

Baboró

International Arts Festival for Children



**Year in Review
2023**

Welcome | Fáilte

The Year in Review offers a fantastic opportunity to see all of the extraordinary achievements made by Baboró in 2023.

Baboró is a year-round organisation; from programmes aimed at developing artists, to the magical festival days in October, Baboró plays a vital role in the development and presentation of work for children and young people.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to pay tribute to the staff, artists, festival team and volunteers for all their work. Most importantly, I want to thank the brilliant schools and family audiences who pack the houses during the festival and engage with us in our year-round programmes.

We look forward to seeing you all in 2024!

Cian O'Brien
Chair of the Board of Directors

The Year in Review is a snapshot of our work. As well as curating, producing, promoting and delivering a world-class international festival in Galway each October, Baboró also runs several artistic projects for children and supports artists throughout the year.

Two highlights in 2023 were kicking off Creating Space, a two-year artist residency in Merlin Woods National School, and a new partnership with Spark Arts (UK) to support underrepresented artists. And we were very proud to win Galway Chamber's Business of the Year Award, the first cultural organisation in Ireland to do so.

As a charity we rely on the belief and support of our dedicated partners, funders, audiences and artists. Thank you to our brilliant volunteers, Children's Panel, team and Board of Directors who work so hard to deliver for the children in our community. We simply couldn't do it without you.

Míle Buíochas,

Aislinn Ó hEocha
Executive Artistic Director

creativity
at the
heart of
every
childhood





About Baboró

Baboró International Arts Festival for Children is Ireland's flagship arts festival dedicated to children and families.

A registered charity, Baboró works all year to bring meaningful arts experiences to children in our community and to support artists making work for young audiences, culminating in our annual multidisciplinary festival presented across Galway City and County.

Children and Community

Children - in all their diverse brilliance - are who we do this work for. Our purpose is to nurture their innate creativity and curiosity for the world around them through their experience of the creative arts.

We recognise that every child has the right to participate in cultural activities, but not all have the opportunity. To address this, we cultivate relationships with schools and communities to bring quality arts engagement directly to children who may not otherwise have access to the arts.



Artist Development

Baboró strives to ensure that all children in Ireland have access to quality art that represents them and their stories, created by artists they can relate to.

By investing in artists with varied backgrounds and identities, we aim to strengthen the sector and increase equitable accessibility to quality art for children. We deliver a range of artist development supports and programmes throughout the year, encouraging and enabling creatives to make exciting, innovative work for young audiences.



Annual Festival

The festival is Baboró's beating heart - a celebration of our ongoing work and an inclusive gathering place for our community. It champions every child's right to experience and participate in the creative arts as both critical audiences and artists.

Spanning 10 days in October, the festival programme offers a range of performances in theatre, dance, music, puppetry and circus as well as visual art exhibitions, workshops and professional industry events. School groups and families are welcomed into venues across the city and county.

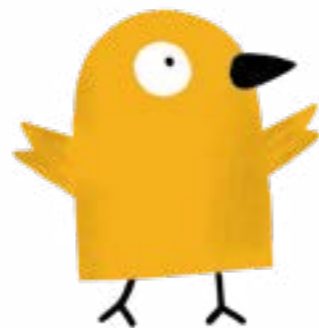




Children and Community

While the festival is the heart of our work for children and we do all we can to remove barriers to attendance, we know that it is not accessible for everyone. Our year-round activities have therefore grown, led by our Outreach Projects Manager who oversees robust arts engagement programmes and community-building initiatives.

This new role has ensured a significant expansion of our outreach efforts and inclusion measures, including new durational programmes.



603
Children engaged
in year-round
programmes

Creative Schools

Creative Schools is a flagship national initiative of the Creative Ireland Programme. Through this initiative, Baboró facilitates creative activities in schools in County Galway. The programme aims to put the arts and creativity at the heart of children and young people's lives.

