County Sligo Festivals and Events Strategy

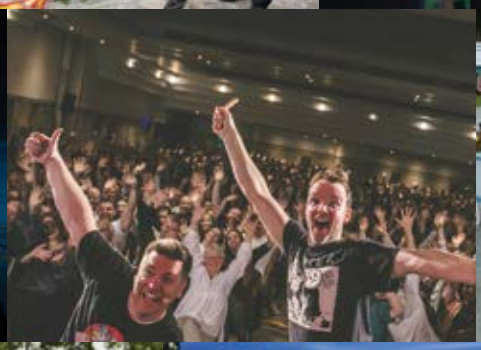
2025 - 2029

Sligo.

Sligo County Council
Comhairle Chontae Shligigh

SLIGO

LOVE STORY



SLIGO

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Introduction from the Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council

I am delighted as Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council to introduce the first Festival and Events Strategy for County Sligo. This docuument is the culmination of work over a number of years and acknowledges the key role that Festivals and Events play in the tourism offering in County Sligo. It facilitates the delivery of a planned and coordinated approach to supporting festivals and events and in so doing recognises the very broad spectrum of festivals and events that take place all year round in the county with huge commitment and tireless contributions from the community as well as the business and creative sectors.

The strategy in addition to setting out an implementation plan for the next 5 years looks at important issues such as sustainability and accessibility so that the legacy it can leave will contribute to a greener and more inclusive Sligo.

I want to extend appreciation to all the festivals and event organisers, and organisations with an interest and role in festival delivery, who have contributed to the development of the strategy via the stakeholder engagement process. You have helped shape this document by your insights and experiences from a practical and lived perspective.

I want also to acknowledge the role of my elected member colleagues on the Festival and Events Oversight Committee, and all members of the Live Invest Visit Strategic Policy Committee, as well as full Council who all engaged enthusiastically with the process and made valuable contributions at each stage. Gratitude is also expressed to the staff of the Tourism & Festival unit of the Council and to Bane Mullarkey Tourism Consultants, who all ensured this strategy was completed and published to a high standard following wide consultation and considered objectives.

Cllr Declan Bree
Cathaoirleach Sligo County Council

Foreword from the Chief Executive of Sligo County Council

Festivals and events are a huge driver to enhance the Economic, Community and Social fabric of our society. We are fortunate in Sligo to have an outstanding array of festivals and events both urban and rural, and of varying scales, appealing to different audiences but all animating our calendar year and telling the Sligo story.

This strategy sets out to examine the festival landscape in Sligo and how a defined hierarchy of festivals can be supported by the Council and other funding and support agencies, to position festivals for further growth. It takes into account that festivals and events are classified in the 'Sligo Destination and Experience Development Plan' as Destination Enabling Projects with potential to become flagship events of regional and national significance.

In a broader context the Council places a key significance on promoting Tourism in the county and has substantially grown investment in this area in terms of staff and capital projects over recent years. The objective in Sligo 2030 to develop Sligos' leisure Tourism offering in order to deliver world class visitor experiences, is well under way with such ambitious developments as the National Surf Centre Strandhill, the National Mountain Bike Centre Coolaney, the UNESCO World Heritage site bid, and the new Queen Maeve Square public realm transformation, all testament to ensuring Sligos unique selling points are differentiated along the Wild Atlantic Way.

This strategy not only considers how to maximise funding available but also looks at a range of non-financial supports and collaborative opportunities providing the sector with a valuable road map towards 2029.

Martin Lydon
Chief Executive Sligo County Council

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and brief

Sligo County Council appointed Bane Mullarkey Tourism Consultants, to develop a strategy for festivals and events in County Sligo, particularly those seeking public financial support. The need for the strategy was underpinned by a recognition of the role that festivals and events play in the overall tourism offering in County Sligo. Significant research, consultation and strategy development had been undertaken to enable this strategy.

The Sligo Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP) has been launched, with festivals and events classified as *Destination Enabling Projects* in the DEDP. The main requirement of the festival and events strategy is that Sligo would have an agreed evidence-based roadmap to facilitate targeted funding and development of festivals and events over the next five years, including a framework to assist in identifying high potential festivals and events for tourism. The process to complete the strategy included two rounds of research and consultation. This document is the result of that work.

1.2. The festival spectrum

There is a broad spectrum of festivals and events in County Sligo. Depending on a festival/event's position on that spectrum, they have different objectives, appeal to different audiences, operate at different levels and have different development needs. This is not unique to Sligo.

Looking at festivals and events through a tourism lens, the spectrum is broad:

- At one end are high potential festivals/events that motivate tourists (domestic or overseas) to visit a destination specifically for the festival/event.
- Next are mid-range festivals/events; they have some potential to attract tourists (domestic and overseas), and with support (some, but not all, of which is financial), can increase their tourism impact.
- At the other end are festivals/events that have a minimal tourism impact; they cater mainly to a local audience.

This categorisation is not to downplay the importance of festivals with a local focus. They may have lower tourism impact, but considerable work and voluntary effort underpin them, and they have a strong social and community value. It is unlikely however, even if there were unlimited resources, that festivals and events that cater primarily to a local audience would be unique or compelling enough in their own right to motivate tourists to visit specially for the festival.

As the focus of this strategy is looking at festivals through a tourism lens, recommendations and actions are presented on that basis. The term 'festival' is interchangeable with 'festival and event' throughout.

1.3. Methodology

The methodology included:

- Review of relevant documents.
- Online survey completed by 26 festivals.
- Individual consultative meetings with 25 festivals.
- Workshop for festivals and stakeholders attended by 35 people.
- Stakeholder interviews.

A list of people who participated in the research and consultation is contained in the appendices.

Taste of Sligo Food Festival

2. Context

2.1. Tourism in County Sligo

The Wild Atlantic Way region welcomed 8 million tourists in 2023, generating €3 billion in revenue.

Sligo attracts approximately 450,000 visitors annually, contributing over €110 million to the local economy, meaning that Sligo's share of the Wild Atlantic Way total is 6% of tourists and 4% of revenue.

There are opportunities for Sligo to increase this share and the Sligo DEDP and this strategy for festivals and events can both play a role in this regard.

2.2. Accommodation in Sligo

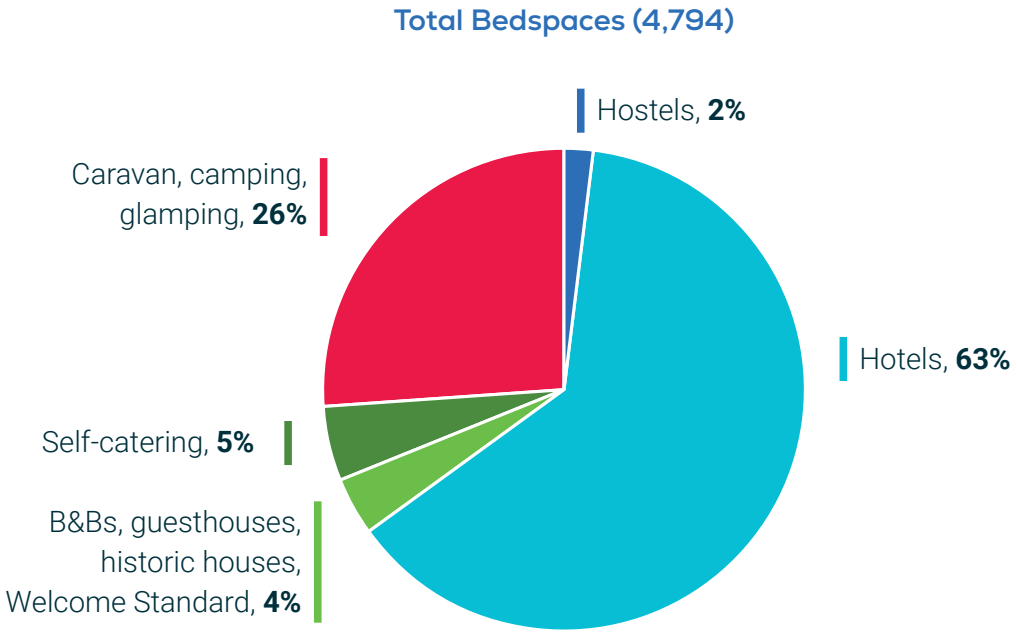
As of January 2025, Sligo had a total of 4,794 bed spaces, of which hotels account for 63%.

