The Ark

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Company Information

The Ark Children's Cultural Centre [CLG] trading as The Ark

Chairperson
Carol Fawsitt *(Until December 2025)*
Mark Kennedy *(From December 2025)*

Directors
Declan Black
Elish Bul-Godley
Lynda Carroll
Catherine Cotter
Emer Egan *(Appointed April 2025)*
Dr Lucy Fallon-Byrne *(Appointed April 2025)*
Shane Hegarty
Prof. Anne O'Gara
Dr. Annie Ó Breacháin
Liam Ryan
Dr Alan Wall *(Appointed April 2025)*
Dr. Pádraic Whyte

CEO and Director
Aideen Howard

Company Secretary and General Manager
Al Russell

Auditors
Whelan Dowling & Associates
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
Block I, Unit I & 4, Northwood Court
Santry, Dublin 9

Bankers
Allied Irish Bank PLC, 7/12 Dame Street, Dublin 2

Business Address
11a Eustace Street, Temple Bar, Dublin 2

Charity Number CHY11334
Charities Regulatory Authority Number 20030827
Company Number 222774

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Welcome

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Financial Statements

2025 in Numbers

78%
of our events were
FREE OF CHARGE

21
Rural
BROADBAND CONNECTION POINTS
all over Ireland
hosted Ark Events

193 EVENTS
IN LIBRARIES
across Dublin and
258 DAYS
of exhibition
for Dublin City Arts Office and Dublin City Libraries' Creative Hubs programme

426
LIVE EVENTS
at The Ark

More than
15,000 CHILDREN
watched streamed performances and workshops.

2
Child-Curated Exhibitions

193,522
TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS

CELEBRATED OUR **30TH** BIRTHDAY

256
Artist Engagements

23,853
Young people and their grown-ups attended live events in The Ark

931
children & their grown-ups took over Mansion House for a Halloween Disco

YEAR 2 IN DCU
Partnered again with the DCU Institute of Education inspiring more future educators.

5 Artist Residencies
Multi-discplinary creative residencies in Early Learning and Childcare settings, and IPAS Centres.

Foreword

Mark Kennedy Chairperson

2025 was a landmark year for The Ark as we celebrated 30 years of producing, commissioning, and sharing ambitious art for children. This milestone offered not only an opportunity to reflect on our journey to date, but also to reaffirm our commitment to making fun and ambitious art for, by, with and about children, inspiring others by what we do.

At its heart, The Ark's work is cemented in our purpose: to realise children's right to art and culture. Over the past three decades, The Ark has welcomed over 1 million children and their families and friends who attended and participated in Ark programmes. That achievement has only been possible through the dedication of artists, staff, funders, partners, and, most importantly, the children whose voices continue to shape our work.

This year's programme exemplified the ambition and breadth of The Ark's artistic vision. From landmark theatre productions and visual art experiences to nationwide engagement through libraries, schools, and digital platforms, 2025 demonstrated the commitment to transforming how we reach and engage children all over Ireland regardless of background.

As Chairperson, I would like to acknowledge the leadership of our CEO, Aideen Howard, and the commitment of the entire team, whose creativity continues to drive The Ark forward. I would like to welcome new Board members appointed this year, whose expertise strengthens our governance and strategic direction. I would also like to thank my predecessor as Chair, Carol Fawsitt, who has contributed so much to making The Ark what it is today.

We would also like to thank our annual funders The Arts Council, Dublin City Council and the Department of Education and Youth for 30 years of continuous support.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on delivering our strategy 2024–2028 and on ensuring The Ark continues to grow as an inclusive and sustainable organisation. Above all, we remain committed to our founding purpose: to realise children's right to art and culture with ambition and joy.

Introduction

Aideen Howard Director

At The Ark, our purpose is to realise children's right to art and culture with ambition and joy. 2025 was an opportunity to reflect on three decades of artistic ambition. Guided by The Ark Strategy 2024–2028, we also realised children's right to art and culture through new initiatives while growing as an inclusive, sustainable and climate-conscious organisation.

In line with our strategic commitment, we were particularly excited to expand our programme for babies and their caregivers, both at The Ark and in community settings.

Child participation remains central to our practice. Through The Ark Children's Council and across our programmes, children help shape our artistic and organisational decision making. In 2025, this commitment was reflected in *Voyages*, our 30th birthday exhibition co-curated by current and former members of the Children's Council, featuring artworks commissioned and acquired by The Ark over the last 30 years.

We were also proud to support the development of *Flies*, a rehearsed reading by artist Shaun Dunne developed with alumni of The Ark Children's Council.

Beyond our home in Temple Bar, our commitment to reaching children wherever they are continued to grow. Throughout the year we made 78 per cent of our programming free in the knowledge that socio-economic barriers to participation in the arts persist.

This work was characterised by long-term programmes delivered beyond our building. Through our Creative Hubs in Libraries partnership with Dublin City Council Arts Office and Dublin City Libraries, more than 139,000 children, families and visitors engaged with workshops, performances and exhibitions in their local community across the city, helping us connect with children who may not otherwise have access to arts experiences. Corporate support from Clancourt and Mason Hayes and Curran enabled children in city centre schools to participate in our programmes for free. We further extended our reach through The Ark Art in Schools programme with support from basis.point.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of The Ark team, the talent of the artists we work with, and the guidance of our Board.

Most importantly, I want to thank the children who engage with The Ark every day. Whether attending a performance, participating in a workshop, contributing through the Children's Council, or encountering art in their school, library or community, our three decades have been for you. As The Ark enters its fourth decade, we remain committed to our purpose: realising children's right to art and culture with ambition and joy.

The Ark Children's Council

"We are like the board of management"

Child from the Children's Council

THE CHILDREN'S COUNCIL AT THE STRATEGY LAUNCH 2024. PHOTO: GEMMA BOVENIZER

Established in 2016, The Ark Children's Council brings children into The Ark's decision–making processes. This group of roughly 40 children from 4th to 6th class take part and generously share their ideas and give us their feedback on our programming.

The Council is supported by The Ark Engagement & Participation Coordinator Estibalíz Errazquin and guided and mentored by artist Shaun Dunne, helping to ensure the children's contributions are meaningfully embedded in our practice.

In their words

- The Children's Council is very fun. It's something we look forward to every month because we get to come together, play games, and do workshops.
- It's a really good way to meet new people, especially if you don't know anyone at the start. It's always nice interacting with new people. It's also nice because people here are kind of the same, we like theatre and creativity, so it's easy to connect. It helps with confidence too. Some of us were shy before joining, but now we feel more comfortable speaking up. It made us feel confident, and it's easier to share ideas.
- One of the best things is that our ideas are actually listened to. If you have an idea, you can say it, and no one says it's too childish or too silly. Even if it doesn't get used, it still gets listened to.
- We do lots of different things, not just theatre. We go to workshops, do crafts, play games, and sometimes talk to artists and give them feedback. Because we're the audience, it helps them know what we like so they can make things better. We also learn a lot. Like in puppetry, we learned you can tell a story with anything even something really simple. It's really good for teamwork. We do activities where you have to work together. Everyone is included and everyone gets to share their ideas, not just the same people all the time.
- If we had to describe it, we'd say it's a place where kids can come to express themselves. We are like the board of management. We get to help make decisions and share what we think. It's a place where you can be creative, meet people, build confidence, and have your voice heard.

Our Children's Council 2025

Aisling, Ali, Alba, Amelia, Anju, Aoibheann, Cezar, Chloe, David, Frank, Freya, Hezu, Kacper, Liam, Lily, Louis, Maddie, Naiph, Nawaal, Nell, Oona, Patrick, Penny, Ruth, Sam, Sebastian, Teddy, Tadhgh, Tiernan, Vincent, & Zac.