Former Creative Associate Jojo Hynes worked with five schools between 2020-2023 (St. Bridget's Tooreen National School, Gorthaganny National School, Castlehackett National School, Belmont National School and Archbishop McHale College). Our current Creative Associate, Maisie Lee, is working with Milltown National School.



A Small Tale

The third year of our partnership with Punchdrunk Enrichment (UK) saw 12 educators deliver 'A Small Tale', an innovative in-class storytelling experience for Senior Infants - 3rd class, with a total of 304 children taking part. The project aims to inspire in students a passion for writing and nurtures reading, speaking and listening skills.

Creative Professional Development Workshops

As part of our community-building efforts, our Outreach Projects Manager, with artist Sorcha Ní Chróinín, designed and delivered five print and bookmaking workshops to primary schools, library services, resource centres and D/deaf community groups across Galway City.

The sessions supported adult participants to explore playful methods to engage the children they work with. Participants are also encouraged to advocate for children's right to access the arts.





Baboró Children's Panel

Baboró is a festival which belongs to children, and it's important to us that children's voices inform the development of our organisation and programmes. The Children's Panel plays a vital role in shaping our work to make all children feel welcome and represented at Baboró.


Fourteen children in 4th and 5th class from Galway City and County meet monthly for creative workshops and events. The panellists, who are recruited via open call, partake in events with the Baboró team, artists and the festival itself.

In 2023, the Children's Panel informed the illustration of our new Birdie, co-produced and starred in a welcome video for Baboró and spent a day attending the festival where they had the opportunity to see shows and meet festival artists.

The panel were also central to the development and presentation of 'The Shape of Quiet Feelings' by artist Maisie Lee.

"I got my voice heard and learned about children's rights."

- Lucas, Children's Panel Member 2022-2023



The Children's Panel produce and star in a video to invite and welcome new audiences to the festival.



Panel members brainstorm and agree their values and goals for 2023.

The panel has a Q&A session with Moonfish Theatre and the cast of 'The Crow's Way' during the festival.





The Wonder Collective

Baboró and Phillida Eves' Rosán Sensory Adventures are collaborating on The Wonder Collective, a three-year project funded by the RTÉ Toy Show Fund, to develop and present new creative work specifically for children with additional needs.

The project includes programming performances for children with additional needs during the 2023 and 2024 festivals, the development of a new show by Rosán Sensory Adventures and the Breaking Ground Bursary to support four artists creating work for this audience.

This project also funded the presentation of 'The Wonder Project' to schools across Ireland, reaching 480 children with intellectual disabilities and autism throughout 2022 and 2023.

“There is so little out there that our children can access, and we love it when Rosán visit our school. They create a safe space, and we know we are in safe hands!

As a staff we feel acknowledged, replenished and reenergised by the experience. It was a day of shared joy, wonder and awe for everyone.”

- Teacher from participating school



Creating Space

2023 saw the start of an exciting new durational project, a two-year partnership in East Galway between Baboró, Merlin Woods Primary School and multidisciplinary artist Colm Ó Foghlú.

The project is following the same children from the start of 1st class in September 2023 until they finish 2nd class in June 2025 with regular creative activities in the classroom and opportunities to attend performances.

Colm works with students and teachers to create dynamic, original projects which engage the children's creative thinking and empathy. This child-led and collaborative approach empowers students to create and experience art on their own terms.

“Expanding the children's imagination through creative arts has a positive impact on all areas of the curriculum we teach. The children develop valuable skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, persistence, resilience and confidence.”

- Paula O'Connor, principal of Merlin Woods Primary School



Artist Development

Baboró has a long history of supporting creatives making work for children - whether they're just getting curious about work for young audiences or have been creating it for years.

Our artist supports have grown steadily since 2017, with significant expansion in the last year, including new Irish and international partnerships, the development of work for children with additional needs and more inclusive and diverse programmes.



BABEL

Our fourth Creative Europe project, BABEL, is a four-year (2022-2025) large-scale project with 14 partners and 11 participating international festivals. Over the duration of the project, Baboró will support a total of eight artists to each attend workshops and residencies with a cohort of international creatives hosted by partnering European festivals.