Type	Premises	Units	Bedspaces
Hotels	17	1,174	3,027
Serviced accommodation: B&Bs, guesthouses, historic houses, Welcome Standard	13	85	198
Self-catering	42	42	261
Caravan, camping, glamping	4	428	1,224
Hostels	3	34	84
Total	**79**	**1,763**	**4,794**

Source: Fáilte Ireland, January 2025

Profile of accommodation in Sligo

- 81% of Sligo's hotel rooms are 4-star and 16% are 3-star.
- There are no 5-star hotels in Sligo.
- The majority of B&B rooms (46%) are 4-star, and 41% are 3-star.
- The size of the unapproved sector in unknown as there no published estimates. At time of writing there were 700+ listings on Airbnb under a search for "Sligo".



Source: Fáilte Ireland Accommodation Dashboard, January 2025

A 2023 audit[1] by Fáilte Ireland showed that Sligo has a limited range of accommodation options, particularly when compared to other counties along the Wild Atlantic Way.

The audit notes that:

- Sligo has not capitalised on its full tourism potential due to a lack of high-quality, diverse, accommodation supply.
- Further development in quality and diversity of accommodation products would assist in balancing the dispersal of visitors across the Wild Atlantic Way region.
- To meet growing demand by 2027, Sligo requires an estimated additional 270-400 hotel rooms, 30-40 serviced accommodation rooms, 30-40 hostel bedspaces, 40-60 self-catering bedspaces, and 70-180 outdoor bedspaces.

During consultation for this strategy, as well as a lack of hotel availability (with government contracts cited as causing pressure on capacity), a lack of facilities for camper vans was raised by consultees.

1. Fáilte Ireland Accommodation Audit - County Sligo, Accommodation Supply, Gap Analysis & Recommendations

2.3. The Wild Atlantic Way

2024 marked the 10th anniversary of the Wild Atlantic Way, described by Fáilte Ireland as having had a truly transformative impact[2] on the economy of the west coast.

The Wild Atlantic Way generates employment and revenue for businesses and communities and is a key motivator for domestic and international visitors.

WILD ATLANTIC WAY
SLÍ AN ATLANTAIGH FHIÁIN

Impacts include:

- Tourists took 8 million trips to the Wild Atlantic Way in 2023, almost 2 million more than in 2013.
- Tourism on the Wild Atlantic Way was worth over €3 billion in 2023, 57% of which was from overseas tourists and 43% from domestic tourists.
- Tourism now supports 121,000 jobs across the region.

Looking ahead, the strategic objectives for the Wild Atlantic Way are to:

1.	Grow the **year-round appeal** of the Wild Atlantic Way domestically and internationally ensuring we attract and disperse high-value visitors into and throughout the region.
2.	Raise the **international profile** of the northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way to increase visitation and revenue.
3.	Increase **tourism revenue, visitor dispersion and season extension** across the southern half of the Wild Atlantic Way.
4.	Protect the **cultural authenticity and "wildness"** of the Wild Atlantic Way.
5.	Enable and assist the industry to grow its **capacity and capability** so that it can thrive over the period of this strategy.
6.	Foster **strong coalitions** of industry and stakeholders with a common purpose in creating flourishing destinations and thriving communities while also building a sustainable model of destination development across the Wild Atlantic Way.

There are opportunities for Sligo's festivals to more fully incorporate the Wild Atlantic Way into programming and marketing, to maximise the opportunities that the Wild Atlantic Way presents.

2. Fáilte Ireland (2024), 10 Years of the Wild Atlantic Way, available at: https://issuu.com/discoverireland/docs/10_years_of_wild_atlantic_way?fr=sMTNiYzYyOTc1Mzk

2.4. Tourism's target segments/audiences

With the objective of driving sales from high value customers who stay longer and spend more, Tourism Ireland[3] and Fáilte Ireland[4] target their promotional activities at priority segments:

Overseas

- **Enrichment explorers:** people who want authentic experiences and to immerse, explore and discover their surroundings. They enjoy hiking, walking, cycling and also relaxing surrounded by nature and wildlife. Planning and research ahead of their trip is part of the fun and thrill of discovery.

Domestic

When Irish people travel within Ireland they can have different motivations for different occasions. The three biggest motivations are social energy, exploration and adventure, accounting for 20%, 17% and 16% of all trip motivations.

- **Social energy:** immersing oneself in the vibrancy and atmosphere created by being around people and fun experiences. Festivals and events, food and drink, and nightlife are important aspects of this motivation.
- **Adventure:** pushing one's personal limits, getting a thrill out of exciting experiences and activities, and going outside of one's comfort zone.
- **Exploration:** exploring new or unfamiliar places and cultural activities and finding hidden gems.
- **Time out:** cherishing time with partners and significant others. It's a time to unwind, disconnect from daily life, and an opportunity to treat oneself.
- **Reconnection:** Spending quality time with close friends. It's less about where this happens and more about simply being in relaxed and comfortable settings.
- **Bonding:** nurturing and strengthening close relationships and with children's needs central to decisions.
- **Celebration:** celebrating milestones, achievements, reunions and special occasions and bringing everybody together.

New digital travel planner for Sligo

In 2025, Sligo County Council launched a new digital travel planner, powered by a curated local data set and utilising artificial intelligence. The travel planner provides hyper-focussed, bespoke itineraries based on people's interests.

3. Tourism Ireland, 2024, Overseas Marketing Segmentation, available at: https://www.tourismireland.com/research-and-insights/Overseas-Marketing-Segmentation
4. Fáilte Ireland, 2022, Travel Motivations Framework, available at: https://issuu.com/discoverireland/docs/segmentation_study_pdfs_fm_100622_v3_lowres

