

Strategic Development Plan

September 2019 – August 2023



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary gives a brief background about the Irish Arts Foundation (IAF) and lists the priorities for both sustained and ongoing development over the next four years – September 2019 to August 2023.

It provides an ongoing framework for IAF corporate and business planning; it is envisaged that this will guide IAF in carrying out its aim of working as effectively as possible with our stakeholders and the wider Irish and non-Irish community

The Leeds-based Irish Arts Foundation (formerly The Irish Music Project) has been in existence since 1998. It was initially set up by a small group of first and second generation Irish individuals who recognised the need for a leading platform to provide cultural support and guidance for organisations working with Irish people.



Since then IAF has grown considerably and has developed from a voluntary body governed by a Management Committee with no paid staff, to an organisation which now employs 2 permanent staff, 9 freelance staff and has a strong Board of Trustees governing the organisation.

IAF has come a long way since its establishment in 1998 in the inner-city area of Leeds as 'Harehills Irish Music Project'. By 2005, it was clear that the organisation had reached a crossroads: the increasing need and demand for our services from new partners and our existing stakeholders was far greater than the IAF had the capacity to resource and a new structure was needed in order to provide a strong basis for the long-term success and sustainability of the organisation.

This work involved supporting and empowering our partners and stakeholders in realising our potential, enabling us to continue to provide quality services to the Irish and wider community to engage with BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) partners, voluntary organisations and other mainstream services, explore funding alternatives and encourage collaborative working with statutory organisations.

This has and will continue to form a core of our work over the next four years.

Priorities for 2019 to 2023

The main thrust throughout the Strategic Development Plan is to strengthen and secure the long-term future of the organisation, to build on IAF's past successes and continue to deliver high quality artistic work with sustainable outcomes.

This is underpinned by the following key priorities:

- To further work in collaboration with a range of voluntary, statutory and BAME agencies and partners
- To continue to develop the internal infrastructure of the organisation to support effective delivery of work in line with our aims and objectives
- To increase the level of core funding of the organisation as well as secure project funding to carry out activities benefitting the Irish community, people of Irish origin and those interested in Ireland
- To increase the voice of the Irish community in Britain by advocating the outcomes and legacy of our work
- To deepen our existing relationships with artists, and engage those newly arriving from Ireland, including those from the traveller community
- To build on the skills base of our artists and staff through providing access to regular training and development opportunities
- To consolidate and develop our networks both within and outside of the community by delivering outreach projects, which will provide new bookings and agency work for our artists, and new activities for the community
- To develop and deliver activities that will help build the traditional Irish music and arts sector through creating sustainable outcomes. This includes undertaking audience development projects and training projects that create a clear progression route in traditional Irish music
- To develop and build on IAF's marketing capabilities
- To increase the audience and participant base for IAF's work

INTRODUCTION

This development plan provides a roadmap for the Irish Arts Foundation (IAF) growth to be managed in line with our aims and objectives in order to ensure long-term sustainability and an effective use of time and resources.

Key achievements in the last 3 years include:

- Ongoing development of the organisation's activities and its place in the sector
- Increased profile and reputation of the organisation and its work
- The continued delivery of numerous high-quality musical, cultural, heritage and arts experiences
- Awarded PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) accreditation

This growth has been achieved in terms of the consolidation of internal infrastructure, the amount and quality of work delivered, and the demand created for IAF's services.

In light of the above developments, this plan has been developed as a unifying document for IAF staff, Board members, funders and other stakeholders in the organisation. It clearly expresses the vision, mission, values and aims of the organisation, which have developed organically since IAF's inception in 1998. It also suggests a way forward that will ensure a controlled and well thought out direction for the growth of the organisation, while still allowing for existing and future opportunities to be embraced.

It is hoped that this plan will:

- Clarify where we fit into the Irish cultural landscape affecting Irish people and people of Irish origin in Britain
- Identify a roadmap of how the Irish community in the region will continue to positively benefit from our activities, and how our activities will benefit Ireland overall
- Help to ensure an effective focus in the areas that have been identified to be developed
- Help our staff, Board members and other stakeholders make decisions about what we do and do not undertake as an organisation
- Encourage our full-time staff and freelance practitioners to be mindful of planned strategic activity in the face of day-to-day work

The contents of this plan have built on our previous Strategic Development Plan and have come together through formal and informal discussion, debate and evaluation between staff, Board members, funders and other partners and stakeholders.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

History of the Organisation

Leeds Irish Arts Foundation with the working name of Irish Arts Foundation (IAF) was established in Leeds, England in June 1998 as a Company Limited by Guarantee (No. 4927919) and a Registered Charity (No.1101657). Its initial establishment as Harehills Irish Music Project (the former name of the Company with the working name of Irish Music Project Leeds) was the culmination of a six-month informal consultation process with a range of different partners and practitioners across the city.

Whilst the major focus of our initial work related to traditional Irish music, increasingly the ongoing development project work became interspersed to include a broader cross section of Irish arts and culture e.g. literary, visual and drama based arts which was reflected by a renaming and re-branding to the Irish Arts Foundation in 2006.

Previous informal consultation had established that there was considerable interest in Irish Music Project Leeds among both practitioners and arts funders and a need to see a community based Irish music and arts organisation established with the vision to deliver contemporary community based activities and events, workshops and performances and provide opportunities and support to musicians and artistes

Irish Music Project Leeds had delivered an immense amount of activity in the areas of development and professional performances, workshops and promotion. This work mainly featured Irish traditional Music, with Irish arts as a secondary art form.



