

Opportunity for Artists

Nature and Place

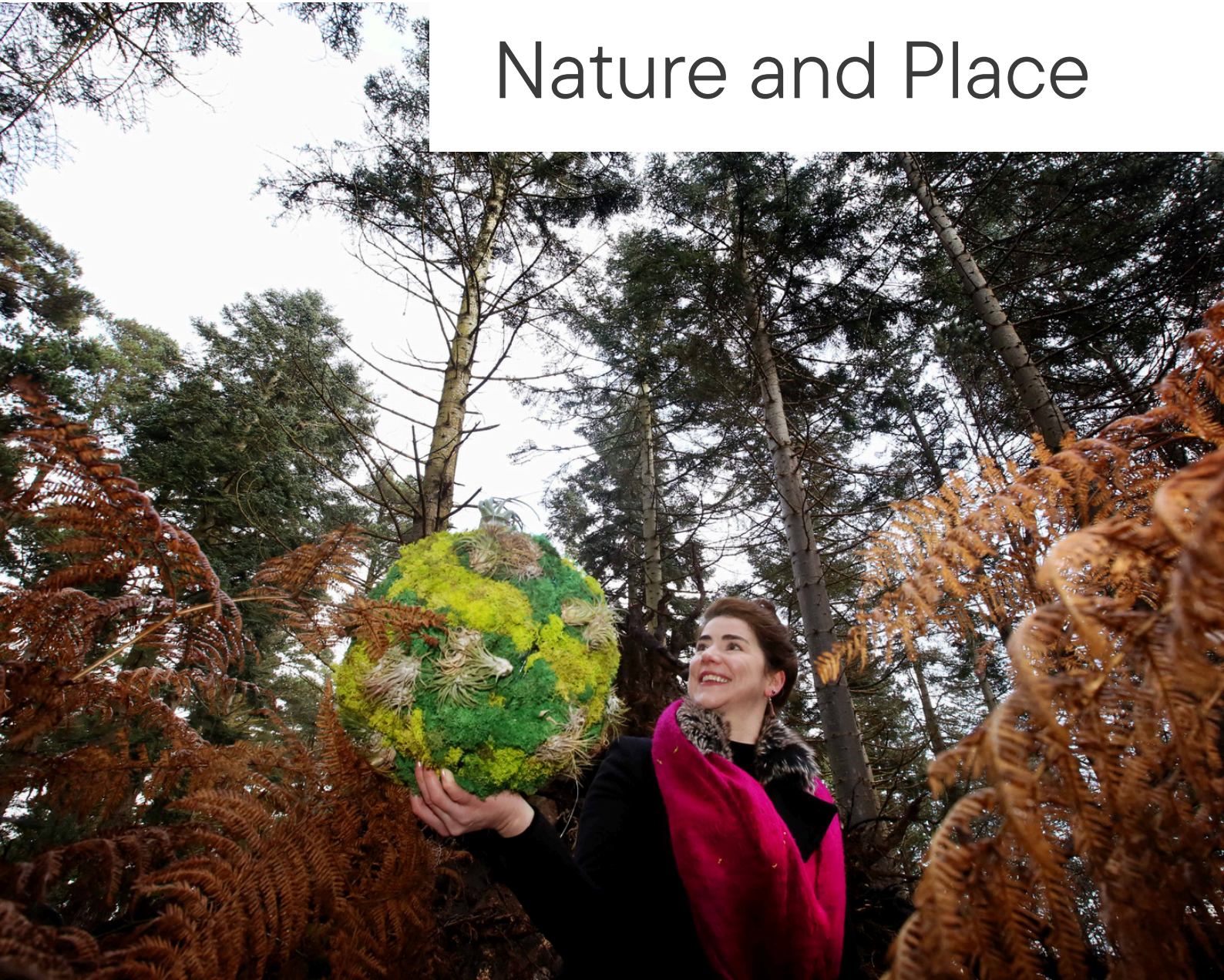


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Overview

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Arts Office is calling for applications from professional artists for a project which respond to the public forests in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County (DLR). This opportunity is for temporary work to take place between September and November 2025; it is not open to permanent artworks or temporary site-based work. The budget for the project is €10,000 (including VAT). An extra budget of up to €2,000 may be available for creating outputs that can continue to engage the public after the project ends.

The closing date for receipt of applications is Thursday 12 June at 17.00 (5pm).

Applications must be made online through the Submit portal. [Apply here](#)

This project is funded by Creative Ireland, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR) County Council and the Dublin Mountains Partnership. It is managed by DLR Arts Office and supported by Coillte.



