



Photo Museum Ireland Artistic Policy 2024-2028



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Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Changes
1	Trish Lambe	15.11.23	First Version
2	Trish Lambe	27.08.25	Updated terms of reference

Photo Museum Ireland Artistic Policy

1. Photo Museum Ireland Mission Statement

We are the national centre for contemporary photography in Ireland. We connect people with inspirational, thought-provoking visual culture, preserve, curate, and promote great photography, and support the artists of today and tomorrow.

Strategic Priorities.

1) Build & strengthen a sustainable museum

To achieve the high-level objectives of the organisation and realise its vision in the medium to long term, we are working to ensure we are a sustainable and fit-for-purpose organisation. Ultimately, we aim to secure a fit-for-purpose home with the facilities required to meet the organisation's growth.

2) We build the capacity of photographers to create great art.

Supporting and promoting Irish artists at various career stages is fundamental to our mission. We are committed to providing comprehensive training programmes that cater to the evolving needs of artists, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their creative practice and support innovation.

3) Develop the collection

We are focused on collecting living artists by digitising archives, creating a comprehensive artists' portfolio collection and holding these works in trust for the public benefit. We are committed to promoting the collection and amplifying the reach and impact of artists' work, both nationally and internationally.

4) Promote visual literacy through innovative education programmes

We believe photography has a unique ability to engage wide, diverse audiences and we are committed to providing a wide range of socially inclusive opportunities for the lifelong discovery and enjoyment of photography and visual culture.

5) Enhance the profile and raise awareness of the museum

We are committed to developing a comprehensive marketing strategy that effectively communicates the museum's unique identity.

2. Current Artistic Pillars:

As part of our Strategic Planning, we are focused on three key artistic pillars:

Sustainability

- PMI aims to be a consciously future-forward, fit for purpose-sustainable organisation. From supporting practitioners who advocate 'greener' photography techniques to pledging to reduce our carbon footprint through reduced transportation of goods, energy-efficient lighting, recycling building materials and sharing resources with other arts organisations, reducing our print materials, encouraging visitors to walk or cycle where they can and implementing an environmentally friendly Green code of conduct across all our activities, PMI aims to be a consciously future-forward, fit for purpose organisation.

Equality, Diversity and Equality

- PMI believes that a diverse and equal society is essential for creativity and growth. We are committed to supporting and showcasing a broad range of contributors and practices that reflect and inform the world we live in. Whether you visit us in person or visit our website, we aim to share compelling images from Irish and international photographers of all ages, races, genders, sexualities, backgrounds and abilities. We also work with partners to tour exhibitions nationally and internationally. We further recognise the role that cultivating and enabling a diverse workforce plays in achieving our aims and strive to create a fully inclusive and progressive environment for all.

Sustaining Artists' Practices

- PMI is an artist-focused organisation dedicated to building capacity for artists through a 360-degree programme of support and activities. Our NPC Collection was initiated specifically to create portfolio records of key practices, securing contemporary practices for the future. We also provide subsidised and free training and production residencies for artists.

3. Statement of Principles

Our exhibitions and artistic programmes connect people with inspirational, thought-provoking photography and visual culture to promote critical thinking and the exchange of knowledge and support imaginative encounters with contemporary photography. Our main focus is to support, develop, promote and showcase work by artists working in Ireland. We also curate international exhibitions reflecting key photographic practices and emerging themes in partnership with international artists, curators and key organisations. An average of 5-6 exhibitions per year enlighten and challenge the visitors to the museum, supported by online platforms for wider audiences.

Our exhibitions are programmed a minimum of 18 months in advance. Our team are specialists in the design, mounting and installation of exhibitions and offer these services on a consultancy basis. The team has between 10 and 25 years of experience. Our artistic programmes are curated by the experienced curatorial team with advice and input from our panel of international advisors.

4. Programme Committee

The Programme Committee comprises the Director, the Senior Curator, the Curator, and the Collections Manager. It meets once a week.

1. To support the defined mission of Photo Museum Ireland.
2. To develop and implement programming policies in accordance with the Museum Standards Programme of Ireland.
3. To devise, promote and secure funding for the museum's artistic programmes.
4. To foster public awareness of the resources and educational opportunities
5. To develop programmes and build strategic partnerships to increase awareness of the important role of Photo Museum Ireland locally, nationally and internationally.
6. TO develop programmes to support art form development for photographers.

5. Terms of Reference:

1. To discuss and agree on programming strategy and long-term plans.
2. To identify and support funding opportunities and partnerships for artistic programmes
3. Discuss and review programming proposals and agree on programme schedules
4. To facilitate the development of the Collection.
5. To draw up acquisition proposals for the Artistic Sub-Committee and Board for approval
6. To manage outgoing loans from the Collection
6. To encourage the widest possible public participation in programmes, working to actively address access issues, DEI and Climate Action.

6. Policy review and programme evaluation

- Exhibition schedules and information on the artistic programme are brought to each meeting of the Board of Directors.
- The Programme Committee reviews the Exhibition policy annually, following the Arts Council and Museum Standards Programme for Ireland guidelines.
- Any recommended changes to the agreed policy are presented to the Artistic Subcommittee for input and review before being presented to the Board of Directors for approval.
- Regular visitor surveys enable audiences and programme participants to provide feedback on exhibitions and displays.
- Annual surveys of artists' needs provide essential feedback, informing the development of our artist support programmes and residences.
- All opportunities for artists are made with input from our external expertise.
- A panel of 3 external photo experts advise on long-term programming plans.
- Peer review panels are convened to evaluate specific strands of programming.

