festival of Children* took place in June, enabled through funding from the Creative Ireland Programme and timed to coincide with Cruinniú na nÓg, Ireland's national day of creativity for children. The inaugural festival celebrated children's rights to play, to engage in cultural activities, and to express themselves. The weekend of free art, theatre, dance, games and film from around the world was curated and presented

by children, for children. This landmark event was the first of its kind in Ireland (if not beyond), included children in all of its decision-making, and saw The Ark present events in venues across Dublin, including Project Arts Centre, Dublin Castle and Smock Alley Theatre.

The Ark's 2018/2019 Children's Council was involved with every aspect of the festival, and acted as a conduit through which other children could get involved. A national call-out asked children to suggest names for the festival, and the Children's Council chose the winner. Children living in Clondalkin Towers Direct Provision Centre were consulted on the festival as part of a workshop with The Ark's Engagement & Participation Coordinator Liam McCarthy and Artist-in-Residence Shaun Dunne, with one participant being responsible for the winning title. Council members consulted with designers on the branding and logos for the festival and selected the final designs.

The Children's Council also contributed to programming decisions for the festival, following two consultation sessions with The Ark's Director. As part of *Right Here Right Now!*, the Children's Council curated and presented *Still Loading...*, a mini showcase of performances-in-progress. The children selected acts for *Still Loading...* based on a shortlist, and gave feedback on three selected pieces with each company or artist in the weeks leading up to the festival.

Another major element of the festival was the *Right Here Right Now! Children's Rally*, which brought children from all over Ireland together in Meeting House Square, Temple Bar, to express themselves and have their voices heard on the issues that are most important to them. Groups from





ten participating schools were involved in songwriting and visual art workshops facilitated by teachers, The Ark's staff and a visual artist or musician, to explore the themes that they wanted to talk about. They made speeches, sang and brought artwork to the rally, where they were joined by hundreds of other children. The festival was launched with a speech from the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone TD, while members of our Children's Council also spoke and acted as MCs on the day.

*"This new festival by children, for children, is an important milestone in providing opportunities for our children and young people to unleash their creative potential."*

**Above:** The Right Here Right Now! Children's Rally. Photo by Mark Stedman.

**Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Josepha Madigan TD.**



## OBJECTIVE 2

**Increase the depth and breadth of our pre-school and school engagement with a particular focus on teachers.**

In January, The Ark appointed our full-time Engagement & Participation Coordinator, tasked with developing school relationships. With this increased capacity, we were able to expand The Ark Access for Schools Programme from four core schools in 2018, to ten schools in 2019. As well as ongoing communication with schools, we worked with these schools to recruit members of The Ark Children's Council in line with our Diversity & Inclusion Policy.

The Ark delivered the Rutland Street Early Years Project as a pilot pre-school engagement. For this project, fifth class students from Rutland Street National School and children from Rutland Street's Holy Child Pre-School were engaged in a project under the supervision of artists Lucy Hill, Duffy Mooney-Sheppard and The Ark's Engagement & Participation Coordinator. The children worked together, alongside teacher Judy Evans, over three full days to create bespoke inflatable spaces and sculptures. Initially, The Ark's team worked with each group individually and, beginning on our second day of engagement, the older and younger children worked together. These workshops culminated in an exhibition and party, celebrating Universal Children's Day, on 20 November 2019.



To deepen our connections with schools and teachers, and to assist in delivering our commitments to education in The Ark's Strategy 2017-2020, The Ark established a Teachers Advisory Group, who will meet semi-annually to advise on The Ark's engagement with schools and teachers. Made up of teachers, lecturers in education, school principals and community liaison officers, this group will act as a conduit between schools, teachers and The Ark. This group will also offer advice on our teacher training programmes, on links between the primary school curriculum and our artistic programme, and on the development of our school-related programming and social engagement projects.



**Left:** The Ark's Artist-in-Residence Shaun Dunne with the 2018/19 Children's Council. **Above:** Family workshop led by Jane Groves in preparation for the *Right Here Right Now!* Children's Rally.

## OBJECTIVE 3

### **Build a long-term relationship with our neighbourhood schools.**

Starting in 2019, The Ark's Engagement & Participation Coordinator has been steadily building relationships with teachers and principals in each of the ten schools participating in our Ark Access for Schools Programme. In 2019 these schools were:

- City Quay National School, Gloucester Street South, Dublin 2
- Holy Child Preschool, Rutland Street, Sean McDermott Street Upper, Dublin 1
- Presentation Primary George's Hill, Halston Street, Dublin 7
- Rutland Street National School, Lower Gloucester Place, Dublin 1
- Scoil Chaitríona, Baggot Street, Dublin 2
- St. Audoen's National School, Cook Street, Dublin 8
- St. Christopher's Primary School, Haddington Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4
- St. Enda's Primary School, Whitefriar Street, Dublin 8
- St. Patrick's Boys National School, Ringsend, Dublin 4
- St. Patrick's Girls National School, Ringsend, Dublin 4

As well as these core schools, we also worked with other designated DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunities in Schools) schools on projects such as *The Haircut!* and the *Right Here Right Now!* Children's Rally.

In line with our Diversity & Inclusion Policy, the Ark Access for Schools Programme was reviewed and refined. Rather than working with individual class groups, The Ark offered four engagements to each school as a

whole, so that the school could choose the most appropriate events for particular classes. Our new approach aims to meet the individual needs of each school.

As well as offering visits to The Ark, we began to offer bespoke visits by individual artists and consultation projects to our Access Schools. The Ark continues to support teachers' professional development and training in arts education, and teachers in participating Access schools will now have the opportunity to avail of complimentary places on Teachers' CPD courses at The Ark. This newly overhauled Access programme was launched in September 2019.

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*"I went to the moon and it was really bouncy! I saw aliens and one had funny ears and one looked like a whale, it was amazing!"*

Audience member, age 3, at Little Bigtop's *Moon Woke Me Up*.

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**Left:** Little Bigtop's *Moon Woke Me Up*.

## OBJECTIVE 4

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**Deliver more inclusive experiences for audiences with disabilities and actively seek out those audiences.**

The Ark believes that our work should be for all children, regardless of impediments to their participation in the arts. In 2019, we published our Diversity & Inclusion Policy, which aims to ensure that all children have access, by whatever means, to visit, participate and enjoy all the artistic experiences we offer. We also implemented aspects of this policy relating to audiences with a disability, and developed relationships with organisations such as Arts & Disability Ireland to help us to include and engage audiences and artists with disabilities.

Having completed a full Access Audit of our building in 2018, The Ark completed the improvements recommended in this audit as part of our capital works in 2019. This included a new reception desk, with a considered design and lower surfaces at Visitor Services contact points to be more friendly for children and wheelchair users. A hearing loop system was also installed at reception. A mirror was installed in our lift so that wheelchair users have a rear view while reversing; improved LED lighting was installed for people with impaired vision; and our dark floor was replaced with brighter material for improved visual contrast. We also installed an autodialler in the lift for exterior communication in the case that someone may become trapped in the lift. White grab rails in our four wheelchair accessible toilets were replaced with blue rails for better visual contrast, and we purchased a second fully wheelchair-accessible telescopic workshop table. In 2019, The Ark continued to offer relaxed











performances, to welcome children who may benefit from a more flexible performance environment, including those with an Autism Spectrum Condition, sensory and communication disorders, or a learning disability. Shows with designated relaxed performances included *Peat*, *The Haircut!* and *Stick By Me* (as part of Dublin Theatre Festival), while during the festive season The Ark welcomed Little Bigtop's *Moon Woke Me Up*, an interactive and multi-sensory production for children in their early years that was also suitable for children with complex needs. In addition to adapting performances for these audiences, familiarisation packs were created and sent to attendees in advance of their visit to prepare them for their trip to The Ark.

*“A fresh approach with a wonderfully realised soundscape, one to watch out for.”*

The Virgin Media Dublin International Film Festival Jury on *The First Was A Boy* by Shaun Dunne.

**Left:** Behind the Scenes at the filming of *Iarscoláire* by Shaun Dunne at Gaelscoil Choláiste Mhuire. Photo by Ali Waters. **Right:** Children from St. Christopher's NS participating in *Nomad*.

## OBJECTIVE 5

**Reach out to groups, ensembles and partner organisations to promote and facilitate equality of access for marginalised children.**

The Ark continued to build our programme of work with children in Direct Provision in 2019. Artist-in-Residence Shaun Dunne facilitated four drama workshops with children living in Clondalkin Towers Direct Provision Centre, while our John Coolahan Early Years Artist-in-Residence 2018/19, Lucy Hill, gave her second early years workshops for young children living in Direct Provision. The Ark actively seeks to recruit Children's Council members from Direct Provision, and our 2018/19 Council included one child then living in Clondalkin Towers. In 2019/20 we selected two additional members from the centre, but unfortunately these children were unable to take up their posts as councillors.