In 2023, we selected the first two artists to participate in workshops hosted by partner festivals. Theatre director Maisie Lee attended residencies in Kitoks Festival (Lithuania) and Theatrefest (Belgium), while dance theatre artist Orlaith Ní Chearra attended BRIK Festival (The Netherlands) and el Petit Festival (Spain).

Meitheal

Baboró proudly partnered on Branar's pilot initiative, Meitheal, an innovative support programme for artists and producers creating work for young audiences.

Last year we hosted 13 participating artists and producers at the festival to see shows, attend industry events and connect with international programmers. We also programmed three shows from Meitheal artists and partnered with Meitheal on an industry discussion about inclusive practice.

Vital Spark

We partnered with The Spark Arts for Children (UK) on a six-month programme to support underrepresented artists.

Four Ireland-based and four England-based creatives were selected to participate in the six-month programme to attend festivals, participate in masterclasses and receive coaching.

Artists in Residence

Theatre director Maisie Lee helped to establish the Baboró Children's Panel and co-facilitates regular workshops and festival visits with our Outreach Projects Manager. Maisie co-created the award-winning audio documentary 'Don't Forget to Wash Your Hands' in 2020 and an immersive installation 'The Shape Of Quiet Feelings' for the 2023 festival.

Visual artist Paula Henihan created an exhibition entitled 'There Are Little Worlds' as part of a residency at Engage Art Studios.

Breaking Ground

The Breaking Ground Bursary is part of The Wonder Collective in partnership with Rosán Sensory Adventures, aimed at supporting artists interested in making new work for children with additional needs.

This bursary and mentorship programme is currently supporting four artists.

Handwritten signature



GROW Programme

GROW is Baboró's programme of support and mentoring for artists making or interested in making work for children. Established in 2017, GROW has expanded to include annual and one-off programmes with local and international partners.

GROW offers a range of opportunities for artists with different levels of experience, varying artforms, diverse cultures and underrepresented communities. Last year our artist development programmes supported 48 artists.



8
artist development
programmes delivered

48
artists supported through
artist development

Festival Mentoring

Baboró's Festival Mentoring is open to artists and creatives at any stage of their career wishing to develop work for children and young people. Each year four artists are selected for this programme to gain insight into the production and presentation of work for young audiences by attending Baboró's annual festival.

Festival Mentoring is an annual three-day curated programme of festival performances, professional workshops, industry networking and mentorship from Phil Kingston (Community & Education Manager at the Abbey Theatre) and Maria Fleming (CEO of First Fortnight).

How to Begin with Finegan

Twelve participants were selected to attend this free in person writing workshop led by renowned playwright Finegan Kruckemeyer and hosted by Graffiti Theatre in Cork.

In collaboration with Graffiti Theatre and Theatre for Young Audiences Ireland, this workshop was designed for established and emerging playwrights interested in writing for young audiences.

Áras Éanna Residency

In partnership with Áras Éanna Arts Centre on Inis Oírr, this residency is part of Baboró's drive to encourage artists to make work for children in the Irish language.

One artist was selected for the two-week residency which included studio space, accommodation and travel.

Go See Fund

Our Go See Fund is a small fund that can be used towards tickets and travel costs to see work for young audiences on the island of Ireland. Applications are open year-round.

WZM



GROW Artist - Mónica Muñoz

Mónica Muñoz is a Spanish dance artist based in Ireland. Her relationship with Baboró began six years ago.

During this time she has participated in two of our artist development support programmes and her work has been presented as part of the festival.

“My relationship with Baboró has been very nurturing, and has pushed me to become and produce a better version of my own work. As a creative it’s important to have a community where you’re encouraged and validated.

Baboró has the most brilliant programme of art for/with children, gloriously diverse and exceptional; for me going from a mentee to an invited choreographer has been a giant leap in my career.”