OUR PURPOSE

To realise children's right to

ART & CULTURE
with
AMBITION & JOY

THE ARK

OUR VISION

The Arts for

EVERY CHILD

OUR MISSION

To make and share **FUN & AMBITIOUS ART** for, by, with and about children, **INSPIRING OTHERS** by what we do

OUR VALUES

Dreaming **BIG**
Having **FUN**
THINKING AHEAD
Opening **HEARTS** and **MINDS**
Showing **KINDNESS** and **CARE**

Strategic Priorities
We have identified four areas of strategic priority which serve our ambition for the period 2024 - 2028. These four priorities are:

REALISE **AMBITIOUS ART** FOR CHILDREN

TRANSFORM OUR **ENGAGEMENT** WITH CHILDREN

Arts for EVERY Child, our vision, is brought to life through four interconnected strategic priorities. They are rooted in our founding principles, driven by our commitment to artistic excellence, and guided by our responsibility to reach and represent all children. Together, they form our roadmap for meaningful, inclusive and ambitious work through 2024- 2028. More detail is provided in the following pages.


INFLUENCE THINKING ABOUT ART & CHILDREN
GROW AS AN INCLUSIVE, EFFECTIVE, SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

REALISE AMBITIOUS ART FOR CHILDREN

'That was better than theatre for adults!'

CHILD AFTER *THE GIGGLER TREATMENT*

PHOTO: ROS KAVANAGH

PHOTO: STE MURRAY

Theatre, Music, and Performance

2025 marked a landmark year for The Ark as we celebrated our 30th birthday. This milestone reflected three decades of dedication to creating and sharing exceptional art for children. The year began with the return of *The Giggler Treatment* based on the novel by Roddy Doyle, written by Fionn Foley, delighting audiences once again with its irreverent humour, musical energy and unmistakable Dublin voice.

In March, we produced a revival of *The Haircut*, a musical by Wayne Jordan and Tom Lane. This reimagining of the Irish legend of Labhraidh Loingseach invited audiences aged 8+ into a world of magic, music and mystery, exploring themes of identity, secrecy and self-expression through a vibrant live score and dynamic performances.

Throughout the year, partnerships remained central to our programme.

- As part of our long-standing relationship with Dublin Theatre Festival, we presented a rich season of work for young audiences that brought global and Irish voices to our stage. This included *UNIVERS* and *BEYOND UNIVERSE* by Engruna Teatre from Catalonia, Spain, a poetic sensory experience for babies, and children with complex additional needs. We were also proud to welcome the world premiere of *Leaves* by Branar, a story of growth, guidance and thenatural world, alongside a captivating adaptation of *The Little Prince* from the UK company The Egg.
- We were delighted to partner once again with Dublin Dance Festival for their 21st edition, presenting *When The Moon Spun Round* by Irish aerial dance and music companies Fidget Feet and Ceol Connected offsite in the Samuel Beckett Theatre.
- Our partnership with TradFest enabled us to revive a much-loved Ark music show with special concert performances of *Tracks in the Snow* by The Henry Girls, marking ten years since its premiere.
- Together with Bram Stoker Festival, we filled the Mansion House with children for our ever-popular *Dracula's Disco* with Donal Dineen

Teenage voices took centre stage with *Flies*, a rehearsed reading developed with alumni of The Ark's Children's Council and led by artist Shaun Dunne.

We also welcomed audiences to our presented work such as *Luminaria* by Fionnuala Gygax, and the return of Branar's *How to Catch a Star*, based on the beloved book by Oliver Jeffers.

Visual Arts, Exhibitions and Festivals

Our visual arts programme continued to entertain with *Puffin Rock Habitats*, created in partnership with the Heritage Council and Cartoon Saloon. Through sensory exploration and interactive play, children discovered Ireland's rich biodiversity.

In summer, we celebrated our 30-year journey with *Voyages*, a unique exhibition co-curated by twelve young people aged 10 to 17, representing current and past members of The Ark Children's Council, who explored our visual art collection and shaped a brand-new exhibition and workshop programme.

A rich programme of creative workshops filled the year exploring traditional crafts, drama, music, dance, creative writing and science for children of all ages.

TRANSFORM OUR ENGAGEMENT WITH CHILDREN

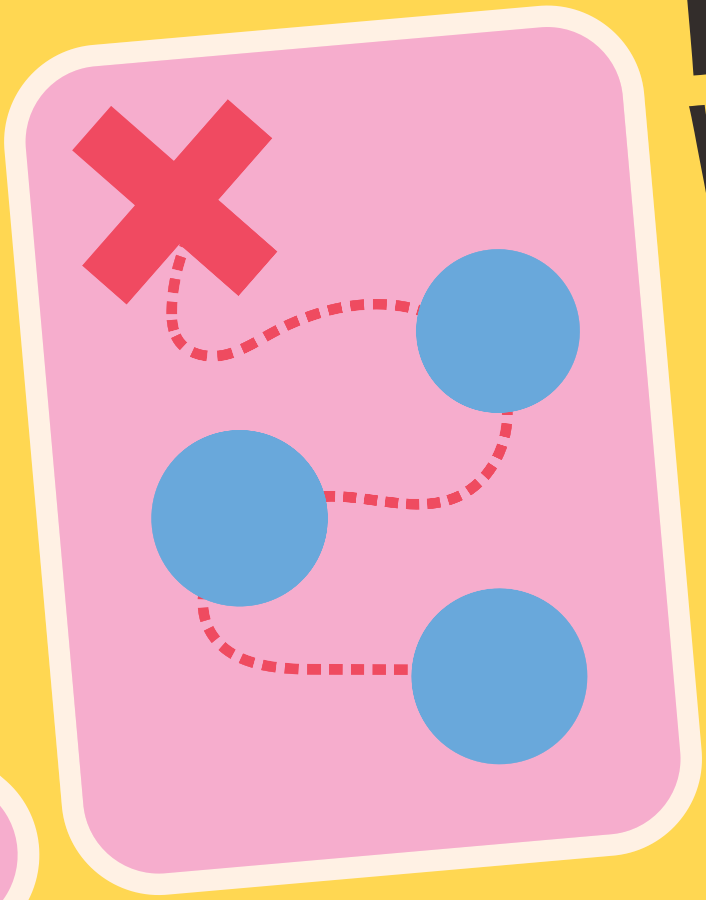

PHOTO: JILLY McGRATH

'This is the best art workshop that I've ever been to'

CHILD AFTER ANIMATION WORKSHOP IN CREATIVE HUBS

PHOTO: GEMMA BOVENIZER

Creative Hubs

A cornerstone of this work was the Creative Hubs in Libraries programme, delivered in partnership with Dublin City Council Arts Office and Dublin City Libraries across Ballyfermot, Cabra, Coolock and the Central Library. Across Spring, Summer and Autumn programmes, Creative Hubs offered a vibrant mix of dance, drama, music, visual art, storytelling, science and performance.

In 2025, the programme engaged over 139,000 attendees and viewers, delivering 159 workshops to more than 2,600 children and accompanying adults, 34 performances to over 800 audience members, and 6 exhibitions viewed by more than 130,000 visitors in library spaces.

Workshops were tailored for early years, primary school children and public audiences. The programme was delivered by a group of artists working across disciplines, creating opportunities for children to explore, collaborate and express themselves. *Things for slow-moving mind-wandering*, a sculptural installation by Dr. Lucy Hill, co-created with children, is on long-term display in Cabra Library.