We continued to work with Dublin City Council in relation to marginalised children using their Neighbourhood Grant, designed to support art in Dublin communities. Along with our Rutland Street Early Years pilot project, in 2019 The Ark completed and premiered the award-winning short



film, *The First Was a Boy*, which was produced as part of the The Ark's Ringsend Neighbourhood Project in 2018. Created by The Ark's Artist-in-Residence Shaun Dunne and filmmaker Luca Truffarelli with St. Patrick's Boys' National School, Ringsend, *The First Was a Boy* premiered at Virgin Dublin International Film Festival 2019 where it was awarded the Judges' Special Mention in the category of Best Irish Short.

For our 2019 Neighbourhood Project, we built on the work accomplished with *The First Was a Boy*. This time, The Ark engaged Shaun Dunne to work with an inner-city Dublin primary school, Gaelscoil Choláiste Mhuire, to develop the Irish language participative short film, *Iarscoláire*. Filmed on location at the old Coláiste Mhuire building on Parnell Square North, this intergenerational project brought present and past pupils of Coláiste Mhuire together, to explore the history of the school, and issues around the abandoned and dilapidated state of the school's previous building. As a bilingual project with workshops conducted in both Irish and English, the project was an excellent step for The Ark in our ambitions to engage with more children in city centre Gaelscoileanna. The resulting short film is presented entirely as Gaeilge.

In April, The Ark delivered Year 1 of the Nomad Project, in which award-winning composer John Barber of the Aurora Orchestra (UK) worked with pupils from St. Christopher's National School on Haddington Road in Dublin. During this project, John and the children devised a short music performance to express their personalities and musical imaginations, performed publicly on The Ark stage as part of our inaugural *BIG BANG Dublin!* international music festival.

The Ark's dedicated Engagement & Participation Coordinator explored ways to provide access to arts and culture for marginalised children in 2019, and will continue to work to develop these opportunities into the future.

## OBJECTIVE 6

### Cultivate our adult audience of teachers, parents, guardians, family and friends.

In the knowledge that children rely on adults to access our work, The Ark aims to develop our audience of adults. This encompasses the parents, guardians, teachers, families and friends of today's children, and those of tomorrow too.

The Ark held a number of events for grown-ups in 2019. Talks included *Beekeeping and its Importance to the Ecosystem* by Dr. Niamh Shaw as part of Science Week 2019, and Shane O'Reilly's *Making Professional Work with Young Performers*. Other highlights included a rehearsed reading of Tim Etchells' *That Night Follows Day* by children for grown-ups as part of our hugely successful *Right Here Right Now!* festival, as well as our *Symposium on Child Consultation & Participative Decision-Making*.

Our John Coolahan Early Years Artist-in-Residence 2018/2019, Lucy Hill, also presented a talk for grown-ups on *A Year of Early Years Visual Art*, which was well attended by figures from both the artistic and early childhood communities.

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**Right:** *That Night Follows Day* by Tim Etchells at Project Arts Centre as part of *Still Loading...*









## STRATEGIC DELIVERY REPORT

## ③ Sustainability

### GOAL

Build the infrastructure and capabilities that ensure The Ark's future as a cultural centre and resource for children

### OBJECTIVE ①

**Diversify our income streams to create a broader income base and establish international partnerships that enhance and amplify our output and impact.**

In 2019, while maintaining ongoing relationships with core funders in The Arts Council, the Department of Education and Dublin City Council, The Ark actively sought out new funding for specific flagship projects from Creative Europe and the Creative Ireland Programme. The Ark is the only Arts Council-funded organisation delivering two Creative Europe projects concurrently: *PUSH+* and *BIG BANG!* New relationships with the Department for Children and Youth Affairs, the Community Foundation for Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland have also supported particular programme and outreach activities.

Individual and corporate giving has been restructured in recent years. The Ark now has a revised membership scheme for loyal audience members, The Ark Opportunities Fund for individuals to support wider access to The Ark's programme, and The Ark Access for Schools Programme which allows businesses to support arts provision for inner-city DEIS schools. In 2019, The Ark had a total of 92 members, and 27 donors to The Ark Opportunities Fund. Mason Hayes & Curran's support of The Ark Access for Schools Programme has continued since 2017.

**Left:** Eight-year-old Margot Troupe performing with Stomptown Brass as part of *BIG BANG Dublin!* Photo by Laura Sheeran.

Improving our fundraising capacity has been a priority for The Ark. In 2019, the organisation participated in The Arts Council's RAISE programme, knitting programme, marketing and fundraising together in a cohesive approach. Crucially, at the end of 2019, The Ark recruited a Development & Advocacy Manager to lead on The Ark's fundraising activities, adding much needed strength to our fundraising efforts.

**Below from left to right:** Aideen Howard with participants in The Arts Council's RAISE programme; The Ark's new accessible reception desk, installed as part of Capital Works completed in 2019; The Ark's Visitor Services team during *BIG BANG Dublin!*; Artists participating in the *PUSH+* Home Lab in Edinburgh, Jan 2019. Photo by Jassy Earl.



## OBJECTIVE 2

**Review and strengthen our corporate governance structures and seek out examples of best practice in this area, while also paying close attention to our obligations.**

In 2019, The Ark invested in board and staff training on corporate governance, and embarked on a rigorous process of policy writing, implementation and review. Late in the year, the board's Resourcing Committee recruited three new trustees (board members), ensuring that the board has the right mix of experience and skills to support the executive and deliver on its governance responsibilities. The Ark is working towards compliance of the Charities Governance Code and is on track to be fully compliant in 2020. For more information on The Ark's progress regarding corporate governance in 2019, see the Governance & Management section of this document from pages 58–63.



### OBJECTIVE 3

**Prudently manage and report on our finances, paying close attention to the reporting and compliance requirement of our funders in The Arts Council and Department of Education.**

In 2019, The Ark implemented a new Reserves Policy, intended to provide an internal source of funds for situations such as a sudden increase in expenses, unanticipated losses in funding, uninsured losses or unbudgeted legal obligations. Our reserve fund will cover three months' operating costs, and we have committed to reaching this target by 2021. We continued to provide efficient and transparent financial reporting to our funders, along with frequent communication. In 2019, we also met with The Arts Council specifically to ensure the effectiveness of our reporting processes.



### OBJECTIVE 4

**Review internal policies and HR systems regularly to make The Ark an inclusive place to work for artists and staff regardless of background or gender.**

The Ark has adopted and implemented a Diversity & Inclusion Policy. We have also revised our Staff Handbook to be clearer and more usable. We have devised a methodology for collating and reporting our data in order to track and monitor our gender and diversity statistics, which we will use to report on and refine our practices. The Ark now has a dedicated budget line for staff training, covering areas including Governance, Finance, Health & Safety, Children's Rights and Digital Marketing.





## OBJECTIVE 5

**Look after our building, attending to evolving health and safety practices, codes and standards to ensure the safety and wellbeing of audiences, artists and staff within it.**

With funding committed in 2017 by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under the Arts & Culture Capital Scheme 2016 – 2018, and matched by Temple Bar Cultural Trust, The Ark completed major capital improvements in 2019, representing a significant investment in the organisation's long-term future.

The capital project upgraded the building, facilities and equipment in order to improve production values, health and safety of staff and audiences, visitor experience and accessibility, and to address the depreciation of elements of the building and its equipment. Works included (but were not limited to) upgrading lighting throughout the building and in the theatre; upgrading IT hardware; redesigning our reception area with a more accessible desk; improving storage for The Ark's art collection and archive; improving seating, dance floor and risers in the theatre; improving public toilets and security. All works were delivered on time and on budget.

We have monitored and ensured optimum health and safety practices within the building. Staff have undertaken First Aid and Fire Marshall training and have created a schedule for its upkeep in 2020. In line with our work on corporate governance, we review our Risk Register on a monthly basis.





## STRATEGIC DELIVERY REPORT

# 4 Advocacy

### GOAL

Advance children's right to art and culture



**Above:** Children's Council member Taylor McEntee speaking at the launch of *Right Here Right Now! Festival of Children*.

### OBJECTIVE 1

**Play our part in raising public awareness of every child's right to culture as set out in our founding principles and in Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in partnership with other like-minded organisations in civil society.**

The Ark Strategy 2017–2020 articulated our ambition to advance children's right to art and culture, through the development of our own art-making and child participatory practice and through the dissemination of that practice. This has been a key area of our activity, and in 2019 we made a number of major achievements.