- Mónica Muñoz



2018: Mónica was selected for the annual Festival Mentoring programme along with artists Oisín Robbins, Annie Keegan and Deirdre Dwyer, mentored by Phil Kingston and Maria Fleming.



2019 - 2020: Mónica was chosen, alongside artist Cathal McGuire, for the 2019 - 2020 Pathways to Production programme which offered financial, artistic and strategic support to develop a project concept.



2022 - 2023: The support Mónica received through Pathways to Production helped her to develop two new pieces. The first, ‘UP-CLOSE’ (pictured), was presented as part of Baboró’s 2022 festival programme. The second, ‘Fall and Float’, (pictured on opposite page) featured in the 2023 programme.



Festival

The festival champions every child's right to experience and participate in the creative arts. We strive to present a festival programme where children see themselves and their stories reflected, where they see opportunities to one day grace those same stages and gallery walls.

The 27th festival presented 53 unique shows, exhibitions and workshops in venues, galleries, schools and libraries throughout the city and county over 10 days. Our audiences of babies, children and young people experienced moments of beauty and joy whilst being challenged by themes of friendship, grief, identity and autonomy.

“The festival reaches the hearts and souls of young and old. Galway smiles and belly laughs during Baboró week.” - Teacher from school group

An **audience of 17,314** children, families, schools and communities (including **97** Irish and international industry professionals) attended **53 unique events** presented in **31 venues** by **122 artists** from Ireland, England, Spain, The Netherlands, Belgium and Australia.

Audience

Our audience comprises children of all ages, families in all their diversity and school and community groups.

We also welcome artists, arts workers and professionals working with children who attend as delegates from Ireland and across the world.

Total Audience: 17,314



97
Irish and
international
industry
professionals

Of school audience 3,332 came from city schools and 4,978 from county schools.

“Children are treated as VIPs, we loved that. Baboró brings the best quality of performances to Galway and that's fantastic for my children's personal development.” - Family audience member

Local Economy

Galway is intrinsic to Baboró as an organisation - it is our home. We are dedicated to strengthening our community by investing in our local economy and supporting local businesses and individuals.

- €581,545 spent locally
- 62 people employed for the festival
- 31 partner venues across Galway City and County
- 379 hotel room nights

62
people employed
for the festival

€581,545
spent locally





Festival Inclusion

Baboró prioritises inclusivity by working to remove barriers, both real and perceived, and creating spaces that are safe and welcoming, no matter the physical or intellectual challenges.

We substantially subsidise our ticket prices and offer free tickets to teachers, SNAs and community groups. We offer free events for schools and families and bring work directly into schools and libraries.

In 2023, we worked on maintaining and building new relationships with community organisations and charities to learn how to better serve our audiences' needs.

Families & Communities

All children, families and communities are welcome at Baboró. Our festival programme is heavily subsidised to reduce financial barriers. We present free events and exhibitions as well as programming for children with additional needs.

We are aware that finances are not the only barrier to attending the festival. We engage in outreach activities to reach communities and groups that may not be connected to Baboró.

In 2023 we offered:

- 217 free tickets for disadvantaged community groups
- 10 free festival events
- 2 Irish Sign Language performances & 1 exhibition touch tour
- 6 relaxed festival events

217
free tickets for
disadvantaged
community
groups

10
free festival
events

Ticket Subsidy

Our 2023 festival programme was subsidised by 81% which is reflected in free events and the reduced ticket prices for performances and workshops.

Ticket Prices:

€12	Adult
€8	Child
€6.50	School
€5.50	DEIS School

Baboró

81% Subsidised

Schools

Schools make up half of our audience and enable Baboró to reach children who may otherwise not get to experience the festival. The teachers and staff of the city and county schools go to great lengths to organise trips to Baboró and we support them through further subsidised ticket prices, a transport subsidy and a school liaison during the festival.