In 2006, the organisation name was changed from the Irish Music Project to the Irish Arts Foundation (IAF). Irish History Month was established in 2007 previously as a single member wholly owned subsidiary of IAF as a Company Limited by Guarantee (No 5908838)

These very significant organisational changes, development and re-branding reflected the organisations broadening profile and its diverse programming to reflect a broader cross section of Irish arts and culture e.g. literary, visual and drama-based arts.

IAF has undertaken this programme of organisational change and development, which has involved the introduction and implementation of two previous similar five-year Strategic Development Plans. These plans provided significant guidance for our previous programmes of activities and methods of delivery.

These new developments also re-invigorated the organisation internally and has sent out a positive message about IAF's strong organisational will to thrive for many years to come These

important changes formed the beginning of a new stage in IAF's life in which an ongoing vision for the organisation has developed, of which this 2019-2023 Strategic Development Plan plays a similar key role.

Our Vision

“We aim to provide access to and participation in traditional Irish music and arts through classes, workshops, access to materials, resources, promotion and performance.”

Our Mission

To raise the profile of the music and arts of Ireland throughout Britain and to celebrate the many contributions that Irish people have made to life in this country.

Aims and Objectives

Our mission is underpinned by clear aims and objectives outlined below:

- To introduce and actively encourage the playing, listening, understanding and celebration of traditional Irish music and Irish cultural heritage more generally, particularly, though not exclusively, the teaching and learning of traditional music among 1st, 2nd, 3rd generation Irish emigrant communities and any other groups interested in Irish culture and music
- To challenge, by way of demonstrating positive and constructive elements of Irishness, widely held anti-Irish stereotypes still prevalent in the wider British community
- To inculcate a sense of awareness, ownership, pride and personal empowerment among Irish people in their own cultural heritage and, in so doing, to go some way towards attempting to offset older Irish people's internalisation of anti-Irish racism, discrimination and oppression
- To facilitate cultural sensitivity among Irish communities by adopting and actively pursuing anti-racist and anti-sectarian policies, particularly in the context of peace and reconciliation initiatives ongoing as part of the post Good Friday peace agreement in Northern Ireland
- To transcend ageist, sexist, disabilist, class and racist barriers to full client involvement and enjoyment of IAF's range of activities
- To provide a co-ordinating role for the disparate provision of Irish specific social and cultural activities throughout Leeds and beyond

- To introduce communities to the distinctiveness and uniqueness that is traditional Irish music and culture and to the wider contribution Irish communities have made and continue to make to the cultural, social and economic fabric locally and nationally
- To specifically target and attract young people whether of Irish or other non-Irish minority ethnic backgrounds who, residing within areas of significant economic and social deprivation, have low self-esteem, inadequate or poorly developed social and transferable skills or who experience complex and complicating issues around their Irishness or other cultural/identity construction

Core Values

Our mission is also achieved by embedding the core values in all of our activities:

- To promote and celebrate our cultural diversity
- To be inclusive in our practices and to work to widen access to Irish Music and Arts generally
- To positively transform people's lives and contribute to social unity through providing inspirational experiences that help break down personal and societal barriers
- To work with sensitivity to those under-represented groups whose cultural aspirations and contributions remain unrecognised and under-represented
- To empower and support those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups to work in governance and management positions in the arts
- To provide equality of opportunity to all members of society

Artistic and Social Commitments

Our mission is to be achieved through the following artistic and social commitments aligned to our core values:

- **To bring Irish arts into the mainstream of British cultural life**
IAF believes that Irish culture is an integral part of British life and deserves acknowledgment. IAF is committed to making culturally diverse arts more readily available through working collaboratively with diverse communities and by nurturing partnerships with mainstream venues, promoters, funders and partner organisations.

- **To provide access to traditional Irish music and arts training and lifelong learning for all**

IAF believes that the transforming power of music and arts enables individuals to transcend boundaries and limitations. IAF is committed to providing access to Irish music and arts from grassroots beginner levels to professional levels – thereby creating tomorrow's performers, educators and facilitators.

- **To create opportunities for the promotion, presentation and professional development of local, national and international artists**

At the heart of any successful arts organisation is its artists. IAF is committed to creating infrastructure in Irish culture, music and arts to enable local, national and international artists to create new work and pursue successful careers. IAF supports its artists as the creators of our contemporary traditions.

- **To act as instigators in the creation of new music**

Operating in a British setting offers an amazing array of opportunities to access musicians from diverse communities and myriad musical genres. IAF believes this music and acts as a cultural bridge and as a voice that names an important part of the British experience.

- **To create platforms for traditional Irish music and arts**

IAF believes in the value of Irish artistic traditions and is committed to investing in the continuing development of and widening of access to these artistic movements.

- **To pursue excellence in all our artistic endeavours**

To IAF this means working with integrity, commitment and focus and demanding only the best from ourselves as well as from those who engage in our activities. To IAF this also means working within an international framework to ensure that the work we are doing is on par with international standards.

STAFFING AND GOVERNANCE

Recruitment and Staff Development

IAF has a staffing policy which aims to recruit, retain and develop the best staff to carry out our mission.