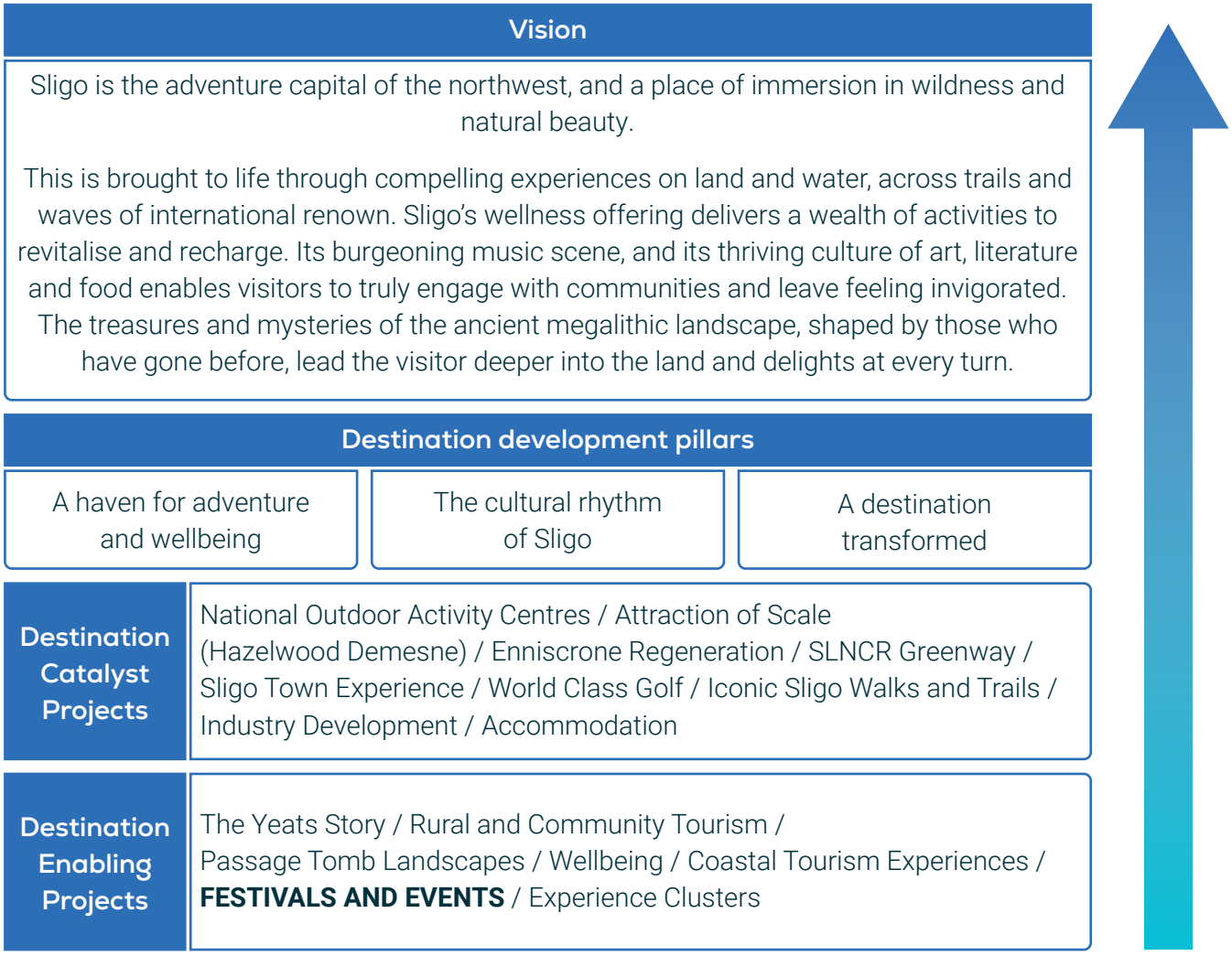
2.5. Sligo Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP)

The Sligo Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP) sets out the vision for tourism in Sligo by 2034.

The vision will be achieved through the implementation of a hierarchy of projects, starting at the top, three *destination development pillars.*

At the next level are nine *catalyst* projects.

At the next level again seven *destination enabling projects.* Festivals and events are included that this level; categorised as a *destination enabling project.*



Source: Sligo Destination & Experience Development Plan

Festivals and events in the DEDP

Reflecting the role of festivals and events as destination enabling projects, i.e. supporting destination catalyst projects and in turn supporting the destination development pillars, the DEDP has a number of actions specifically around festivals and events. These actions are:

- Deliver a large scale event or festival for Queen Maeve Square. The 2024 May Bank Holiday marked the official opening of Queen Maeve Square. This three-day event was led by Sligo County Council in partnership with Fáilte Ireland. Performers included Gavin James, Moncrieff and Téada, along with many other local artists.
- Work to deliver large scale surfing events or festivals to increase the profile of the National Surf Centre (NSC), project lead is the NSC with Sligo County Council and Fáilte Ireland as partners.
- Work towards raising the profile of food and drink through existing and new events – highlight provenance.
- Support the ongoing development of themed events and festivals that align with key DEDP themes and stories.
- Extend and strengthen the emphasis on performing arts, music and cultural events across the entire county.
- Continue to support and promote outdoor adventure events.

Implementation of the DEDP is being driven by the Destination Sligo Forum, which consists of tourism industry stakeholders in Sligo, which was established as part of the development of the DEDP. The two co-chairs of the Destination Sligo Forum were interviewed as part of the consultation for this strategy.

2.6. Infrastructural investment

Sligo County Council has invested heavily in tourism related infrastructural projects in recent years with many ambitious projects ongoing and in future planning.

One major project completed in 2024 was the development of the new Civic Space at Queen Maeve Square in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. This has transformed the centre of Sligo town from what was a carpark to a new attractive outdoor recreation and performance space with a capacity of 4,500 and is key factor in enhancing the nighttime economy and supporting the Purple Flag designation. The iconic 1.8m high Sligo sign in the square is a focal point for visitors and locals as a meeting place and for photo opportunities.

Queen Maeve Square

For general enquiries on programming/marketing, email **hello@queenmaevesquare.ie**

For bookings, email **bookings@queenmaevesquare.ie**

Recently delivered tourism related infrastructural projects

- National Surf Centre Strandhill – state of the art purpose-built surfing facility.
- National Mountain Bike Centre – world class forested mountain tracks for all abilities.
- Queen Maeve Square – new transformational civic and performance space in Sligo town.
- Pontoon at Doorly Park – construction of new jetty.
- Outdoor performance space (amphitheatre) at Cleveragh Regional Park.
- Yeats Trail - signposted touring route with 14 locations.
- Public realm improvements, Enniscrone – funded by Fáilte Ireland under Destination Towns programme.

Ongoing tourism related infrastructural projects

- Numerous walks and trails upgrades and marketing.
- Development of new greenways and active travel – SLNCR & Sligo Greenway.
- Garavogue River Walk from Queen Maeve Square to Cleveragh Regional Park and onwards to Cairns Hill.
- 'Dead Man's Point' outdoor swimming pool at Rosses Point – to provide sheltered changing areas during 2025.
- Recreation area at Gibraltar pt – Phase 1 (access) completed 2024. Phase 2 (feasibility for reconstruction of tidal pool) to progress during 2025.
- Sligo's bid for UNESCO World Heritage site status for Sligo's Neolithic Landscapes.

Wild & Well Festival

Future tourism related infrastructural projects

- Enniscrone Destination Town – Cliff Bath House & Pavillion.
- Facilities for water based activities at Rosses Point and Enniscrone.
- Reimagining Rosses Point & Strandhill - public realm improvement projects.
- Historic Sligo Gaol - future use considerations.
- Feasibility for the development of an iconic viewing point platform at Lough Lumman on the Sligo Way.
- Dedicated pedestrian and cycle bridge linking Cleveragh and Hazelwood Peninsula - pursue consideration.
- Lady Anne Trail from Town Centre to Hazelwood – continued development planning.
- Rosses Point Marina Project – RRDF Category 2 project development application during 2025.
- The Beachery, Rosses Point – reimage and repurpose as coffee shop/restaurant and related functions.
- Pontoon at Enniscrone - proposal to support scuba diving for Ship to Reef project.
- Support the Development of Hazelwood Demesne – House and Lough Gill Distillery.
- Support the development at 'The Showgrounds' Sligo Rovers - Large Scale Sport in Infrastructure Fund.
- Support the Sligo Rowing Club and the Sligo Kayak Club in the building of a new boat house at Doorly Park pier.