Schools, Early Years and Broadband Connection Points

Our commitment to reaching children all over the island of Ireland continued through the Broadband Connection Points (BCP) initiative, delivered in partnership with the Department of Rural & Community Development and the Gaeltacht. In 2025, we delivered 32 events across 12 centres in 8 counties, engaging 334 children and 94 adults through live digital workshops and streamed performances.

Schools and early years settings remained central to our engagement. Teachers are key stakeholders, and we continue to place them at the heart of our approach, working in partnership to provide practical resources and support their ongoing professional development.

Artist Development

Artist development also remained a vital thread throughout our work. Through ongoing opportunities for collaboration and facilitation, we supported artists to deepen their skills in engaging children in meaningful and inclusive ways.

INFLUENCE THINKING ABOUT ART AND CHILDREN

PHOTO: JILLY McGRATH

'Best summer course I've ever done! Loved every minute, it was so focused but still allowed huge creativity and flexibility!'

TEACHER FROM A VISUAL ARTS APPROACH IN THE CLASSROOM


PHOTO: GEMMA BOVENIZER

Teachers and Early Years Residencies

Our teacher Continuing Professional Development programme remained a vital platform for this work. Courses such as *The Magic of Everyday Materials in the Early Years Classroom* and *A Visual Arts Approach in the Classroom* continued to equip educators with practical, creative approaches to integrating the arts into everyday learning.

A key area of growth in 2025 was our early years residencies, delivered through The Arts Council's Arts in Early Learning and Childcare Settings Scheme. At Darndale Belcamp Integrated Childcare Service and St. Joseph's Early Childhood Development Service, artists worked closely with children over eight weeks, creating space for sustained, meaningful engagement.

In Darndale, musicians Kasia Eliasz and Gustavo de Morais introduced babies and toddlers to music through rhythm, movement and song, while in St. Joseph's, visual artists Jane Groves and Olga Vnukova guided children through hands-on exploration of nature, materials and seasonal change.

Partnerships and Schools Programmes

Our residency at DCU, as part of the The Arts Council's Children and Young People's Arts (CYPA) Artists in Residence programme, continued to evolve. Throughout the year, we worked with student teachers across disciplines, embedding arts practice into teacher education.

Through our Broadband Connection Points (BCP) programme funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development, we continued to advocate for access to the arts across rural Ireland. In 2025, we expanded both reach and depth, delivering live digital workshops and sharing filmed performances with children across multiple counties.

Our *Ark Art in Schools* programme further extended our reach, bringing artworks from The Ark's collection directly into classrooms. *The Art Runway* and *All Kinds of Everything* enabled children to engage with, curate and learn alongside art in their own school environments.

Throughout the year, The Ark's Children's Council and alumni continued to play a vital role in shaping our work, contributing ideas, collaborating with artists, and influencing how we think about art and young audiences.

GROW AS AN INCLUSIVE, EFFECTIVE, SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

'Children need somewhere like this, where no matter what they say, what they wear, what the colour of their skin is, they will be respected'

PATRICK O'DONOVAN, MINISTER FOR CULTURE, COMMUNICATIONS AND SPORT, AT THE ARK


PHOTO: JYM DALY

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PHOTO: GEMMA BOVENIZER

Sustainability and Organisational Development

In 2025, as The Ark celebrated its 30th birthday, we continued to take meaningful steps toward building a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable organisation. Guided by *The Ark Strategy 2024–2028*, our vision of Arts for EVERY Child remained key.

A focus this year was progressing our Climate Action Plan. Building on the groundwork laid in 2024, we advanced actions across environmental, social and governance priorities. This included progressing plans to upgrade building infrastructure, improving energy efficiency, and undertaking a full energy audit in partnership with SEAI.

The implementation and monitoring of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy throughout the organisation continued to be a priority.

We also hired an Additional Needs Assistant for The Ark Children's Council to support neurodivergent children and those with additional needs to fully participate in sessions.

We continued our important work with our Teachers Advisor Group., helping us remain efficient and focused in how we plan and deliver our engagement with schools.

Ark Access for Schools

We are deeply grateful to our corporate partners, Clancourt, Goodbody, INTO and Mason Hayes & Curran, for their continued support of Ark Access for Schools. Their commitment plays a crucial role in enabling children who may face barriers to participation to experience high-quality arts and cultural opportunities.

We are also delighted to have secured a three-year partnership with basis.point to support *Ark Art in Schools*. This innovative programme brings original artworks from The Ark's collection directly into classrooms, allowing children to engage with professional art in their own school environment over time, supported by artist-designed resources and teacher CPD.

As we mark 30 years of The Ark, we remain committed to growing as a sustainable, inclusive organisation.

PHOTO: GEMMA BOVENIZER

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.

The Board of Directors

The Ark is governed by a Board of Directors with a minimum of five members. 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. The Director and CEO, Aideen Howard, is not a member but attends Board meetings. The Company Secretary who served throughout the financial year was The Ark's General Manager, Al Russell, and he also attends.

Directors serve on a voluntary basis, with no remuneration. In 2025, no Directors claimed expenses.

In 2025 the Board was Chaired by Carol Fawsitt until December when Mark Kennedy became Chair. The Board is legally responsible for running the company, leading and directing The Ark's activities, overseeing the proper management of the organisation, including compliance with all legal, funding and regulatory requirements. Its powers and responsibilities are derived from the company's Constitution. The Directors' Code of Conduct requires each one to comply with the Charities Governance Code. In 2025, the Board met 7 times, including the AGM on 18th June.

Three new Directors were appointed in 2025: Emer McDermott (Egan), Dr. Lucy Fallon Byrne, and Dr. Alan Wall were appointed in April. Three Directors retired from the Board in 2025: Professor Anne O'Gara in June and Alan Wall and Carol Fawsitt in December.

BOARD MEMBERS	DATE APPOINTED	EXPERTISE	BIOGRAPHY	BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2025
Carol Fawsitt (Chair until December)	08/02/17 Resigned: 10/12/25	HR, Law	Carol Fawsitt is a solicitor (now retired) who specialised in employment law. She was a Senior Partner and Head of the Employment Law Dept. at Hayes, following the merger of her specialist practice with them. An NED of several charities in the course of her career, a member of a State Agency and Authority, and a former Chair of A.A.I. and the C.I.C.Tribunal. Currently, she is a Co-Founder of Silent Voices and a member of the Charity Appeals Tribunal, which hears appeals from the Charities Regulator.	6/7
Prof. Anne O'Gara	11/12/19 Resigned: 10/12/25	Education	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 and Skills. 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.	4/4
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.	6/7
Lynda Carroll	11/12/19	Finance, Chartered Accountancy and Tax	Lynda Carroll is a chartered accountant and chartered tax advisor. She has over 30 years' experience in financial services at board and senior executive level. She now works as an Independent Non-Executive Director in the financial services, state and voluntary sectors.	6/7
Shane Hegarty	21/04/21	Arts, Media	Shane Hegarty is the author of the bestselling children's series *Boot* and *Darkmouth*. Previously a journalist and editor with The Irish Times, he is now a full-time writer, translated into 20 languages and regularly appearing at events and festivals in Ireland and the UK.	5/7
Dr. Annie Ó Breacháin	21/04/21	Education	Annie Ó Breacháin is Assistant Professor in Drama Education in the Institute of Education, Dublin City University (DCU). Annie previously worked with the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST, now OIDE) and was chairperson of the Association for Drama in Education in Ireland (ADEI) from 2017 to 2021.	7/7