We do this by using appropriate, skilled artists; when employing artists we have a series of meetings and an interview to ascertain whether they have the necessary skills, expertise and artistic/personal qualities. We look for:

- excellent communication skills
- high quality of work
- a suitable artistic skill base
- relevant experience
- the ability to work in partnership with others
- good organisation skills and sense of responsibility
- enthusiasm, artistic vision and commitment to quality of experience and outcome

For all of our activities, we identify what success would look like for our work at the project planning stage - from the perspectives of the artists, participants, partners, audiences and any other beneficiaries - and monitor the progress of work against this vision. A thrice-yearly report of activity is reported to the Board, and any adjustments or areas of concern noted and addressed.

Our current staffing structure is shown on Appendix 1 of this document.

Board of Directors

IAF has a Board of Executive Directors consisting of nine individuals who contribute their time and undoubted considerable individual and collective expertise on a voluntary basis alongside the awareness of the professional responsibilities of being a Board member of a charitable organisation. This has contributed to the development of a contemporary board culture e.g. implementation of 'virtual' meetings, a Finance Sub Committee with specific reporting responsibilities.

Our current Board of Directors is shown on Appendix 2 of this document.

Volunteer Involvement

IAF benefits very much from the involvement of volunteers in all of our activities, particularly those from the Irish community. We will ensure that we continue to recruit, retain and develop excellent volunteers carrying out work to the highest standards. IAF will do this by offering training (formal and informal), opportunities for learning (via work experience placements), and opportunities to provide hands-on assistance at events.

MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Key external and stakeholder recognition and evidence is the award and implementation of recognised “quality” standards/goals for work we undertake.

Irish Arts Foundation have been awarded level one PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) accreditation. The PQASSO quality mark is endorsed by the Charity Commission and demonstrates that the IAF meets the hallmarks of an effective charity.

The PQASSO Quality Mark is endorsed by the Charity Commission and more formally evidences to our funders and other stakeholders that we are demonstrating and further developing the running of an effective charity.

These important quality assurance structures will also allow IAF’s programme of activities to link closely into other agendas impacting on the sector and the people we work with, including, for example, quality assurance processes that already exist in schools as part of the Ofsted.

Policies and Procedures

IAF has a comprehensive and very thorough portfolio of policies, processes and procedures in place to ensure that the organisation continues to encourage innovation, compliance with the law and that safeguards are in place at every level of the organisation.

These include an Equality and Diversity, Child Protection Policy, Finance and Financial Management policy, Health and Safety policy, and others. This portfolio is reviewed annually by senior staff and the Board of Directors, to overview progress made towards our policy goals, and adjustments and/or changes are made when needed in the light of review findings or changes to current legislation.

Quality Assurance

There are a number of different, but complementary aspects of quality assurance that will be developed throughout all our activities, particularly our artistic programme:



- the quality of our management and delivery processes
- the quality of project delivery and therefore, the work of delivery partners
- the quality of the artistic and cultural experience from the perspective of artists, participants and audiences

The last two points help us answer the question, “Do we deliver quality arts, cultural and heritage activities?” and ensures that that question is at the heart of all we do.



Areas for action and development within the quality theme include:

- Discussing and developing quality assurance mechanisms with existing stakeholders and funders, so that potential funders, sponsors, partners, artists, and audiences know that we meet exacting standards, and that the activities they deliver/receive will be of high quality
- Increasingly making artists, participants and audiences aware of the protocols, processes and procedures we use as part of a development process, by offering relevant information and training to staff, and providing information releases/marketing material for participants and audiences
- Developing a culture of self-improvement and peer referencing where artists learn from each other and work together to improve quality
- Placing quality improvement at the heart of our partnership activities and our review process, linking funding and planning more explicitly to quality

We also work with our partners to further develop this agenda, and to support our vision for traditional Irish arts and music and other art forms.

Accountability

Our year-on-year activities (as well as our independently audited accounts) are shown and shared in our Annual Report, which is presented in compliance with British law and shared with partners and stakeholders, including funders. This demonstrates that all of our activities are fully transparent and accountability is at the heart of all we do.

Financial Management

IAF has efficient and well-managed financial systems in place, which include:

- a detailed Finance and Financial Management Policy for the information of all staff and the board, which provides a standard point of reference for the methodology of salary apportionment, running costs and stakeholder service level agreements
- four authorised signatories on IAF's current account at Allied Irish Bank (three Board Members and the Chief Executive), with two signatures required on every expenditure under £350.00, and 3 signatories needed for sums above this amount
- a system of book-keeping maintained with QuickBooks software with the ability to produce reports, management accounts, profit and loss statements and balance sheets
- an annual independent audit undertaken by registered auditors

Current Funding Arrangements

Time-limited and specific project funding has been received from various sources, including the Irish Government Emigrant Support Programme, Arts Council England, The Ireland Fund of Great Britain, Culture Ireland, Irish Youth Foundation, The Heritage Lottery Fund, Leeds City Council and The National Lottery Community Fund.

IAF will continue to seek and access alternative sources of funding including statutory and lottery sources, local business sponsorship (for specific projects), funding from trusts and foundations and other charitable sources.

DEVELOPMENT: PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Our Current Activities

IAF continues to deliver an immense amount of artistic, cultural and social activity, while being engaged in a process of defining and refining its areas of work. This has included the creation of internal infrastructure and new ways of working that support a high quality and sustained delivery of work.



IAF has developed relationships with a large pool of freelance artists, mainly based in Yorkshire as well as nationally and internationally. Through these relationships, IAF has developed expertise in assessing the diverse skills and specialist areas of these artists and an ability to match them to respective projects. IAF has also built up a dedicated base of audiences and participants and the database continues to grow.