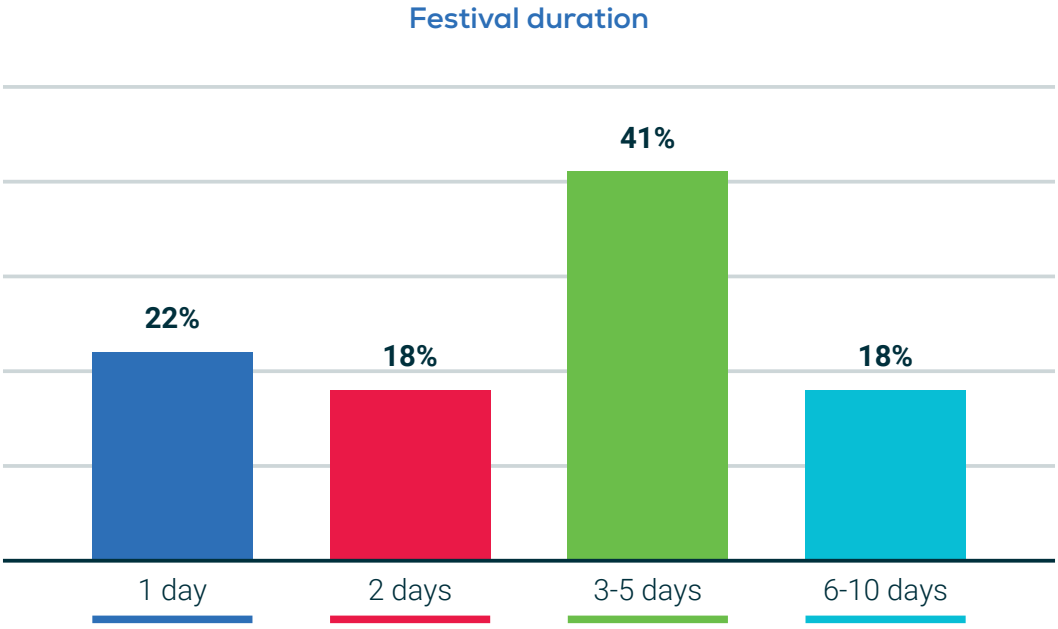
ATU Haunting

3. Research findings

Extensive consultation and research were undertaken to ensure that the strategy reflects the needs and ambitions of Sligo's festivals and events. An online survey was completed by 27 festivals; one-to-one meetings were held with 23 festivals; one-to-one meetings were held with 11 stakeholders; and a workshop was attended by 35 people, a mix of festivals and stakeholders. The findings and outputs from all this research are presented over the following pages.

3.1. Festival duration

- Three to five days is the most common duration
- 22% of festivals are for one day
- 18% are two days
- 18% run for 6+ days

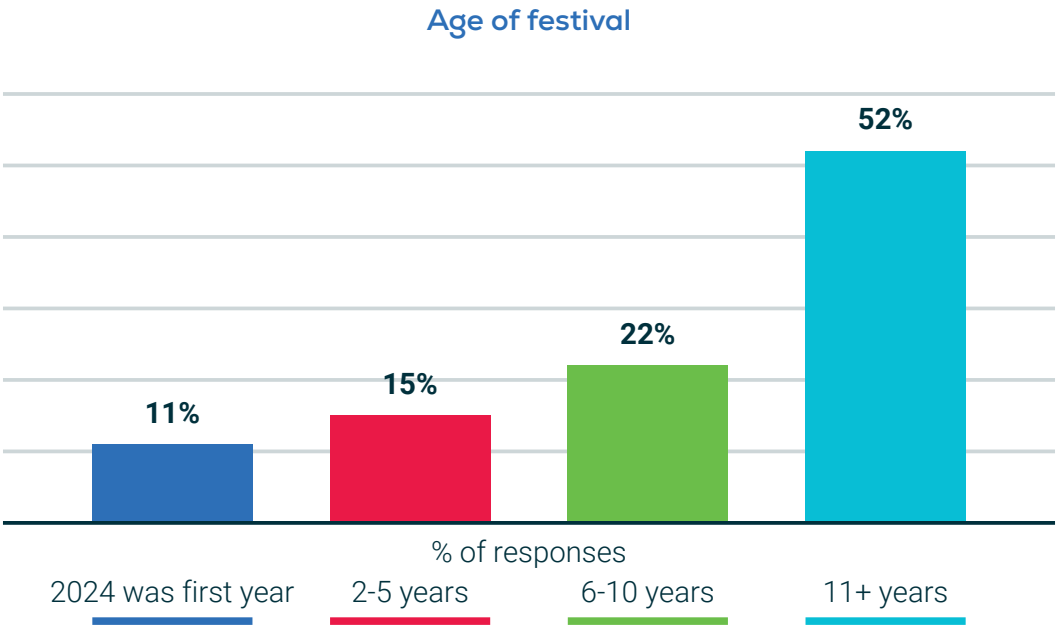


Source: Online survey

3.2. Festival age

Over half of Sligo's festivals are well established and running for over 11 years.

It is also encouraging to see that a quarter of festivals are less than five years old and that 2024 was the first year for some festivals.



Source: Online survey

3.3. Free or paid admission

The online survey asked festivals about their pricing models. The findings show that Sligo's festivals span the full spectrum of paid admission and free admission; some charge for every event, some offer everything for free and the majority of festivals are somewhere in the middle with a mix of free and paid events.

Looking at admission charges:

- 19% of admissions cost less than €10.
- 37% of admissions cost €10-€20.
- 37% of admissions cost €20+.

A note about charging and ticket prices:

Some festivals provide up to 100% of their events for free. However, among festivals that charge admission there is no evidence of price resistance, even when there is a price increase. It's important that festivals do not undersell their events and that there is an appreciation and understanding that value for money is usually more important to their audience than price. It is also widely known in the festival sector that selling tickets in advance boosts overall revenue. Putting an online booking engine or temporary sales platform in place will drive festival revenue.

3.4. Audience size and profile

The online survey shows that five festivals estimate that their audience is 10,000+; eight festivals estimate their audience to be between 2,000 and 10,000; five festivals estimate their audience to be between 1,000 and 2,000, and the remaining eight festivals estimate their audience to be 1,000 or lower.

Across all festivals, organisers estimate that 52% of attendees are locals, 36% are domestic and 12% are international.

When asked where their overseas visitors come from, festivals mentioned Great Britain, Mainland Europe and North America; this ties in with the national pattern of overseas visits.

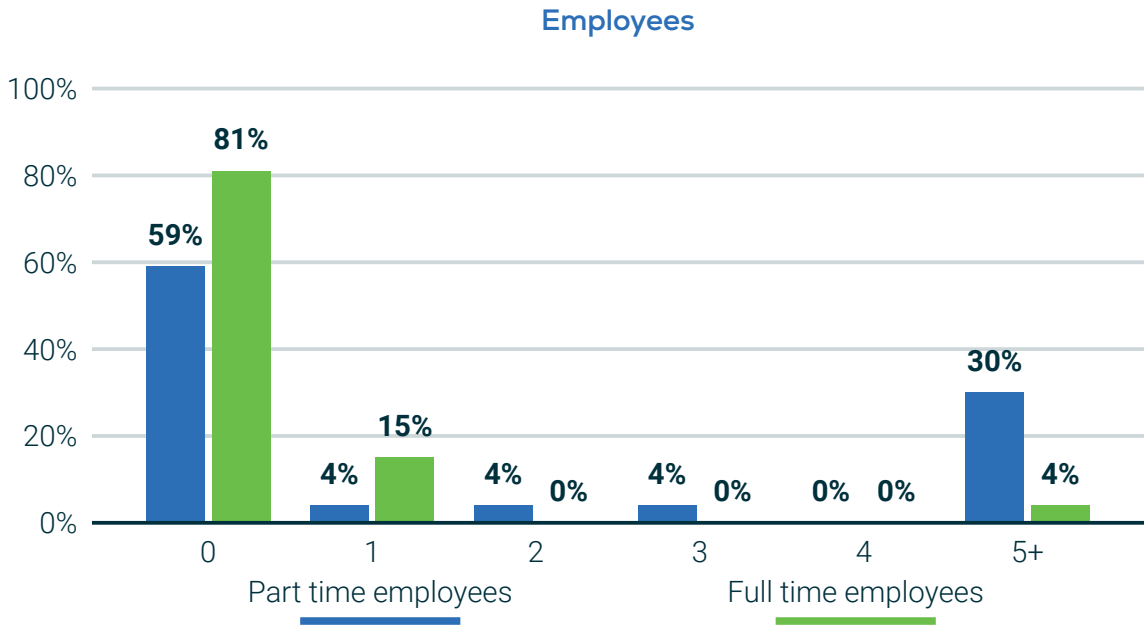
In terms of gathering audience data, 33% of festivals conduct an audience survey, 33% use people counters, 80% analyse ticket sales and 7% use Garda estimates.

