



# STRATEGIC PLAN

2025 - 2030



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí  
Cork County Council



funding  
the arts



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# INTRODUCTIONS



As the Chair of the Board, I am privileged to witness the continuous evolution of this iconic institution and its profound impact on our community and region.

Cork Opera House holds a special place in the heart of our city and region, serving as a cultural hub that enriches lives, fosters community pride, and contributes to the economic and social vibrancy of our area. Its significance extends far beyond the stage, touching the lives of individuals, families, and communities across Cork and beyond.

In crafting this strategy, we have embarked on a journey to shape the future of Cork Opera House, ensuring its relevance, vitality, and sustainability for generations to come. We recognise the importance of honouring our rich heritage; while embracing innovation and adaptability in an ever-changing world.

This strategic plan is a testament to our commitment to excellence in the performing arts; fostering creativity, nurturing talent, and promoting inclusiveness. We are dedicated to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and represented. Through our programming, outreach initiatives, and partnerships, we strive to celebrate diversity, amplify underrepresented voices, and ensure that Cork Opera House reflects the rich tapestry of our community.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated members of the Board, who serve voluntarily, for their invaluable contributions to the development of this strategy. Their expertise, passion, and unwavering commitment have been instrumental in shaping our vision and guiding us towards our shared goals.

I also extend my gratitude to the dedicated staff, visionary leadership team, supportive patrons, and esteemed partners who have contributed their expertise, passion, and unwavering support to this endeavour. Together, we are poised to chart an exciting course forward, igniting imaginations, inspiring minds, and enriching lives through the transformative power of the arts.



**TIM HEALY,**  
CHAIR OF THE BOARD

As we embark on this journey, I invite you to join us in celebrating the past, embracing the present, and envisioning the future of Cork Opera House—a beacon of creativity, innovation, and artistic excellence for all.

**TIM HEALY**  
CHAIR OF THE BOARD

## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Cllr. Des Cahill  
Cllr. Mary Rose Desmond  
Marguerite Gallagher  
Dr. Ciara Glasheen-Artem  
Tim Healy (*Chair*)  
Cllr. Joe Kavanagh  
Margaret Lane (*Company Secretary*)  
Cllr. Seán Martin  
Cllr. Gearóid Murphy  
Edwina Nyhan  
Dr. Rónán Ó Dubhghaill  
Cllr. Terry Shannon



**EIBHLÍN GLEESON,**  
CEO & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



As I reflect on the remarkable journey Cork Opera House has had over the past 170 years, I am in awe of the role that it has played in the cultural vibrancy of the city and in the lives of its citizens. Throughout that time, it has remained a cultural cornerstone in Cork, and today it remains a vibrant hub of creativity, production, artistry and entertainment and continues to enrich the lives of the hundreds of thousands who pass through its doors each year.

As we look forward to the next five years, Cork Opera House is poised for an even more ambitious future. The strategic plan for 2025–2030 lays out a bold vision that builds upon our rich heritage, focusing on our programme, our community, our history, our people, our infrastructure and our financial health.

This period will see us develop plans that include not only enhancing our producing capacity and facilities but also expanding our outreach initiatives, strengthening our partnerships, and increasing our accessibility. We are committed to ensuring that

everyone in our community can experience the transformative power of the arts. We will focus on our environmental impact and turn our energy to becoming a more sustainable venue.

We will continue to foster trust and nurture talent within our community, take pride in our city and county and the bountiful artists in our midst. We will create joy on our stage and for our audiences. We will focus on our inclusivity, doing what we can to include everyone in our programme, our stage and in our audience.

This strategic plan is ambitious, and rightly so. It reflects the belief that the arts are essential to the health and vitality of our society. With the unwavering support of our audiences, partners, and the broader Cork community, we will achieve our goals and set new standards for excellence in the years to come.

I would like to thank the Board members and staff who gave their time voluntarily to develop this strategy. We appreciate everyone's guidance and energy and look forward to its implementation.

I would like to thank Cork City Council, the Arts Council of Ireland and Cork County Council for their support of Cork Opera House. Without them, none of our successes would have been possible.

Over the next 5 years, we will confidently shape the future of Cork Opera House. I invite you to join us on this exciting journey. Together, we will continue to grow, innovate, and inspire. The best is yet to come.

**EIBHLÍN GLEESON**  
CEO & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Cllr. Mary Rose Desmond**  
*Committee Chair*

**Tim Healy** *Board Chair*

**Ciarán Bermingham**

**Dr. Ciara Glasheen-Artem**

**Denis Kelleher**

**Margaret Lane**

**Edwina Nyhan**

**Cllr. Terry Shannon**



It is with great pride and enthusiasm that we present the Strategic Plan for Cork Opera House, a comprehensive framework designed to guide us through the next phase of our development. This document represents not only our vision and ambitions but also our commitment to ensuring that Cork Opera House remains a vibrant, progressive, and successful cultural institution at the heart of Cork's creative landscape.