IAF works in an environment where hardships are faced by many elderly members of the Irish community in Britain, terms of socio-economic hardship, marginalisation and isolation.

The activities we deliver within our **Community Participation and Learning Programme** include the delivery of community-based performance events, participatory projects, local, regional and national collaborative work to further develop and diversify our audiences and participants through formal and informal projects such as:

The Leeds Gathering: a ten-day citywide festival of Irish traditional and contemporary music and arts featuring performers from Britain, Ireland and beyond, including regular family events, concerts and workshops.



Adult Learning Programme, which focuses on adults with a core musical knowledge e.g. classically trained, jazz-influenced or English folk music;

Irish cultural **educational and inter-generational** music, arts and participatory community-based dance workshops,



Irish Language conversational classes

Development of the **Inter-Celtic project** celebrating the musical links between Ireland and the Celtic nations



Irish History Month: a pioneering venture in Britain, its purpose is to promote the many positive contributions that Irish people have made in Leeds and to introduce new audiences to the vibrancy of Irish arts, heritage, culture and history.. Established in 2007, Irish History Month was previously as a single member wholly owned subsidiary company of IAF. It is now integrated within our Community Participation and Learning Programme

The Irish Elders' Cultural Project Providing a range of performances and reminiscence workshops directed towards vulnerable and elderly Irish people, in collaboration with Irish community organisations and venues.



Leeds Irish Community Archive Project Ongoing development and delivery of the Community Archive project, 'Untold Stories - The Leeds Irish Community'. Initially funded through The Heritage Lottery Fund, the project focuses on the experiences of the emigrant Irish community in Leeds in the second half of the twentieth century, particularly their settlement and cultural traditions such as music, dance, song and sport.

IAF has also developed an excellent reputation as a professional organisation that specialises in creating participatory music and arts opportunities for young people and academics, supporting artists to consider or pursue successful careers in Irish arts, developing cutting edge performance work, and enabling other organisations to include Irish arts and artists in their work through advice, guidance, arts and advocacy. IAF's headquarters are based in a hub of artistic, cultural and educational activities in Leeds at Headingley Enterprise & Arts Centre (HEART).



IAF's unique position is further defined through the following key achievements:

- Excellent standing among community, music and arts organisations, voluntary and statutory agencies, educational establishments, and funders
- Consistent high quality delivery of artistic work – both traditional and contemporary
- Trust and loyalty of freelance artists towards IAF
- Ability to attract diverse audiences, both in terms of ethnic origin and age

Type of Activities

IAF has delivered a varied and broad range of work since its inception in 1998. The main strength of the organisation has historically been its focus on traditional Irish music and arts. The work of the organisation has been realised through various methods, including through the provision of ongoing core services; time-limited, specific subcontracts to deliver participatory projects; and through its own funded projects.

IAF's work has organically evolved into key areas:

- **Irish Arts Training and Development**

This has included activities such as, ongoing community classes, outreach projects through community collaborations and partnerships, schools' workshops and residencies, artist training sessions, etc. Increasingly, IAF is contacted with requests for advice and guidance in delivering Irish arts projects, widening participation and attracting predominantly but not exclusively first, second, third and dual heritage Irish participants and more diverse audiences. IAF has helped to capacity-build other organisations to deliver Irish arts work and this area of work is growing. This is mainly achieved through delivering participatory outreach and collaborative work with other community organisations and projects.



- **Professional Performances and Promotion of Artists**



This has included the delivery of taster performances to build new audiences, large-scale professional performances and festivals, and promotion of UK based Irish artists. Within this area of work, IAF has identified a need for ongoing audience development work and will continue this goal in an ongoing and structured way aligned to developments in the sector.

The bulk of our work has taken place in Leeds and West Yorkshire. However, IAF has also worked on a regional and national basis and has delivered work throughout the Yorkshire region as well as in Greater Manchester, Tyneside, Merseyside, London and The Thames Valley. Some international work has also been delivered in Scotland, Holland Germany and Ireland.

OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Increase funding, esp. by targeting new funders – trusts and foundations, individual giving	Loss of current staff and subsequent knowledge drain
Increase awareness of IAF’s work and needs of sector amongst decision-makers / policymakers	Inability to retain current staff and recruit new staff due to modest salary packages and funding constraints
Increase staffing levels Ongoing board and staff development	Annual deficits due to lack of core funding insolvency
Traineeships to develop specialist skills required in the Irish arts sector, esp. at management level	Loss in quality of work due to being overstretched
Develop artist loyalty, and increase pool of freelance artists	Losing a distinct product or offering through too much diversification
Develop Folk and Traditional Music BA (Hons) programme module with Leeds College of Music	Loss of artistic expertise and international contacts due to practitioners moving away
Develop music grading and accreditation system	Loss of freelance artists as key providers due to them moving away or moving on in their careers
Deliver traditional Irish music training and support Professional development and training of IAF’s freelance artists, incl. training in community delivery	Decline of support of Education Leeds Music Support Services
Increase size / segmentation of IAF’s database	Inability to successfully fundraise for, protect and sustain IAF’s traditional Irish music training due to the lack of social value placed on it by funders and the population generally
Increase marketing of the organisation and its services; increase media contacts and profile	Competition due to diversity and abundance of options
Increase networking and partnership working	Economic considerations begin to overshadow artistic output
Audience and participant development work	Declining audiences for classical and traditional music and arts
Develop traditional Irish music education model that can be used in other cities	Limited availability of appropriate and supportive venues for IAF’s work
Advocate for and initiate joined-up planning and strategy for Irish music and arts in the region with stakeholders	BREXIT
Exploit social media to reach out to new audiences and participants	