Most festivals (63%) regard themselves as predominantly regional, followed by predominantly local (44%), predominantly international (41%), and predominantly national (37%).

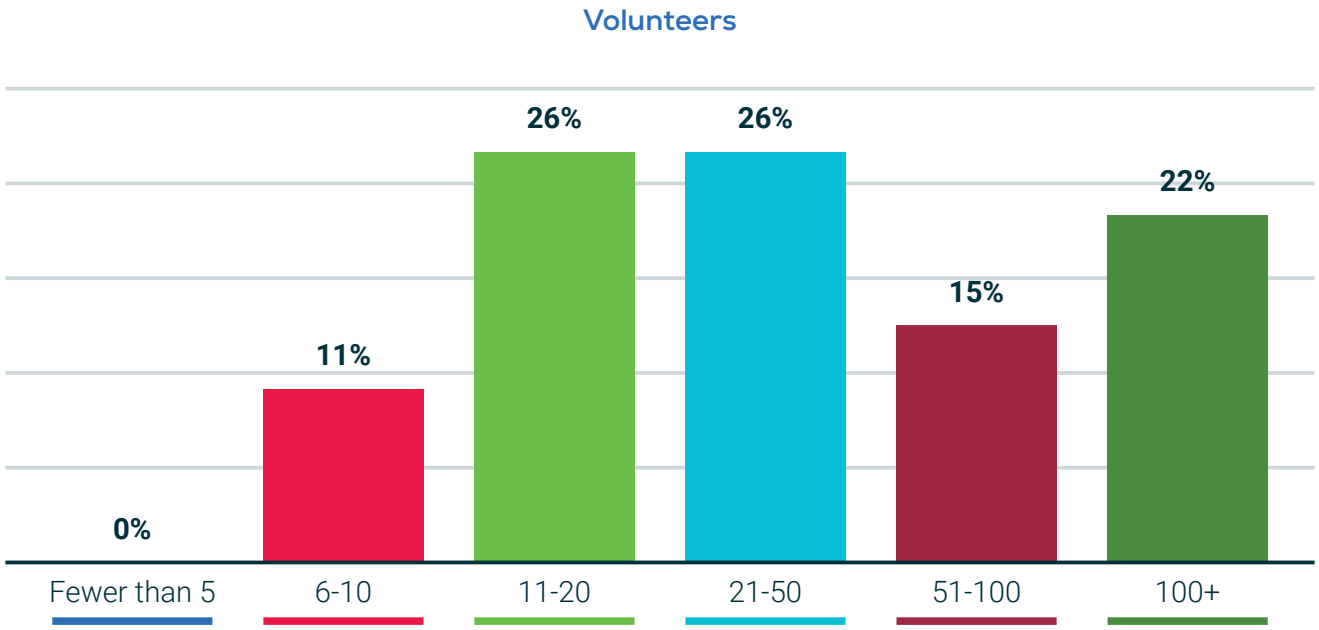
3.5. Legal structure, employees and volunteers

Insights:

- Just over half (56%) of festivals are run by a community group, committee or charity with the remainder (44%) registered as a company (including not-for-profit companies).
- 81% of festivals do not have full time employees and 60% do not have part time employees. Just 15% of festivals have one full time employee.
- Many festivals are organised by volunteers with the phrase “a labour of love” being used by many consultees.



Source: Online survey



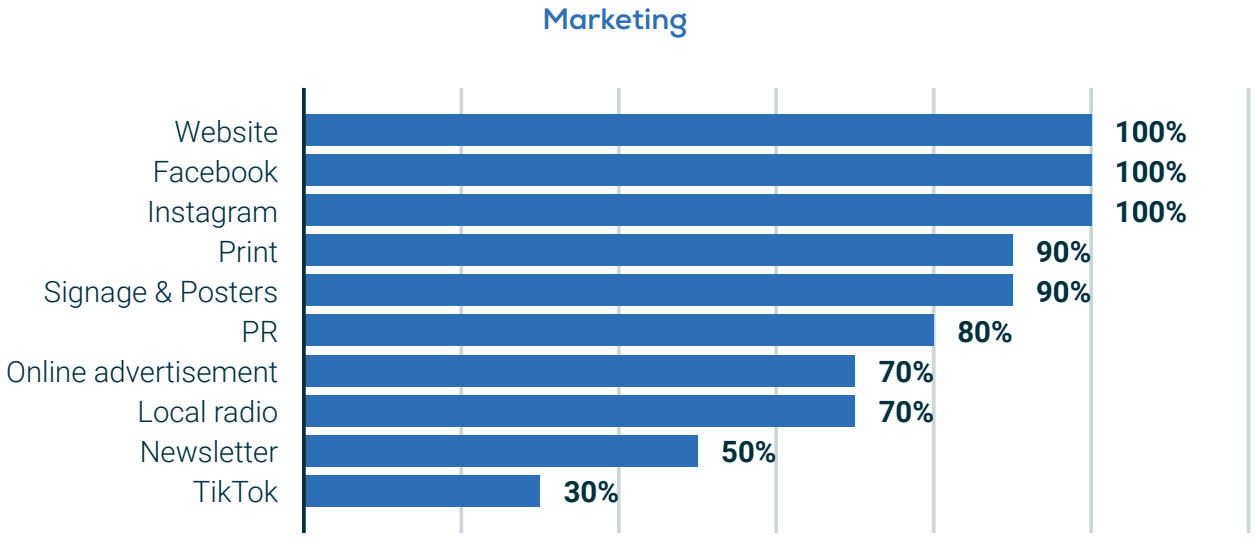
Source: Online survey

3.6. Marketing

As the chart below shows, the use of marketing platforms by Sligo's festival and events follows the expected trend, with digital platforms to the fore.

In terms of spend, almost one third of festivals spend €1,000 or less on marketing while at the upper end of the scale, 11% spend over €20,000.

In discussions with festivals, many talk of having to firstly pay for items such as programming, equipment etc that are essential to staging the festival, and then whatever remains can be spent on marketing. This underlines the need for centralised marketing support for festivals.