The creation of this plan was a deeply collaborative and inclusive process, one that benefited from the invaluable insights and perspectives of our staff, stakeholders, and Board Members. Each step was marked by detailed engagement and thoughtful contributions that have shaped a strategic direction we can all be proud of. Their collective wisdom has been instrumental in crafting a plan that is reflective of our shared values and aspirations. I am grateful to everyone who participated in the process, in particular the members of the Strategic Committee who volunteered so much of their time to produce such a worthy plan.

This Strategic Plan is not just a static document; it is a living, breathing framework that will evolve with the organisation. It sets out clear objectives and priorities, providing us with a roadmap to follow and a set of metrics by which to measure our progress and success. It is designed to be a dynamic tool, allowing for flexibility and adaptation as we respond to the changing needs of our audiences and the broader cultural context in which we operate.

By embedding this strategy in our daily operations, we ensure that every decision we make contributes to the realisation of our vision for Cork Opera House. This plan will enable us to build on our strengths, address challenges, and seize new opportunities for growth and development. With this strategic approach, we are poised to reinforce Cork Opera House's role as a cornerstone of the cultural life of our city and a beacon of artistic excellence.



## **CLLR. MARY ROSE DESMOND,** CHAIR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

It was a privilege to chair this Committee and I am confident that this Strategic Plan will serve as a solid foundation for the continued success of Cork Opera House, ensuring that it remains a place where culture and community converge for years to come.

**CLLR. MARY ROSE DESMOND**  
**CHAIR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**



# OUR STORY

## OUR HISTORY, OUR JOURNEY, OUR FUTURE

Cork Opera House is a true cultural gem in the heart of Cork city. This prestigious venue is more than just a building; it's a testament to Cork's love for music, drama, and culture. With its rich history and contemporary appeal, the venue attracts thousands of visitors, both local and international, every year.

Located on the banks of the River Lee, Cork Opera House mirrors Cork's prosperous mercantile history. Just as the Port of Cork served as Ireland's gateway for countless goods and individuals arriving by sea over many centuries, our opera house has also upheld a global perspective, serving as a cultural landmark in Cork for 170 years. Cork Opera House is a symbol of Cork's rich cultural heritage, standing as a testament to our city's love for the arts, its commitment to creativity, and its dedication to providing a platform for artists.

The original opera house structure was designed by the much-celebrated Irish Architect Sir John Benson and constructed on Anglesea Street as part of the Irish Industrial Exhibition of 1852. Following the Exhibition this building was dismantled brick-by-brick



and rebuilt on Nelson Place (now Emmet Place), to become an opera house for the city. This structure had various names over the years: The Athenaeum, The Munster Hall, The Great & Royal Opera House Company, and eventually, after a redesign by C.J. Phipps in 1877, Cork Opera House.

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**HOSTING ILLUSTRIOUS FIGURES LIKE SARAH BERNHARDT, CHARLES DICKENS, HAROLD PINTER, ELLA FITZGERALD, AND LOCAL TALENT LIKE CILLIAN MURPHY, CORK OPERA HOUSE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A STAGE FOR THE BEST ENTERTAINMENT.**

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Hosting illustrious figures like Sarah Bernhardt, Charles Dickens, Harold Pinter, Ella Fitzgerald, and local talent like Cillian Murphy, Cork Opera House has been a stage for entertainment history. In 1955 Cork Opera House celebrated its centenary year. Disaster struck when on the evening of December 12th a fire broke out during rehearsals for the Christmas pantomime, *Sleeping Beauty*. Having survived the burning of Cork by British forces during the Irish War of Independence, Cork Opera House succumbed to a combination of faulty wiring and wooden construction. For the first time in many years Cork was without a theatre.

Following a ten-year fundraising campaign, a modern venue designed by Michael Scott of Scott Tallon Walker Architects was constructed on the same site and officially opened by President of Ireland, Éamon de Valera, on October 31st, 1965. After re-opening Cork Opera House entered a new era, producing the very best of contemporary Irish theatre and opera as well as iconic in-house productions such as *The Summer Revels* and annual Christmas pantomimes



to huge success. In 1993, a new front-of-house was designed by Murray Ó Laoire Architects for “a vision of the building which takes the architecture of Cork City into the 21st century”.

