

Bealtaine Festival

An Age & Opportunity arts initiative



Monaghan County Council

Bealtaine Festival Funding Call 2026

What is Bealtaine Festival?

Each year in the month of May, Bealtaine is presented as a nationwide festival celebrating the arts and creativity as we age. The festival, which celebrated 30 years in 2025, is an initiative of Age & Opportunity, the national organisation that promotes active and engaged living as we get older. The Bealtaine theme for 2026 is Lust for Life.

Monaghan County Council Cultural Section runs an extensive, interactive programme throughout the county in our libraries, county museum, and in partnership with cultural and community settings. To date, this programme has featured collaborative socially engaged activities/events across all artforms in a range of settings, as well as exhibitions, concerts, dance events, storytelling, theatre productions, workshops and writers' events. Projects have been delivered in a range of care settings and in organisations in which older people are active or which work with older people, e.g. Active Retired groups, resident's associations, libraries, book clubs, choirs, Men's Sheds, ICA etc.

Monaghan County Council is inviting Expressions of Interest for events to take place during Bealtaine 2026 in locations in county Monaghan.

How to respond to the open call:

The application process is straightforward. We are looking for information about:

1. The proposed activity/event
2. **Community Group:** Tell us about your group and how you work with older people.
3. **Community Group:** Have you liaised with a creative practitioner/artist to facilitate the activity? Please name artist/creative in application.
4. **Artist/Creative Practitioner:** Tell us about yourself, your practice, including any previous experience or training in working with older people and why you are interested in working with older people? Please include your CV and examples/samples of relevant practice.
5. **Artist/Creative Practitioner:** Have you liaised with a community group/organisation to facilitate the activity? Please name group in application.
6. **Artist/Creative Practitioner:** If you plan to facilitate an open public event, information about promotion/bookings is required and how you can ensure demographic attendance?
7. While this is not essential at this point, the importance of clear communications and agreements with users and host venues regarding expected engagement and outcomes should be recognised.
8. In what practical ways will older people be engaged (e.g. as workshop participants, co-creators or audience members)?
9. How will you ensure the participation of members and support of host venues?

How to apply:

Deadline for Submissions is **1pm on Friday 6th March 2026**

Enquiries about eligibility or proposal ideas should be sent to culture@monaghancoco.ie

Submissions should be emailed to culture@monaghancoco.ie

Submission should be marked Monaghan Bealtaine Open Call 2026 and should include:

- Application Form
- Artist/Creative CV(s) to include three examples of previous relevant practice (images, videos etc.)

Assessment of proposals

As there is a limited budget available for this initiative, it may not be possible to support all applications. All applications will be assessed against a set of priorities or criteria, which include:

- Quality of the proposal.
- Track record of the artist/creative and community group in engaging older people and delivering activities in this way.
- We are particularly interested in receiving proposals for projects which involve engaging with older people in care settings or community contexts (active retirement groups, family resource centres, community organisations).
- The assessment may also consider geographic and artform spread to ensure the widest possible engagement across the county.

The assessment process will take place in early March, and applicants will be informed of the outcome of this process during the week beginning Monday 9th March 2026.

Terms/Conditions:

1. **Submission Date:** no late applications will be accepted after closing date.
2. **Maximum Funding:** €500 per activity/event
3. **Only one application** per group/artist/creative
4. **Funding is only available** for artists/creatives born or based in County Monaghan.
5. **Funding is only available** for events that take place in County Monaghan.

What happens if your application is successful:

- If successful, you will be required to provide further details of the event for the programme brochure by Tuesday 17th March.
- Health & Safety Information: All potential health and safety risks must be fully considered and addressed for all Bealtaine events. Events must take place in accordance with current government health guidelines as well as Monaghan County Council's own Health & Safety policies.
- Depending on the setting and participants involved, Garda vetting may be required.
- Successful applicants must have a public liability insurance policy in place.
- Applicants awarded financial support will have to provide specific indemnity to Monaghan County Council on their insurance policy in respect of the project/event(s) and submit to the Cultural Section by the deadline specified in letter of offer.