Source: Online survey

Annual marketing spend	% of festivals
€1,000 or less	30%
€1,000-€5,000	48%
€5,001-€10,000	11%
€10,000 +	11%

Source: Online survey

3.7. Collaboration

Festivals see the benefit of and are committed to collaboration, sharing resources, supporting each other and partnering with other tourism providers. They also point to the fact that time pressures and the fact that most festivals are run by volunteers, can mean that networking and collaboration do not get enough attention. Enhanced collaboration can include:

1. Resource sharing among festivals
2. Collaborating between festivals for impact measurement programmes
3. Facilitated networking; festivals to meet more often to share knowledge and contacts
4. Development of a Sligo festival and events forum
5. Networking with tourism officers and national tourism bodies
6. Partnerships with other businesses; Hotels for package deals; Cafés and bars for event series; Food stalls and drink providers
7. Social media cross-posting

Ballygawley Music Festival

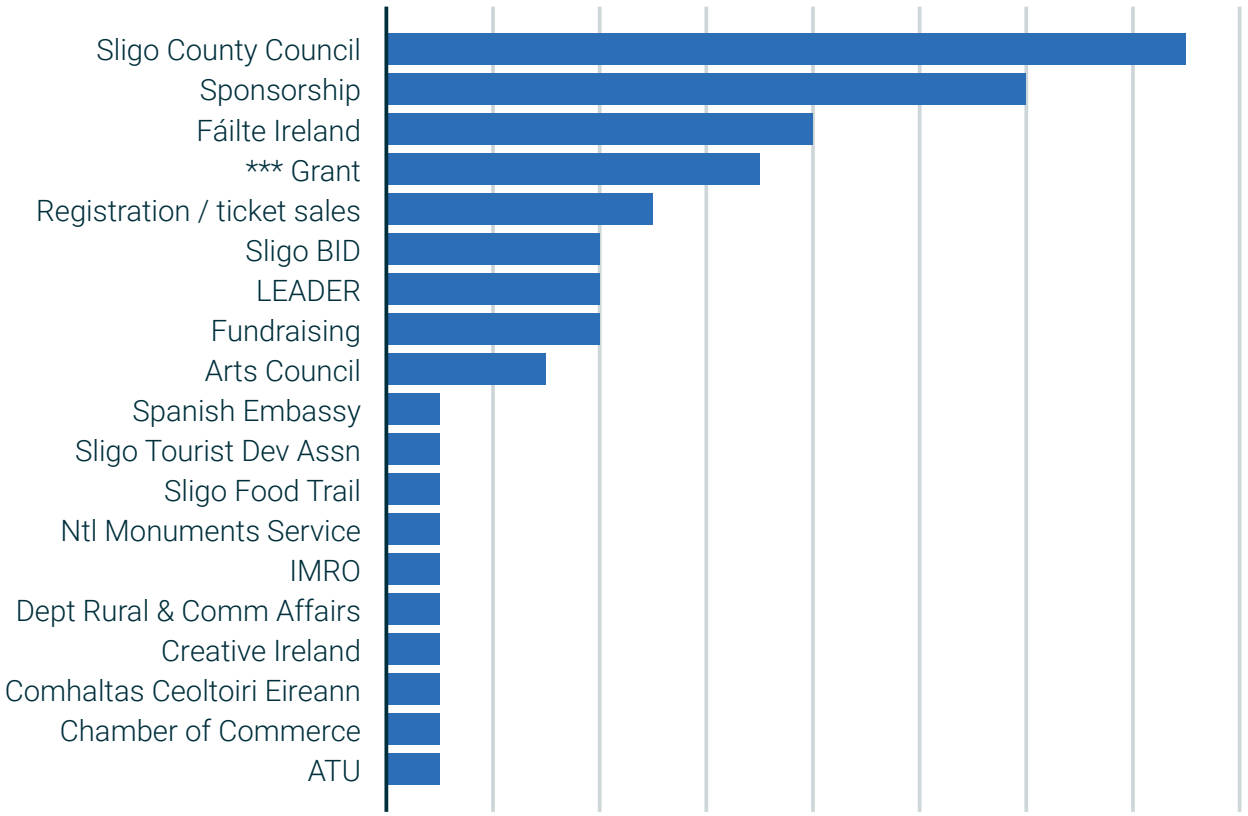
3.8. Sources of funding

The table below shows the mix of funding sources. It is positive to see that 60% of festivals grew commercial income in 2024. The decline in sponsorship points to the need for support in targeting sponsorship but also to the fact that many businesses are under pressure from high costs and inflation.

	Increased in 2024	Decreased in 2024
Commercial income (tickets, registrations, stall rental, merchandise, etc)	60%	40%
Public funding (e.g. local authority, Arts Council, LEADER, Fáilte Ireland, Creative Ireland, etc)	59%	41%
Sponsorship	48%	52%

Source: Online survey

Sources of funding – number of mentions



Source: Online survey

*** Note regarding the word "grant": As this was an open-ended question in the online survey it is likely that respondents who used the word "grant" are referring to some of the other public funding sources such as Sligo County Council, Fáilte Ireland, The Arts Council, LEADER, etc.

3.9. Non-financial supports[5]

While financial support is obviously important, the online research and meetings with festivals also highlighted the role of non-financial support in driving growth and success.

The graphic below shows the type of non-financial supports that festivals would like to access.

Marketing and promotion

- Advertising and PR campaigns
- Assistance with website development
- Access to branding / signage opportunities around Sligo
- Centralised marketing hub providing digital, graphic design and social media support

Resource sharing and collaboration

- Shared equipment / production resources, for example, crowd barriers, signage, etc.
- Connecting event organisers with potential volunteers

Administration and compliance

- Help with business plans
- Guidance on health and safety
- Guidance on sustainability and accessibility
- Accounting support
- Up to date directories of contacts

Policy and procedures

- Database of venues
- Structured interactions with council officers; a one-stop-shop for festivals and events

5. See also the implementation action plan.

Tubbercurry Old Fair Day

3.10. Concluding remarks

Taking account of all the research and consultation, the overall needs for the future of festivals and events in Sligo can be summarised as follows:

- **Resourcing the strategy:** There is a strong consensus that the strategy needs to be adequately resourced if festivals are to deliver on their tourism potential.
- **Financial support:** Funding is identified as a key issue with many noting the need for increased financial backing and to rethink fund allocation based on economic impact.
- **Growth potential:** Calls for more supports for festivals that have proven growth capacity and close alignment with Sligo's strategic policies. There's a recognition that some festivals have reached their ceiling while others have room for expansion.
- **Collaboration and coordination:** There is a desire for a coordinated approach to the sharing of resources and equipment, and better cross promotion.
- **Impacts:** There is a call for better analysis of festival impacts on local businesses.
- **Venues:** The importance of Queen Maeve Square as a cultural hub and pivotal location for festivals is highlighted by festival consultees who also express a desire for a simple and impartial process for festivals to access it, and other public spaces. The shortage of dedicated performance venues is also mentioned, with calls for an audit and database of available spaces, including Council-owned properties.
  In addition, cultural institutions provide a valuable contribution to festivals with a range of quality venues on offer in Sligo such as The Model, the Hawk's Well theatre, the ATU Knocknarea Arena, The Factory and indeed libraries.

In summary, the consultation and research findings reflect a desire for a structured, well-supported and collaborative approach to festival development in Sligo. The future depends on increased financial and logistical support, more coordination, improved infrastructure and a well-resourced strategy to maximise the impact of festivals and events on tourism and community development in Sligo.

Love Is A Stranger

4. Sustainability and accessibility

4.1. Sustainability

One of the topics explored in the online survey and during consultation meetings with Sligo's festivals was sustainability, with the following practices cited as being either currently in place or being planned. They are grouped together under five main themes:

1. Waste management and plastic reduction	2. Transport	3. Local focus	4. Environmental awareness	5. Marketing and promotion
Recyclable decorations and signage	Encourage public transport and car pooling	Prioritising local vendors and local food	Environmental policies in place	Less print
Recycling stations	Promote e-bikes	Supporting the local economy	Carbon footprint monitoring	More online
Zero single-use plastics policy	Using buses to reduce traffic		Energy conservation	Reusable marketing materials
Water refill stations				

Source: Online survey and meetings with festivals and events

Spilt Milk Festival

As noted in the Sligo DEDP, tourism must adopt a much more sustainable approach with new visitor expectations on how they value local experiences, and greater environmental awareness.