- 16 free workshops for 425 children
- 28 free art exhibition tours for 613 children
- 1,883 children attended through bus subsidy
- 807 free teacher and SNA tickets
- 6 performances for children with additional needs
- 1 Irish Sign Language performance
- 2 performances adapted for ASD school groups

16
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425 children

28
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613 children



Festival Team

Every Autumn, Baboró's small year-round team expands tenfold to include dedicated staff and volunteers who ensure the festival runs smoothly and all audience members feel welcome and safe.

This expansion includes a Front of House team, technicians and production staff, a box office team, communications team and seasonal office roles.

"The hands on support from the Baboró team outside the theatre space was faultless. Respectful, calm, good humoured. Being met at, and escorted back to, our transport was unexpected but it made transitioning so much smoother and pleasurable - as well as safer - for staff and pupils."

- Teacher attending 'Making Waves' with children with additional needs

Front of House Team

Baboró's Front of House team is the face of the festival. These are the people who welcome audiences and create a real sense of excitement, safety and belonging.

We strive to ensure our Front of House team is diverse and inclusive, with a total of 35 nationalities represented across the team. We also work with community groups to provide volunteer and steward opportunities to individuals from disadvantaged or marginalised backgrounds.

35
nationalities were
represented across
the festival team

170 Festival Team Members



80
Volunteers
(Our 2023 volunteer programme was supported by SAP.)

53
Production and
Support Team
Members

25
Venue Stewards

12
Front of House
Managers



How Baboró is Supported

Baboró is a registered charity funded by the Arts Council of Ireland, Galway City and County Councils and other public funding bodies. We also rely on the support of the local business community, multinational organisations, private funds and donations. Together all of these income streams enable us to produce a world-class arts festival for children that is accessible and affordable.

Baboró is a full-time organisation engaged in year-round community programmes for children and artist development, in addition to presenting the annual festival. These programmes are led and managed by a small team employed year-round. They are supported and governed by a voluntary board of directors who actively participate in the strategic development of Baboró.

Team

A small year-round team delivers the annual festival and our community projects.

This team is supported by a committed voluntary board of directors as well as an equally committed Children's Panel!