PEST Analysis (Political, Economic, Social / Cultural, Technological)

<p>POLITICAL</p> <p>Recent national election and potential ensuing changes – will arts and culture be a priority?</p> <p>Change of representation in local government (Leeds City Council) – shared power between Liberal Democrats and Conservatives</p> <p>Cultural diversity – how long will it be on the political agenda?</p> <p>Political panic being whipped up in regards to minority communities – i.e. refugees and asylum seekers, terrorist threat, immigrants generally</p> <p>Large size of Yorkshire region</p> <p>Race Equality Scheme to be rolled out for all RFO's by Arts Council England, Spring 2005</p> <p>Changes to the Disability and Discrimination Act</p>	<p>ECONOMIC</p> <p>The London's 2012 Olympics legacy – will more Lottery funding now be diverted to sports?</p> <p>Decline in local authority and statutory funding</p> <p>Decline in sponsorship funding</p> <p>Opportunities for funding from trusts and foundations</p> <p>Opportunities for funding for social enterprises</p> <p>Increase in UK individual giving to charity</p> <p>Relative poverty of Yorkshire region in relation to the rest of the country – limited availability of disposable income for spending on culture</p>
<p>SOCIAL/CULTURAL</p> <p>London 2012 onwards – social focus on London</p> <p>Predominance of commercial popular music and declining audiences / participants for classical and traditional art forms</p> <p>Fear of crime and anti-social behaviour affecting audience numbers</p> <p>Mix of rural and urban populations in the region</p> <p>Ethnically segregated – competition between social groups</p> <p>Style obsolescence – what is in social favour changes very quickly</p> <p>Tick box culture when it comes to cultural diversity</p> <p>Distance and distrust between different Irish social and cultural groups</p>	<p>TECHNOLOGICAL</p> <p>Free access to music through internet and resulting threat to income via music sales</p> <p>Less audiences for live performance because of competition for audiences with TV, movies, Internet, etc.</p> <p>Predominance of mobile phones - opportunities to use texting as a marketing tool</p> <p>Increasing use of internet - opportunities for online marketing</p>

Delivering Our Mission, 2019 - 2023

Performance, Promotion and Audience Development:

IAF will continue to deliver professional performances, promote local, national and international artists and develop audiences for these art forms. This work will be focused on fulfilling two main aims:

- Artists: To continue to nurture and platform emerging and established practitioners of traditional Irish Music and Arts
- Audiences: To enable audiences to experience and enjoy both traditional and contemporary traditional Irish Music and Arts through delivering professional performances and undertaking audience development activities

Music and Arts Training:

IAF will continue to create training and development opportunities from grassroots to professional levels. IAF will work to fulfil the following aims in regards to training and development:

- First Access: Creating accessible, grassroots, participatory opportunities for people of all ages and from all backgrounds to take part in traditional Irish music and arts
- Progression: Ensuring access to high-quality, ongoing participatory opportunities in traditional Irish music
- Training and professional development of emerging artists (CPD): Including both advanced musical training as well as professional development in delivering music training at a grassroots level. The emphasis here will be on creating a progression route within Irish traditional music training, as this is an area that will demand a great deal of focus in order to be successfully realised

Traditional Irish Music and Arts Development:

Much activity and energy abounds within the traditional Irish music, arts and heritage sector. However, this sector is still one in a phase of development. There are gaps that need to be addressed in order to successfully sustain and grow the traditional Irish music and arts sector in the long term.

Some of the gaps include:

- limited investment in Irish music, arts and heritage
- lack of trained managers in the Irish music, arts and heritage sector with knowledge and expertise, particularly for traditional Irish music
- limited pool of musicians and educationalists to deliver music and arts training at a grassroots community level and up, due to:
 - lack of traditional Irish music expertise and ability to a high standard
 - lack of teaching ability
 - lack of awareness that community music and arts is a viable career choice
- limited audiences for traditional Irish music, arts and heritage
- limited availability of appropriate venues with knowledge of programming Irish arts, incl. sound engineering expertise, marketing expertise, cultural sensitivity and understanding

There is awareness within IAF that our aims cannot be achieved in isolation given the gaps in this sector. Therefore, IAF will work to foster and support the development of the Irish cultural and arts sector.

Collaboration



IAF is aware of other organisations developing a similar type of work, and our forward plans always ensure that IAF does not duplicate activities accordingly.

There are also other Irish organisations based at the Leeds Irish Centre that position themselves as central focuses for Irish arts and culture such as Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCE), The Leeds St Patrick's Day Parade Committee, The Tuesday Club and the Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA).

IAF has always respected the work of such organisations and will continue to work in collaboration rather than competition with such organisations.

With a structured and focused business and marketing plan, however, IAF has the opportunity to remain an innovative Irish Music and Arts organisation in the UK and reach the aspiration of being a Centre for Excellence in

the UK. The Irish Arts Foundation name has the benefit of having an immediate sense of national presence.

Strategic Action Plan: External

: To promote and increase access to the diversity of the Irish cultural experience.

