



HOMETOWN ARCHITECT OPEN CALL

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

The Hometown Architect project is part of the Irish Architecture Foundation’s Reimagine programme, which aims to connect communities with architects to co-design and improve their local built environment. The Reimagine programme believes that local insight and tacit knowledge from all stakeholders are integral to developing solutions for our urban spaces, fostering a sense of agency, ownership, and pride among participants.

Funded by the Arts Council and Department of Rural and Community Development, with additional support to the Irish Architecture Foundation from the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage, this project aligns with the Town Centre First policy, which aims to revitalise towns across Ireland, building and sustaining vibrant town centres where communities can flourish. In 2023, 5 communities will be awarded supports to the value of €10,000 for projects that focus on the regeneration of their town centres.

Hometown Architect invites joint applications from community stakeholders and local architects with proposals that focus specifically on the improvement of some aspect of their local town or village centre. The architect or community stakeholder may be the lead applicant, applications must indicate who the lead partner will be. Proposals may for example take the form of creative consultations, collaborative research, temporary installations, spatial interventions, tactical urbanism projects, or pilots for ambitious urban realm projects.



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

The last few years have reminded us of the economic, social, and cultural importance of Irish towns and villages. Changing patterns of work have presented an opportunity to transform the way we live - to reverse the trends of suburban sprawl, commuter belts and hollowed out town centres. Many people have left cities to return to their hometowns or other towns and villages across the country, bringing with them new energy and useful skills to contribute to the important work already being done by communities across Ireland to revitalise their local area.

The Irish Architecture Foundation was founded on the belief that architecture has the power to improve lives and to transform how we think about the places where we live, work and play. We also believe that architecture should be accessible to everyone; our work brings together people from diverse backgrounds and disciplines to create inclusive conversations that inspire a better built environment for everyone. The Hometown Architect project celebrates the passion, talent and knowledge that exists in Irish towns, both from the world of architecture and other diverse groups and individuals.

Online information sessions will be held on the following dates, outlining the application process in detail, and giving the opportunity to ask questions during a Q&A discussion:

- Info session 1: Wednesday 23rd Nov, 12pm - 1pm. Register [here](#).
- Info session 2 TBC: Tues 13th Dec, 12 - 1pm. Register [here](#).

WHO CAN APPLY?

Who is eligible to apply?

- This programme is open to applications from, but not limited to: Voluntary and Community Organisations; Town Teams; Non-Profits; Cultural Organisations; Local Authorities; Public Bodies. Project groups should have a demonstrated link to the location of the project.
- Applications must be made in partnership with an architect, who can also demonstrate a link to the location of the project.
- The lead applicant must be clearly identified on the application. If the lead applicant is a community stakeholder, they must be registered as a legal entity (e.g. registered charity, CLG, DAC). If lead applicant is an architect, they must be registered with the RIAI. All lead applicants must accept responsibility for arranging necessary insurance cover for the duration of the project.
- Applicants who have received Reimagine Funding in the past are invited to reapply with a new or next phase project proposal.
- Proposals must have a focus on improving town or village centres. For more information on what defines a town, please see separate FAQs document.

Who is not eligible to apply?

- Applications from profit-making enterprises.
- Applications from Individuals ie. not part of a project team.
- Applications from single interest groups. Project proposals must be of benefit to the wider town community, representing diverse needs and interests.
- Projects outside of the Republic of Ireland.

- Projects that already have a fixed outcome or design.
- Projects that do not demonstrate opportunities for co-design or community engagement.
- Projects that do not have a Town Centre First focus.
- Projects that do not provide professional fees for architects.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Applications can be completed through our online form [here](#). The deadline for applications is 16th January 2023. Late applications will not be accepted.

Applications must be completed in one sitting; progress cannot be saved. We recommend completing your answers elsewhere and copying and pasting into the form in case an issue occurs during the application process. For best user experience, the form should be completed on a laptop or desktop computer, using the Google Chrome browser.

Consider including information on the following questions within your application:

- How do you envision that the IAF can particularly help in this project?
- Where is the project based, what type of area is it?
- What stage is the project at currently?
- Is it likely that some 'thing' will happen within calendar year 2023? (the project may not be fully complete in 2023, or could be one phase of a longer term engagement, but at least one moment of significance should occur in 2023)
- Is there at least one connection to a strong community group?
- Will there be staff time commitment that helps push the project forward?
- Can you finance an outcome, big or small?

- What is the social impact of this project?
- What policies and initiatives could this project connect to ie. New European Bauhaus, County Development Plan, National Policy on Architecture etc.

If you have any difficulties completing the form, please contact

adminreimagine@architecturefoundation.ie

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE OFFER?

Selected applicants will receive €10,000 total funding. Payments will be made to lead applicant, applications should include an indicative budget of how funding will be split between professional fees and other project expenditure. The Irish Architecture Foundation supports the Arts Council's ['Paying the Artist'](#) policy on the fair and equitable remuneration and contracting of artists (including architects) and expects all applicants to comply with the principles set out in their guidelines. Applications which do not include professional fees for project architects will not be considered.

Applicants will receive additional supports from the Irish Architecture Foundation and Department of Rural and Community Development, including:

- Community toolkit, including community engagement tools and other useful resources
- Branding and communication resources and support
- Access to mentoring from local Town Regeneration Officer through Town Centre First National Office

WHAT ARE THE SELECTION CRITERIA?