Today Cork Opera House continues to be an industry leader, producing the very best in live entertainment, theatre, and opera for the people of Cork and further afield. Our ongoing partnership with University College Cork as a Learning Theatre showcases a unique collaboration, marking a new chapter for arts education in Ireland. Initiatives such as the Cork Opera House Concert Orchestra and Cara O’Sullivan Associate Artists ensure that audiences have regular access to world-class musicians and performers.

Cork Opera House is more than just a venue; it's a cultural institution that plays a crucial role in Cork's arts scene. It's a place where artists and audiences come together to celebrate creativity, enjoy performances, and share in a love for the arts.

# OUR MISSION

Celebrating the shared joy of live performance, championing talent and creating connections and memories for our community.



# OUR VISION

- ▲ To be the heart of live performance locally, nationally and internationally.
- ▲ To maintain our position as a unique, independent producing house owned by the people of Cork.
- ▲ To be brave, nurturing and dynamic with our artists, audiences and staff.
- ▲ To continue to lead from the front in the area of inclusivity in the arts.
- ▲ To honour our legacy while forging new memories and connections.



# OUR VALUES

FOSTER TRUST  
TAKE PRIDE  
CREATE JOY  
BE INCLUSIVE  
TO NURTURE





# OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

OUR PROGRAMME

OUR COMMUNITY

OUR HISTORY

OUR PEOPLE

OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

OUR FINANCES



# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

## OUR PROGRAMME

Our Programme is the lifeblood of Cork Opera House. In it, we welcome the best artists, both from Ireland and further afield. With it, we continue to nurture our community, foster talent and create joy for our audiences.

### SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Continue to offer a variety of entertainment and artistic options that ensure there's something for everyone across:

- Music
- Musical Theatre
- Theatre
- Pantomime
- Opera
- Family Programming
- Dance
- Comedy
- Festivals
- Live Podcasts

### PRODUCTION

As one of Ireland's only independent large-scale producing houses, we will continue to develop our large-scale production capacity and seek opportunities to produce across a variety of art forms, including but not limited to pantomime, opera, musical theatre and large scale traditional theatre.

### OPERA PRODUCTION

Cork Opera House plays a vital role in the opera landscape in Ireland and over the past 10 years, we have re-established our position as opera producers of note. We will continue to prioritise the production and presentation of operatic repertoire and productions on our stage and continue to grow our capacity in this area.

Creating opportunities for the development of operatic talent in Ireland through programmes such as the Cara O Sullivan Associate Artist Programme will continue to be a strategic priority for Cork Opera House.

### ORCHESTRA

Since its foundation in 2015, the Cork Opera House Concert Orchestra has played a vital role in our programme. It has provided employment to musicians in our city, provided significant development opportunities for multiple musicians and creatives and provided our audiences with countless memorable performances.

We will prioritise the long-term strategic importance of the orchestra and focus on developing a sustainable future for it. We will continue to develop audiences through innovative programming such as the annual Cork Proms.

In the next 5 years, we will commission an independent report on the provision of orchestral programming and performance in the Cork region.

### ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT

Prioritise and develop artistically led programming, platforming the best artists and creatives, setting a high standard for the artistic offerings at Cork Opera House.

### THEATRE DEVELOPMENT

We will explore opportunities for the production and presentation of large-scale theatre in Cork.

We will contribute positively to the theatre community in Cork and participate actively in developing Cork Theatre Collective ensuring that where possible, we are enabling growth and supporting this community.

### FESTIVALS

Continue to serve as a home for the city's festivals, enhancing our role in the broader cultural landscape and contributing to the vibrancy of the arts ecology in Cork.

### EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Diversify our programme to demonstrate our commitment to representing and serving a broad spectrum of diverse artists, audiences and communities.

### COMMERCIAL & ARTISTIC GOALS

Maintain a balance between commercially viable shows and artistically led productions, ensuring financial sustainability while staying true to our artistic vision.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

# OUR COMMUNITY

OUR ARTISTS

OUR AUDIENCES

OUR PROMOTERS

OUR FUNDERS &  
STRATEGIC PARTNERS

OUR SPONSORS

## OUR ARTISTS

Our artists are the cornerstone in delivering our mission at Cork Opera House. Over the course of this strategy cycle, we will continue to create significant opportunities for artists. We will continue to pursue performances on our stage from international artists of note. Our goals include but are not limited to:

### RESIDENCIES

Artistic residencies at Cork Opera House contribute to individual artistic growth and organisational learning. As well a general residency programme across a variety of genres, following on from the enormous success of our ground-breaking initiatives - the Autistic Artist in Residence and the New Irish Artist in Residence - we will continue to prioritise artistic residencies with minority groups in line with our strategic and artistic goals.