Objectives	Work Programme	Outcomes	Timeframe	Responsibility
1. Support and assist new and existing stakeholders to identify and develop Irish heritage and cultural projects	Map the range of cultural activities offered to new and existing partners and stakeholders	Expansion of cultural activities available to wider community	6-12 months ongoing	Chief Executive / Development Officer
2. Development of ongoing projects	Provide advice and partnership support to enable stakeholders to effectively participate in any new developments. Identify possible sources of funding and sponsorship for new projects	Up to date website and directory of current service cultural provision	3 months ongoing	Chief Executive / Development Officer
2 (a) Adult Learning Programme	Focusing on adults with a core musical knowledge e.g. classically trained, jazz-influenced or English folk music	24 Adult Irish Music workshops and participatory events (formal and informal)	12 months ongoing	Chief Executive / Development Officer /Outreach Team/ Workshop Practitioners

<p>2 (b) Irish History Month</p>	<p>Introduce local communities to the distinctiveness and uniqueness that is traditional Irish arts and culture and the wider contributions that Irish communities have made and continue to make to the cultural, social and economic fabric of Great Britain</p>	<p>Irish cultural events during March for Irish history Month</p>	<p>6 – 18 months ongoing</p>	<p>Chief Executive / Development Officer / Outreach Team/ Workshop Tutors</p>
<p>3. Expansion of Community Participation and Learning Programme</p>	<p>Further develop a programme which will enable community groups, community centres etc. have access to traditional Irish music, arts and culture</p> <p>Irish Elders Cultural Project</p> <p>Collaborating with other educational, voluntary or community our area with whom we have not worked before</p> <p>Further develop a community based collaborative programme</p>	<p>Concerts featuring high profile Irish artistes</p> <p>Cultural workshops for Irish Elders</p> <p>Irish Cultural Days</p> <p>Reaching young people who have not participated Irish cultural activity before, in particular at Key Stages 2 and 3 Annual 10-day Community based Irish Music and arts event. "The Leeds Gathering"</p>	<p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>6-18 months</p>	<p>All staff</p> <p>All staff</p> <p>All staff</p> <p>Chief Executive / Development Officer /Outreach Team/</p>

	<p>of artistic and cultural classes, training sessions, workshops and events</p> <p>Working with groups e.g. Chapel FM, Seven Arts, Inkwell, HEART in extending and improving our organisation's ability and capacity to deliver traditional Irish cultural activities</p>	<p>Irish Language Classes</p> <p>Partnership based community activities, concerts and workshops</p>	<p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>	<p>Workshop Practitioners and volunteers</p> <p>Chief Executive / Development Officer / Workshop Practitioners</p>
<p>4 The continued development of collaborative links with other agencies in Leeds</p>	<p>For example, with the University of Leeds Department of Music, Leeds Museums and Galleries Service</p>	<p>To study the experiences of the Irish in Leeds in terms of culture, music and heritage</p>	<p>18-36 months</p>	<p>Chief Executive / Development Officer</p>
<p>5 Involvement in the cultural planning of The Leeds City Museums and Galleries as a BAME consultancy partnership group</p>	<p>To further develop Leeds Irish Community Archive Project</p>	<p>Establish a publicly accessible archive of materials - recordings, photographs, etc. which relate to the history and development of the Irish community in the inner-city areas of Leeds where the immigrant Irish community historically settled</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>Chief Executive / Development Officer</p>

Strategic Action Plan: Internal

: To ensure the efficient and effective governance, management and administration of the organisation.

Objectives	Work Programme	Outcomes	Timeframe	Responsibility
To achieve highly skilled and motivated Senior Management Team (SMT)	Review governance, financial management and administration of IAF to identify areas for improvement	Maintain professionally run organisation with closely managed and monitored structure	12 -18 months	Chief Executive
Staff development and implementation of new training programme	Review of job descriptions. Discuss training and career development with all staff. Creation of new training programme, identifying trainers and/or courses	Motivated, skilled and professional employees who are proud to work and represent IAF	12 months with ongoing staff development	Chief Executive / Development Officer
Ensure adequate funding available to meet all IAF requirements. (short and long term)	Develop fundraising strategy to best identify sources of funding outside of Irish Government support	Higher profile across more sectors. Increased awareness of IAF. Access to wider funding streams which will reduce operational risk	Ongoing with regular review by Board	Chief Executive / Finance Sub Committee
Strengthen and reform internal management and financial systems	Review existing systems and policies and procedures. Create new streamlined office systems and new financial system	Efficient accurate systems in place to ensure information easily accessible for smooth organisational management	12 -18 months with annual review thereafter	Chief Executive / Finance Sub Committee

APPENDIX 1: MARKETING STRATEGY 2019-2023

IAF has developed a structured approach to marketing our activities based on the current economic and cultural environment in Britain as outlined below.

Marketing Aims

IAF continues to work towards:

- establishing basic marketing foundations in all areas of the marketing mix, which can be built on as IAF expands and develops
- segmenting IAF's marketing approach according to different aspects of its work and service delivery (e.g. education versus performance)
- diversifying income streams and generating new income
- facilitating a deeper relationship with our core audience
- raising the profile of IAF's work amongst the identified potential audiences and encourage engagement of these audiences
- promoting the unique selling proposition (USP) of local, national and international artists creating Irish and fusion work
- advocating, training and developing artists, promoters and venues in order to achieve increased participation from these stakeholders