BOARD MEMBERS	DATE APPOINTED	EXPERTISE	BIOGRAPHY	BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2025
Dr. Pádraic Whyte	06/04/22	Literature	Pádraic Whyte is associate professor in children's literature and a director of the Children's Literature MPhil programme at the School of English. His current research focuses on Genders and Sexualities in Children's Literature, Children's Cultural Archives and Book Collections, and Irish Children's Literature. He is a former Chair of the KPMG Children's Books Ireland Awards	7/7
Liam Ryan	19/10/22	Business, Music	Liam Ryan is the Country Manager at Irish-founded mental health company SilverCloud and has cofounded two tech startups in the digital health industry. Liam studied the French Horn at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and conducted the 90-member symphony orchestra at Trinity College Dublin. Liam currently plays trumpet with Attention Bébé and Stomptown Brass.	6/7
Mark Kennedy (Chair from December)	15/02/23	Finance, Accountancy	Mark Kennedy is a Chartered Accountant, and a member of the Global Executive Committee and Group Governing Board of Forvis Mazars, the international audit and advisory firm. Since joining the firm in 1995 he has worked primarily with large corporate and government clients, both in Ireland and internationally.	6/7
Elish Bul-Godley	19/04/23	Marketing, Content, Communications	Elish Bul-Godley is a marketing consultant who helps brands grow through Content Strategy & Creation, Copywriting, Brand Marketing, Mentoring, Training and Social Media Management. Elish works at Content Plan, the Digital Marketing Agency, Greenedge Dublin, and is a lecturer at the UCD Professional Academy.	4/7
Declan Black	12/06/24	Law	Declan is a solicitor and a partner in Mason Hayes & Curran having served as managing partner from 2013 to 2022. He is a qualified mediator and a director of Rethink Ireland, a national charity which supports the most innovative non-profit organisations working in communities across the country through financial grants and non-financial assistance. He is also a council member of the Irish Management Institute, one of Ireland's leading business education schools	6/7

Board Committees and Working Groups

Audit & Risk Committee

Chaired by Lynda Carroll in 2025, the Audit & Risk Committee assists the Board and the Executive in fulfilling its responsibilities in relation to overseeing finances, budgets, accounts, internal financial controls, audits and managing risk. It makes recommendations and reports to the Board in relation to these matters. It meets three times a year.

In 2025, in addition to core work on the 2025 budgets, 2024 Audit, and The Ark's Risk Register, the Audit & Risk Committee oversaw the creation of a new Crisis Management Plan as well as reviewing and revising The Ark's Risk Appetite Statement, Risk Management Policy, and Reserves Policy. They also oversaw an operational review of The Ark's Internal Financial Controls, and The Ark's Statement of Fundraising Principles.

FINANCE, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MEMBERS	DATE APPOINTED	COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2025
Lynda Carroll (Chair)	14/04/20	2/3
Carol Fawsitt	15/11/21	2/3
Shane Hegarty	10/11/22	2/2
Declan Cantwell (External Member)	31/01/22	2/3
Mark Kennedy	2/2/2024	3/3

Governance Committee

Chaired by Professor Anne O'Gara until June 2025 and thereafter by Dr. Pádriac Whyte, the Governance Committee advises and assists the Board and the Executive in fulfilling its responsibilities in relation to the development of policies, practices and governance documents, and considers all factors necessary, including laws and regulations, which require compliance for funding obligations and best practice for Irish charities. This includes the Charities Regulator's Governance Code, with which The Ark has been compliant since 2020. In 2025 it met four times.

In 2025 the Governance Committee oversaw and delivered an extensive workplan. Key activity included a detailed review and revision process for the Terms of Reference for External Members of Committees and Working Groups, an updated Statement of Values, and the Conflicts of Interests Register. The Committee reviewed a new Critical Incident Policy, The Ark's Artist Fair Pay, Fair Practice Policy and an Internal Statement on the usage of Artificial Intelligence. Other work included the annual operational review of The Ark's Child Safeguarding Policy, updated Data Protection Policies, and a full review of The Ark's Safety Statement, Lobbying Policy, and Flexible Working Policy.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS	DATE APPOINTED	COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2025
Carol Fawsitt	17/09/18	3/4
Lynda Carroll	13/05/20	2/4
Prof. Anne O'Gara (Chair to June)	13/05/20	2/2
Dr. Pádraic Whyte (Chair from June)	19/09/22	3/4
Declan Black	22/11/24	4/4
Liam Ryan	03/10/2025	2/2

Board Resources Committee

Chaired by Carol Fawsitt, the Board Resources Committee advises and assists the Board in overseeing and fulfilling its responsibilities in relation to recruitment of Directors, the proper composition and function of the Board and succession planning. It meets at least three times a year.

In 2025 the Board Resources Committee utilised the Board Skills Matrix to assess Board expertise and to guide recruitment and succession planning.

In addition to the above three standing Committees, the Board has two working groups focused on key areas of strategic priority.

RESOURCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS	DATE APPOINTED	COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDANCE IN 2025
Carol Fawsitt (Chair)	05/06/19	2/3
Aideen Howard (CEO/Director)	05/06/19	3/3
Declan Black	16/09/2024	3/3
Mark Kennedy	16/09/2024	1/1

Development and Fundraising Working Group

Chaired by Carol Fawsitt until May and by Shane Hegarty from May and including Catherine Cotter, Elish Bul-Godley, Liam Ryan, and Emer Egan, the main focus of the working group is to assist the Executive in exploring fundraising opportunities and diversifying income streams. It oversaw the creation of The Ark's 2024 Annual Report and supported staff with corporate sponsorship pitches. The Development & Fundraising Working Group met with The Ark's Director three times in 2025.

Research Working Group

Chaired by Dr. Pádraic Whyte until May and by Dr. Annie Ó Breacháin from May, the Research Working Group works with The Ark's Director to consider the research priorities and opportunities for The Ark. This group met three times in 2025. Key areas of focus include potential approaches to managing The Ark's extensive archive, strengthening The Ark's relationships with Third-level Education providers, and potential ways of funding these activities.

PHOTO: ORFHLAITH GANNON

Governance and Management

Board recruitment, induction and training

The Ark Board operates a protocol for the recruitment and appointment of Directors to the Board. Key to this is the Board Resources Committee which identifies gaps in the competencies, skills and needs of the Board and looks to recruit accordingly, while also taking into account The Ark's Strategy and EDI Policy. The Committee reports to the Board and makes recruitment recommendations as they arise. We are committed to regular training for the Board, with an annual budget line set aside for this purpose. In 2025, Board members participated in training programmes delivered by Safe to Create, Carmichael Ireland, The Wheel, and the Institute of Directors. When a new Director is appointed, they are provided with extensive induction materials and opportunities for familiarisation with the organisation. Where appropriate, they are also assigned a mentor from the Board to support them as needed.

Conflicts of Interest

If it is proposed that The Ark enters a contract, or a financial or professional arrangement, with any organisation or individual, then any Director who has an interest in or connection with that organisation, either directly or indirectly, must declare their interest to the Board. Directors have an opportunity to declare any conflicts of interest at the start of every Board meeting. In the event of a conflict of interest, a Director must make a statement, answer any questions posed to them by other Directors, leave the room and refrain from voting on the particular issue. In the interest of avoiding conflicts of interest, a former Executive Director of The Ark may not be appointed to the Board of Directors until a minimum of two years has elapsed since they ceased to be employed by the organisation. A Register of Interests is maintained and was updated in 2025. The Ark has a comprehensive Director's Code of Conduct with which all Directors must comply. Directors must not accept gifts or favours which could compromise their position on the Board. As outlined in the Director's Code of Conduct, all gifts with a value of more than €100 must be declared. The Code of Conduct is reviewed every three years and is signed annually by all Board members

Compliance with Sector–Wide Legislation and Standards

The Ark is fully compliant with the annual requirements of the Charities Regulator, the Companies Registration Office and the legislation, standards and codes developed for the sector, including all relevant and applicable Employment, Equality, Health and Safety, and Tax legislation. The Ark publishes information about its governance and other company information online. We are 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
- The Charities Governance Code
- The Charities Regulator's Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public 2017, and we confirm our commitment to the principles set out there in on an annual basis.
- The Arts Council's Governance Transparency Scale

Governance and Management

PHOTO: GEMMA BOVENIZER

Investment policy

The policy of The Ark Board is to invest any monies where risk is kept to a minimum. Hence, to date any funds that have accrued have been held in a fixed-term deposit account with AIB Bank.

