

Baboró

International Arts Festival for Children



**Strategic Plan
2023 – 2027**

Welcome

Since the first stand-alone festival in 1997, Baboró has brought the world to the children of Galway city & county. Each October, children and families are inspired by the extraordinary artists whose work takes over the stages and galleries of Galway.

As a member of Baboró's brilliant Board, I am privileged to see how the festival has grown and evolved, survived and thrived. This strategy sets out a bold, ambitious vision for Baboró for the coming five years, it lays the groundwork to ensure that Baboró remains a vital, year-round resource for artists, for Ireland, for Galway and most importantly for children.

Beir Bua agus Beannacht.

Cian O'Brien,
Chair



Now in its 27th year, Baboró has welcomed hundreds of thousands of children, teachers and artists to the festival in Galway for over a quarter of a century. The festival has flourished during this time, bringing unique artistic experiences to children in theatres, galleries, libraries, schools and on the streets in every corner of Galway city and county. Baboró's visionary founders recognised the right of every child to participate in a rich cultural life, no matter their means or ability, and this founding principle continues to guide our work.

We are ambitious for what we can achieve in the next five years to reflect the diversity of Ireland today in our programmes and extend a warm welcome to all; to give agency to children in our community; to take responsibility for the impact our work has on our fragile environment; and to sustain the festival and its team so that Baboró can continue to thrive.

Aislinn Ó hEocha,
Executive Artistic Director

Rights of the Child

Every child,
without exception,
has the right
to participate in
cultural
and artistic
activities.

Every child has the right to express themselves artistically and to have their voice listened to on matters that impact their lives. These rights are established in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the Irish state is a party.

Every child's right to a rich cultural life guides how we approach all of our work.

See pages 20 & 21 of this document to read these rights.

Vision

creativity
at the
heart of
every
childhood

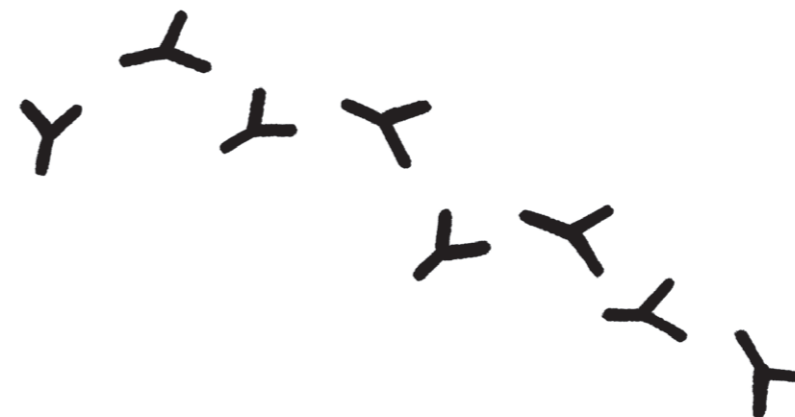


Purpose

Baboró's purpose is to nurture children's innate **creativity** and **curiosity** for the world around them through their experience of the creative arts.

We do this by:

- **Curating** an exciting international arts festival and innovative arts in education programmes in Galway.
- **Encouraging** and enabling families, teachers and communities to facilitate children's participation.
- **Supporting** artists across Ireland to make innovative work for children which has the potential to tour nationally and internationally.
- **Advocating** for children's right to participate fully in the cultural life of their community.



Values

We value **Play, Curiosity, Boldness, Collaboration** and **Belonging**.
We believe that creativity enhances the quality of life of all children.



Play

Play is at the very heart of what we do.

We encourage children to play freely and express themselves. We invite artists to tell new stories and find innovative ways to connect with young audiences.

Collaboration

We believe in the importance of respectful collaboration and meaningful partnerships.

We strive to continually expand the community of collaborators who share our values and challenge our assumptions.

Curiosity & Boldness

We are inspired by children's natural curiosity.

