

The logo for Pavilion Theatre, featuring a stylized graphic of five horizontal lines of varying lengths, with the bottom line being a wavy line, positioned to the left of the text.

PAVILION  
THEATRE

A photograph of a theater interior. In the foreground, rows of dark blue upholstered seats are visible, receding into the distance. The stage is at the far end, illuminated by several spotlights. A grand piano is positioned on the stage, and a small stool is next to it. The stage floor has a pattern of light and shadow. The background is dark, with some light reflecting off the stage walls.

STRATEGY  
2025-2028



# INTRODUCTION

**For more than 100 years, Pavilion Theatre has been an iconic marker on the landscape of Dún Laoghaire, beloved and frequented by local and visiting patrons.**

As a leading theatre and creative hub for the performing arts, we present on average 360 events per year. We offer a carefully curated, diverse, multi-disciplinary programme of national and international performances spanning theatre, music, dance, comedy, literature, family events and cinema.

Pavilion Theatre is a critical part of the regional arts infrastructure. We provide opportunities for artists to develop their practice and to perform on our stage. We also aim to maximise audience potential with sizeable financial returns for companies, producers and artists.

Embedded in our artistic policy is a commitment to supporting and showing work of quality across a wide range of performance and related disciplines. It reflects a dual focus: the public/audience and the artist/maker. Attracting audiences through the presentation of work that challenges the range of their experience is accompanied by a strong emphasis on creating a supportive environment for artists – one that respects and rewards their work, and invests in the development and creation of new work via bursaries, residencies, co-commissioning and co-production. Our artist development programme is artist-led and is grounded in a participatory decision-making process.

As a theatre located in Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County, and supported by dlr County Council and the Arts Council, we value and promote local amateur artistic practice, which further contributes to the theatre's vital presence in the life of its community and on the national stage.



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

We are proud of our reputation as an influential player on the local and national arts scene, where we continually forge new relationships with companies, producers and artists who share our commitment to high quality programming.

We have created sustained partnerships and joint ventures with lead companies, producers and festivals, such as **Dublin Theatre Festival**, **Dublin International Film Festival**, **CoisCéim**, **Druid Theatre Company**, **Fishamble: The New Play Company**, **Irish National Opera**, **Livin' Dred**, **Music Network**, **Teac Damsa**, **Foggy Notions**, **Landmark Productions**, and many others.

Marie Mullen in *The Saviour* by Deirdre Kinahan | Photo: Carol Rosegg

**2024 saw us continue to expand. *Between the Notes*, a new concert series, showcased artists from Ireland and around the world, including Australian Music Prize nominees Luke Howard and Sophie Hutchings, Oscar-nominated US composer Dustin O'Halloran (Liberty Hall), Poland's beloved Hania Rani (Vicar Street), Dublin collective Glasshouse performing the music of the late Japanese composer Ryuichi Sakamoto, and visionary Irish performers such as Martin Hayes and Iarla Ó Lionáird. The series continues in 2025, taking in new venues like Dublin's National Concert Hall, and featuring Federico Albanese, Penguin Cafe, Jóhann Jóhannsson's *Drone Mass* and more.**

Recent successes include the presentation of Landmark Productions' *The Saviour* starring Marie Mullen, co-producing Colin Murphy's *The United States vs Ulysses* (5 performances in which Pavilion Theatre invested significantly) and Mikel Murfi's *The Mysterious Case of Kitsy Rainey* in Dublin Theatre Festival 2023, with no less than three Dublin Theatre Festival productions featuring in our 2024 programme, where we continued to support quality Irish Theatre for multiple performances.

We were also directly involved in producing a number of shows in 2024 including Robert Harris, the master of the historical thriller, Glasshouse presenting Sigur Rós, IMRAM's Invisible String Project and *Living the Beatles' Legend* with Kenneth Womack.

