

Fire Station Artists Studios  
Strategic Plan 2013-2016

**live, work, programme, connect**  
**2013 – 2016**

**FIRESTATION**  
**20 YEARS ARTISTS**  
**STUDIOS**  
Artists/Art/Activism

Fire Station Artists' Studios is a living and working environment where communities of professional practice, place and interest interact, developing arts practices of exceptional quality and integrity.

Fire Station Artists Studios,  
a place for visual artists to:

**live**  
**work**  
**programme**  
**connect**



## introduction

2013 marks twenty years of Fire Station supporting professional visual artists and this fifth strategic plan is generated at a time of considerable flux. Making a living and a life as an artist continues to be a significant challenge at a time of such economic uncertainty. However, the Fire Station has always been able to respond creatively to challenge and constraint. The current climate has encouraged us to review our core activities; optimise our existing facilities and re-articulate our priorities. At its most basic level we are vested with supporting artists to create art. We do that through the provision of physical and conceptual spaces. We augment that support by developing strategic partnerships at a national and international level that yield opportunities for Irish artists further afield. Our strategy is informed by a practical vision that is continually reviewed and updated. Each action we take reflects thoughtful consideration and a continued commitment to improving the living and working lives of artists, whether that decision is to buddy up experienced residents with our newest artists; or, create international partnerships that yield residency opportunities. Our supports for artists have evolved over the first twenty years of our existence and will continue to evolve along with the needs of artists over the course of this plan.

The feedback we have received from artists over the past twenty years has convinced us that this menu of support works. We calibrate those supports to the needs of artists by paying close attention to those who have passed through our doors and to those who make application to do so. What artists are telling us is that space to live, to work in an integrated and supportive atmosphere is what is important. This plan is framed around the key policy areas of Live, Work, Programme and Connect and in this document we outline our goals and actions over the course of the next four years in each of these programme areas.

## **policy areas**

Fire Station Artists Studios will:

### **Live**

Fire Station will support artists by providing high quality, affordable living spaces.

### **Work**

Provide the optimal environment in which artists can create work.

### **Programme**

Provide on-going opportunities for artists to work and critically reflect on their practice.

### **Connect**

Ensure that policy and programme are integrated, inter-connected and relevant to improving the living and working lives of artist.

## live

### Goal

Fire Station will support artists by providing high quality, affordable living spaces.

### Actions

- Increase the number of living and work spaces for artists by developing 12 Buckingham Street
- Integrate space vacated by N.C.C.C.A.P.\*
- Optimise facilities to enhance existing studio spaces
- Examine the 'flow' of the building and adjust according to new needs
- Create a social/community space for residents and visiting artists both Irish and international
- Create opportunities for artists to share their experience of living at the Fire Station
- Promote the Fire Station as an international artists' resource and residence
- Profile the Fire Station internationally
- Support and encourage artists to share their experience of living at the Fire Station.

\* The North Centre City Community Action Project: a community group (run by FAS) tasked with re-training young people who have left the education system early. They sub-let office space, a trainee workshop, classrooms and kitchen from FSAS since 1993.

## work

### Goals

Provide the optimal environment in which visual artists can work.

### Actions

- Expand the number and quality of studio spaces for artists
- Create optimal use of non-studio spaces such as meeting rooms, Resource Centre and new flexible space in 12 Buckingham Street
- Provide a supportive environment in which artists can work
- Continue to develop the Sculpture Workshop and Resource Centre
- Invest in the professional development of artists through the Skills Programme and programmed talks.
- Augment and develop the skills training programme
- Optimise the roles and responsibilities of staff
- Enhance and develop staff skills.

## programme

### Goal

Provide on-going opportunities for artists to work and critically reflect on their practice.

### Actions

- Develop existing awards to support artists
- Continuing to develop the Skills Programme responding to artists' needs
- Facilitate artist exchanges in international residencies
- Commission artists to make work
- Profile Fire Station internationally
- Invite international artists and curators to reside in the Fire Station
- Hosting a series of public talks to engage a wide audience of artists and curators.



## connect

### Goal

Ensure that policy and programme are integrated, inter-connected and relevant to improving the living and working lives of artists.