Reserves Position and Policy

To reflect the Charities Regulator's Governance Code and Arts Council funding conditions, a Reserves Policy was first agreed in 2019 and is reviewed annually and updated as required.

The Board of Directors approach to budget and reserves policy requires that:

- Prudent and adequate budgetary controls are in place to ensure that the resources of the company are not depleted unnecessarily.
- A reserve should be maintained in a readily realisable form and used for any cash flow requirements.
- The designated reserves and use of any surplus to the baseline reserve is reviewed regularly by the Board of Directors.
- Use of Board-designated reserves is subject to approval by the Board.
- In 2025 The Ark Reserves Policy included a multi-year commitment to build a designated reserve to a target level of at least €235,000, which represents approximately three months average operating costs. At the end of 2025, a reserves position of €124,425 has been achieved. Given the clear challenges in adding to reserves when much of the organisation's income is restricted funding, the approach to building reserves is a key focus for the Board in 2026

Managing risk

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 continues to mitigate this risk by actively endeavouring to diversify its revenue streams.

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 Board and Management monitor and control these risks with regular reference and reporting where required to the organisational Risk Register. In addition, we regularly review and update our policies that govern areas such as Child Safeguarding, Health and Safety, and others. Other unique operational risks for our organisation include IT and data security and recruitment and retention of staff. We mitigate the inherent risks in these areas through the strict implementation and monitoring of relevant policies and engagement of specialised third parties to advise on these areas where required.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The main financial risks to The Ark emanate from any potential reduction in funding from the Arts Council of Ireland and the Department of Education, our two primary supporters. However, the company continued to mitigate this risk in 2025 by diversifying its revenue streams. As much of our activity is strategically free (78% of 2025 activities) and our audience capacity is limited by the size of our venue and our commitment to ensure that children enjoy a focused and supported experience, there is a limit to the amount of box office income that can be generated.

Governance and Management

PHOTO: GEMMA BOVENIZER

Management and Staffing

Director and CEO
Aideen Howard

General Manager
Al Russell

Finance Officer
Mary Reade

Production Manager
Mark Rooney

Assistant Production Manager
Franco Bistoni

Programme Producer
Kelly Phelan

Engagement & Participation Manager
Aisling Clancy

Engagement & Participation Coordinator
Estibaliz Errazquin

Marketing and Visitor Services Manager
Clodagh Mooney Duggan

Digital & Audience Development Coordinator
Kate Brady

Learning & Schools Coordinator
Shannon Callahan

Philanthropy & Partnerships Manager
Steven Silke (from April)

Engagement & Participation Artist
Shaun Dunne

PR Consultant
Sinead O'Doherty

Housekeeper
Ashley Walsh

Children's Council Additional Needs Assistant
Alana Mullins (from September)

Visitor Services Coordinators
Laura Whelan and **Ali Waters**

Visitor Services Assistants
Aoife McCloughlin, Aoife Sweeney O'Connor, Ashanti Wheeler, Baxter King-Epping, Dani Hensman, Lorna Kettle, Matthew Tallon, Marissa Wyll, Mika Moret, Paul Derham, Shauna Harris, Sophia Mitchell, Sophie McCormick, Uainín Lindsey and **Wren Dennehy.**

Governance and Management

PHOTO: GEMMA BOVENIZER

Remuneration and performance management

The Ark takes care to remunerate its staff in accordance with arts sector standards and takes into account experience levels and length of service when determining salaries. You can find the relevant information on the salary band for remuneration of the CEO/Director and General Manager in point 9 of the Notes to our Financial Statements on Page 53. Individual work plans are set and agreed annually in accordance with The Ark Strategy and form the basis on annual review.

Volunteers

The Ark recruits volunteers for specific activities when suitable opportunities arise. 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. There were no volunteer roles in 2025.

Communications

To reach our audience of children, we promote our activities to the decision-makers in their lives: parents, families, teachers and librarians. We reach these through a mix of activity online (website, email, social media, online listings and advertising) and in print (posters, flyers, brochures, mailouts and occasional print and outdoor advertising). The Ark also plays a significant role in teacher and artist development, so we communicate regularly with these cohorts and offer free membership schemes for each so that they have access to events, training and opportunities.

The Ark speaks to a wide range of stakeholders: funders and supporters, partners and peers in the arts, education and children's sectors, professional networks and so on. Alongside meeting our reporting requirements from funders, we send regular updates to stakeholders every year and encourage them to engage in our activity.

In addition to public-facing communications and stakeholder engagement, The Ark places great emphasis on strategic media activity. In collaboration with an external consultant, we seek local and national coverage across print, broadcast and online. This serves to promote our programme and encourage attendance and participation, but also to reinforce the importance of children's right to art and culture, the value participation in the arts brings to children and the distinct role the arts can play in empowering our youngest citizens.

Introduction To Financial Statements

2025 was another busy year. As outlined in this report, we delivered a rich programme that reached significant audiences both in person and digitally nationwide.

In 2025, we continued to uphold the two key principles that guide the management of our finances. Firstly, that creating great artwork and delivering great cultural experiences requires significant investment. Secondly, 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 2025, The Ark had assets of €727,679 (2024 – €792,224) and liabilities of €603,254 (2024 – €660,909). The net assets of the charity decreased by €6,890 which includes depreciation. Public funding was key to The Ark in 2025, with principal support from the Arts Council and significant support from the Department of Education & Youth. Dublin City Council/Temple Bar Cultural Trust supports The Ark through the provision of the premises by way of a cultural use agreement. Additional public funding came from Dublin City Council, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth, Department of Rural & Community Development, Science Foundation Ireland, and Dublin UNESCO City of Literature.

Project funding was received from basis.point and the Ireland Funds. Corporate support came from the Clancourt Group, Irish National Teachers' Organisation and Mason Hayes & Curran, as well as support in kind from A&L Goodbody, RTÉ Supporting the Arts and Google. In addition to box office income and partnerships, income was generated from our membership scheme and donations from the public.

Directors' Responsibilities Statement

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

The Directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with the Companies Act 2014 and applicable regulations.

Irish company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under the law the Directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" issued by the Financial Reporting Council. Under company law, the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the charity as at the financial year end date and of the net income or expenditure of the charity for the financial year and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014.

In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Directors confirm that they have complied with the above requirements in preparing the financial statements.

The Directors are responsible for ensuring that the charity keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the charity, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and net income or expenditure of the charity to be determined with reasonable accuracy, enable them to ensure that the financial statements and the Directors' Annual Report comply with Companies Act 2014 and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Directors are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the charity's auditor in connection with preparing the auditor's report) of which the charity's auditor is unaware, and
- the Directors have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as Directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The Directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the Republic of Ireland governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Statement on Relevant Audit Information

In accordance with section 330 of the Companies Act 2014, so far as each of the persons who are directors at the time this report is approved are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the statutory auditors are unaware. The directors have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and they have established that the statutory auditors are aware of that information.