We celebrated 10 years of film (narrative, documentary, exhibition, opera, family and theatre) at Pavilion Theatre. The diversity of our broader cinema programme reflects important issues, such as immigration, racism, climate change, gender-based discrimination and LGBTQIA+ rights.

Professional productions for younger audiences featured a robust programme of 26 performances that included work from Ireland, the UK and Australia. Our suite of artist initiatives and supports – Pavilion Studio and Pavilion Patron Donation – harnesses a closer relationship with artists to whom we offer bursaries and/or co-commissions to develop and complete projects, which are original, ambitious and relevant to our audiences.

Over the past two years, Pavilion Studio has enabled 101 artists to develop work through short residencies in its offsite studio including Dee Roycroft and Jody O'Neill, Clare Monnelly, and Janet Moran, to name a few. In 2024, Annie Ryan, Michelle Read, Clare Barrett, and Ciara Elizabeth Smyth participated in our residency initiative. Our *In Conversation* series in 2023 featured Liz Nugent, Joseph O'Connor, Claire Keegan and Miriam Margolyes.

Pavilion Theatre's Volunteer Programme has been a vital tool in engaging with our community since its inception in 2010. As facilitators and audience members, our 60 volunteers from different communities in the Dublin-Wicklow area have the opportunity to experience all we have to offer, while also acting as ambassadors for the theatre.

In 2023, benchmarking was undertaken to provide audience insights and analysis comparing Pavilion Theatre with similar venues in two categories: venues with fewer than 500 seats in large urban areas and high-performing mid-scale venues across Ireland with 324-510 seats. In both categories, Pavilion Theatre was the top venue of 2023 with respect to total ticket sales and gross ticket income. We also offered an above-average number of events and greater per-show attendance, while metrics around average ticket price, customer value and audience engagement tracked either towards the centre of the range or slightly higher.

Pavilion Theatre has recently invested in a process of capital development with ongoing improvement of auditorium, backstage and technical upgrades (€250k in 2023), including a new L-Acoustics PA sound system.





Cormac McCarthy & Martin Hayes | Photo: Des Gallagher

# THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

An extensive consultation process informed the development of our strategy, including:

1

**Desk research** to assess policy context and organisational analysis.

2

**Board and senior team focus group meetings** to generate ideas and to establish ambition for the future.

3

**One to One interviews and focus group meetings** with various stakeholders to share their views about Pavilion Theatre.

4

**A comprehensive survey of Pavilion Theatre's audience** base between October 2023 and March 2024 to understand and reflect its audience preferences and perceptions in the organisation's strategy 2025-2028. The survey ranged from an exploration of developmental priorities to assessment of participant demographics, frequency of attendance, reasons for attending Pavilion Theatre, barriers to attendance, preferred programmes, communication channels, and satisfaction with services in general. A high participation rate of 1,935 respondents indicates a significant level of engagement and interest from Pavilion Theatre's audience; this has informed our decision-making around our future priorities.

Our strategy has been framed in the context of national cultural policy, the Arts Council's nine-year strategy *Making Great Art Work*, and a broad range of other policies, including, but not limited to equality, diversity and inclusion policies and environmental priorities.



# THE STRATEGY OVERVIEW

## Our Vision

We will be celebrated for our artistic excellence, collaborative partnerships and financial stability.

## Our Mission

Through dynamic programming, artist development and exceptional production values, we present cutting-edge and vibrant artistic experiences, enriching the lives of all who share our passion and our ambitions.

## Our Values

Our values are our guiding principles and underpin everything that we do.

## Our Values are...

### Ambitious

We present high quality shows that inspire and engage our artists and our audiences, while aiming for excellence in programming, production, marketing and customer service.

### Courageous

Our priority is to present new and established work; supporting the artist and challenging our audiences.

### Collaborative

Shared ideas and values are at the heart of our way of working. We consistently seek fresh opportunities, co-creating and co-presenting a variety of work with a range of partners.