Over the life of the strategy, festivals should be supported to become more sustainable across the full festival experience, and sustainability will continue to be a requirement for funding.

Festivals applying to Sligo County Council for funding must demonstrate how climate change / sustainability initiatives are integrated into the delivery of the festival/event and contribute to Sligo County Council's aim of achieving a greener Sligo. For example:

- The use of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) fuelled generators result in 90% reduction in onsite energy generated GHG emission.
- Waste management; clearly labelled recycle/ compost / general waste bins.
- No single use plastic policy at bars (where applicable).
- Reusable cups.
- Traders whose ethos is sustainable trader policy.
- Food vendors who have signed up no single use plastic packaging pledge.

Official Opening of 'Queen Maeve Square' May 2024

4.2. Accessibility

Accessibility within festivals is essential to ensure that people of all abilities can fully participate in and enjoy the experience equally. By implementing accessibility measures, festivals will create inclusive environments that cater to diverse needs, including those with mobility, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

The aim over the lifetime of this strategy is that Sligo's festivals are accessible and inclusive, so that everyone can enjoy the breadth of experiences on offer.

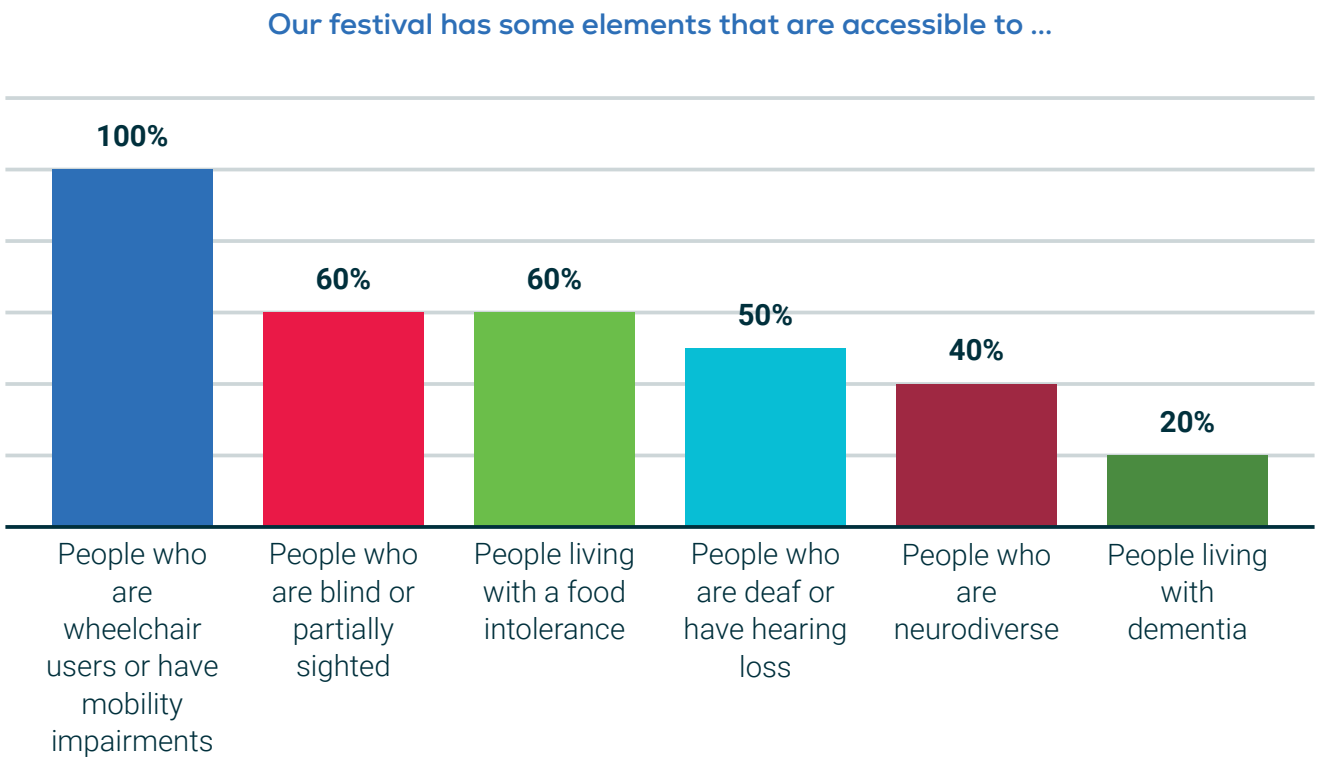
Success would see all festivals rolling out initiatives that will increase accessibility and inclusivity over the lifetime of the strategy. To achieve this ambition, training and other supports will be provided to festivals, in partnership with relevant organisations, to facilitate sharing of resources and knowledge.

Ultimately, prioritising accessibility is not just a legal obligation but a moral one that reflects a commitment to inclusivity and equity. Accessible and inclusive programming benefits not only those with disabilities but can also improve the overall experience for all attendees.

The online survey asked festivals

> "How accessible is your festival/event? Our festival has at least some elements that are accessible to …".

The graph shows respondents' current efforts.



Source: Online survey

5. Positioning Sligo's festivals and events for tourism growth

5.1. Background

A central ask of this strategy is to identify festivals that can help realise the ambitions of the Sligo DEDP. Sligo's festivals have been examined by looking at them through a tourism lens. Adopting this approach is not to disregard festivals that align less closely with the aims of the Sligo DEDP - such festivals are important from a social, cultural and economic perspective to the local community, but they have a more limited role in tourism.

Brave decisions must be made about where to focus scarce financial resources in order to gain maximum tourism impact in the future.

Cairde Sligo Arts Festival

5.2. Criteria for a successful tourism festival

Successful festivals share certain common characteristics and demonstrate a consistent set of core principles and operational approaches that are generally acknowledged as good practice, regardless of any particular location.

Reflecting their role as destination enabling projects, Sligo's festivals and events have been evaluated; both against DEDP actions and priorities[6] and also against criteria that are particularly relevant to tourism.

These include:

1. Aligning with the Sligo DEDP projects / actions for festivals and events (see section 2.5).
2. Adopting a professional approach to event management, governance, structure, finance and funding, and providing evidence of maximising revenue opportunities.
3. Motivating domestic and overseas tourists to travel to Sligo specifically for the festival and/or encouraging tourists to stay longer in Sligo because of it.
4. Having a unique, differentiated and focussed proposition that is firmly embedded in Sligo's strengths and is hard to replicate in another location.
5. Having a clear understanding of audience needs and undertaking regular audience research.
6. Animating the Wild Atlantic Way brand proposition and the Visit Sligo brand proposition in promotion and in programming.
7. Providing opportunities for audiences to enjoy immersive and participative experiences.
8. Demonstrating an ability to leverage existing funding to create a sustainable, long term future.
9. Having sustainability at the heart of decisions and practices.
10. Adopting and implementing an ethos of accessibility and inclusivity.

6. See details in section 2.5 Sligo Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP)

SO Funny Comedy Festival

5.3. Three categories of festival

As noted on the previous page, Sligo's festivals and events have been evaluated against the Sligo DEDP[7] and against the criteria in section 5.2. The result of this evaluation is to be able to group Sligo's festivals into three categories:

Category 1: High Potential Tourism Festivals and Events.