In order to inspire other organisations to include children in their decision-making processes, we commissioned an evaluation and documentary on The Ark Children's Council. In March 2019, The Ark curated a symposium on Child Consultation & Participative Decision-Making, to discuss our child participatory practice and to share the findings of the report entitled "Evaluating the Operation and Impact of The Ark Children's Council". Supported by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, The Ark commissioned Deirdre Hogan and Shirley Martin from University College Cork's School of Applied Social Studies to create a report evaluating the child participation and consultation processes of the Children's Council and to provide recommendations for its future



# Children have a right to access art and culture



**Aideen Howard**  
**Opinion**

**Ratification of UN children's convention in 1992 committed State to targeted cultural investment**

The democratic programme of the first Dáil in 1919 opened with a singular promise to the children of the imagined Republic: "It shall be the first duty of the Government of the Republic to make provision for the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of the children, to secure that no child shall suffer hunger or cold from lack of food, clothing, or shelter, but that all shall be provided with the means and facilities requisite for their proper education and training as citizens."

This document, written in the midst of revolution, sets out a minimum standard for the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of children. Given the desperate urgency of child poverty at the time, the inclusion of "the means and facilities" for citizenship as a basic requirement is powerful. To consider children as citizens was an egalitarian act of imagination that foreshadowed the children's rights movement more than half a century later.

Inspired by that democratic programme, No Child 2020, a joint initiative by The Irish Times and the Children's Rights Alliance, calls for a universal investment in children's participation in cultural activity as one of five actions to eradicate child poverty.

State obligations to children took on new significance in 1992 when Ireland ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child enshrining the State's commitments to "promote, fulfil and protect" children's rights. Arising out of a paradigm shift from the view of children as passive subjects the convention recognises the child as a full human being with the ability to participate fully in society and acknowledges the primary role of parents in the care and protection of children as well as the obligation of the State to assist in these duties.

There are remarkable similarities between the idea of children's citizenship in the 1919 document and the so-called participation rights of the convention. This international human rights instrument gave children and young people the right to be heard and grown-ups (parents, family, the State) a duty to listen. Most radically, article 31 sets out the right of the child to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. It goes even further, undertaking to provide equal opportunities for cultural and artistic activity. By ratifying the convention, the Irish State expressed a binding commitment to art and culture for children for the first time in its history.

## Founding principles

How has our now prosperous Republic delivered on that commitment to every child since 1992? The Ark Cultural Centre for Children – the first of its kind in Europe – was established in 1995, citing article 31 as one of its founding principles. The State has developed arts policy and invested in arts for children through the Arts Council. This ensures that the Ark, as well as other child-centred organisations such as Babaró and Branar in Galway and Kids' Own in Sligo, can make exciting, contemporary work for children across Ireland. The Arts Council remit is clearly to invest directly in artists and arts infrastructure but indirectly, participation opportunities for children have increased too.

The national cultural institutions, funded directly by the State, also run



**NO CHILD 2020**

“

**The introduction of a universal subsidy for every child to engage in one cultural opportunity each year would begin to address the economic inequality that limits their cultural participation**



■ Twins Molly and Jack Clearly Flynn enjoy a pre-Culture Night event at a "Beag" performance at the Crawford art gallery in Cork. PHOTOGRAPH: CLARE KEOGH

programmes for children. Another welcome development is Creative Schools, a programme born out of the Arts and Education Charter, to create an arts-rich environment in 300 schools.

However, neither this targeted initiative in schools nor the existing arts infrastructure alone can fulfil universal access for all. With so many children living in poverty, the barriers to participating in cultural activities are self-evident. Without a new intervention, in addition to existing provision, that yawning gap in public policy means that art and culture remain only for some, not all, children. The introduction of a universal subsidy for every child to engage in one cultural opportunity each year would begin to address the economic inequality that limits their cultural participation.

## Social skills

Singing, painting, dance and theatre help children to develop better social skills and positive relationships but children from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to participate in arts and cultural activities than children from more affluent families. Cost is a key barrier.

Because children's learning is enhanced by arts participation this, in turn, creates further inequality in school achievement. Many arts organisations attempt to level out that inequality by offering incentives for school groups and teachers and Deis schools often use School Completion funding for cultural visits. But neither of these tactics can bridge the gap in participation between those living in disadvantage and their more affluent peers.

Direct investment in children's capacity to participate would be a decisive step towards addressing this existing inequality. This is an opportunity to put arts and culture at the heart of public policy for children – not as a byproduct of already hard-pressed arts funding but as a direct investment in the quality of children's lives.

Aideen Howard is director of the Ark Children's Cultural Centre, Dublin

**Above:** Opinion piece by The Ark's Director, Aideen Howard, as part of the No Child 2020 campaign, published in The Irish Times on 20 September 2019.

development. The symposium was attended by more than 70 people from the arts and youth sectors, while 15 Children's Council members acted as Front of House staff, MC'ed the event and contributed to a panel discussion.

*"I learned how to express myself better, because people really cared about what you had to say."*

Luka Delaney, Children's Council 2017/2018 member, speaking to Sara Keating for The Irish Times, February 2019.

We devised and delivered *Right Here Right Now!*, a totally child-led arts festival curated, designed and hosted by children. As part of this, we created a publicity campaign to raise awareness of every child's right to culture.

We continued to be a visible champion of children's right to culture by advising other organisations, contributing to national policy efforts, and providing comment in national media. Examples of this include:

- 'What children think seems to mean a lot more here, and that's really cool', a feature article on The Ark Children's Council and their role in shaping Peat in the Irish Times (28 February 2019, part of the No Child 2020 campaign)

- A front-page photograph of the *Right Here Right Now! Children's Rally* in the Irish Times (14 June 2019)
- 'Children have a right to access art and culture,' an opinion article by The Ark's Director in the Irish Times (20 Sept 2019, part of the No Child 2020 campaign)
- Minister for Culture Josepha Madigan TD responded in The Irish Times' Letters to the Editor (26 Sept 2019):  
*"The passion and commitment of Ms. Howard and her colleagues on the Expert Advisory Group of the Creative Ireland Programme is delivering a seismic shift in perception across Government around the value of creativity as vital to the wellbeing of our youngest citizens."*

The Ark's Director was appointed to the National Advisory Council to Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures by Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Katherine Zappone TD in February 2019, and was jointly nominated by the Ministers of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, Education & Skills and Children & Youth Affairs to Creative Ireland's Expert Advisory Group.

**Right:** Lucy Hill at the 2019 Korean Arts and Culture Education Service (KACES) Symposium at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea.

**Far right:** *Right Here Right Now! Children's Rally.*  
 Photo by Mark Stedman.

## OBJECTIVE 2

### **Make the case for the inherent value of art in children's lives with government and other policy makers**

In 2019, The Ark Director advocated for children's right to art and culture as a member of The National Advisory Council to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and a member of the Creative Youth Expert Advisory Group. As a member of the voluntary steering committee of the National Campaign for the Arts, she continued to advocate for increased investment in arts and culture for all citizens.

The Ark 2018/19 John Coolahan Early Years Artist-in-Residence, Lucy Hill, presented Ark practice at the 2019 Korean Arts and Culture Education Service (KACES) Symposium at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea on 23 May 2019, as well as delivering a full day CPD workshop for arts and education practitioners. She and The Ark Creative Arts Manager, Aisling O'Gorman, also presented on this practice at Early Childhood Ireland's national research conference in Croke Park in April 2019.



## OBJECTIVE 3

### **Promote the voice of the child inside and outside of The Ark**

At the core of our child participation practice is The Ark Children's Council, a group of 35 children aged 10 or 11, who immerse themselves in our work, feed back on our practice, engage with artists and contribute to our decision making. Additionally, in 2019 several Council members participated in the BIG BANG Festival Ambassador's Programme by shaping, publicising and feeding back on the festival's programme. The Children's Council, with the help of children from all over Ireland, also named, curated and delivered *Right Here Right Now! Festival of Children*, which included the *Right Here Right Now! Children's Rally*. The rally was an opportunity for several hundred children to gather in Meeting House Square to publicly highlight and demonstrate their rights, including their right to art and culture and their right to expression.





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# Introduction to Financial Statements

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In the following Financial Statements, you will see evidence of the remarkable year that The Ark had in 2019. As always, we managed our finances in line with two complementary beliefs: that creating great artwork and delivering great cultural experiences requires significant investment; and that, as an organisation primarily funded by the State, we have a responsibility to manage our finances prudently, ensuring that such investments produce meaningful results.

At the close of 2019, The Ark retained a small net surplus, of €14,110. As is clear throughout this document, increased activity in all operational areas was supported by higher levels of income (at €1,349,938, up €135,700 on 2018) and expenditure (at €1,335,828, up €282,870).