### Inclusive

Anybody attending, performing or working in Pavilion Theatre feels welcome, represented and valued.

### Resilient

Our approach is grounded in artistic excellence, a strong financial focus and robust governance.

## STRATEGIC THEME I

# NURTURING AMBITION AND CREATIVITY

**Goal:** Work of the highest calibre will stimulate, inspire and compel

Pavilion Theatre aims to present dynamic and attractive work from Irish and international artists, showcasing varied artforms and delivering unique and memorable insights to our audiences. We continuously challenge ourselves to connect our audiences to thought-provoking work from established and emerging artists. Drawing on the talents of these creatives to develop and present their work is at the heart of what we do. We offer them much sought after space and time to support their artistic exploration and experimentation.

We have a formidable track record of collaboration and co-creation, co-commissioning and co-producing to support the needs of the artist and engage with our diverse audience. Alongside that, we generate work of our own as a producer, commissioner and creative hub.

In supporting local, amateur and community groups, we offer them an opportunity to showcase their talent against a backdrop of professional technical facilities and excellent front of house customer service. Our popular cinema programme explores a variety of contemporary themes that foster a sense of community and audience loyalty.

### Delivering on our ambition means that we will:

- 1.1 Maintain our dynamic, challenging, high quality curatorially-driven programme.
- 1.2 Encourage a diverse range of innovative and ambitious artists' voices across the art forms.
- 1.3 Nurture artists' development through a series of professional mentoring initiatives.
- 1.4 Ensure that our creative opportunities are more accessible to working artists with childcare needs.
- 1.5 Support the development of full-length plays by established and emerging writers, facilitated by leading Irish Theatre directors.
- 1.6 Engage and invest in more co-productions and co-commissions.
- 1.7 Maintain our national visibility by curating productions in offsite venues.

### Measures of Success

- Numbers of events across various art forms programmed and their success in reaching their target audience.
- % increase in numbers of new artists, and new productions.
- Artist development and mentorship programme implemented.
- Patron donation scheme delivered.
- Financial support provided for bursary recipients with childcare needs.
- Number of co-productions and co-commissions.
- Extent of new and diverse work presented off-site – e.g., numbers, access to new audiences.



## STRATEGIC THEME II

# SUSTAINING AUDIENCES

**Goal:** Audiences will experience world-class, unforgettable shows

Pavilion Theatre is a curated space with a reputation for quality and consistency. Our audiences know that they will be challenged, stimulated and often experience the unexpected. This sense of anticipation is part of what keeps our audiences returning.

We maintain their trust through the consistency of our curated programme; establishing and maintaining lasting relationships with them, providing a welcoming experience for incoming companies and their artists and fostering connections with creatives through our Artist Development programmes. Our programming for children and young people is carefully chosen; it focuses on the quality and track-record of companies and organisations we present. We aim to incorporate our diversity and inclusion objectives through our programming and marketing initiatives.

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**Delivering on our ambition means that we will:**

- 2.1** Present a compelling programme that includes international and national work of the highest quality.
- 2.2** Develop new approaches to programming and promote events for families, young people and minority communities.
- 2.3** Liaise with dlr Co Co to reach new audiences through shared marketing and targeted engagement.
- 2.4** Grow our audience reach through more diverse and socially inclusive programming.
- 2.5** Improve our customer service focus, addressing our audience's preferences and our artists' creative needs.

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**Measures of Success**

- An audience development and engagement strategy aiming to remove barriers to attendance, and bringing diverse, younger, harder to reach audiences to the theatre.
- % increase in our number of accessible performances (sign language, relaxed and accessible performances).
- Attendance, participation, satisfaction and digital engagement monitored via our marketing team.
- Collection of GDPR-compliant data on ticket-buyer behaviours through our Ticketsolve box office system.
- Online booking, website performance, social media activity across all platforms, and media coverage tracked and measured against stretch targets.