7. Programming:

The Programme Committee, reporting to the Board of Directors, is responsible for policy development, exhibition strategy, and planning.

- The Programme Committee is composed of the Director, the Senior Curator, the Curator and the Collection Manager.
- This senior management team is responsible for devising the content of the exhibition programme in the gallery.
- The Programme Committee consults and involves external curators, experts and academics as required.
- The gallery programme is agreed 18 months – 3 years in advance.
- The Programme Committee actively seeks to develop exhibitions in conjunction with partner organisations nationally and internationally.
- External exhibition proposals are reviewed and progressed by the Programme Committee. All unsolicited submission proposals are replied to.

8. Financial Management:

- Budgets are set in September of the previous year and are approved by the Board of Trustees as part of our annual Strategic Funding application to the Arts Council for Revenue Funding.
- Artists' fees and payments for talks and other activities are paid in line with our Artists' Payment Policy, which has been benchmarked against guidelines established by Visual Artists Ireland, and our Collection Policy.
- We support post-production, printing and framing costs for exhibitions.
- We pay commission fees and fees for talks, symposia and workshops.

- We offer artists' residency opportunities for:
 - Early Career Artists;
 - Development opportunities to support the development of new projects;
 - Exhibition residencies for artists to prepare for upcoming exhibitions;
 - Archiving residences, creating archival portfolio records of key artistic practices.

9. Exhibition Standards:

- PMI will ensure that exhibitions present resonant and relevant work by photographic artists.
- PMI exhibitions are curated by the experienced curatorial team with advice and input from our panel of international advisors.
- PMI presents temporary, changing exhibitions only.
- As part of our long-term Strategic Plan, we are seeking to relocate to a larger space which would enable us to present a mix of temporary, short and long-term exhibitions.
- Our Artists' Project space presents work-in-progress installations and works from our community and outreach projects delivered with communities across Ireland.
- PMI exhibitions will be designed and installed to comply with our Access Policy.
- PMI exhibitions are presented in an accessible and audience-centred way to ensure that audiences' needs, interests, expectations, and motivations will inform the planning, design, evaluation, and, where appropriate, research and delivery of exhibitions.
- All new exhibitions produced by PMI in late 2025 will conform to our Irish Language Policy. Incoming exhibitions are not subject to this requirement, although it will be encouraged.
- Online exhibitions presented on our website can be viewed using the multiple-language website feature.
- All new exhibitions in PMI will conform to our Collection Care and Conservation Policy and employ conservation-approved/grade materials wherever possible
- PMI will undertake due diligence with regard to intellectual property and copyright ownership of any materials used in exhibitions.
- Each Exhibition will have a set of clearly defined Objectives and Key Performance indicators and all exhibitions will be subject to an appropriate evaluation process.
- The content of exhibitions will be supported by research involving PMI staff and be subject to internal review as part of the exhibition development process.
- A comprehensive programme of public art installations, Artist-led community projects, talks, events, workshops, and screenings create opportunities for audiences and visitors to engage with the photographic exhibitions.
- The exhibition space is deep-cleaned each week and receives a light cleaning each day.

Production of exhibitions

Photo Museum Ireland offers darkroom and digital artists production workspaces and facilities, managed by experienced staff.

Installation and design of exhibitions:

The installation of exhibitions is led by Darragh Shanahan and supported by Darren Campion and Brendan Maher.

Text and language-based content

- Exhibition Titles: All text is set at a minimum font size of 12 using Colfax font which reads as 14 pt size. This is a sans serif, large, clean modern font.
- Captions and text panels are set at a maximum of 250 words.
- Our website offers a text translation option for European languages.

Audiences and visitors

- Equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of what we do. We actively involve community, educational or other groups in the planning of exhibitions.
- Online and hard copy visitor guides and wall texts accompany all exhibitions, with large font-size versions available.
- A Social Story and online Access guides help visitors plan their visit.
- Artist-led projects directly engage hard-to-reach communities.
- Visitor surveys and exhibition surveys help us understand our audiences and assess the impact of our exhibitions and organisation.
- Feedback feeds into our exhibition and organisational development planning, and it also feeds into our Marketing Strategy.
- A Visitor's Book invites feedback.
- Our active online platforms invite active engagement and feedback.
- Our Artists' Project space presents work-in-progress and works from our national community and outreach projects.
- Our website offers a translation option for main European languages.

10. Organisation overview:

Founded in 1978, we were the first dedicated space for photography on the island of Ireland. Over the years, we have introduced a rich and compelling range of international photographers to Irish audiences, including Eve Arnold, Sebastião Salgado, Weegee, August Sander, Walker Evans, Duane Michals, Chris Killip, Martin Parr, and Michael Schmidt, to wide audiences. We continue to champion the work of Irish artists for the widest possible audiences, including, among many others. In 1997, we moved to its current home in Meeting House Square, a 4-storey building designed by award-winning architects O'Donnell + Tuomey offers visitors two floors of exhibition spaces; an education space; an Artist project space for new work; high-spec digital production studio and communal darkroom and a specialist Bookshop and Print Sales area.

11. Training in exhibition management received in the last five years:

- Working at a Height and Use of Scaffold 2023.
- Fire Warden Training 2022
- Diversity and Inclusion training in 2021 and Safe to Create Training in 2023 and 2024.
- Training in the handling of artworks 2023
- AslAm & Aspite training 2024
- Art Handling 2025
- Age-Friendly Business Recognition Programme Training 2024
- Media Training - Unique Media 2024
- Effective Emergency Planning and Practical Disaster Recovery 2024