After launching a wave of strategic fundraising activity in 2018, we were particularly pleased to see those efforts begin to pay off in 2019, with an exceptional diversification of income streams. These new funding streams supported a very busy year, which included many brand new pieces of artistic output. Highlights included:

- The inaugural *BIG BANG Dublin!*, our international music festival for children, and the first of four annual events made possible by The Ark's participation in a large-scale project funded by the European Union's Creative Europe programme  
.....
- The pilot of *Right Here Rigt*, a new four-day festival made possible with support from Creative Ireland's National Creativity Fund  
.....
- Significant development and evaluation of our child participation practices funded by the Department of Children & Youth Affairs' What Works funding scheme  
.....
- World premieres of two new plays commissioned by The Ark – *Peat* by Kate Heffernan and *The Haircut!* by Wayne Jordan and Tom Lane – thanks to an increase in our Arts Council funding designated for production  
.....
- Increased output using our outdoor stage on Temple Bar's Meeting House Square, with support from Dublin City Council Events  
.....
- Continued work with children living in Direct Provision, enabled by the Department of Justice & Equality's Community Integration Fund

Similar levels of activity were taking place behind the scenes, in order to put The Ark in a stronger position for the years to come. In 2019, we finished a major capital investment programme, funded by the Department of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht, and Temple Bar Cultural Trust / Dublin City Council. The capital works made our building safer, more accessible, and more efficient for all visitors and for staff, as well as delivering a much-needed technical upgrade to our theatre and production facilities. We were proud (just a little bit) to have completed these complex works on time and on budget.

Increased activity required more hands on deck, and increased funding happily enabled us to expand our team to include a full-time Engagement & Participation Coordinator, who works directly with schools and groups like our Children's Council, and an additional full-time role to our Visitor Services team.

With the additional recruitment of a Development & Advocacy Manager – filling a role vacant since May 2018 – we are already making strides in diversifying our income even further through new fundraising efforts. The Ark is extremely grateful to our public sector funders – more than 80% of our funding comes from sources including The Arts Council, Department of Education, Department of Children & Youth Affairs, Department of Justice, Department of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht, and Dublin City Council. We recognise, however, the need to continue to build a base of income from philanthropic and other charitable sources as well.

Last but far from least, our board of directors adopted of a new Reserves Policy in 2019, which saw the creation of a Designated Reserves Fund, in line with governance best practices. This can be seen on our Balance Sheet in the following pages. We also appointed a new auditor, Whelan Dowling & Associates, and look forward to working with them in the years to come.



## THE ARK CHILDREN'S CULTURAL CENTRE, COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for the financial year ended 31 December 2019

		Unrestricted Funds 2019	Restricted Funds 2019	Total	Unrestricted Funds 2018	Restricted Funds 2018	Total
Notes		€	€	€	€	€	€
<b>Income</b>							
Grants and donations	3.1	932,990	277,359	1,210,349	827,917	220,127	1,048,044
Charitable activities	3.2	114,255	-	114,255	94,323	-	94,323
Other trading activities	3.3	16,908	-	16,908	47,754	-	47,754
Other income	3.4	8,426	-	8,426	24,117	-	24,117
<b>Total income</b>		<b>1,072,579</b>	<b>277,359</b>	<b>1,349,938</b>	994,111	220,127	1,214,238
<b>Expenditure</b>							
Raising funds	4.1	227,185	-	227,185	209,278	-	209,278
Charitable activities	4.2	914,150	194,493	1,108,643	714,341	129,339	843,680
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>1,141,335</b>	<b>194,493</b>	<b>1,335,828</b>	923,619	129,339	1,052,958
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>(68,756)</b>	<b>82,866</b>	<b>14,110</b>	70,492	90,788	161,280
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds for the financial year</b>		<b>(68,756)</b>	<b>82,866</b>	<b>14,110</b>	70,492	90,788	161,280
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>							
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2019	14	200,001	148,460	348,461	129,509	57,672	187,181
<b>Balances carried forward at 31 December 2019</b>		<b>131,245</b>	<b>231,326</b>	<b>362,571</b>	200,001	148,460	348,461

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the financial year.

All income and expenditure relate to continuing activities.

**Approved by the Board of Directors on 30/09/20 and signed on its behalf by:**

BRIAN LAVERY      GERRY SMYTH

Chairperson      Director

**THE ARK CHILDREN'S CULTURAL CENTRE, COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

# BALANCE SHEET

as at 31 December 2019

		2019	2018
	Notes	€	€
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible assets	9	193,219	155,312
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	10	102,388	143,531
Cash at bank and in hand		438,531	376,548
		540,919	520,079
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	11	(371,567)	(326,930)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		169,352	193,149
<b>Total Assets less Current Liabilities</b>		362,571	348,461
<b>Funds</b>			
Restricted funds		231,326	148,460
Board Designated funds		108,957	35,700
General fund (unrestricted)		22,288	164,301
<b>Total funds</b>	14	362,571	348,461

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland", applying Section 1A of that Standard.

**Approved by the Board of Directors on 30/09/20 and signed on its behalf by:**

BRIAN LAVERY      GERRY SMYTH

Chairperson      Director



## THE ARK CHILDREN'S CULTURAL CENTRE, COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

for the financial year ended 31 December 2019

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net movement in funds		14,110	161,280
Adjustments for: Depreciation		64,187	26,602
		<b>78,297</b>	187,882
Movements in working capital:			
Movement in debtors		41,143	(94,110)
Movement in creditors		44,637	129,126
Cash generated from operations		<b>164,077</b>	222,898
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Capital Expenditure		(102,094)	(125,481)
<b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>61,983</b>	97,417
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2019</b>		<b>376,548</b>	279,131
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2019</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>438,531</b>	376,548

**THE ARK CHILDREN'S CULTURAL CENTRE, COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the financial year ended 31 December 2019

## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Ark Children's Cultural Centre Company Limited by Guarantee is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in the Republic of Ireland. The registered office of the company is also the principal place of business of the company. The financial statements have been presented in Euro (€) which is also the functional currency of the company.

## 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the charity's financial statements.

### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)".

The charity has applied the Charities SORP on a voluntary basis as its application is not a requirement of the current regulations for charities registered in the Republic of Ireland.

As permitted by the Companies Act 2014, the charity has varied the standard formats in that act for the Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet. Departures from the standard formats, as outlined in the Companies Act 2014, are to comply with the requirements of the Charities SORP and are in compliance with section 4.7, 10.6 and 15.2 of that SORP.

### Statement of compliance

The financial statements of the charity for the financial year ended 31 December 2019 have been prepared on the going concern basis and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)" and FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland", applying Section 1A of that Standard.

### Fund accounting

The following are the categories of funds maintained:

#### Restricted funds

Restricted funds represent income received which can only be used for particular purposes, as specified by the donors. Such purposes are within the overall objectives of the charity.

#### Unrestricted funds

Unrestricted funds consist of General and Designated funds.

- General funds represent amounts which are expendable at the discretion of the board, in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.
- Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that the board has, at its discretion, set aside for particular purposes. These designations have an administrative purpose only, and do not legally restrict the board's discretion to apply the fund.

### Income

Income is recognised by inclusion in the Statement of Financial Activities only when the charity is legally entitled to the income, performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, the amounts involved can be measured with sufficient reliability and it is probable that the income will be received by the charity.

**Income from charitable activities**

Income from charitable activities include income earned from the supply of services under contractual arrangements and from performance related grants which have conditions that specify the provision of particular services to be provided by the charity. Income from government and other co-funders is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to the income because it is fulfilling the conditions contained in the related funding agreements. Where a grant is received in advance, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, it is accrued in debtors.

**Grants from governments and other co-funders typically include one of the following types of conditions:**

- Performance based conditions: whereby the charity is contractually entitled to funding only to the extent that the core objectives of the grant agreement are achieved. Where the charity is meeting the core objectives of a grant agreement, it recognises the related expenditure, to the extent that it is reimbursable by the donor, as income.
- Time based conditions: whereby the charity is contractually entitled to funding on the condition that it is utilised in a particular period. In these cases the charity recognises the income to the extent it is utilised within the period specified in the agreement.

In the absence of such conditions, assuming that receipt is probable and the amount can be reliably measured, grant income is recognised once the charity is notified of entitlement.

Grants received towards capital expenditure are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities when received or receivable, whichever is earlier.

**Expenditure**

Expenditure is analysed between costs of charitable activities and raising funds. The costs of each activity are separately accumulated and disclosed, and analysed according to their major components. Expenditure is recognised when a legal or constructive obligation exists as a result of a past event, a transfer of economic benefits is required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be reliably measured. Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but cannot be attributed to one activity. Such costs are allocated to activities in proportion to staff time spent or other suitable measure for each activity.

**Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost or at valuation, less accumulated depreciation. The charge to depreciation is calculated to write off the original cost or valuation of tangible fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives as follows:

Computer equipment	-	20% Straight line
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	-	20% Straight line
Comms. systems	-	10% Straight line
Office Equipment	-	20% Straight line

**Debtors**

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due. Income recognised by the charity from government agencies and other co-funders, but not yet received at year end, is included in debtors.

**Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand comprises cash on deposit at banks requiring less than three months notice of withdrawal.

**Taxation and deferred taxation**

No current or deferred taxation arises as the charity has been granted charitable exemption.

**Pensions**

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity. Annual contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the income and expenditure account in the period to which they relate.



**3. INCOME**

<b>3.1 GRANTS AND DONATIONS</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>
Arts Council - Strategic Funding	<b>615,000</b>	-	<b>615,000</b>	565,000
Arts Council - Co-Funding Award	<b>3,625</b>	-	<b>3,625</b>	1,306
Dublin City Council (DCC) - Revenue Grant	<b>16,000</b>	-	<b>16,000</b>	16,000
Dublin City Council (DCC) - Events Grant		<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	
Dublin City Council (DCC) - Neighbourhood Grant	<b>9,065</b>	-	<b>9,065</b>	14,817
Dublin City Council (DCC) - Cruinniú no nOg	-	-	-	40,000
Dept. of Education and Skills (DES) via PDST	<b>275,000</b>	-	<b>275,000</b>	211,667
Dept. of Justice	-	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	7,023
Dept. of Children & Youth Affairs (DCYA) & TUSLA	-	<b>41,103</b>	<b>41,103</b>	26,397
Creative Ireland	-	<b>68,810</b>	<b>68,810</b>	1,190
Dept. of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht (DCHG) - Capital	-	<b>52,795</b>	<b>52,795</b>	57,659
Temple Bar Cultural Trust (TBCT) / Dublin City Council (DCC) - Capitall	-	<b>56,899</b>	<b>56,899</b>	57,658
Other Grants	<b>14,300</b>	<b>29,180</b>	<b>38,980</b>	23,700
Support in Kind	-	<b>21,072</b>	<b>21,072</b>	25,627
	<b>932,990</b>	<b>277,359</b>	<b>1,210,349</b>	1,048,044

**3.1.1 PUBLIC FUNDING BREAKDOWN 2019**

<b>Grantor</b>	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Accrued (Deferred) 31-Dec-18</b>	<b>Grant Awarded 2019</b>	<b>Received in 2019</b>	<b>Income in 2019</b>	<b>Accrued (Deferred) 31-Dec-19</b>
Arts Council	Strategic Funding	Core Funding	Unrestricted	-	615,000	615,000	615,000	-
Arts Council	Co-Funding Award	Project Funding	Restricted	-	14,500	14,500	3,625	10,875
Dublin City Council	Arts Grant	Core Funding	Unrestricted	-	16,000	16,000	16,000	-
Dublin City Council	Neighbour-hood Project	Project Funding	Restricted	9,815	2,000	2,000	9,065	2,750
Dublin City Council	Events Funding	Meeting House Square Events	Restricted	-	10,000	10,000	10,000	-
Dept. Education & Skills/PDST	Annual Funding	Core Funding	Unrestricted	183,333	275,000	275,000	255,000	203,333
Dept. Justice	Community Integration Fund	Project Funding	Restricted	2,000	-	-	2,000	-
Dept. Children & Youth Affairs/ TUSLA	QCBI/What Works Fund	Project Funding	Restricted	23,103	18,000	18,000	41,103	-
Dept. Children & Youth Affairs	Bursary Services	Project Funding	Restricted	-	18,000	18,000	-	18,000
Creative Ireland	National Creativity Fund	Project Funding	Restricted	26,810	42,000	42,000	68,810	-
Dept. Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht	Capital Award	Capital Expenditure	Restricted	-	52,795	52,795	52,795	-
Temple Bar Cultural Trust/ Dublin City Council	Match Funding	Capital Expenditure	Restricted	-	56,899	56,899	56,899	-
				<b>245,061</b>	<b>1,120,194</b>	<b>1,120,194</b>	<b>1,130,297</b>	<b>234,958</b>

**3.2 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>
Programme Income	98,553	-	98,553	92,155
Co-Production Income	15,702	-	15,702	2,168
	<b>114,255</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>114,255</b>	<b>94,323</b>

<b>3.3</b>	<b>OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
		€	€	€	€
	Fundraising	<b>11,954</b>	-	<b>11,954</b>	40,596
	Rental Income	<b>4,710</b>	-	<b>4,710</b>	6,860
	Merchandise	<b>244</b>	-	<b>244</b>	298
		<b>16,908</b>	-	<b>16,908</b>	4,754

<b>3.4</b>	<b>OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
		€	€	€	€
	Reimbursed Expenses	<b>8,426</b>	-	<b>8,426</b>	24,117

#### **4. EXPENDITURE**

<b>4.1</b>	<b>RAISING FUNDS</b>	<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>Other Costs</b>	<b>Support Costs</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
		€	€	€		
	Marketing Expenses	<b>73,424</b>	-	-	<b>73,424</b>	49,097
	Support Costs - Payroll Expenses	<b>107,641</b>	-	-	<b>107,641</b>	119,015
	Public Relations Costs	<b>19,680</b>	-	-	<b>19,680</b>	9,450
	Other Fundraising Costs	<b>15,535</b>	-	-	<b>15,535</b>	11,611
	Support Costs - General Office	<b>10,905</b>	-	-	<b>10,905</b>	20,105
		<b>227,185</b>	-	-	<b>227,185</b>	209,278

<b>4.2</b>	<b>CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>Other Costs</b>	<b>Support Costs</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
		€	€	€	€	€
	Programme Costs	<b>279,829</b>	-	-	<b>279,829</b>	161,061
	Artists Fees and Expenses	<b>231,327</b>	-	-	<b>231,327</b>	191,389
	Research and Development	<b>20,515</b>	-	-	<b>20,515</b>	16,636
	Support Costs (Note 4.4)	-	-	<b>453,355</b>	<b>453,355</b>	330,497
	Support in Kind	-	<b>21,072</b>	-	<b>21,072</b>	25,627
	Governance Costs (Note 4.3)	-	-	<b>102,545</b>	<b>102,545</b>	118,470
		<b>531,671</b>	<b>21,072</b>	<b>555,900</b>	<b>1,108,643</b>	843,680



<b>4.3</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE COSTS</b>	<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>Other Costs</b>	<b>Support Costs</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
		€	€	€	€	€
	Audit & Accountants Fees	-	-	<b>4,833</b>	<b>4,833</b>	4,305
	Legal & Professional	-	-	<b>2,870</b>	<b>2,870</b>	2,143
	Payroll Expenses	-	-	<b>71,034</b>	<b>71,034</b>	68,007
	General Office	-	-	<b>23,500</b>	<b>23,500</b>	43,707
	Finance Costs	-	-	<b>308</b>	<b>308</b>	308
		-	-	<b>102,545</b>	<b>102,545</b>	118,470

<b>4.4</b>	<b>SUPPORT COSTS</b>	<b>Charitable Activities</b>	<b>Governance Costs</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
		€	€	€	€
	Support Costs - Payroll Expenses	<b>399,464</b>	<b>71,034</b>	<b>470,498</b>	437,605
	Support Costs - General Office	<b>53,891</b>	<b>23,500</b>	<b>77,391</b>	23,625
	Audit and Accounts Fees	-	<b>4,833</b>	<b>4,833</b>	4,305
	Finance Costs	-	<b>308</b>	<b>308</b>	308
	Legal and Professional	-	<b>2,870</b>	<b>2,870</b>	3,093
		<b>453,355</b>	<b>102,545</b>	<b>555,900</b>	468,946

## 5. ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

The company initially identifies costs of its support functions. It then identifies those costs which relate to the governance functions. Having identified the governance costs, the remaining support costs together with governance costs are apportioned between the key charitable activities undertaken in the year. Refer to the table below for the basis of apportionment and the analysis of support and governance costs.