Accounting Records

To ensure that adequate accounting records are kept in accordance with sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014, the Directors have employed appropriately qualified accounting personnel and have maintained appropriate computerised accounting systems. The accounting records are located at the company's office at 11A Eustace Street, Temple Bar, Dublin 2, D02A590.

The Auditors

This is the seventh year of Whelan Dowling & Associates acting as Statutory Auditors to The Ark. Whelan Dowling & Associates have indicated their willingness to continue in office in accordance with the provisions of section 383(2) of the Companies Act 2014.

Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2025 €	Restricted Funds 2025 €	Total Funds 2025 €	Unrestricted Funds 2024 €	Restricted Funds 2024 €	Total Funds 2024 €
Income							
Grant & Programme Funding	4.1	1,136,449	155,306	1,291,755	1,050,000	123,108	1,173,108
Charitable activities	4.2	199,368	90,022	289,390	183,041	67,722	250,763
Other trading activities	4.3	39,274	144,950	184,224	32,071	144,156	176,227
Other income	4.4	22,297	-	22,297	50,084	-	50,084
Total income		1,397,388	390,278	1,787,666	1,315,196	334,986	1,650,182
Expenditure							
Raising funds	5.1	86,818	129,560	216,378	58,826	104,153	162,979
Charitable activities	5.2	1,317,460	260,718	1,578,178	1,265,089	230,833	1,495,922
Total Expenditure		1,404,278	390,278	1,794,556	1,323,915	334,986	1,658,901
Net income/(expenditure)		(6,890)	-	(6,890)	(8,719)	-	(8,719)
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the financial year		(6,890)	-	(6,890)	(8,719)	-	(8,719)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds beginning of the year	15	131,315	-	131,315	140,034	-	140,034
Total funds at the end of the year		124,425	-	124,425	131,315	-	131,315

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 10 June 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

JOHN MARK KENNEDY	PÁDRAIC WHYTE
Chair	**Director**

Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025 €	2024 €
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	10	8,302	13,565
Current Assets			
Debtors	11	33,075	48,459
Cash at bank and in hand	12	686,302	730,200
		719,377	778,659
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(603,254)	(660,909)
Net Current Assets		116,123	117,750
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		124,425	131,315
Funds			
Designated funds (Unrestricted)		124,425	130,957
General fund (unrestricted)		-	358
Total funds	15	124,425	131,315

Approved by the Board of Directors on 10 June 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

JOHN MARK KENNEDY — **Chair**

PADRAIC WHYTE — **Director**

Statement of cash flows

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025	2024
		€	€
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net movement in funds		**(6,890)**	(8,719)
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation		**10,138**	8,242
Interest receivable and similar income		**(272)**	(249)
		2,976	(726)
Movements in working capital:			
Movement in debtors		**15,384**	(4,467)
Movement in creditors		**(57,655)**	(5,479)
Cash used in operations		**(39,295)**	(10,672)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received		**272**	249
Payments to acquire tangible assets		**(4,875)**	(1,925)
Net cash used in investment activities		**(4,603)**	(1,676)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		**(43,898)**	(12,348)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**730,200**	742,548
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**12**	**686,302**	730,200

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Ark Children's Cultural Centre Company Limited by Guarantee is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in Ireland. The registered office of the company is 11A Eustace Street, Temple Bar, Dublin 2, D02A590, Ireland which 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 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".

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.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements of the charity for the financial year ended 31 December 2025 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".

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 & IT equipment	20% Straight line
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	20% Straight line
Comms. systems	20% 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 areheld 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. GOING CONCERN

The Directors have prepared budgets and cash flows for a period of at least twelve months from the date of the approval of the financial statements which demonstrate that there is no material uncertainty regarding the company's ability to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and to continue as a going concern. On this basis the Directors consider it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. Accordingly, these financial statements do not include any adjustments to the carrying amounts and classification of assets and liabilities that may arise if the company was unable to continue as a going concern.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

4. INCOME

4.1 GRANTS AND PROGRAMME FUNDING

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
	€	€	€	€
Arts Council – Strategic Funding	770,000	-	770,000	700,000
Arts Council – Touring & Dissemination	-	35,150	35,150	-
Arts Council – Personal Access Costs 2025	-	1,535	1,535	3,000
Arts Council – YPCE Residency 2024	-	14,032	14,032	5,968
Arts Council - CYPA Residency 2025		7,091	7,091	-
Arts Council – CYPA Residency Personal Access Costs 2025	-	721	721	-
Arts Council – Arts in Early Learning and Childcare Scheme – 2024	-	31,440	31,440	8,395
Arts Council – Arts in Early Learning and Childcare Scheme – 2023			-	3,382
Arts Council – Arts in Early Learning and Childcare Scheme – 2025	-	16,700	16,700	-
Arts Council Commissions	-	4,000	4,000	6,000
Cork County Council – Creative Places 2024	-	-	-	1,140
Dublin City Council – Revenue Grant	17,000	-	17,000	15,000
Dublin City Council – Community Development Grant	-	6,335	6,335	1,665
Dublin City Council – UNESCO Programme Grant	-	5,000	5,000	5,000
Dept. of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)	-	-	-	20,000
Dept of Education via Oide	335,000	-	335,000	335,000
Dept of Rural & Community Development – BCP Grant	-	28,815	28,815	33,253
Science Foundation Ireland	-	4,487	4,487	4,445
Support in Kind	14,449	-	14,449	30,860
	1,136,449	155,306	1,291,755	1,173,108

4.2	CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
		€	€	€	€
	Grants from governments and other co-funders:				
	Programme Income	149,368	-	149,368	139,721
	Co-Production Income	-	33,669	33,669	13,544
	Service Delivery – Creative Hubs Programme	50,000	56,353	106,353	97,498
		199,368	90,022	289,390	250,763

4.3	OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
		€	€	€	€
	Fundraising	19,424	144,950	164,374	165,343
	Rental Income	19,850	-	19,850	10,884
		39,274	144,950	184,224	176,227

4.4	OTHER INCOME	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
		€	€	€	€
	Other income	16,536	-	16,536	249
	Reimbursed Expenses	5,761	-	5,761	49,835
		22,297	-	22,297	50,084

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

4.5 PUBLIC FUNDING BREAKDOWN 2025

Fund	Purpose	Restricted	(Accrued)/ Deferred 2024 €	Awarded 2025 €	Received 2025 €	Income 2025 €	Accrued/(Deferred) 2025 €
Arts Council:							
Strategic Funding 2025	Core Funding	Unrestricted	192,500	770,000	577,500	770,000	-
Strategic Funding 2026	Core Funding	Unrestricted	-	-	192,500	-	(192,500)
Touring & Dissemination (Strategic)	Core Funding	Restricted	-	35,150	28,120	35,150	7,030
Access Costs 2025	Core Funding	Restricted	-	1,535	1,228	1,535	307
YPCE Residency 2024	Project Funding	Restricted	10,332	-	4,000	14,032	-
CYPA Residency 2025	Project Funding	Restricted	-	20,000	16,000	7,812	(8,188)
Arts in Early Learning and Childcare Scheme – 2024	Project Funding	Restricted	23,473	-	7,967	31,440	-
Arts in Early Learning and Childcare Scheme – 2025	Project Funding	Restricted	-	39,905	31,924	16,700	(15,224)
Traditional Arts Commission Award (2023)	Project Funding	Restricted	4,400	-	-	4,000	(400)
Dublin City Council:							
Cruinniu na nÓg 2025	Project Funding	Restricted	-	700	700	700	-
Revenue Grant	Core Funding	Unrestricted	-	17,000	17,000	17,000	-
Creative Hubs 2025 Programme Delivery Fee	Service Delivery	Restricted	-	126,001	126,001	106,353	(19,648)
Community Development Grant 2024	Project Funding	Restricted	6,335	-	-	6,335	-
UNESCO Programme Grant	Project Funding	Restricted	-	5,000	5,000	5,000	-
The Sandbox Commission – Sparking Space	Project Funding	Restricted	-	15,000	15,000	13,471	(1,529)
Department of Education/ Oide							
Annual funding	Core Funding	Unrestricted	223,333	335,000	335,000	335,000	(223,333)
Department of Rural & Community Development							
Broadband Connection Points Network	Project Funding	Restricted	-	28,815	28,815	28,815	-
			460,074	**1,394,106**	**1,386,755**	**1,393,343**	**(453,485)**