We take an active role in learning and growing, and encourage others to do so too. We are bold in our advocacy of every child's right to participate in culture.

Belonging

Baboró is for everyone; the arts is for all of us.

We welcome differences; they are integral to our world. Our intention is that all audiences, artists and partners feel welcome at the festival and a part of our community.



What We Do



Baboró International Arts Festival for Children is Ireland's flagship arts festival dedicated to children and families. Baboró is a registered charity which works year-round to bring meaningful arts experiences to children in our community and to support artists making work for young audiences.

Our annual international festival dedicated to children is the beating heart of what we do – it's what we work towards all year. To complement the festival, we support and nurture artists and creatives in Ireland to make excellent and innovative work for our young audiences. And we continue to reach out into our community in an effort to break down barriers to participation, so that everyone can feel that they belong at Baboró – that they are both seen and heard.

The Festival

Our annual festival is the highlight of our year, where we celebrate children as audience and artists. The festival is a curated programme of high quality, engaging, provoking work from the best makers around the world and around the country. It offers a range of genres, themes and age ranges so that there is something for everyone. The programme includes theatre, dance, puppetry, circus, visual art, literature and digital work. We invite children into theatres, galleries, outdoor spaces and we also bring the festival to their classrooms, school yards and local libraries. The festival is brimful of compelling stories – stories that move us, challenge us, surprise us, inspire us, scare us, make us laugh out loud and give us a glimpse into many cultures.

The festival champions every child's right to experience and participate in the creative arts. We take children seriously and do not underestimate their capacity for understanding. We create spaces that are safe and welcoming and inclusive, no matter the physical or intellectual challenges. We strive to present a festival programme where children see themselves and their stories and interests reflected, where they see opportunities to one day grace those same stages and gallery walls. Above all, we want children to feel the collective excitement of experiencing a range of live artistic encounters with friends, family, teachers so that they feel that 'festival buzz' that inspires and excites.

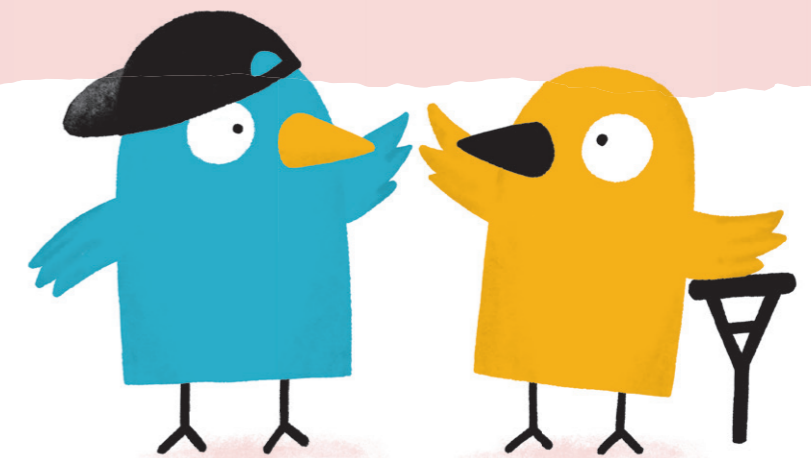


Artist Development

The festival is a vital part of the national ecosystem of the children's arts sector in Ireland. It is an important gathering place for artists and creatives to see inspiring work, broaden their network of Irish and international peers and presenters, to exchange ideas and to meet potential collaborators. We curate a series of industry events and professional development opportunities for artists and teachers to provoke debate and challenge the status quo. The festival is also a space for creators and educators to celebrate work for young audiences, embrace play and be inspired. Our artist development programme operates year-round, offering professional development opportunities and support to see work throughout Ireland.