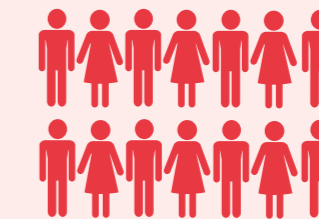
3
Full-time staff



5
Part-time staff

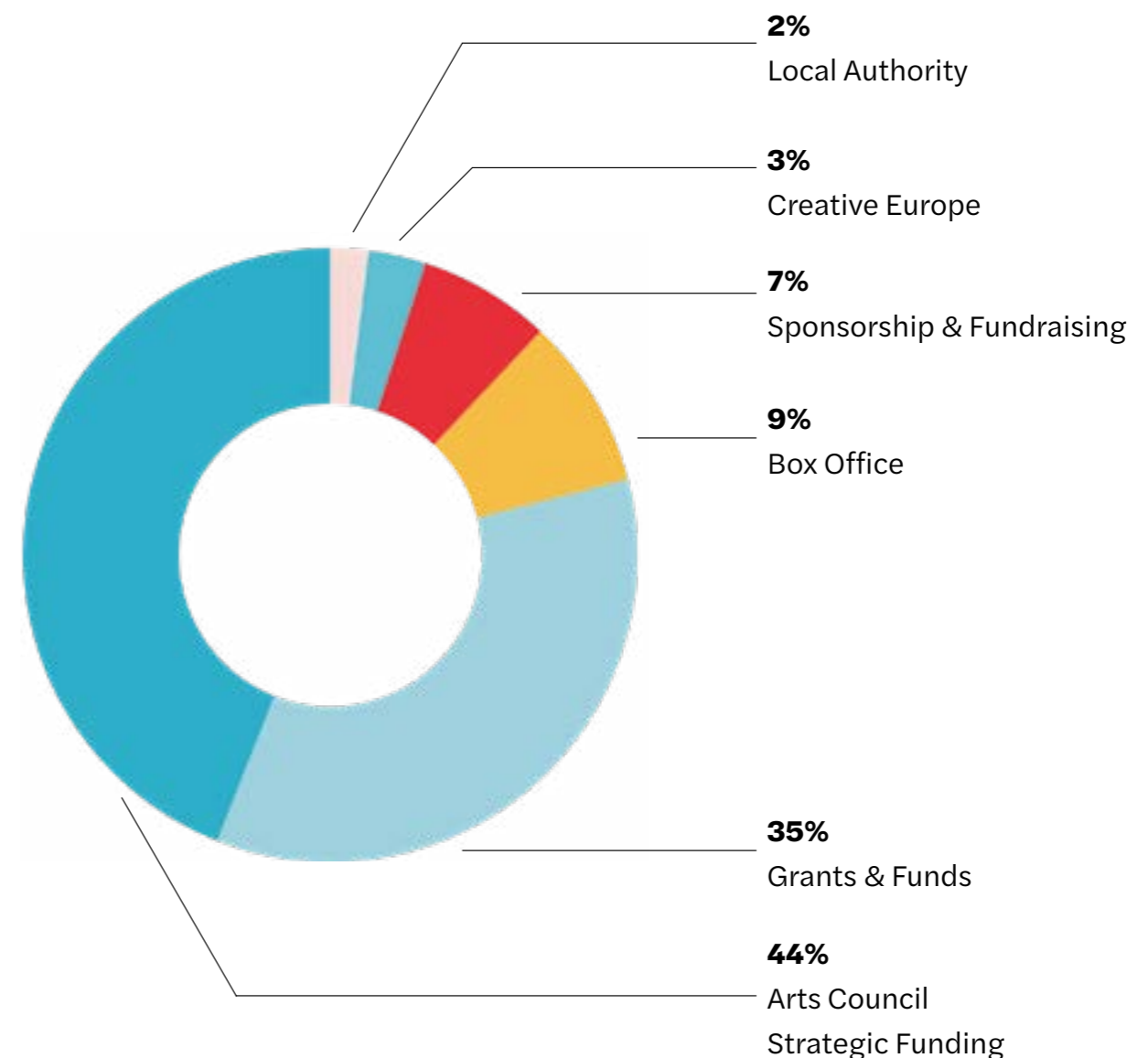


10
Voluntary members of Board of Directors



14
Children's Panel Members

2023 Funding Sources





2023 Supporters

Baboró is grateful for the generosity and commitment of our loyal business supporters, sponsors and individual donors. We are reliant on their support in order to fill the gaps in our funding so that we can continue to ensure the festival is accessible to all.

Our community of supporters understands the value of children and young people's creativity, and the importance of investing in organisations like Baboró who enhance the lives of our children and young people. Through our festival programme, outreach and arts in education projects, we encourage empathy, critical thinking and innovation whilst sparking joy in young lives.

2023 Funders and Supporters

FUNDING BODIES



SUPPORTING PARTNERS



SPONSORS



CULTURAL PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNERS



ACCOMMODATION PARTNERS



DONORS & SUPPORTERS

Awaya | Pure Joy | Blake & Kenny Solicitors | Mr Waffle | Cava Bodega | Galway City Distillery | SDL
 Lally Tours | Aunty Nellie's Sweet Shop | Brigit's Garden | Corrib Princess | Wildlands | Milano
 Cian O'Brian | Erin McErlean | Vincent Baltz | Dr William E. Warren | Lisa Vernon | Keziah Baltz | Ann & David Baltz-Aks
 Julia Aks | Roxanne Baltz | Joseph Baltz | Hilary Eustace | Annette Curley | Nikunj Sakhrelia | Aislinn Ó hEochá



Baboró

International Arts Festival for Children

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Principal Photography:

Anita Murphy

Other Photography:

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Vanessa Jordan

Stephen Dobbie (A Small Tale)

Maurice Gunning (Fall and Float)

the arts
council
= chomhairle
ealaíon

funding
the arts