Current Market

- In addition to Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield Metropolitan Districts have a high proportion of population of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd generation or 'dual-heritage' Irish origin and should be considered key areas for audience penetration in the development of services and marketing.
- As Bradford and Huddersfield also contain a large proportion of West Yorkshire's population of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd generation Irish origin it is logical that they be included within a catchment area based loosely on the 45 minute drive time.
- In addition to the cities outlined above, the Irish community in West Yorkshire is more 'invisibly' represented in Kirklees and Calderdale Metropolitan Districts
- The Irish community was historically more concentrated in particular areas of Leeds e.g. Harehills, Chapeltown, Scott Hall, Hyde Park, Woodhouse, Beeston, and Hunslet but is now more dispersed across the city

- The majority of IAF's current electronic mailing list reside in the North of England
- Neighbourhoods classified as 'Urban Prosperity' in ACORN demographic classification, which are key hotspots for IAF attendees, are heavily concentrated in North Leeds. Bradford, Halifax and Wakefield have more isolated pockets of Urban Prosperity. It is also worth noting that York, just beyond the 45-minute drive time boundary, has strong potential

Further notable characteristics of the catchment area include:

- Above UK average levels of 15-24 year olds and students. IAF's mailing list currently has 12% student's so this is a target audience to look at developing
- The 'Urban Prosperity' ACORN category accounts for just 6% of the Yorkshire population, but 24% of IAF's mailing list are in this 'Wealthy Achievers' and 'Moderate Means' categories were represented proportionately to the Yorkshire population as a whole
- 'Secure Families' and 'Flourishing Families' accounted for 26% of the mailing list highlighting a high propensity and potential around the community events
- Aspiring Singles, 'Educated Urbanites' and Irish communities were also disproportionately well-represented groups in comparison with the base Yorkshire population
- 'Older Families', 'Prosperous suburbs', 'Low-income Irish families' and 'Home owning Irish family' areas were disproportionate well-represented types as well

IAF needs to particularly look at further engaging our local authorities in our work, so maybe focusing on engaging with the leisure services and educational departments. IAF also needs to look at reaching those already at a first stage of learning traditional Irish music who are looking for opportunities to progress to the next level.

Geographical Footprint

IAF has defined a specific geographical remit for its work. The organisation will proactively focus its work in Leeds and urban areas of West Yorkshire, as there is much scope for consolidation and expansion in these areas.

A high level of demand exists throughout the rest of Yorkshire for Irish arts work as evidenced by an increasing demand for our services. The organisation will continue to deliver targeted work throughout the Yorkshire region as a whole, but this will primarily be on a reactive basis through partnerships. This will include work in both urban and rural areas.

Within the time period of this Strategic Development Plan, IAF will not run targeted projects on a national basis. This is due to a number of reasons, including a desire to service the North, where there is little Irish arts provision as compared to the South.

In addition, IAF will work within the capacity of its resources – including financial and human resources as well as partnership resources. The bulk of IAF's strong partnerships are predominantly with organisations in the Yorkshire region. However, IAF will continue to work in partnership with other arts and heritage organisations as appropriate, to promote artistic products nationally and internationally.

Target Audiences

The identified target audiences in relation to these services are as follows:

	Core audiences	Potential new audiences
Music Training	Schools. Practitioners. Irish community, particularly 2 nd , 3 rd and mixed heritage Irish Young (8-25). (Market penetration)	Universities. Colleges. Community groups. Irish Communities. Non-Irish audiences. (Market Development)
IAF Performances	Irish. 2 nd , 3 rd generation Irish. Newer arrivals and students from Ireland: 'professional migrants' Mixed heritage. Middle income. Students. Educated Urbanites. Families. (Market penetration)	Passing trade. Irish Communities. Local communities in new venue areas. Outlying community pockets of West Yorkshire. Cross over from arts attendees from other art forms. (Market development)
Booked Performances i.e. - private bookings / bookings by other venues	Private bookings from people in the community. Bookings through links with established venues. (Product development and diversification)	Use booked performances as a route into passing trade. (Product development and diversification)

Expanding the Market

Key geographical hotspots to focus on include:

- West, South and North Yorkshire (for maintaining and developing core audience)
- Lincolnshire and Humberside to the east of Leeds and parts of Greater Manchester to the West of Leeds for further developing audience

- Greater London and the South West of England, Wales and Scotland for developing networking and partnership opportunities, sharing information etc
- Student areas in Leeds, Huddersfield, Sheffield and York may also increase the numbers of students engaging

Congruence with Local, Regional and National Strategies

The organisations aims and work programmes complement and further a range of policies and strategies, as follows:

Local

With reference to the local authority’s “area management wedge” infrastructure for service provision, the Foundation has consulted widely and developed links with a variety of community, voluntary and statutory bodies, including schools, further and higher education bodies, and community venues across all 7 wedges in the Leeds area. This will map a way forward to champion exposure of Irish arts, culture and history across the Leeds metropolitan area in key institutions. The need for received local knowledge is apparent given the differing restrictions on community resources.

Regional

The aims and objectives of regional initiatives means that there are now additional platforms for exposure across the region. In addition, current cultural strategies across West Yorkshire are being revised, and extended cultural and arts departments are being formed in York; in all these urban areas, we have a key opportunity to establish an enduring and effective presence.



National

There are plans for increased focus on community cohesion in cultural initiatives across the U.K. from 2019 and beyond. The Foundation has a unique perspective given its regional presence and will be a key player and a point of reference for those seeking quality exposure to Irish arts, culture and heritage.