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

5. EXPENDITURE

5.1	**RAISING FUNDS**	**Direct Costs**	**Other Costs**	**Support Costs**	**2025**	2024
		€	**€**	**€**	**€**	€
	Allocated Support Costs – General (Note 5.4)	-	-	**17,593**	**17,593**	11,773
	Allocated Support Costs – Payroll expenses (Note 5.4)	-	-	**198,785**	**198,785**	151,206
		-	-	**216,378**	**216,378**	162,979

5.2	**CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES**	**Direct Costs**	**Other Costs**	**Support Costs**	**2025**	2024
		€	**€**	**€**	**€**	€
	Programme Costs	**262,191**	-	-	**262,191**	250,133
	Artists Fees and Expenses	**404,074**	-	-	**404,074**	354,928
	Research and Development	**7,681**	-	-	**7,681**	19,548
	Allocated Support Costs – Payroll expenses (Note 5.4)	-	-	**451,803**	**451,803**	393,405
	Allocated Support Costs – General (Note 5.4)	-	-	**361,462**	**361,462**	358,643
	Governance Costs (Note 5.3)	-	-	**90,967**	**90,967**	119,265
		673,946	-	**904,232**	**1,578,178**	1,495,922

5.3	**GOVERNANCE COSTS**	**Direct Costs**	**Other Costs**	**Support Costs**	**2025**	2024
		€	**€**	**€**	**€**	€
	Allocated Support Costs – Payroll expenses (Note 5.4)	-	-	**85,301**	**85,301**	113,502
	Allocated Support Costs – General (Note 5.4)	-	-	**5,666**	**5,666**	5,763
		-	-	**90,967**	**90,967**	119,265

5.4	**SUPPORT COSTS**	**Cost of Raising Funds**	**Charitable Activities**	**Governance Costs**	**2025**	2024
		€	**€**	**€**	**€**	€
	Payroll Expenses	**198,785**	**451,803**	**85,301**	**735,889**	658,113
	General Office	-	**188,531**	**13**	**188,544**	209,974
	Marketing Expenses	-	**129,560**	-	**129,560**	112,060
	Fundraising Expenses	**17,593**	-	-	**17,593**	11,773
	Support in kind	-	**14,449**	-	**14,449**	30,860
	Legal and Professional	-	**28,922**	**20**	**28,942**	5,770
	Audit and Accounts Fees	-	-	**4,455**	**4,455**	4,455
	Banking Fees	-	-	**1,178**	**1,178**	1,288
		216,378	**813,265**	**90,967**	**1,120,610**	1,034,292

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

6. ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Basis of Apportionment	2025	2024
		€	€
Support Costs – General Office	Usage	335,697	333,806
Audit and Accounts Fees	Governance	4,455	4,455
Legal and Professional	Governance	28,942	5,770
Support in kind	Usage	14,449	30,860
Banking Fees	Usage	1,178	1,288
Support Costs - Payroll Expenses	Usage	735,889	658,113
		1,120,610	1,034,292

7. NET INCOME

	2025	2024
	€	€
Net Income is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of tangible assets	10,138	8,242
Auditor's remuneration:		
– audit services	4,455	4,455

8. EMPLOYEES AND REMUNERATION

Number of employees

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

	2025	2024
	Number	Number
Core Administration (2 full-time, 1 part-time)	3	4
Core Cleaning (1 part-time)	1	1
Core Fundraising (1 full-time)	1	-
Core Programme (7 full-time, 1 part-time)	8	8
Core Technical (2 full-time staff)	2	2
	15	15

The comparative number of staff classified as Core Programme Staff in 2024 was eight. This was reported as seven in the previous financial statements and corrected here.

The staff costs comprise:	2025	2024
	€	€
Wages and salaries	709,166	640,720
Pension costs	26,723	17,393
	735,889	658,113

None of the Board of Directors received emoluments or payments for professional or other services during the period.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

9. 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 bands below were:

	2025	2024
	Number of Employees	Number of Employees
€60,000 to €70,000	**1**	1
€70,000 to €80,000	**1**	1

The Director, Aideen Howard, was paid a salary of €79,196 in 2025.

10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer & IT equipment	**Fixtures, fittings and equipment**	**Comms. systems**	**Office equipment**	**Total**
	€	**€**	**€**	**€**	**€**
Cost					
At 1 January 2025	99,031	443,113	106,542	25,463	674,149
Additions	4,875	-	-	-	4,875
At 31 December 2025	103,906	443,113	106,542	25,463	679,024
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2025	93,840	436,972	106,542	23,230	660,584
Charge for the financial year	3,624	5,178	-	1,336	10,138
At 31 December 2025	97,464	442,150	106,542	24,566	670,722
Net book value					
At 31 December 2025	**6,442**	**963**	**-**	**897**	**8,302**
At 31 December 2024	5,191	6,141	-	2,233	13,565

11. DEBTORS

	2025	2024
	€	€
Trade debtors	**1,195**	34,592
Prepayments	**24,543**	13,867
Accrued Income	**7,337**	-
	33,075	48,459

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

12.	**CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS**	**2025**	2024
		€	€
	Cash and bank balances	**525,655**	569,825
	Cash equivalents	**160,647**	160,375
		686,302	730,200

13.	**CREDITORS**	**2025**	2024
	Amounts falling due within one year	**€**	€
	Trade creditors	**64,986**	22,190
	Taxation and social security costs	**19,602**	24,604
	Other creditors	**24,019**	39,890
	Accruals	**5,572**	62,539
	Deferred Income	**489,075**	511,686
		603,254	660,909

14. **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 €26,723 (2024 – €17,393).

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

15. FUNDS

15.1 RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds
	€	€
At 1 January 2024	140,034	140,034
Movement during the financial year	(8,719)	(8,719)
At 31 December 2024	131,315	131,315
Movement during the financial year	(6,890)	(6,890)
At 31 December 2025	**124,425**	**124,425**

15.2 ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENTS ON FUNDS

	Balance 1 January 2025	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	Balance 31 December 2025
	€	€	€	€	€
Restricted	-	390,278	390,278	-	-
Unrestricted funds					
Board Designated	130,957	-	-	(6,532)	124,425
Unrestricted General	358	1,397,388	1,404,278	6,532	-
	131,315	1,397,388	1,404,278	-	124,425
Total funds	**131,315**	**1,787,666**	**1,794,556**	**-**	**124,425**

15.3 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Fixed assets - charity use	Current assets	Current liabilities	Total
	€	€	€	€
Unrestricted general funds	8,302	719,377	**(603,254)**	124,425
	8,302	**719,377**	**(603,254)**	**124,425**

16. 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.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the financial year ended 31 December 2025

17. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year Directors made donation to The Company totalling €8,082.