### TICKETS FOR ARTISTS

We will develop ticket pricing structures in support of artists, allowing as many artists as possible to experience performances at the Cork Opera House without financial barriers.

## COMMISSIONING NEW WORK

Commissioning new work ensures a continuous artistic evolution in our venue and our city and contributes to our artistic legacy. The commissioning of new work in particular in the areas of theatre, music and dance will remain a strategic priority for Cork Opera House throughout this strategy cycle.

### LOCAL ARTISTS

Local artists are integral to the vitality and cultural resonance of Cork Opera House.

The inclusion of local artists contributes to a sense of ownership and pride among residents, fostering a stronger bond between Cork Opera House and its audience.

We will host open calls and auditions for all our in-house productions, ensuring where possible we are casting locally. We will encourage applications from local artists for all our artistic residencies and other opportunities that come up at Cork Opera House.

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

## OUR COMMUNITY

### OUR AUDIENCES

Our audiences are pivotal: their significance immeasurable to Cork Opera House. We will continue to develop and nurture a strong and loyal audience dedicated to supporting our work at Cork Opera House. This is essential to our survival and continuing growth.

#### COMMUNICATION

Continue to put our audiences at the heart and soul of our work. Listen to our audiences at every opportunity, encouraging them to provide feedback about their experiences.

We will maintain effective communication channels to facilitate two-way communication. We will continue to create memorable experiences to foster a sense of belonging and commitment, creating a lasting legacy for Cork Opera House.

#### YOUNG AUDIENCES

While our programme will remain accessible to all audiences, throughout this plan we will focus on nurturing younger audiences for Cork Opera House's sustained success and legacy. With their digital affinity, younger audiences offer opportunities for innovative engagement. Prioritising these relationships will build a community that values and advocates for the arts, securing the enduring vibrancy of Cork Opera House.

We will develop an Educational Outreach Programme, bringing live performances, workshops, and interactive experiences to schools and third level institutions in the community. Collaborating with local schools and youth organisations, we will create opportunities to showcase the important work being carried out by this community.

We will establish a Youth Membership Programme, offering dynamically priced tickets, exclusive events, and educational resources to young audiences.

#### MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

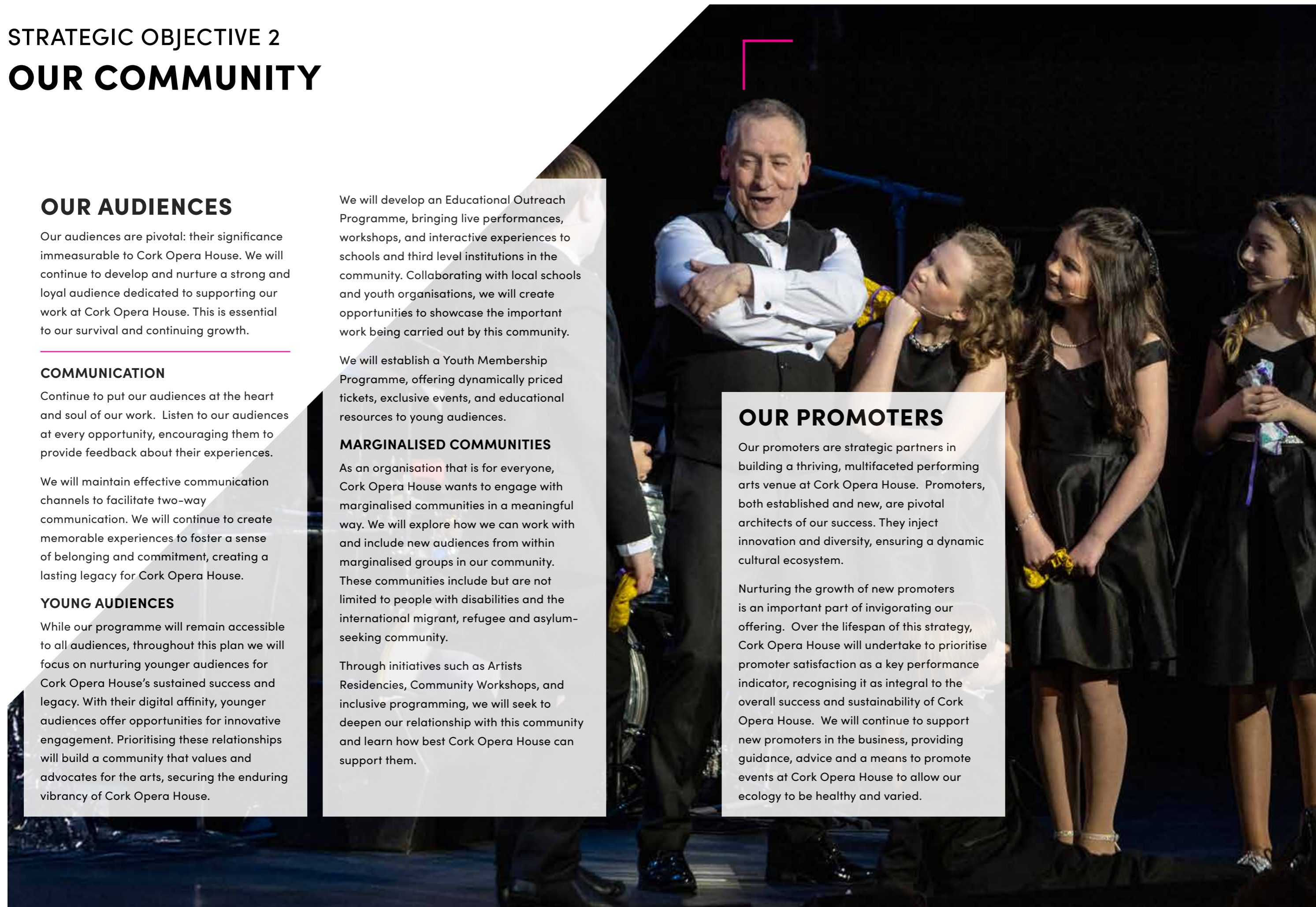
As an organisation that is for everyone, Cork Opera House wants to engage with marginalised communities in a meaningful way. We will explore how we can work with and include new audiences from within marginalised groups in our community. These communities include but are not limited to people with disabilities and the international migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking community.