## STRATEGIC THEME III

# ENHANCING SPACES

**Goal:** Pavilion Theatre's infrastructure will be sustained and continuously improved

Pavilion Theatre is an iconic presence in Dún Laoghaire as a theatre and cinema. It acts as hub, home and host to many individuals and companies in music, dance, film and theatre. Apart from striving for programme excellence, we aim to ensure that our audiences have access to top class facilities, and ease of movement throughout the building. We are undertaking capital development, including improvement of our auditorium, backstage and technical systems, upgrading our sound system, our cinema projector and a new stage projector.

We are conscious of our environmental obligations. With support from dlr Co Council, we hope to upgrade our space to increase energy efficiency and reduce our carbon footprint. We have an ongoing commitment to our visual identity and brand awareness throughout the interior and exterior of the building. This includes improvements to our exterior display units, venue signage and lighting for improved visibility and brand awareness. We have already made progress towards redesigning our backstage signage to improve our engagement with artists performing at the venue.

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## Delivering on our ambition means that we will:

- 3.1 Welcome artists and our audiences to flexible, accessible and vibrant surroundings that facilitate and embody the artistic experience.
- 3.2 Continue to develop the theatre's box office, bar, gallery and front of house spaces to improve visibility, accessibility, consistency and brand awareness.
- 3.3 Ensure that our technical facilities maintain the highest production standards for our artists and audiences.
- 3.4 Seek new collaborations to promote the theatre as a cultural destination.
- 3.5 Utilise eco-friendly practices in production, operations, and facilities management to reduce the theatre's carbon footprint and maintain its commitment to sustainability.

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## Measures of success

- Improved physical spaces for our audiences.
- Increased use of gallery space and its potential maximised.
- New partnerships developed to further enhance Pavilion's positioning as a cultural destination.
- Technical facilities upgraded to support existing high production values.
- Eco upgrades completed, reducing the venue's environmental impact.
- A carbon-positive space that preserves our heritage and history.
- Visual identity created for "Eco Pavilion".
- Carbon-conscious space maintained.



## STRATEGIC THEME IV

# PLEDGING QUALITY

**Goal:** Pavilion Theatre will be a vibrant organisation, where our commitment to quality aligns with our ambition for excellence.

At Pavilion Theatre, we believe that excellence is not merely a goal but a continuous journey. We are committed to excellence in every facet of our operations. We aim to be at the forefront of the performing and cinematic arts by embracing innovation, nurturing talent, and delivering exceptional experiences.

Our commitment to quality is evident in our meticulous attention to detail in every production, service, and interaction. This ensures that each performance meets the highest standards of artistic and technical excellence. Our governance framework promotes ethical conduct, while our organisational structure supports sustainable growth and continuous achievement. We ensure that our policies and practices reflect our dedication to fairness, inclusivity, and respect. By regularly evaluating our performance and listening to our audiences, partners, and stakeholders, we identify opportunities for enhancement, innovation and change.

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**Delivering on our ambition means that we will:**

- 4.1** Aim for the highest standards of organisational governance, strategic guidance and oversight.
- 4.2** Implement robust reporting mechanisms to ensure transparency in financial performance, operational activities, and strategic outcomes.
- 4.3** Develop income opportunities from traditional and other sources to ensure our sustainability.
- 4.4** Foster the development and well-being of Pavilion Theatre staff, ensuring that Pavilion is a positive, inclusive and rewarding place to work.
- 4.5** Initiate succession planning and capacity-building to ensure leadership continuity and organisational renewal.
- 4.6** Ensure that resources are invested in appropriate staff structures to deliver on our strategic ambition.

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**Measures of Success**

- Executive succession strategy, organisational structure and board renewal in place.
- Governance assessment on an annual basis.
- Rigorous financial reporting and monitoring processes underway.
- Alternative funding and income generation opportunities identified.
- Equality and inclusion policies developed and implemented within the theatre's governance structures.
- A thriving team who are engaged, challenged and developing in their roles.