ReRoot performance, Barnaslingan Forest 2024. Photo Ciara King, dlr Arts Office

Background

Nature and Place

Our forests and woodlands are vital to us as we face increasing challenges with the climate emergency which is leading to extreme weather events, for example Storm Éowyn, happening on a more regular basis. Nature and Place is a strand of commissions/projects which started in 2024 and invites artists to respond to our public forests; the public forests in DLR are Ticknock, Tibbradden, Barnaslingan, Carrickgollogan, Kilmashogue and Ballyedmonduff. It is a programme which works collaboratively with the Dublin Mountains Partnership and is supported by Coillte. Please see additional background information on page 11. [See the 2024 projects here](#). (Please note that for the 2025 project, we are most interested in event-based outcomes taking place in the forest).

In 2025 Nature and Place will focus on some of the challenges of the climate crisis. Our weather patterns are changing due to climate change with an increase in the amount of sudden intense bursts of rain* which can lead to erosion. Fires are becoming more frequent with devastating impacts on forest and hill landscapes and ecosystems. Our human footprint as we visit, walk, bike, go horse-riding, and explore the forests also makes a big impression, erosion and forest fires (some as a result of barbeques) are an increasing issue and challenge. We are inviting artists to explore these impacts and to engage in conversations with forest visitors and stakeholders as to how we might manage our interactions with our natural environment in a sustainable way to minimise the potentially detrimental impact and protect it into the future.

* <https://www.met.ie/human-caused-climate-change-brings-increased-storm-rainfall>
<https://www.epa.ie/environment-and-you/climate-change/what-impact-will-climate-change-have-for-ireland/>
<https://www.ifaw.org/international/journal/climate-change-wildfires>

Artist Proposals

Project Outline

- We are looking for a creative project that explores conversations and connections with people who use the forests for recreation – especially walkers, hikers, runners, horse riders, mountain bikers and families.
- The Dublin Mountains Partnership will introduce the selected artist(s) to some of the key groups who use the forests
- The project should create interactions and experiences that the public can enjoy and actively take part in.
- We are interested in artists who have previous experience of creating projects that involve interaction with people.
- One of our aims is to encourage people to reflect on their relationship with nature and forests and consider the impact of their actions on this environment in a changing climate.
- We want the project to concentrate on one or more of the public forests in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, ideally one where, in addition to walking, regular mountain biking and horse-riding activity takes place such as Ticknock or Carrickgollogan.
- We are not interested in permanent work or work which is physically sited in the forests.



Laura Sarah Dowdall and Right: Robert Coleman performing ReRoot in Barnaslingan Forest, 2024. Photos Mark Stedman

Artist Proposals

What are we looking for?

The project must take place between **September and November 2025** and should include creative outcomes that connect with and engage the public in the forests.

We welcome a range of approaches and are most interested in:

- **Audio-based work** – such as sound walks or podcasts
- **Lens-based work** – including film and video
- **Literary / Performance based work**– such as poetry, storytelling, or spoken word

The project should include events for the public, held in the forest, or near the forest in a location agreed with project partners. These events could include guided walks, performances, workshops, or talks. We are open to these taking place over the period from September to November. We are open to artists building on existing research or work that connects directly to this project. As the events will be outdoors during autumn and early winter, proposals should take seasonal weather conditions into account.



Ticknock no 3 from the series Silva, Martin Healy 2024. © Martin Healy

We welcome ideas that can continue to engage the public after the project ends. These might be shared online by project partners and could include videos, podcasts, writing, or images. These are not part of the €10,000 commission budget. If funding allows, we will allow an extra budget of up to €2,000 for these additional outputs.

Artist Proposals

What budget is available and what does it cover?

The total project budget is €10,000, including VAT (if applicable). Your application should provide a breakdown of how you plan to use this budget, covering the following areas:

1. Fee to the Artist(s)

The budget set aside for the artist(s) and their team to cover time and expenses. It includes payment for creating the work, as well as costs like travel, materials, and any artistic or public events linked to the project. It should also include insurance.

- Estimated time: 25-28 days, covering research, engagement with recreational forest users, and the time dedicated to public outcomes.
- As public engagement is a key part of this project, please include details showing how you would allocate budget for public-facing events and outcomes.

2. Travel, Transport and Equipment

Travel, transport, and equipment costs should be included in the Artist's Fee and Costs. They should not make up a large portion of your budget. We will not fund international travel for this project.

Additional Outputs

If funding allows, we will allow an extra budget of up to €2,000 for documentation/content such as videos, podcasts, writing, images to extend the life of the project.

* Public events/outcomes in the forests will need permission from Coillte.

Application

Who can apply?

- This opportunity is only open to professional artists.
- It is open to individual artists or to a team of two or more artists/creatives working together.
- We are very interested in collaborations which include more than one artform.
- Artists must have experience of engaging the public through previous projects.
- It is not suitable for artists whose work is only based in museums, galleries, cultural institutions or formal settings.
- Artists who have received funding under Nature and Place before are not eligible to apply.