Phases of the Marketing Strategy

The marketing strategy for the next 4 years will encompass a review of all current marketing work undertaken by IAF. This will include an overhaul and development of IAF's:



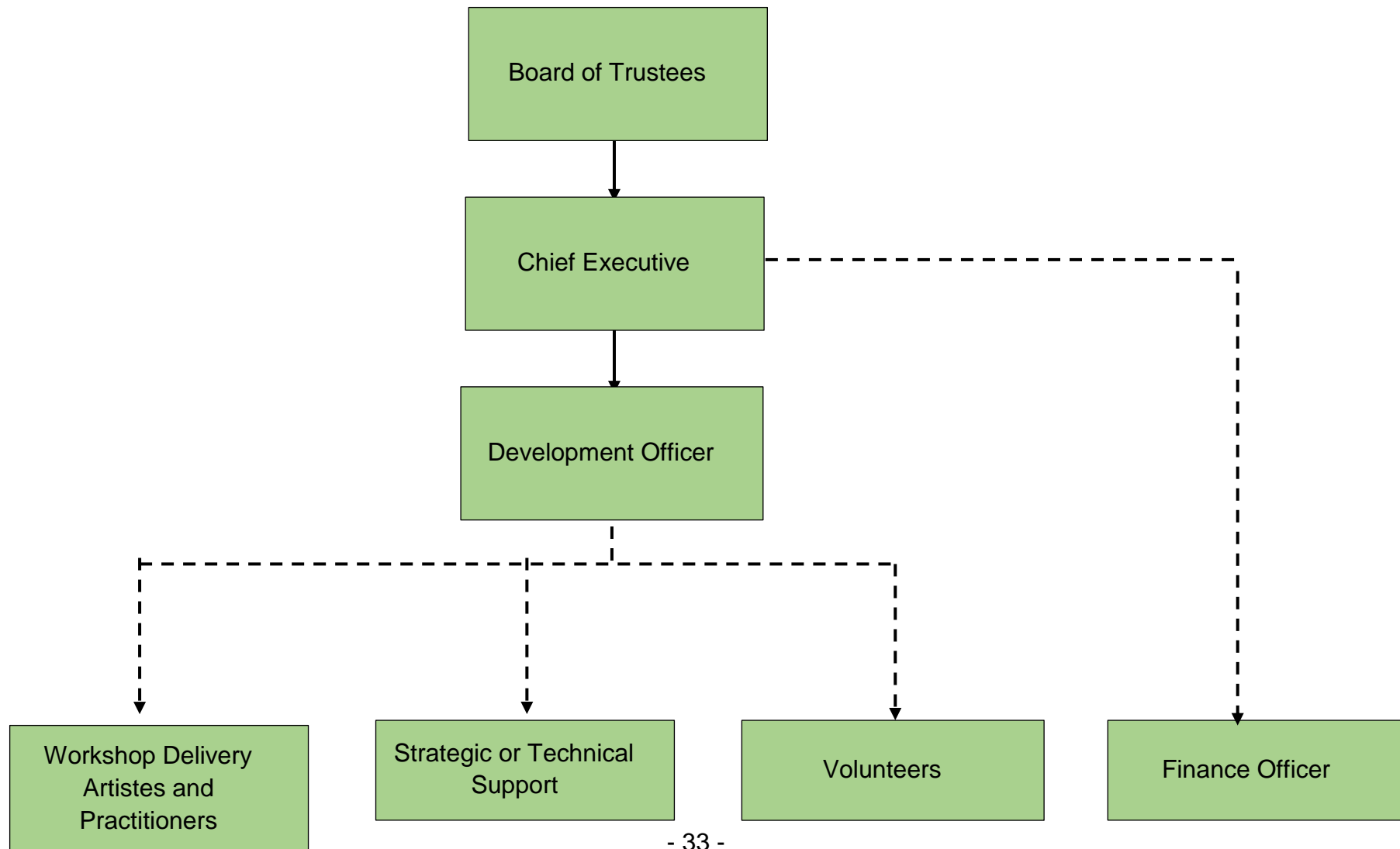
- Print: overview of print collateral portfolio
- Website/ E-marketing and online social networking
- Distribution of print, geographical bases for Irish music and arts
- Direct mail (particularly working on the database and target audiences)
- Media Relations

Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout the marketing strategy and IAF's development of the next 4 years continuous quantitative and qualitative review and evaluation will take place to ensure that the strategies and audience focus remains paramount within the development of IAF's services and reputation.

IAF will continue to develop the wide range of tools used for formal and informal monitoring and evaluation, which will be a key driver in achieving IAF's mission and legacy and developing a forward strategy ongoing.

APPENDIX 2: CURRENT STAFFING STRUCTURE, SEPTEMBER 2019



APPENDIX 3: BOARD OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS, JULY 2019

NAME	FUNCTION	WORK EXPERIENCE/SKILLS
Joanne Heyworth	Chair	HR Consultant. Former Head of Human Resources (HR) at Trinity College, Calderdale and Human Resources Officer at Arts Council England.
John O'Dwyer	Vice Chair	Project Manager, Caring Together in Woodhouse and Little London, Leeds.
Kieron Mulloy	Treasurer	Chartered Management Accountant.
Dr Patrick Bourne	Director	Assistant Community Curator, Abbey House Museum and Kirkstall Abbey, Leeds.
Amanda Burton	Director	Freelance Artist and Administrator, Inkwell Arts, Leeds.
Oliver Engley	Director	Design Consultant.
Tara McStay	Director	Head teacher at a local primary school.
Sean Stowell	Director	TV researcher and producer of The Politics Show at BBC Television in Leeds.