### Actions

- Create sustainable and strategic relationships with artists and arts organisations of local and international reputation.
- Create and curate opportunities to disseminate Fire Station's expertise through international meetings, artist exchange and strategic relationships
- Create opportunities to influence arts policy and the living and working needs of artists
- Enhance and develop the Skills Programme through international partnerships and linkages
- Review staff roles in the light of an enhanced capital development
- Continue to invest in board development to ensure high quality governance and board engagement.

evaluation



Goal	Action	Indicator	Timeframe	
<b>LIVE</b>				
Fire Station will support artists by providing high quality, affordable living spaces	Increase the number of living and work spaces for artists by developing 12 Buckingham Street	Opening of 12 Buckingham Street	2014	
		Refurbishment of all windows	2013	
	Optimise facilities to enhance existing studio spaces	A new budget to support access needs for artists with disabilities	ongoing	
	Examine the 'flow' of the building and adjust according to new needs	Make changes to internal structure including new access arrangements throughout the building	2014	
	Create a social/ community space for residents and visiting artists both Irish and international	Establish a communal social space in the building	2014–2015	
	Promote the Fire Station as an international artists' resource and residency	Attend conferences Update website	ongoing	
	Profile the Fire Station internationally.		Engage in social media	2013 onwards
			International and local advertisements attracting artists to apply that are a good match for Fire Station.	ongoing
			Ask all artists past and present to promote FSAS on their CV.	2013–2016
Support artists to share their experience of living at the Fire Station	Introduce a 'buddy' system		2013 onwards	

Goal	Action	Indicator	Timeframe
<b>WORK</b>			
Provide the optimal environment in which visual artists can work	Expand the number and quality of studio spaces for artists	Increased number of studios	2014 onwards
		Regular maintenance and management of the studios	ongoing
		Enhanced capital development programme	
	Create good use of non-studio spaces such as meeting rooms, resource area and new flexible space in 12 Buckingham Street	Increased usage of non-studio spaces High volume of artists using the spaces all of the time and for different needs	2015 onwards
	Provide a supportive environment in which artists can work	Continue to provide excellent administrative and curatorial supports	ongoing
	Continue to develop the Sculpture Workshop and Resource Centre	Purchase and update equipment and software as required	2014 onwards
	Invest in the professional development of artists	New programme of professional development supports	2013–2016
	Augment and develop the skills training programme	Review and update the skills programme in response to established need	2014–2015
		Offer reduced costs for residents participating on skills programme	2013 onwards
	Optimise the roles and responsibilities of staff	Job descriptions and contracts to be reviewed	2014 onwards
	Enhance and develop staff skill	Staff development	2014–2016

Goal	Action	Indicator	Timeframe
<b>PROGRAMME</b>			
Provide on-going opportunities for artists to work and critically reflect on practice	Develop new awards to support artists	Update, review and promote existing awards	2013 onwards
	Facilitate artist exchanges in international residencies	Increased number of exchanges	2014 onwards
	Commission artists to make work	Increased number of artists' commissions	2014–2016
	Invite international artists and curators to reside in the Fire Station	Increased number of artist and curator residencies	2014–2016
	Curate and mainstream critical reflection as a core part of the Fire Station programme of activity	Curation of critical thinking events	2013–2016

Goal	Action	Indicator	Timeframe
<b>CONNECT</b>			
Ensure that policy and programme are integrated, connected and relevant to improving the living and working lives of artists	Create sustainable and strategic relationships with artists and arts organisations of international stature	New partnerships established	2013–2016
		Existing relationships continued	2013–2016
	Create and curate opportunities to disseminate Fire Station's expertise through international meetings; artist exchange and strategic relationships	Number of international opportunities availed of by FSAS staff and artists to be increased	2014–2016
	Create opportunities to influence arts policy and the living and working needs of artists	Published papers	2013–2016
	Create opportunities to contribute to critical debates surrounding contemporary visual arts practice	Attendance at conferences	2014–2016
	Enhance and develop the artists' skills programme through international partnerships and linkages	Increase in number of artists exchange opportunities	ongoing
	Extend and develop the skills programme in response to artists' needs	Increased number of new programmes	2014–2015
	Continue to invest in board development to ensure high quality governance and board engagement	Roll out of board development programme	ongoing





## Fire Station Artists' Studios

Located in Dublin's North East Inner City, Fire Station Artists' Studios was established in 1993 to support professional visual artists. It provides subsidised combined living and working studios for Irish and international artists, large scale sculpture workshop facilities and training opportunities for artists. A key policy of Fire Station is to contribute to the debate on collaborative and socially engaged arts practice, through a commissioning process that incorporates critique.

[www.firestation.ie](http://www.firestation.ie)

## Fire Station Artists' Studios

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