



OLLSCOIL NA  
GAILLIMH  
UNIVERSITY  
OF GALWAY



## **Running Up That Hill: Arts Funding and Economic Sustainability in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Conference Schedule 22-23 October 2025  
University of Galway**

*Sponsored by Research Ireland Laureate Awards and the University of Galway, including the College of Arts, Social Science and Celtic Studies, the Institute for Creativity, School of English, Media and Creative Arts, Arts in Action, and Drama and Theatre Studies*

*Supported by the Town Hall Theatre Galway and Moonfish Theatre*

What if we started economics not with its long-established theories, but with humanity's long-term goals, and then sought out the economic thinking that would enable us to achieve them?

Kate Raworth, *Doughnut Economics* (2017, p. 10)

**There is no conference fee but online registration is required, accessible here:**  
<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/universityofgalway4/1676763>

## Day 1: Wednesday 22 October 2025

### 9.30-10.00: Welcome and Opening Comments

Dr Miriam Haughton, Dr Patricia O'Beirne  
G010, Hardiman Research Building (HRB)

### 10.15 -11.45: PANEL 1A: Balancing Public Funding with Artistic Intention

Chair: Professor David O'Shaughnessy (English, University of Galway)  
G010, HRB

**Professor David Barnett (Theatre, University of York):** 'Squaring the Circle: How Arts Council-Funded Theatres in Yorkshire Balance Their Public Mission with Financial Sustainability Through Programming'

**Dr Charlotte McIvor (Drama, University of Galway):** "I searched for my spark and I found it"(?): Remixing Creativity, Sustainability and/or the Decolonial in post-Decade of Centenaries Irish Arts Policy

**Máiréad Ní Chróinín (Moonfish Theatre/Drama, University of Galway):** 'The Price of Equity in Theatre-Making: A case-study from Moonfish Theatre.'

### 10.15-11.45: PANEL 1B: Creative Objectives, Creative Policies

Chair: Brendan Kennelly (Economics, University of Galway)  
G011, HRB

**Maeve Freaney, Fionnuala Brown, Eavan Cronin, Aogan Smyth, Anna Sheldon (Economics, University of Galway):** 'Lights Out in Galway: Valuing a Recently Closed Cinema in a UNESCO City of Film'

**Dr Mark Rainey and Dr Patrick Collins (Geography, University of Galway):** 'Creative ecosystems in non-urban areas: cultural mapping as a basis for strategy and policy'

**Osama Abu Shanab (Business, University of Galway):** 'The Environmental Cost of Creating Art'

### 11.45-12.15 : Coffee

Foyer, HRB

### **12.15-1pm: Felispeaks Performance**

Chair: Post-show discussion chaired by Professor Ríona Ní Fhrighil (Irish, University of Galway)

Bank of Ireland Theatre (located between O'Donoghue Centre and SULT)

### **1-2pm: Lunch**

Foyer, HRB

### **2.00-3.15: PANEL 2: Commissioning and Funding New Plays**

Chair: Jane Daly (Arts Consultant and Facilitator)

G010, HRB

Panellists: Paula McFetridge (Kabosh), Lynne Parker (Rough Magic), Matthew Zajac (Dogstar)

### **3.30-4.45: PANEL 3: The Economy of Producing Work for Children and Young Audiences**

Chair: Dr Ali FitzGibbon (Arts Management, Queen's University Belfast)

G010, HRB

Panellists: Joanne Beirne (Branar), Marianne Kennedy (Drama, University of Galway), Tony Reekie (Catherine Wheels)

### **5pm: Refreshments**

O'Donoghue Centre Foyer

## **DAY 2: Thursday 23 October 2025**

### **10.00 -11.15: PANEL 4: Managing Budgets During Economic Crisis**

Chair: Cathie Boyd (Cryptic/Sonica)

G010, HRB

Panellists: Lian Bell (Designer and Arts Manager), Gemma Reeves (Rough Magic), Alex Rigg (Oceanallover)

### **11.15 - 11.30: Coffee**

Foyer, HRB

**11.30- 1.00: PANEL 5A: Precarity and Performance**

Chair: Dr Ian R. Walsh  
G010, HRB

**Philip Ryan (Nocht Studio):** 'Open Cull.'

**Emer Lyons (Psychology, University of Galway):** 'PART(S)(W)HOLE: The personal is political is precarious.'

**Tricia O'Beirne (Drama, University of Galway):** Valuing art and performance in a neoliberal policy environment: funding structures of independent theatre production in the twenty first century'.

**11.30-1:00: PANEL 5B: Economic Sustainability and Arts Funding: Global Perspectives**

Chair: Dr Charlotte McIvor  
G011, HRB

**Lia Capotorto (Drama, UCD):** "That New York State of Money: Responding to a Performance Sector in Crisis"

**Eirini Polydorou (Theatre Studies, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens):**

The Public Funding of Independent Theatre in Greece during 2003-2023: Does Greek theatre funding policy reflect the concept of culture as a public good?

**Finian O'Gorman (Drama and Theatre Studies, University of Galway):** "The Best for the Most": How Arts Council Policy has Shaped Irish Theatre as an Industry and Artform.

**1.00- 2.00: Lunch**

Foyer, HRB

**1.20-1.50: Performance** by Alex Rigg (Oceanallover), the Burren College of Art MFA, Dr Liam Carr (Geography, University of Galway)  
Venue TBC

**2.00 – 3.15: Una Mullally: Keynote**

Chair: Dr Miriam Haughton (Associate Professor, Drama and Theatre Studies)  
O'Donoghue Theatre

### **3.15 – 3.30: Break**

### **3.30-4.30: Arts Council Roundtable**

Chair: Professor Pól Ó'Dochartaigh (History, University of Galway)  
O'Donoghue Theatre

Panellists: Toby Dennett (Strategic Development, Arts Council Ireland), Ashleigh Lilley (Economist, Arts Council Northern Ireland), Jaine Lumsden (Theatre Officer, Creative Scotland)

**Conference Ends.**