Through initiatives such as Artists Residencies, Community Workshops, and inclusive programming, we will seek to deepen our relationship with this community and learn how best Cork Opera House can support them.

### OUR PROMOTERS

Our promoters are strategic partners in building a thriving, multifaceted performing arts venue at Cork Opera House. Promoters, both established and new, are pivotal architects of our success. They inject innovation and diversity, ensuring a dynamic cultural ecosystem.

Nurturing the growth of new promoters is an important part of invigorating our offering. Over the lifespan of this strategy, Cork Opera House will undertake to prioritise promoter satisfaction as a key performance indicator, recognising it as integral to the overall success and sustainability of Cork Opera House. We will continue to support new promoters in the business, providing guidance, advice and a means to promote events at Cork Opera House to allow our ecology to be healthy and varied.



# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

## OUR COMMUNITY

### OUR FUNDERS & STRATEGIC PARTNERS

#### CORK CITY COUNCIL

Cork City Council remain steadfast in their support and we are deeply grateful for their ongoing investment in our organisation. This strategy was informed by the current Cork City Council Arts Strategy (2022–2026). We will continue to work closely with the Arts Office and Cork City Council to meet our shared objectives.

#### ARTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND

The Arts Council of Ireland are key partners in the presentation of our artistic programme. Their support is central to our ability to deliver our ambitious operatic and orchestral programme, as well as our residencies – and other vital parts of our programme.

This strategy was informed by the Arts Council’s “Making Great Art Work” Strategy. We will continue to work with the Arts Council to create opportunities for the development of the performing arts in our region, in line with the shared objectives of the Arts Council.

#### CORK COUNTY COUNCIL

Cork County Council continue to provide consistent funding that is vital to our operation. We will continue to explore opportunities to develop the performing arts