	<b>Basis of Apportionment</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
		€	€
Support Costs - Payroll Expenses	Usage	<b>470,498</b>	437,605
Support Costs - General Office	Usage	<b>77,391</b>	23,625
Audit and Accounts Fees	Governance	<b>4,833</b>	4,305
Finance Costs	Usage	<b>308</b>	308
Legal and Professional	Governance	<b>2,870</b>	3,093
		<b>555,900</b>	468,946

<b>6.</b>	<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
		€	€
	<b>Net Income is stated after charging/(crediting):</b>		
	Depreciation of tangible assets	<b>64,187</b>	26,602

**7. EMPLOYEES AND REMUNERATION****Number of employees**

The average number of persons employed (including executive directors) during the financial year was as follows:

	<b>2019 Number</b>	2018 Number
Programme (6 full-time)	<b>6.0</b>	4.0
Temporary Programme (Specific Purpose)	-	3.0
Core Administration (2 full-time, 1 part-time)	<b>2.6</b>	2.6
Core Fundraising (1 part-time)	<b>0.8</b>	0.3
Core Technical (2 full-time staff)	<b>2.0</b>	2.0
Core Cleaning (1 part-time)	<b>0.5</b>	0.5
	<b>11.9</b>	12.4
<hr/>		
The staff costs comprise:	<b>2019</b>	2018
	<b>€</b>	<b>€</b>
Wages and salaries	<b>470,798</b>	502,247
Pension costs	<b>14,464</b>	16,844
	<b>485,262</b>	518,278

None of the board of directors received emoluments or payments for professional or other services during the period.

**8. ANALYSIS OF STAFF COSTS AND THE COST OF KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL**

The number of employees whose total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) for the reporting period fell within the band below were:

	<b>Number of Employees</b>	<b>Number of Employees</b>
€70,000 to €80,000	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

**9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	<b>Computer &amp; IT equipment</b>	<b>Fixtures, fittings and equipment</b>	<b>Comms. systems</b>	<b>Office Equipment</b>	<b>Total</b>
	€	€	€	€	€
<b>Cost</b>					
At 1 January 2019	73,617	321,637	106,543	18,784	520,581
Additions	11,934	90,160	-	-	102,094
At 31 December 2019	85,551	411,797	106,543	18,784	622,675
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At 1 January 2019	63,734	177,825	106,540	17,170	365,269
Charge for the financial year	6,762	56,205	3	1,216	64,186
At 31 December 2019	70,496	234,033	106,543	18,386	429,456
<b>Net book value</b>					
At 31 December 2019	15,055	177,761	-	398	193,219
At 31 December 2018	9,883	143,815	-	1,614	155,312

<b>10. DEBTORS</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
	€	€
Trade debtors	<b>83,642</b>	132,658
Prepayments	<b>18,746</b>	10,873
	<b>102,388</b>	143,531

<b>11. CREDITORS</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>	€	€
Trade creditors	<b>37,722</b>	32,265
Taxation and social security costs	<b>17,876</b>	21,128
Other creditors	<b>19,726</b>	16,835
Accruals	<b>4,833</b>	3,887
Deferred Income	<b>291,410</b>	252,815
	<b>371,567</b>	326,930

No balances are repayable on demand or have interest accrued. Deferred Income is comprised of grant income received during the year ended 31 December 2019 as the performance conditions attached to these grants was not met at 31 December 2019. See note 3.1.1 for more details.



**12. PENSION COSTS - DEFINED CONTRIBUTION**

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. Pension costs amounted to €14,464 (2018 - €16,031).

**13. RESERVES**

	2019 €	2018 €
At 1 January 2019	<b>348,461</b>	187,181
Surplus for the financial year	<b>14,110</b>	161,280
At 31 December 2019	<b>362,571</b>	348,461

**14. FUNDS****14.1 RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENT IN FUNDS**

	Unrestricted Funds €	Restricted Funds €	Total Funds €
At 1 January 2018	129,509	57,672	187,181
Movement during the financial year	70,492	90,788	161,280
At 31 December 2018	200,001	148,460	348,461
Movement during the financial year	(68,756)	82,866	14,110
At 31 December 2019	<b>131,245</b>	<b>231,326</b>	<b>362,571</b>

**14.2 ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENTS ON FUNDS**

	Balance 1 January 2019 €	Income €	Expenditure €	Transfers between funds €	Balance 31 December 2019 €
<b>Restricted income</b>					
Restricted	148,460	277,359	194,493	-	231,326
<b>Unrestricted income</b>					
Unrestricted General	164,301	1,072,579	1,134,592	(80,000)	22,288
Designated Board Funds	35,700	-	6,743	80,000	108,957
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>348,461</b>	<b>1,349,938</b>	<b>1,335,828</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>362,571</b>

**14.3 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY**

	<b>Fixed assets - charity use €</b>	<b>Current assets €</b>	<b>Current liabilities €</b>	<b>Total €</b>
Restricted funds	-	248,735	<b>(82,275)</b>	166,460
Unrestricted general funds	193,219	292,184	<b>(289,292)</b>	196,111
	<b>193,219</b>	<b>540,919</b>	<b>(371,567)</b>	<b>362,571</b>

**15. STATUS**

The Ark Children's Cultural Centre (trading as The Ark), is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital, registered in Dublin, Ireland with registered company number 222774. The Ark is also a charity with CHY number 11334 and RCN 20030827

The liability of the members is limited.

Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of its being wound up while they are members, or within one year thereafter, for the payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before they ceased to be members, and the costs, charges and expenses of winding up, and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves, such amount as may be required, not exceeding € 1.

**16. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS**

	<b>2019 €</b>	<b>2018 €</b>
Cash and bank balances	<b>348,583</b>	305,621
Cash equivalents	<b>89,948</b>	70,927
	<b>438,531</b>	376,548

**17. POST-BALANCE SHEET EVENTS**

In the period since the year end the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on the operations of the Company. The final impact of the disruption can't be reliably measured at this time.

**18. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on 30/09/20.





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# Governance & Management

The Ark Children's Cultural Centre (trading as The Ark), is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital, registered in Dublin, Ireland with registered company number 222774. The Ark is also a charity with CHY number 11334 and RCN 20030827.

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## MISSION

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Established in 1995, 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. We commission, produce and present work for, by and about children, from the ages of two to 12 years old. We do so in our architecturally award-winning home in the heart of Dublin's Temple Bar, leased through a long-term cultural use agreement with Temple Bar Cultural Trust. We also work off-site and on tour in Ireland and abroad. 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. We also curate specific professional development opportunities for teachers and artists.

We work in partnership with others as artistic collaborators and regularly share our resources and knowledge with artists, educators and all those interested in child-centred arts practice. We also work with other like-minded organisations to advance children's rights to art and culture as part of their learning and development. The Ark is dedicated to creating brilliant art experiences for children, schools and families.

## OUR FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

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The Ark's vision, mission and values are inspired by Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of The Child [1989] which was ratified by Ireland in 1992.

Article 31:

- 1. State Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.*
- 2. State Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.*

## OUR VALUES

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Our values are what we stand for. They guide and motivate our attitudes, behaviours and decision-making as we put children at the heart of everything we do. They can be shared and expressed by children, artists and staff alike.

- **Doing our best:** We seek to do our best every day. With a positive attitude and commitment to excellence we encourage all those who engage with us to be at their best too.
- **Being friendly and welcoming:** Everyone is welcome at The Ark and we love sharing what we do and how we do it. We treat everyone the way we would like to be treated ourselves – with respect and consideration.
- **Having fun:** We enjoy our work and take it seriously too! We love creating opportunities for children, collaborators and colleagues to have fun.
- **Being brave:** We are always open to trying out new ideas and to being adventurous and brave in how we make art. We stand for and speak up for children while also encouraging them to express themselves.
- **Always learning:** We are constantly curious and always alert to change. We create opportunities to learn for ourselves and from each other. We appreciate what we learn by experience – and by mistakes. We share our learning with others.

## BOARD, DIRECTORS, COMMITTEES

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The Ark is governed by a Board of Directors with a minimum of five and maximum of nine members. In 2019, the board established a Resourcing Committee, which is responsible for determining the mix of directors' experience, skills, and background required by The Ark, and for nominating new directors to address those needs. Directors are elected to the board for three-year terms, by a majority vote among existing directors, at The Ark's annual general meetings. They may serve successive terms, to a maximum of nine years. Directors may also be co-opted on to the board, with approval of existing directors, between AGMs.

Following each AGM, the board elects a chairperson for their meetings; in 2019 the chair was Brian Lavery. The secretary who served throughout the financial year was The Ark's General Manager, Al Russell. In December 2019, The Ark appointed three new board members: Lynda Carroll, Catherine Cotter and Professor Anne O'Gara.

Directors serve on a voluntary basis, with no remuneration. In 2019, no directors claimed expenses to be reimbursed.

The Ark Board conducts Board meetings at least five times annually including the AGM. The Ark's Board met five times between January and December 2019, including the AGM on 10 July 2019.