Project selection will aim to reflect a geographical range, as well as diversity in themes, groups and outcomes. Projects must be located within a town or village, as defined in FAQs.

Specific criteria used to judge applications:

1. Capacity/Feasibility: We encourage you to be creative, but consider what could stall a project - access, site safety, ownership. Also, has your team worked together before on a project that demonstrates your ability to work collaboratively? Can the team commit required time and resources to achieve project outcomes?
2. Ambition/Impact: Carefully considered projects, even at a small or medium scale, can have a large impact. How will your project positively affect the built environment of your town, your community, and your group?
3. Architectural and Design Value: How important is the design of the built environment to this project? We will prioritise working with groups and projects that will benefit most from the unique supports that the Irish Architecture Foundation can offer.
4. Town Centre First: How does your project contribute to the regeneration of your town centre? Does it align with the Town Centre First policy goals of *creating town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community*? Particular opportunities identified in the Town Centre First initiative include:

2.1 | Climate Change and Adaptation of our Towns

2.2 | Digital Transformation and New Ways of Working and Living

2.3 | Demographic Change and Housing Choice in Towns

2.4 | Experience-Led Retail

2.5 | Regeneration of Public Space

2.6 | Sustainable Mobility

2.7 | Realising the Existing Cultural and Heritage Assets of Places

2.8 | Gaeltacht and Gaeltacht Service Towns

2.9 | Empowered, Inclusive and Engaged Communities

Full Town Centre First policy details can be found [here](#).

WHAT ARE THE TIMELINES?

- Open call launch – 1st Nov 2022
- Information sessions - 23rd Nov 2022 and 13th Dec 2022 (register for these online sessions [here](#))
- Deadline for applications – 16th Jan 2023
- Judging period (including interviews with shortlisted applicants) - Jan/Feb 2023
- Announcement of final applicants - Feb 2023
- Project commencement – Feb 2023
- Project end – Dec 2023

ABOUT REIMAGINE

Reimagine is a nationwide placemaking programme by the Irish Architecture Foundation, that works with communities across Ireland to co-create and co-design solutions to problems or opportunities they've identified in their locality. Reimagine matches architects with local partners, enabling communities to play an active role in the development of their neighbourhoods, streetscapes, parks, villages and towns. We truly believe architecture has the power to improve the way we live and how we think about our built environment. By bringing people together from diverse backgrounds and disciplines, we can create a more inclusive conversation that will inspire a better-built environment for everyone.

Since 2019, Reimagine has worked with twelve communities around Ireland on projects identified by the communities themselves. Through annual Open Calls, we select communities to work with design teams on solutions to improve their built environment. Like each community, each project was unique. These have ranged from creative community consultations, collaborative research, temporary installations, and spatial interventions. Architects have worked with historians, ecologists, men's sheds, Tidy Town committees, library goers, economic development groups and school children among other groups. Hometown Architect builds on the work and learnings from these previous Fieldwork projects, further details of which can be found [here](#).

Our [website](#) is the online home for Reimagine, acting as a central portal for placemaking where we create and share resources, enable a network of advocates and a growing community of practice interested in regenerating communities. This portal is a national centre of information for placemaking toolkits and training, with a free webinar archive, case studies, essays and the latest placemaking news.

The Reimagine team also host a wide range of events during the year:

- The **Reimagine Café** is an informal community space for all those involved in placemaking and reimagining their built environment. Meetings happen online or in person on the first Tuesday of every month, allowing attendees to share ideas, hear about new projects and build relationships
- A series of **Reimagine Sessions** as part of a public learning programme of talks, panels and workshops to build public discourse on placemaking. Each session is complemented by a specially commissioned Pocket Guide to Placemaking

The Reimagine programme was initially developed with funding from the Creative Ireland Programme's National Creativity Fund. Reimagine and associated projects are now funded by the Arts Council, Department of Rural and Community Development and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The Irish Architecture Foundation is principally funded by the Arts Council, Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage, Office of Public Works, which enables us to deliver projects like Reimagine. More information on our funders can be found [here](#).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Where the lead applicant is a local group, they must be registered as a legal entity (e.g. registered charity, CLG, DAC)
- Where the lead applicant is an Architect, they must be registered with the RIAI
- Lead applicants must accept responsibility for project management of the project, and arranging necessary insurance cover for the duration of the project.
- Funds will be awarded in February 2023 and must be spent in full by Dec 31st 2023. The usual process is for funds to be drawn down in payments of €4,000, €4,000 and €2,000 over the duration of 2023. If this is not feasible with your project, an alternative payment schedule can be discussed.
- Awarded funds can only be spent on project proposed in initial application. If after funds are awarded there is a change in circumstances, eg. cancellation of project, withdrawal of either party, applicants must inform the Irish Architecture Foundation immediately. In this situation, the decision to continue or withdraw funding will be made at the discretion of the Irish Architecture Foundation.
- By completing this application form, you confirm that the Irish Architecture Foundation may retain your details and share with relevant third parties as required under the selection process and programme administration. Your data will be held in accordance with GDPR requirements, full details of our Data Protection Policy can be found [here](#).
- Selected applicants agree to acknowledge the support of the Irish Architecture Foundation and its funders in any published materials relating to the project.

- Selected applicants consent to their project details being included in marketing communications from the Irish Architecture Foundation and its funders, and to make themselves available for interview or other marketing purposes as required.
- The Irish Architecture Foundation reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions and selection criteria, to exclude any application, and to cancel this open call at any stage without prior notice.