Work in the Community

We are committed to making our festival and programmes more equitable. Baboró is building on our work in the community by bringing festival shows and workshops into schools throughout the city and county, touring to rural schools and community libraries, and unearthing new ways of reaching audiences that cannot reach us. We work directly with teachers and schools year-round on innovative arts in education projects in Galway city and county. We are building our community of families, schools, artists and local organisations so that everyone feels that they can belong at Baboró. We collaborate with our Children's Panel to ensure the voice of the child is included in our work.



Goals

Baboró's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy underpins all of our work. We are committed to continuing to make the annual festival and all of our programmes accessible to all.

Every child is valued and welcome at Baboró. We are working towards removing barriers facing children and artists and are committed to creating programmes where everyone feels welcomed, feels heard and is represented in our community. We commit to reflecting the diverse, multicultural Ireland of today in our artistic programmes.



Goals

1

Our annual **Festival** continues to be Baboró's beating heart – a celebration of all our work and a gathering place for our community.

2

Children in all their diversity and brilliance will be at the heart of our programmes and activities.

3

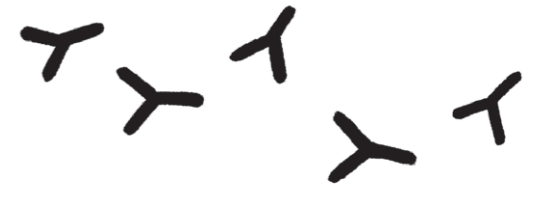
Artists will be supported to make exciting, innovative work for children and young people.

4

The **environmental** and **biodiversity crisis** will be reflected in the way we work and the stories we tell.

5

We will invest in **our staff team** to build a resilient organisation that reflects the quality of our work.



Goal 1

Our annual **Festival** continues to be Baboró's beating heart – a celebration of all our work and a gathering place for our community.

Objectives

- Present a range of exciting, inspiring shows, exhibitions and workshops from around the country and the world.
- Strive to ensure that all of our audience members see themselves and their stories reflected in the festival programme.
- Work hard to make sure that everyone feels that they belong at the festival by breaking down barriers to attendance, and bringing the festival directly into schools and communities.
- Demonstrate, through our model, the value of investment in high quality arts for children, and advocate for continued investment in work for children.

Outcomes

Baboró will continue to be recognised as one of the world's foremost arts festivals dedicated to children. Our artistic programmes will maintain a high level of quality and continue to push the boundaries of work made for, and presented to, children. We will have broken down barriers to attendance and improved the reach of the festival into the community. Our work will demonstrate the value of investing in the arts for children.





Goal 2

Children in all their diversity and brilliance will be at the centre of our programmes and activities.



Objectives

- Take children seriously, listen to their ideas and incorporate them into how we work and the programmes we create.
- Reflect the diversity of children living in Ireland in our programming and the accessibility of our offerings.
- Invest in relationships with schools and community groups across Galway city and county to create pathways for teachers and families to connect with Baboró and encourage their children towards ongoing engagement with the arts.
- Build real connection with families and community groups that are currently underrepresented in arts participation and enable their meaningful engagement in the Baboró community and wider arts scene.

Outcomes

Children's voices will have informed the development of our organisation and our programmes. More children living in Ireland will see themselves reflected in our programmes. We will have expanded our school and community networks and deepened our relationships with children, teachers and families in our community.



Goal 3

Artists will be supported to make exciting, innovative work for children and young people.