<b>BOARD MEMBERS</b>	<b>DATE APPOINTED</b>	<b>EXPERTISE</b>	<b>BIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2019</b>
Brian Lavery (Chair)	05/09/12	Business, Marketing, Media	Brian is the European Managing Director for AccuWeather. He was previously a senior marketer at Twitter, a commercial manager at Vodafone Ireland, and a management consultant with McKinsey & Co.	5/5
Gerard Smyth	05/09/12	Arts, Media, Poetry, Theatre	Gerry is a poet, critic and journalist. He worked for over 40 years with The Irish Times, including as Managing Editor with responsibility for the paper's literary and arts coverage. His poetry has appeared widely in publications in English, since the late 1960s, as well as in translation.	4/5
Tomm Moore	11/05/16	Animation, Illustration	Tomm is Co- Founder and Creative Director of Oscar Award-nominated Cartoon Saloon, founded in 1999 by Tomm, Nora Twomey and Paul Young, who met whilst studying animation in Ballyfermot Senior College Dublin.	2/5
Carol Fawsitt	08/02/17	HR, Law	Carol is a solicitor specialised in employment law and a previous Senior Partner and Head of the Employment Law Department at Hayes Solicitors. Carol is currently a consultant solicitor and a member of the Charity Appeals Tribunal to deal with appeals from the Charities Regulator.	5/5
Dr. Anne Looney	08/02/17	Education	Anne is the Executive Dean of Dublin City University's new Institute of Education. A former teacher, from 2001 until 2016 she was the CEO of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.	5/5
Maria Corbett	19/06/17	Children's Rights	Maria has 20 years' experience as a children's rights advocate, policy analyst and researcher. Maria is currently a doctoral researcher with the School of Law, National University of Ireland, Galway and is an Irish Research Council Scholar.	3/5
Prof. Anne O'Gara	11/12/19	Education	Professor Anne O'Gara was President of Marino Institute of Education (MIE) from 2006 to 2018, having previously worked as a Primary Inspector with the Department of Education. She is Adjunct Professor in the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and a ministerial appointee to the Board of Tusla, where she acts as Deputy Chair.	1/1
Catherine Cotter	11/12/19	Arts, Education	In addition to running her own commercial interiors company, Catherine Cotter has worked in the arts and education for over 30 years, including spearheading arts programmes in Ireland and Portugal, and contributing to some of Ireland's most prominent literature organisations.	1/1
Lynda Carroll	11/12/19	Finance, Chartered Accountancy and Tax	Lynda is a chartered accountant and chartered tax advisor. She has over 30 years' experience in financial services at board and senior executive level, including as Managing Director of De Lage Landen Ireland and Vice President of Global Structured Finance Europe.	1/1



The Ark board has an Audit & Risk Committee, which is responsible for reviewing, and recommending to the Board for approval: the annual budget, audited accounts, and risk register. The committee reports to the Board and meets at least three times annually; it met three times in 2019.

<b>FINANCE, AUDIT &amp; RISK COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>	<b>DATE APPOINTED</b>	<b>COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2019</b>
Gerry Smyth (chair)	25/05/17	3/3
Brian Lavery	25/05/17	3/3
Dr. Anne Looney	19/11/18	3/3
Gráinne Cleary (external)	16/05/18	1/2
Lynda Carroll	14/04/20	n/a

The board also has a Governance Working Group, which advises and assists The Ark's management in its work to comply with the Charities Regulator's Governance Code. The Ark will achieve full compliance with the code in late 2020.

As part of the compliance process, the Governance Working Group oversaw a fundamental revision of The Ark's Child Safeguarding Policy in 2019, which included in-person meetings with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency of the Irish Government. In 2020, this work was completed and the policy was formally adopted by the board. Additional work by the Working Group in 2019 included the development of the Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

<b>GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP MEMBERS</b>	<b>DATE APPOINTED</b>	<b>WORKING GROUP MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2019</b>
Brian Lavery (chair)	17/09/18	3/3
Carol Fawsitt	17/09/18	3/3
Maria Corbett	10/10/18	2/3
Prof. Anne O'Gara	13/05/20	n/a

The board has a Resourcing Committee, which advises and assists the board chairperson on matters relating to management of The Ark's director and critical HR issues, and relating to management of the board, such as the skills and experience profile, recruitment of new board members, and succession planning. The Resourcing Committee was established in 2019 and met three times during the year.

<b>RESOURCING COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>	<b>DATE APPOINTED</b>	<b>WORKING GROUP MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2019</b>
Brian Lavery (chair)	05/06/19	3/3
Carol Fawsitt	05/06/19	3/3
Gerry Smyth	05/06/19	3/3

## GOVERNANCE

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The Ark is fully compliant with the annual requirements of the Charities Regulator as well as the Companies Registration Office. The Ark is committed to complying with the Charities Governance Code, The Arts Council Transparency Scale, and the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. The Ark publishes information about its governance and other company information online.

In 2019, The Ark's Director began the Professional Certificate in Corporate Governance at The Institute of Public Administration, which she completed in 2020. (The board chair also holds this certification.) The General Manager also undertook courses in Child Safeguarding, Garda Vetting, Financial Management, Company Secretarial Role, Data Protection and The Charities Regulators' Governance Code.

## COMPLIANCE WITH SECTOR-WIDE LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

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The charity engages proactively with legislation, standards and codes which are developed for the sector. The Ark Children's Cultural Centre Company Limited by Guarantee subscribes to and is compliant with the following:

- The Companies Act 2014
- The Charities SORP (FRS 102)
- Children First Act 2015
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Charities Regulator's Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public 2017

In 2020, The Ark will be fully compliant with the Charities Governance Code.

In 2019, The Ark invested in board and staff training in relation to our corporate governance responsibilities and embarked on a rigorous process of policy writing, implementation and review. This included generating a new Child Safeguarding Policy, reviewing our Health and Safety policy, and completing our first Risk Register, which is now updated regularly and reviewed at every board meeting.

## MANAGEMENT

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Aideen Howard, Director, leads The Ark team comprising the General Manager, Creative Arts Manager, Production Manager and Assistant Production Manager, Programme Coordinator, Finance Officer, Engagement & Participation Coordinator, Marketing Manager, Development & Advocacy Manager, Housekeeper, Visitor Services Coordinator, Visitor Services Administrator and a part-time panel of Visitor Services Assistants.

## STAFFING

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In 2017 and 2018, to address legacy funding issues, The Ark engaged in a cost-reduction and restructuring process which significantly reduced its staffing level. In 2019, the diversification of funding sources allowed for the appointment of a full-time Engagement & Participation Coordinator, Development & Advocacy Manager and Marketing Manager. For details of staff salary ranges, please refer to our Financial Statements on page 53.

## VOLUNTEERS

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Rather than running a year-round volunteering programme, The Ark recruits volunteers for specific activities when additional support is required, such as for large-scale events like *Right Here Right Now! Festival of Children*.

Volunteers are recruited through public call outs. When recruited, volunteers receive training and induction as well as detailed briefings regarding the activities to which they are contributing. All volunteers are vetted by An Garda Síochána before they begin their activities, and are supervised throughout.

In 2019, we recruited nine volunteers to assist with the delivery of *Right Here Right Now!* Volunteers supported audiences by working in Front of House and behind the scenes at our events across the city.

In 2019, we engaged an external firm to conduct a risk assessment of our building, and addressed the arising issues with our capital improvement works. In addition, we regularly review and update our policies that govern areas such as Child Safeguarding, Health and Safety, and others. We mitigate the inherent risks in these areas through the strict implementation and monitoring of these policies.

## MANAGING RISK

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The main financial risks to The Ark emanate from any potential reduction in funding from The Arts Council and the Department of Education, our two primary supporters. The company mitigated this risk in 2019 by diversifying its revenue streams to an unprecedented degree, through multi-annual Creative Europe funding and project grants from Creative Ireland and The Department of Children & Youth Affairs.

As an arts organisation that works directly with the public, and particularly with children, The Ark also faces a number of unique operational and reputational risks. Both The Ark's management and board monitor and control these risks with regular reporting on our Risk Register.



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# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

**to the Members of The Ark Children's Cultural Centre, Company Limited by Guarantee**

Report on the audit of the financial statements

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## OPINION

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We have audited the charity financial statements of The Ark Children's Cultural Centre Company Limited by Guarantee for the financial year ended 31 December 2019 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account), the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies set out in note 2. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is Irish law and FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland", applying Section 1A of that Standard and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the charity as at 31 December 2019 and of its net incoming resources for the financial year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland", as applied in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act 2014 and having regard to the Charities SORP; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

## BASIS FOR OPINION

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We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard for Auditors (Ireland) issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

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We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which ISAs (Ireland) require us to report to you where:

- the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the directors have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

## OTHER INFORMATION

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The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our Auditor's Report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material

misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

## OPINIONS ON OTHER MATTERS PRESCRIBED BY THE COMPANIES ACT 2014

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Based solely on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- in our opinion, the information given in the Directors' Annual Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- in our opinion, the Directors' Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014. We have obtained all the information and explanations which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit.
- In our opinion the accounting records of the charity were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited. The financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

## MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

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Based on the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified any material misstatements in the Directors' Annual Report. The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions required by sections 305 to 312 of the Act are not made. We have nothing to report in this regard.

## RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

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### RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTORS FOR THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 10 the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

## AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditor's Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

## FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE SCOPE OF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS AUDITOR

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As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (Ireland), we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.



- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our Auditor's Report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our Auditor's Report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

## THE PURPOSE OF OUR AUDIT WORK AND TO WHOM WE OWE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

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Our report is made solely to the charity's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume any responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

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### **Darren Carrick ACA for and on behalf of WHELAN DOWLING & ASSOCIATES**

Chartered Accountants and Statutory  
Audit Firm, Block 1, Unit 1 & 4,  
Northwood Court Santry  
Dublin 9, Ireland

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# 2019 Artistic Programme

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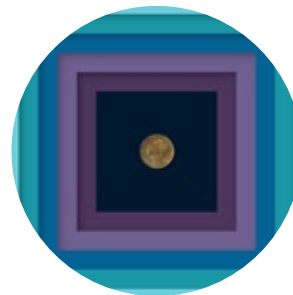
**First Fortnight at The Ark**  
19 JANUARY

Our first collaboration with First Fortnight festival included workshops *The King Who Finds Feelings Confusing* for ages 3-5 and *Clowns Without Borders* for ages 9+.



**Spike Cello Festival**  
8-9 FEBRUARY

Our first collaboration with Spike included *String Play*, presented by The Ark and Improvised Music Company, Creative Music-Making workshops with Ernst Reijseger and interactive installation *The Curious Cello* by Jonathan Nangle.



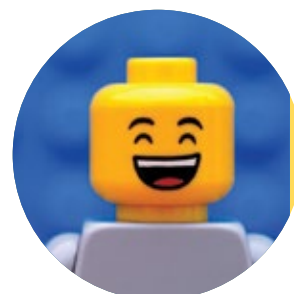
**Peat**  
28 FEBRUARY-31 MARCH

The world premiere of Kate Heffernan's new play for ages 8+, commissioned and produced by The Ark and directed by Tim Crouch.



**Tradfest Children's Hub 2019**  
25-27 JANUARY

Our annual collaboration with Tradfest offered music performances, craft activities, beginners bodhrán workshops and an open trad session for children.



**Fantastic Flix at The Ark**  
16-23 FEBRUARY

In partnership with the Virgin Media Dublin International Film Festival, The Ark offered workshops in Lego Animation and Directing for Screen, as well as a Music in Film workshop with Morgan Cooke that was rescheduled for September. Members of our Children's Council also sat on the Fantastic Flix Children's Jury.



**Child Participation & Decision-Making Symposium**  
12 MARCH

A symposium aimed at artists, educators, children's rights advocates, policy makers and arts organisations to share the findings of a UCC report on the Operation and Impact of The Children's Council.

**BIG BANG Dublin!**

5-7 APRIL

The first festival of its kind in Ireland, *BIG BANG Dublin!* brought music performances and installations from across Europe to Irish children of all ages, taking place in venues all over Temple Bar.

**W.A.M. (We Are Monchichi)**

11-12 MAY

Company Wang Ramirez' family dance show was presented in partnership with Dublin Dance Festival in the O'Reilly Theatre. The company also delivered a workshop for children aged 7-12.

**Right Here Right Now!  
Festival of Children**

14-16 JUNE

A brand new festival created by children, for children, *Right Here Right Now!* saw exhibitions, performances, workshops, a baby rave and a rally for children's rights happen in venues across Dublin.

**Game Plan: Board Games  
Rediscovered**

13 APRIL-23 JUNE

A touring exhibition from the V&A Museum of Childhood accompanied by a range of workshops and events.

**International Literature  
Festival Dublin**

26 MAY

As part of our annual collaboration, ILFD came to The Ark with a day full of events featuring authors and books for children of all ages.

**Scrapefoot**

29 JUNE-31 AUGUST

Our first co-production with ANU was a walk-through visual art experience for ages 6+.





### **Culture Night at The Ark**

20 SEPTEMBER

For Culture Night 2019 The Ark offered free Early Years visual art taster workshops for ages 2–4 with artist Asha Joanna O'Neill.



### **The Haircut!**

10 OCTOBER–2 NOVEMBER

A new Ark commission for ages 8+ by playwright Wayne Jordan and composer Tom Lane.



### **Science Week at The Ark**

14–15 NOVEMBER

The programme included Fidget Feet's *Hatch* (ages 4–10), a talk for grown-ups by Dr. Niamh Shaw, and schools workshops with author Professor Luke O'Neill and illustrator Linda Fährlin in partnership with Dublin Book Festival.



### **Theatre for Children at Dublin Theatre Festival**

27 SEPTEMBER–13 OCTOBER

At Dublin Theatre Festival 2019, The Ark welcomed *BigKidLittleKid* by Anna Newell (Ireland, ages 3–6), *Stick by Me* by Andy Manley and Red Bridge Arts (UK, ages 3–6), and *Baba Yaga* by Windmill Theatre Company and Imagineate (Australia and UK, ages 7–12), as well as presenting the world premiere of *The Haircut!*



### **Dracula's Disco**

28 OCTOBER

Our annual outdoor disco for ages 5+ in partnership with Bram Stoker Festival.



### **The Lea Larsen Trio**

29 NOVEMBER

A free St. Andrew's Day performance presented by the Scottish Government in Ireland was attended by children from a number of Ark Access schools.



### **Moon Woke Me Up**

14-29 DECEMBER

Little Bigtop's interactive theatre experience for children aged 3-5 and their grown-ups.



### **Seedlings**

ALL YEAR

Our Early Years Artists-in-Residence offered monthly interactive workshops for children aged 2-4 and their grown-ups. Until March, Lucy Hill led visual art workshops while from May onwards, Joanna Parkes led drama workshops for little ones.



### **Teachers' CPD**

ALL YEAR

Our 2019 programme of Continuing Professional Development courses for teachers included dance with Emma O'Kane, music and drama with Anita Mahon and Joanna Parkes, visual art with Jole Bortoli, STEM with Dr. Niamh Shaw, and Gaming in the Classroom with *Make Create Innovate*.



### **The Cosmic Corner**

14-29 DECEMBER

For the festive season, our basement was transformed into a drop-in hangout space.



### **Public and school workshops**

ALL YEAR

Highlights included sessions to prepare schools and families for the *Right Here Right Now! Children's Rally*, an introduction to upcycling and a *Magical Moonbeams* lantern workshop during the festive season.

### **Artists' Coffee Mornings**

ALL YEAR

In January, May and October 2019, we hosted Artists' Coffee Mornings at The Ark to give artists interested in making work for children the opportunity to meet in an informal setting.

### **Events for Grown-Ups**

ALL YEAR

Highlights included a talk with Shane O'Reilly on *Making Professional Work with Young Performers* and a rehearsed reading of Tim Etchells' *That Night Follows Day* as part of *Right Here Right Now!*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Ark would like to offer a sincere thank you to all of the organisations and individuals who supported our work in 2019. Their generous financial contributions, and their consistent championing of our shared belief in children's right to culture, has helped us move towards a society where creativity and culture for children are valued and enrich all of our lives.

### Principal Supporter



### Annual Supporters



### Grant Funders



### Corporate Supporters



### The Ark Opportunities Fund

Ann Barry, Audrey Behan, Irina Bereznytska, Kathy Carroll, Claire Crosbie Dunning, Maria Davey Borresen, Sheila De Courcy, Emer Dolphin, Carol Fawsitt, Teresa Gadd, Deirdre Giblin, Aileen Hooper, Carol Kelly, Penelope Kenny, Marina Lynch, Frank McNamee, Simon Mills, Aisling & Mark Mortell, Tomm Moore, Deirbhile Nic Craith, Patricia Quinn, Eamonn Russell, Deborah Spillane, John Sutton.

The Ark would also like to thank our individual donors who wish to remain anonymous.

## ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

The following are links to the various policies, reports and web pages referenced in this document. The latest information about The Ark and our work is available on our website, [www.ark.ie](http://www.ark.ie), and on our social media channels [@TheArkDublin](https://www.facebook.com/TheArkDublin).

[The Ark's Child Safeguarding Policy](#)

[The Ark's Company Information](#)

[The Ark's Diversity & Inclusion Policy](#)

[The Ark Strategy 2017-2020](#)

[An Evaluation of the Operation and Impact of The Ark Children's Council](#)



## The Ark Children's Cultural Centre

Founded in 1995, 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.

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**The Ark**

Company number: 222774  
Charity Number: CHY 11334  
Charity Registration Number: RCN 20030827

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