How to apply

The application must be made online: [Apply Here](#)

- We will ask you to tell us about your previous work and your ideas.
- You will need to fill in an application form and upload digital files that give more detail about your previous work. This will include your CV, project budget, and images of your work.
- Please allow time for this and do not start making your application very close to the deadline.
- We have a scoring system for this commission and every application will be marked based on this.
- This is a competitive selection process which means that applications are marked in comparison to each other.

If you have any difficulty completing the online application or have any access needs, please contact us by email arts@dlrcoco.ie or telephone (01) 236 27 59

Application

What you will need to make your application:

Please read all the information below carefully before you make your application.

- Please submit a single PDF attachment (15MB max) that includes the following information: Your CV and a CV for anyone else who will be collaborating with you (two pages at most)
- Tell us about your ideas for this project, the artform, and how your idea connects to the theme referenced in the background information. Look at the Scoring System which we will use to assess your application and make sure that you respond to it. (see pages 9 and 10; 300 words maximum)
- Include a budget (see details below), giving an outline of how you would break down the spending on this project. This must include a fee to you as the artist(s), and to anyone you will be working with.
- Give examples of previous work which relate to the type of work you propose for this project; these may include:
 - Up to 10 images on one PDF attachment (include details). Alternatively, you could include low resolution jpegs.
 - Examples of written work; limited to 20 pages in total.
 - Up to three weblinks to YouTube or Vimeo or sound files; these should be no longer than eight minutes.
 - Please make sure to include passwords for any which are not public.

Timeline and key dates

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Application process opens: | 15 May |
| Closing date for receipt of applications: | Thursday, 13 June |
| Successful applicants notified: | mid-August |
| Project start: | early September |
| Project completion: | by early December 2025 |

Selection

How will we select the artists?

Applications will be assessed by a panel which will include members of our team, and individuals with arts practice expertise. The decision of the selection panel will be final and will be based on the scoring system that is outlined below.

- The minimum qualifying mark is 80. This means that any application which scores under 80 will not be eligible for selection.
- **There is funding for one project under Nature and Place.** This means that not all applications which are awarded 80 or above will be successful.
- If none of the proposals received reach the minimum marks for selection, we will not select a project from this open call and may use a different selection process.
- We will form a panel from applications which score over 80 marks. We may use this panel to commission further projects if additional funding becomes available within a one-year timeline.



Ticknock: What's Going On? By Listen and Breathe, 2024. Photo: Damien Eagers, Coalesce

Scoring

This is the scoring system we will use to assess each application:

1. Quality and creativity of your application and ideas (50/100)

As part of this, the selection panel will look at:

- Your track record as an artist as shown in your application, including technical skill in terms of materials and technique. Please include evidence of your experience of engaging with the public. We are interested in your ideas around how you will approach this project and the ways that you will connect with the stakeholders and public so please include details about this.
- Include an outline of the outcomes you would plan – both in the forest and to document and extend the life of the project. We understand that this may be provisional and could change based on consultation and engagement.
- You must include a budget outline for the €10,000 project amount. If you have ideas for the additional budget of up to €2,000 for outcomes to extend the life of the project, include this information too.
- Think about who the target for the engagement of the work is – it is mainly recreational forest users, who may not typically take part in art events.
- Include examples of previous outcomes from your work which have taken place outside of formal art settings.

2. How your work responds to the setting and environment (30/100)

- This will include looking at both the medium and themes of your work.
- It will include the suitability of your proposal to the forest environment and setting – how it considers the artform/materials you plan to use and other items related to the creation of this work. We strongly encourage the use of sustainable practices/materials and ask you to include details in your application around how you will approach the commission from a sustainable point of view.
- Please include examples of previous work you have done which interacts with or responds to the natural environment.

Scoring

3. Your previous experience of delivering similar projects/commissions (20/100)

- Please show some clear examples of previous projects, or commissions that are similar in scope and scale to this opportunity.
- The examples should clearly outline that you managed and delivered on time and within budget.

If necessary, the selection panel may contact you to ask for more information about specific details in your application. This could include an informal online interview.

We will let you know by email if your application is successful or not.

We welcome applicants who represent the diversity of Irish society. We encourage applications from all areas of the community regardless of your gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller Community, or socio-economic background.



Ticknock: What's Going On? By Listen and Breathe, 2024. Photo: Damien Eagers, Coalesce

Appendix 1

Background Information

Our forests and woodlands are vital as we face increasing challenges with the climate emergency leading to extreme weather events happening on a more regular basis. They play an important role in both climate mitigation and climate adaptation. Trees help contribute to cleaner air in cities, provide diverse wildlife habitats, and sequester carbon.[1] Forests can also provide sustainably grown wood to build low carbon, energy efficient homes.