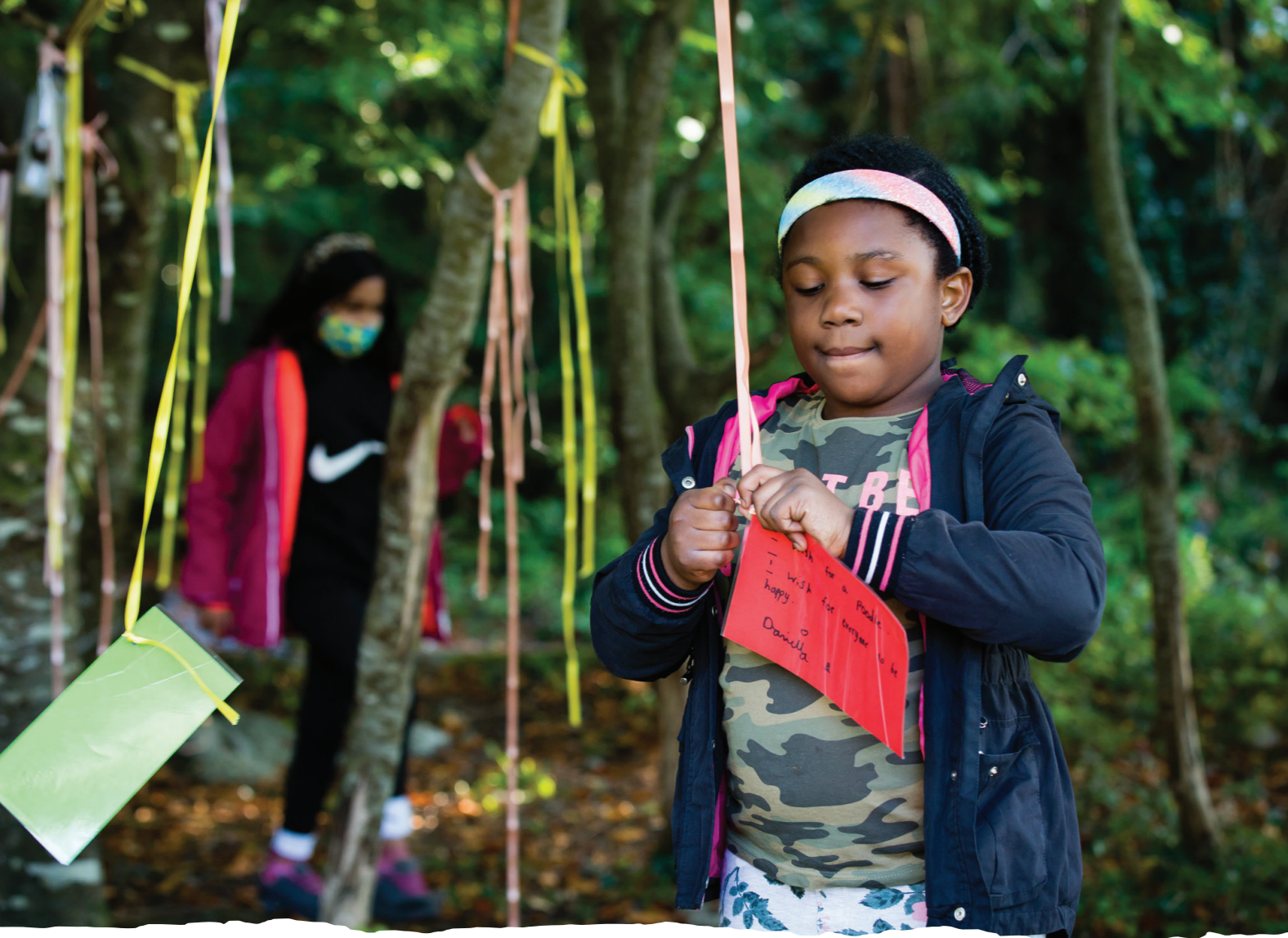
Objectives

- Mentor and support artists, creatives and educators who are exploring and developing theatre, dance, music and visual art for young audiences, or are interested in doing so.
- Encourage artists to tell compelling stories that reflect and inspire children and young people.
- Invest in specific programmes to support the development of underrepresented voices in our sector.
- Facilitate rich learning opportunities between artists based in Ireland and their international peers.
- Contribute to the growth and sustainability of viable careers for artists and arts workers in the arts for young audiences sector.

Outcomes

We will have reviewed our artist support programmes and enhanced our offerings to artists and creatives. The artists we support will reflect the diversity of children living in Ireland today. We will have expanded our international partnerships to enhance our programmes. We will have contributed to diversifying and enriching the national ecosystem of artists and creatives.