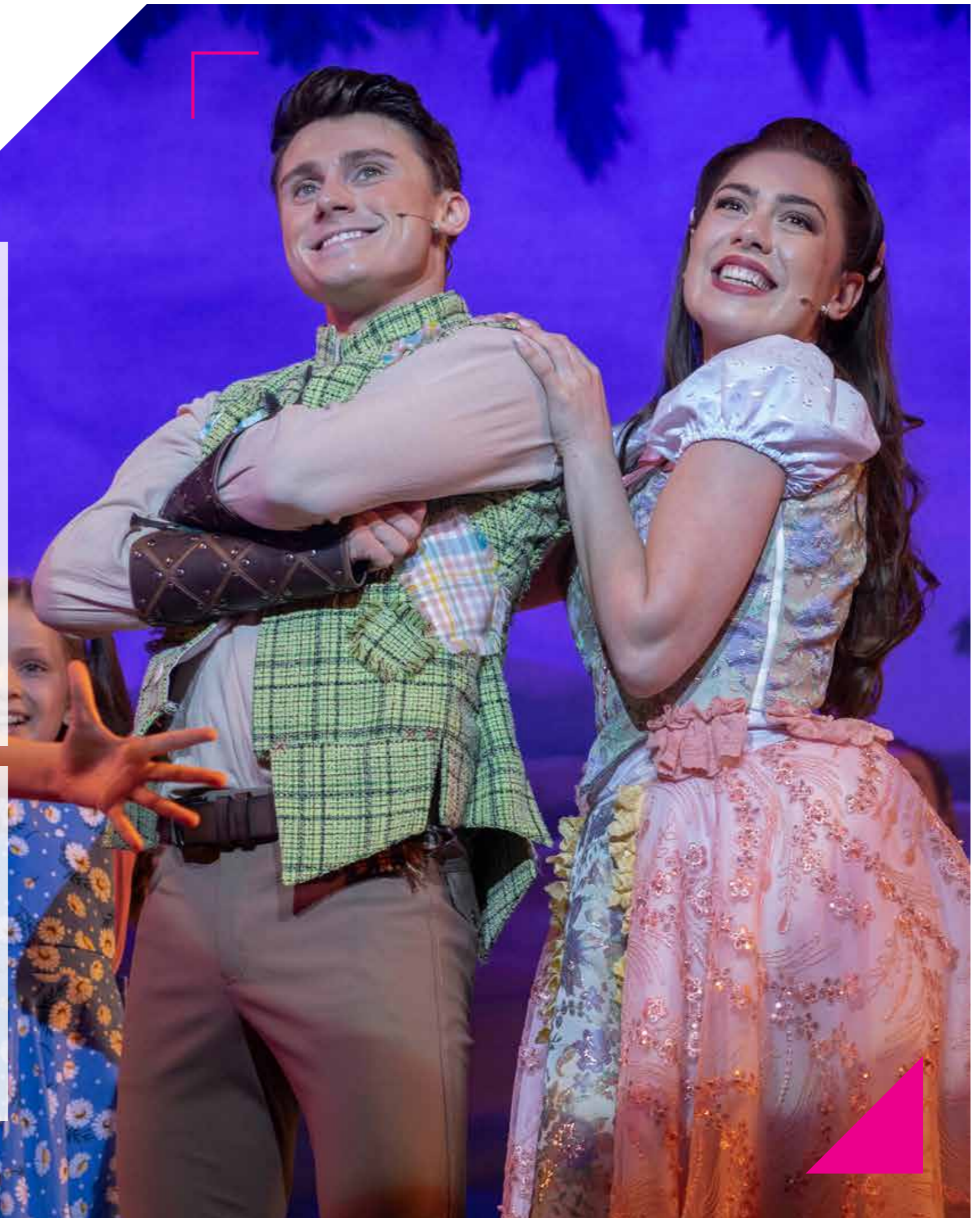
across Cork county, including where possible producing performances in towns across the county.

#### UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

Through our partnership with University College Cork, Cork Opera House has established itself as the country’s first learning theatre. Our “Creating Together” partnership has seen us develop and educate the next generation of arts practitioners through initiatives such as joint residencies, internships, a joint MRes, and the introduction of a Masters in Arts Management & Creative Producing. We will continue investing in this ambitious partnership to support the delivery of these initiatives, to the benefit the students and the arts community as a whole.

### OUR SPONSORS

Our valued sponsors help support the delivery of our own produced work. Over the course of the plan, Cork Opera House will align sponsorship opportunities with companies that share our strategic vision and values. We will ensure seamless integration of sponsor brands into Cork Opera House’s narrative and craft unique sponsorship activations that captivate audiences and provide sponsors with an exclusive and memorable association.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

# OUR HISTORY

Celebrating Cork Opera House's 170th birthday in 2025 will seek to recognise and celebrate our enduring role as a cultural cornerstone in Ireland to "enduring role as an important cultural institution in Ireland. This milestone represents the thousands and thousands of performances on our stage and the resulting connections that have unfolded within its historic walls. This celebration will be a tribute to the heritage, traditions, and resilient spirit that has sustained this iconic venue, fostering a sense of pride and gratitude within the community.

Marking this milestone is an opportunity to cast a spotlight on Cork Opera House, attracting attention and support for our continued cultural significance and our work. By acknowledging the contributions of audiences, performers, staff, and stakeholders, the celebration becomes a moment of collective appreciation and a catalyst for ensuring that the legacy of Cork Opera House not only endures but continues to evolve, adapt, and inspire many more birthdays to come.

2025 will be the year of celebrations with a focus on legacy, weaving together the past, present, and future of this important cultural institution. In the years following our 170th birthday, we will focus on developing the legacies that originate from these celebrations, allowing us to continue to prioritise our history and our significance as a cultural institution for many years to come.