Key management compensation

The key management personnel of the charity comprise of the CEO and the employee benefits of the key management is disclosed in Note 8.

Transactions with Directors

No member of the Board of Directors received any remuneration for services provided during the year (2024: €Nil).
No Directors requested any reimbursement for expenses incurred for services provided during the year (2024: €Nil).

18. POST-BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

There have been no significant events affecting the Charity since the financial year-end.

19. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on 10 June 2026.

Independent Auditor's Report

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

Opinion
We have audited the charity financial statements of The Ark Children's Cultural Centre Company Limited by Guarantee ('the Charity') for the financial year ended 31 December 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account), the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the notes to the financial statements, including the 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" 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 2025 and of its deficit 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"; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

Basis for opinion
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 below 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 the 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
In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information
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.

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 course of 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.

Independent Auditor's Report

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

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- the information given in the Directors' Annual Report is consistent with the financial statements;
- the Directors' Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014; and

We have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, are 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 and the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Directors for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 9, the Directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework that 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 they either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Independent Auditor's Report

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

Further information regarding the scope of our responsibilities as auditor
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 thecharity 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
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 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.

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

10 June 2026

Acknowledgements

The Ark would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to all the organisations and individuals who supported our work in 2025. Your generous financial contributions and your consistent championing of our shared belief in arts for EVERY child has helped us keep reaching and engaging more children at home and in school across Ireland.

Principal Supporter

the arts council an chomhairle ealaíon funding the arts

Annual Supporters

An Roinn Oideachais Department of Education

Temple Bar Cultural Trust

Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City Council

Grant Funders

An Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail Department of Rural and Community Development

Creative Communities

An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

Taighde Éireann Research Ireland

Cathair Litríochta Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin UNESCO City of Literature

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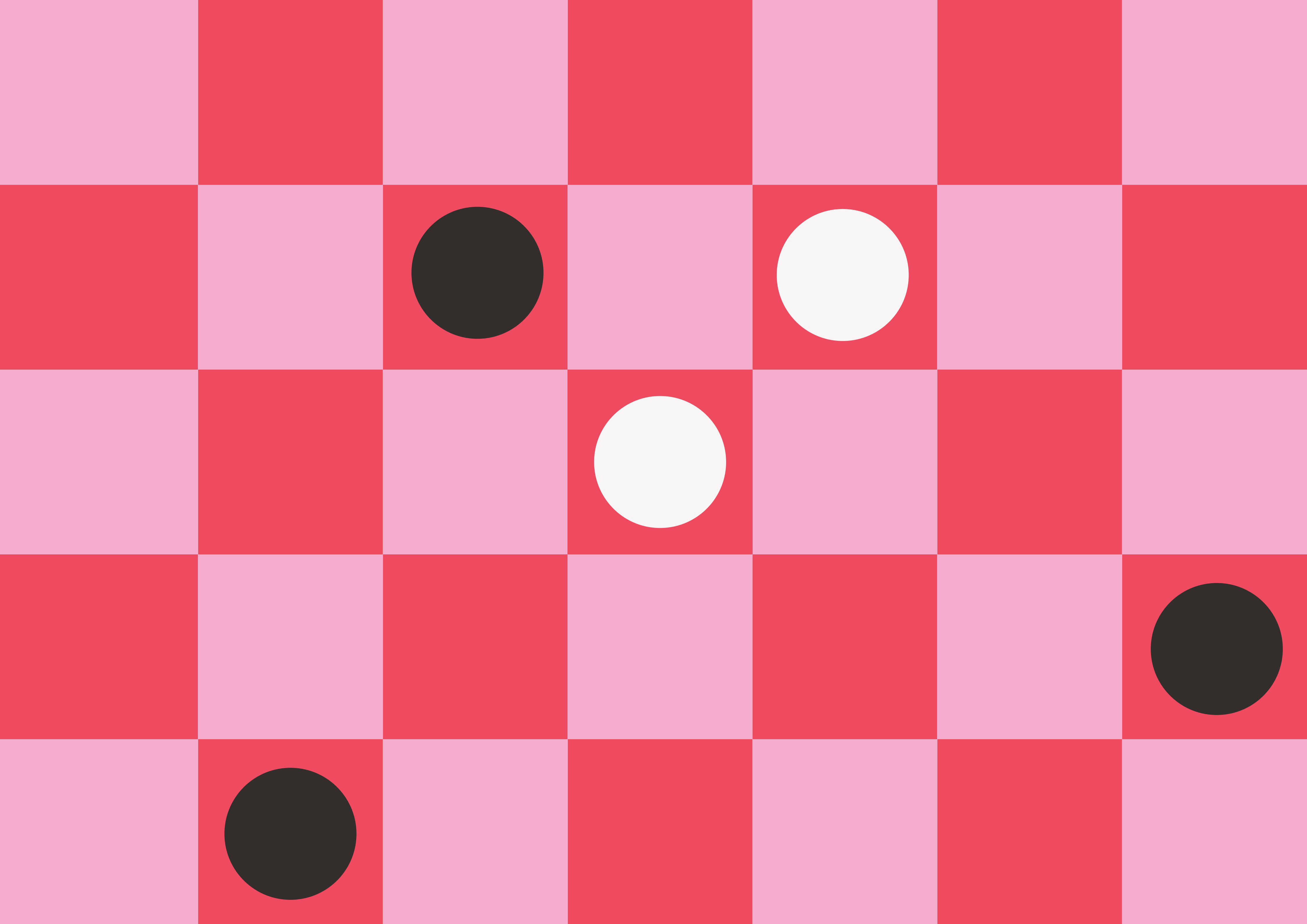
Ann Barry, Audrey Behan, Gordan Bell, Irina Bereznytska, Catherine Byrne, Claire Caffrey, Kathy Carroll, Catherine Cotter, Claire Crosbie Dunning, Maria Davey Borresen, Sheila de Courcy, Emer Dolphin, Carol Fawsitt, Teresa Gadd, Deirdre Giblin, Shane Hegarty, Aileen Hooper, Aideen Howard, Carol Kelly, Penelope Kenny, Anne Looney, Marina Lynch, Aideen McCole, Fiach Mac Conghail, Frank McNamee, Simon Mills, Aisling & Mark Mortell, Deirbhile Nic Craith, Patricia Quinn, Eamonn Russell, Andrew Shortt, Deborah Spillane, John Sutton & Jole Bortoli. We would also like to thank our individual donors who wish to remain anonymous.

Additional References

The following are the various policies, reports and web pages referenced in this document. Links to find all of these online can be found at https://linktr.ee/TheArkDublin or by scanning the QR code.

- **The Ark Strategy 2024-2028**
- **The Ark's Child Safeguarding Statement**
- **The Ark's Equality Diversity & Inclusion Policy**
- **The Ark's Code of Conduct**
- **Climate Impact Action Plan**
- **The Ark's Company Information**
- **An Evaluation of the Operation and Impact of The Ark Children's Council**

The latest information about The Ark and our work is available on our website, **ark.ie**, and on our social media channels **@TheArkDublin.**



The Ark Children's Cultural Centre

The Ark is a dedicated cultural centre for children. Our purpose is to realise children's right to art and culture with ambition and joy. We do so by commissioning, producing and presenting fun and ambitious art for, by, with and about children, and by sharing the work of brilliant and daring Irish and international artists in our award-winning, purpose-designed home in the heart of Dublin's Temple Bar, as well as in-person and online in schools, in libraries and in early years and care settings around Ireland.

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The Ark, Dublin

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

Designed by Gareth Jones and Graham Thew