Goal 4

The **environmental** and **biodiversity crisis** will be reflected in the way we work and the stories we tell.

Objectives

- Develop an Environmental Sustainability Policy that will guide our work.
- Embed sustainability practices in our operations and events in order to minimise our environmental impact.
- Our creative programmes will reflect children's curiosity and passion for the world around them.

Outcomes

We will have developed an Environmental Sustainability Policy and begun to implement that policy so that we are accountable for the impact our work has on the environment. We will have introduced practices to reduce Baboró's carbon footprint. We will listen to children's natural curiosity and concerns for the environment and strive to reflect these in our programmes, with a proactive approach and hope for the future.





Goal 5

Invest in **our staff team** and build a resilient organisation that reflects the breadth and quality of our work.



Objectives

- Create and resource a staffing structure that reflects our year-round activity.
- Ensure that the diversity and richness of Irish society is reflected across our Board, staff and volunteers.
- Invest in collaborative relationships that support our work and enhance our values.
- Develop our funding model to enable longer term planning.

Outcomes

We will have expanded our staff team to ensure that we are adequately resourced to carry out Baboró's work to the highest quality. Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy will have guided our work to improve the diversity of our team. We will continue to partner with individuals and organisations that share our values and help us achieve our strategic goals. We will have diversified our income streams so that we can adequately plan for the future.

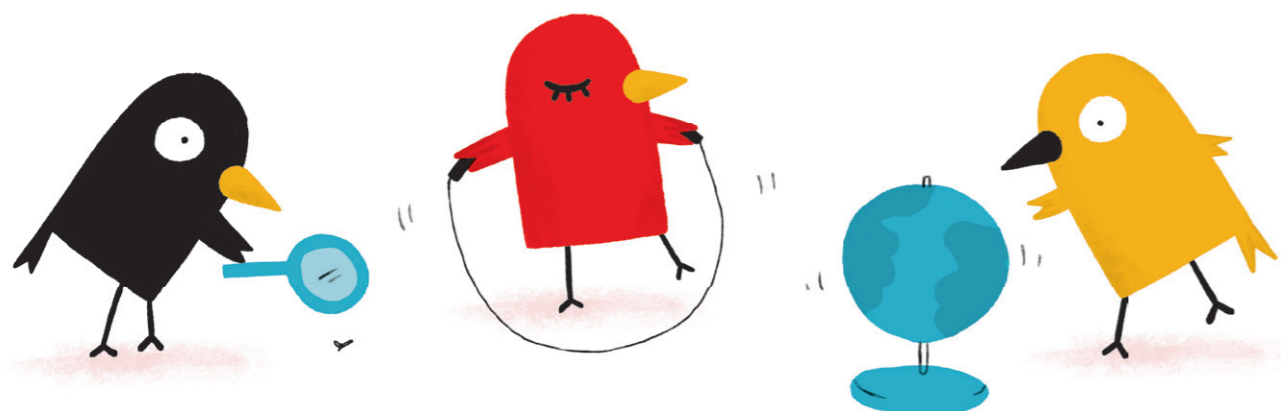


In 1992 Ireland ratified the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.**



Article 12 – The Child’s Opinion

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.



Article 13 – Freedom of Expression

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child’s choice.
2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or
 - (b) For the protection of national security or of public order (order public), or of public health or morals.

Article 31 – Leisure, Recreation and Cultural Activities

1. Recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
2. Shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity ^[i]

[i] See also Article 27 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948) which states *inter alia* that *Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, [and] to enjoy the arts...*

Baboró

**International Arts
Festival for Children**

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Registered Charity CHY 13790



Thank you to those who contributed to the creation of Baboró's Strategic Plan

Baboró Children's Panel /
Baboró Board of Directors /
Noeleen Hartigan

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Design & Illustration: Sarah Moloney
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