“

**WE WILL ENSURE  
CORK OPERA HOUSE  
THRIVES AS A BEACON  
OF CREATIVITY, JOY  
AND CONNECTION  
FOR GENERATIONS TO  
COME.**

”

# CORK OPERA HOUSE AT 170 YEARS!

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

## OUR PEOPLE

At Cork Opera House, our staff are the driving force behind every performance that graces our stage. Their dedication, creativity, and passion form the very foundation upon which our institution thrives.

Each member plays a pivotal role in crafting unforgettable experiences for our audiences.

We will continue to prioritise the well-being and job satisfaction of all staff and foster a positive culture of collaboration and respect across the organisation.

These are our key priorities concerning staff:

Invest in technical skills as a priority. Our technical capacity on our stage is essential to our success. Without this specialised crew, Cork Opera House would not be able to operate. We will continue to invest in these skills as a priority.

Promote cultural sensitivity and inclusivity to accommodate diverse audiences, artists and staff.

Provide diversity and inclusion training, celebrate cultural awareness events, and ensure that staff members are well-versed in accommodating diverse audiences.

Create a workforce plan that enables us to meet the capacity requirements of this strategy.

“

**AT CORK OPERA HOUSE,  
OUR STAFF ARE THE  
DRIVING FORCE BEHIND  
EVERY PERFORMANCE  
THAT GRACES OUR  
STAGE.**

”



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

# OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

### INVEST IN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

Our physical infrastructure is the backbone of our operations. From our stage to our auditorium, bars, foyer, dressing rooms and office spaces – every part of our physical footprint plays a vital role in our success.

In the face of a rapidly evolving environment, Cork Opera House recognises the imperative of strategic investment in our building.

As we navigate a changing landscape, we need to assess and address our physical infrastructure to maintain a leading edge in the industry.

Currently, Cork Opera House does not have a rehearsal space it can call home for any of our in-house productions. This is of serious strategic concern as it can directly affect the quality of the show, as well as impacting our capacity to grow.

Finding a home for rehearsals will need to become a key strategic objective for Cork Opera House as we scale up in terms of our production capacity.

### OUR KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

- Work with specialist expertise to scope our facilities, to identify necessary improvements and needs across performance spaces; accessibility requirements, rehearsal spaces, to backstage areas, public areas to technical capabilities.
- Develop a framework that not only addresses immediate needs but identifies long-term capital investment goals.
- Create a 10-year Capital Development Plan that will outline priorities and identify how we will resource our required investment until 2034.
- Prioritise investment in technical equipment to include lighting, sound and stage equipment, enabling Cork Opera House to remain competitive and a leader in entertainment production.

### STRATEGIC INVESTMENT IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY

As a large cultural institution, we understand the importance of considering our impact on the environment. We will therefore, over the lifespan of this strategy, invest strategically in energy efficiency and commit to reducing our ecological footprint; fostering sustainability.

By embracing energy-efficient technologies and practices, we not only contribute to cost savings but also play a vital role in the broader movement towards a greener, more sustainable future.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6

# OUR FINANCES

### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial stability is paramount for Cork Opera House's ongoing success. Striking a balance between financial stability and artistic vision is key. This enables us to navigate challenges, adapt to changing circumstances, and continue serving as a vibrant performing arts venue for the community.

Our finances are stable, and in order to remain so, it is critical that the company continues to receive Revenue Grants from the Arts Council, Cork City Council and Cork County Council.

The company continues to generate strong profitability and cash flow from its operations and can continue to fund the repayment of its debt.

In line with our 10-year Capital Plan, we will continue to invest in capital development at Cork Opera House to ensure our competitiveness and continued growth over the course of this strategy.

As the region's leading cultural institution, it is essential that we remain a fit-for-purpose venue, well able to continue to positively contribute to the growth and development of the arts and entertainment sector.

### PROFITABILITY AND FINANCIAL STABILITY

Profitability and financial stability are paramount for Cork Opera House's ongoing success. It ensures fair support for employees and collaborating artists, as well as the maintenance and development of the venue's infrastructure.

Striking a balance between financial stability and artistic vision is key, with a commercially focused approach complementing rather than compromising the institution's artistic impact. This equilibrium enables the Opera House to navigate challenges, adapt to changing circumstances, and continue serving as a vibrant performing arts venue for the community.





# OUR ENABLERS

TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF OUR STRATEGIC PLAN, THE FOLLOWING ENABLERS ARE KEY TO DRIVING CORK OPERA HOUSE'S CONTINUED GROWTH:

## LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

The leadership team at Cork Opera House, including the board of directors and senior management, will remain actively engaged in guiding the strategic direction.