The public forests in DLR are Ticknock, Tibbradden, Carrickgollogan, Ballyedmonduff, Kilmashogue, and Barnaslingan; we invite artists to focus on these in particular. They are all part of the [Dublin Mountains Makeover](#), a long-term project, managed by Coillte, to change the use from primarily productive forests to forests where biodiversity and recreation are prioritised ([watch introduction video here](#)). So far 61 hectares of new native woodland has replaced conifer forests in the Dublin Mountains. This long-term transformative project is happening in a changing climate.

These forests are an incredibly rich source of biodiversity. As part of the Dublin Mountains Makeover, a team of ecologists undertook a Biodiversity Monitoring Project in the nine forests in the Dublin area in 2022 and the first half of 2023. A total of 47 species of bird were recorded across the forests between July-September 2022. Nine species of butterfly and seven species of bat were also identified. Over the winter period, they surveyed species such as badger, pine marten, squirrel (grey and red) and deer.

Trees and forests are also important for our mental health and wellbeing (as evidenced, for example, by the [Woodlands for Health initiative](#)) and provide opportunities for rest and relaxation in nature. They are a huge resource for outdoor activities and exercise. Ticknock Forest, for example, is the one of the most visited forests in the country; it had on average over 715 visits per day in 2024. The [Dublin Mountains Partnership](#), of which Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and Coillte are partners, has a [strategic plan](#) with four key themes: Protect the Resource, Promote the Benefits, Partner for Success, Provide for Recreation. The DMP also host free guided walks for the public every month led by the DMP Volunteer Rangers who share their passion and knowledge of the Dublin Mountains, see www.dublinmountains.ie for details.

[1] Wilson, S.J., E. Juno, J.R. Pool, S. Ray, M. Phillips, S. Francisco, and S. McCallum. 2022. "Better Forests, Better Cities." Report. Washington, DC: World Resources Institute. Available online at doi.org/10.46830/wrirpt.19.00013.

Appendix 2

Information and
resource organisations

The list below includes clickable hyperlinks.

[The EPA - Climate Change](#)

[DLR Climate Action Plan](#)

[Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2030](#)

[DLR County Biodiversity Action Plan 2021 -2025](#)

[DLR County Heritage Plan 2021-2015](#)

[Dublin Mountains Makeover](#)

[Pro Silva Ireland](#)

[Tree Council of Ireland](#)

[Wicklow Uplands Council - Upland Path Survey](#)

[Mountain Meitheal Dublin Wicklow](#)

[Leave no Trace Ireland see also Resources](#)

[SEE-Project](#)

[Wicklow Uplands Council - SUAS Project](#)

[Hill Fire Info:](#)

- [National Parks and Wildlife Service issues summer fire safety appeal - National Parks of Ireland](#)
- [Fire Management](#)

[Irish Uplands Forum](#)

[dlr Sports Partnership](#)

[Coillte Forests recreation map](#)

[The Gap Mountain Biking](#)

[Ticknock mountain bike trails](#)

[Offroad Cycling Ireland](#)

[Horse Sport Ireland](#)

[Trec Trails Ireland](#)

[Mountaineering Ireland](#)

[Irish Mountain Running Association](#)

[Sport Ireland Great Outdoors a guide for accessibility](#)

Appendix 3

Freedom of Information, GDPR, and Insurance Disclosure

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 applies to Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council. This Act gives people the right to request information held by public authorities and the right to have personal information held about them corrected or updated where the information is incomplete, incorrect, or misleading.

If you feel that any of the information you submit as part of your application is confidential or sensitive, you should let DLR Arts Office know. You must clearly state why you think the information is confidential or commercially sensitive, and why it should not be released as part of a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Data protection laws mean that your personal data should generally only be stored where there is a lawful basis, such as your consent, or where there is a legal obligation. Any information you provide for this application will be held for one year from the date you submit it and will only remain in the ownership of Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council Arts Office.

We will only use the information you give in your application to administer and managing the process for these projects, including the selection process (this may include several external panel members who will read your application). You may withdraw your consent to the retention of the information relating to your application at any point by sending an email to arts@dlrcoco.ie

Insurance

We must make sure that any external person or company working with us on a project such as this has insurance cover in place. If you are selected for a commission, you will need to have Public Liability Insurance in place up to a limit of €6.5 million. Public Liability Insurance covers your legal liability to pay damages to members of the public for injury, loss, or damages, which occur because of your activities. The insurance policy must indemnify (cover) both Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council and Coillte.

If you employ another person to work with you, you will also need Employers Liability Insurance to a limit of €13 million (this will only be needed if the person working with you does not have an insurance policy of their own). These are standard insurance policies and several companies in Ireland provide them for artistic activities.

Contact us with further questions

www.dlrcoco.ie/arts
arts@dlrcoco.ie
(01) 2362759



Ticknock no 10 from the series Silva, Martin Healy 2024. © Martin Healy