## CLEAR VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The alignment and integration of the strategic objectives outlined in this plan will be a key enabler of our success.

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Communication will be key, both internally and externally. We will ensure that our staff, performers, and stakeholders are kept informed and engaged through regular updates.

## PROGRESSIVE AND NURTURING SPACE TO CREATE AND WORK

The success of Cork Opera House relies on the creativity and passion of the artists and staff. We will continue to foster a culture of collaboration and innovation that will help us attract and retain talent.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Building strong relationships is vital, together with fostering open dialogue with stakeholders, partners and collaborators. Cork Opera House will continue to ensure that its strategic goals are aligned with the needs and expectations of those who support and benefit from its work.

## RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

Financial sustainability is critical. Cork Opera House will continue to prioritise revenue generation and ensure efficient resource allocation to maintain long-term stability.

## WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

The alignment and integration of the strategic objectives outlined in this plan will be a key enabler of our success.

## CONTINUOUS MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Cork Opera House will continue to revisit the content of the strategy at regular intervals, both at executive and board levels. Flexibility will be built into the plan to allow us to respond to changing market dynamics and the needs of the sector.



# OUR KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS BY 2030...

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

### OUR PROGRAMME

#### WE WILL HAVE...

- A varied programme that prioritises in-house productions alongside our received programme
- An established a long-term plan for the Cork Opera House Concert Orchestra
- Be a leader in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the arts in Ireland

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

### OUR COMMUNITY

#### WE WILL HAVE...

- Commissioned at least five new pieces of art
- Welcomed at least 5 Artists in Residence
- Established Tickets for Artists programme
- Included local artists in all auditions for all of our in-house productions
- Established an Education and Outreach Department that will reach out to schools and younger audiences and will have integrated marginalised communities into our work

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

### OUR HISTORY

#### WE WILL HAVE...

- Celebrated our 170th Anniversary and 60th Anniversary of the New Building.
- We will have an established and delivered a legacy programme out of our 170th Events

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

### OUR PEOPLE

#### WE WILL HAVE...

- Invested in our technical skills and will have prioritised this in every budget cycle and human resources plan
- Undertaken significant training in the areas of cultural sensitivity and diversity and inclusion
- Created and implemented a workforce plan to underpin the work of the strategy

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

### OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

#### WE WILL HAVE...

- Developed a Capital Plan that addresses the needs of the building for 10 years
- Completed an Energy Audit that informs resource allocation for sustainability and we will have commenced meeting the recommendations as set out in the audit.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6

### OUR FINANCES

#### WE WILL HAVE...

- Maintained financial support from our Funders: the Cork City Council, Cork County Council and The Arts Council of Ireland.
- Established productive and mutually beneficial partnerships with our sponsors and strategic partners.

# CONCLUSION

Cork Opera House’s Strategic Plan 2025–2030 is not just a roadmap; it’s a commitment to our community, our audiences, and our stakeholders. Its bold, inclusive and sustainable; rooted in our mission to celebrate the shared joy of live performance — locally, nationally and internationally.

Over the next five years, we will push boundaries as a producing house, forge new connections, and amplifying voices from all backgrounds. Together, we’ll strengthen our legacy, nurture talent amongst artists and staff, and reimagine what’s possible for the performing arts in Cork and beyond.

“  
**CORK OPERA HOUSE WILL SERVE AS A SPACE WHERE STORIES ARE TOLD, DREAMS ARE NURTURED AND PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE COME TOGETHER.**  
”

Ambition needs accountability – so to measure our success and ensure we remain true to our vision; we’ve set clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the next five years. These benchmarks will guide us, inspire us, and keep us focused on delivering excellence in every area of our work.

Financial sustainability through prudent stewardship of resources, strategic partnerships, and expanded revenue streams, will secure the future of live performance at Cork Opera House. Our focus on environmentally sustainable practices will ensure we protect not only the cultural fabric of our community but also the planet we share.

Central to this plan is our dedication to community connection. Whether through educational outreach, partnerships with local organisations, or audience engagement initiatives, we will cultivate a theatre that truly is for everyone. Cork Opera House will serve as a space where stories are told, dreams are nurtured, and people from all walks of life come together.

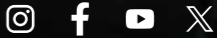
As we embark on this journey, we invite our community, partners, and supporters to join us in shaping the future of the Arts and Entertainment Sector in Cork and beyond. Together, we can fulfill our mission and ensure Cork Opera House thrives as a beacon of creativity, joy, and connection for generations to come.

With unwavering commitment and passion, we step confidently into the next chapter of Cork Opera House’s legacy.



## GET IN TOUCH

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