The festivals[8] that fit the profile of a Category 1 High Potential Tourism Festivals are:

- Cairde Sligo Arts Festival
- Remembering the Armada
- Sligo Jazz Festival
- Sligo Live
- Sligo Summer Festival (expanded to 3 weekends)
- Taste of Sligo Food Festival

Category 2: Developing Festivals and Events with Potential for Tourism

Category 3: All Other Festivals and Events

This approach to categorisation also reflects national policy i.e. the Fáilte Ireland strategic festivals model (see section 5.6).

5.4. Funding the strategy

In 2024, Sligo County Council invested €113,000 in open Grant funding to Sligo's festivals and events.

The €113,000 fund comprised:

- €59,500 from the Sligo County Council Arts Office
- €53,500 from the Sligo County Council Community & Tourism Department (this sum includes €23,500 from the Fáilte Ireland Regional Festivals & Participative Events Fund)

7. See details in section 2.5 Sligo Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP)
8. Festivals listed in alphabetical order.

Recommendation for Sligo County Council funding 2025-2029

Year	Recommendation
2025	A. The €113,000 fund to be continued (subject to funding, and subject to meeting criteria), with some re-evaluation of grant awards. This would see applicants evaluated against DEDP and tourism objectives. B. A new additional sum of €30,000 to be available to support Category 1 High Potential Tourism Festivals and in accordance with a Festivals Charter to be signed up to with Sligo County Council. Category 1 High Potential Tourism Festivals will be eligible to also apply to the €113,000 fund (ref point A above). C. A new, additional sum of up to €20,000 to be available to the Sligo County Council Festivals and Events Office to commence the implementation of development and other non-financial actions set out in this strategy.
Annually: 2026 to 2029	A. The €113,000 fund to be continued (subject to funding, and subject to meeting criteria), with some re-evaluation of grant awards, as required. This would see applicants evaluated against DEDP and tourism objectives. B. A similar sum as in 2025 (€30,000 subject to funding) to be available to continue to support Category 1 High Potential Tourism Festivals, determined in accordance with compliance with the Festivals Charter, KPIs and related requirements. Category 1 High Potential Tourism Festivals will be eligible to also apply to the €113,000 fund (ref point A above). C. Along with continued funding towards implementing development and non-financial actions set out in this strategy, 2026 will also see the introduction of a new annual open call for a special development fund for Category 2 Developing Festivals with Potential for Tourism. Subject to assessment criteria to be set out, and limited to six successful applicants. Category 2 Developing Festivals with Potential for Tourism will be eligible to also apply to the €113,000 fund (ref point A above). Regarding points B and C above, potential sums will be part of the annual budgetary process of Sligo County Council so cannot be guaranteed. Such allocations will be dependent upon financial priorities and commitments, and economic circumstances prevailing. Sligo County Council is committed to supporting the aims of this strategy and its intentions are to continue the funding streams as set out for 2025 for years 2026-2029.

Other potential funding sources[9] for festivals include The Arts Council, LEADER and Creative Ireland. Festivals will be encouraged to apply to these funding streams if they meet the eligibility and criteria.

9. This is not an exhaustive list of other potential funders

The following is noted with respect to these three specific events:

1. St Patrick's Festival currently receives €50,000 from Fáilte Ireland with match funding provided by Sligo County Council and Sligo BID. If the Fáilte Ireland support for Regional St. Patrick's Festivals comes to an end, the Sligo St Patrick's Festival will need to consider a new approach in terms of future proofing for financial sustainability and continuity.
2. The Sligo DEDP has identified as a key action "to deliver large scale surfing events or festivals to increase the profile of the National Surf Centre (NSC), project lead is the NSC with Sligo County Council and Fáilte Ireland as partners". The strategy notes that there is an opportunity and potential for Sligo in this area. In addition the value of Sligo's landscape and potential for outdoor pursuits such as walking and cycling (Mountain Bike Centre) etc fits well under the DEDP Pillar of Sligo as 'A haven for Adventure and Wellbeing' and should be supported.
3. The opportunity to develop a Christmas market (and other seasonal markets) in Queen Maeve Square should be considered by the operator of Queen Maeve Square.

Sligo St Patricks Day Festival – Photo Credit 'Kapture Photography Ireland'

5.5. A charter for Category 1 High Potential Festivals

Category 1 high potential festivals availing of funding and supports will be requested to sign up to a charter of responsibilities to avail of additional funding. To maximise buy-in and to ensure that the charter meets the needs of both funder and festival, the detail will be drawn up in consultation between Sigo County Council and category 1 high potential festivals.

The charter will include key performance indicators (KPIs) and benchmarks, such as the criteria listed in section 5.2, and other measures aimed at making the festival sustainable, including;

1. Audience research to be undertaken
2. Strong tourism focus to be demonstrated
3. Measurable increase in bednights
4. Growth in audience numbers
5. Expanded programme to be evident from year to year
6. Increased focus on revenue generation and future financial sustainability
7. Enhanced collaboration – both with other festivals and with tourism providers
8. Increased alignment in programming and in marketing with the Sligo DEDP, with the Visit Sligo brand and with the Wild Atlantic Way brand
9. Active marketing and placement of Visit Sligo branding online and at events
10. Targets for environmental sustainability and for accessibility
11. Leverage existing supports to reduce reliance on state supports
12. Potential to progress to apply for Fáilte Ireland national festival funding

Sligo Live Festival

5.6. Fáilte Ireland funding

Regional Festivals and Participative Events Grant Scheme

The Fáilte Ireland Regional Festivals and Participative Events Grant scheme awards €550,000 to 31 local authorities for distribution to festivals. The breakdown of allocations by county is not available, but Sligo receives the eighth highest amount at €23,500. If the total fund was divided equally between the 31 counties, the annual allocation would be just shy of €17,500 each.

Fáilte Ireland Strategic Festivals Programme

In 2025, a new three year (2026-2028) strategic funding model will be introduced by Fáilte Ireland; it will support and develop a diverse and compelling portfolio of uniquely Irish, cultural and heritage tourism-led festivals and events that cater to both domestic and international visitors. The aim is to support and develop festivals specifically with a tourism focus encouraging audiences to attend and stay longer, thereby delivering additional economic benefits and increased returns to the exchequer.

5.7. Festivals collective[10]

A number of Sligo festivals are currently exploring the formation of an informal partnership to pool resources, share information, and pursue funding opportunities more effectively. This collective could serve as an ideal platform to submit a joint application for LEADER grants, with participating festivals contributing agreed sums as match funding.

5.8. Suite of supports

Apart from additional funding, a key ask of this strategy is to identify a suite of supports to facilitate festival development and growth.

While the need for strategic alignment of funding to support high potential festivals is acknowledged, it is also vital that non-financial supports are in place. These can include, but are not limited to, enhancing capabilities in finance competency, programme development, sustainability, marketing, succession, training, governance, and more. The details of these are included in the implementation action plan.

10. Working title

Spanish Armada Festival

6. Implementation action plan

6.1. Delivering the strategy

To deliver the strategy, a comprehensive action plan will be implemented. Rather than implementation being the responsibility of any one individual organisation, different actions will be delivered collaboratively by relevant stakeholders, including Sligo County Council, Fáilte Ireland, LEADER, LEO Sligo, Sligo Volunteer Centre, ATU, Sligo BID, etc.

6.2. Overview

During consultation, although many expressed the need for financial supports, it was also clear that financial supports alone are not enough. Supports such as training, collaboration, marketing and knowledge sharing are also critical.

Many of the findings from the research with Sligo's festivals and events would equally be found in other counties. These include a reliance on grant aid, a weak commercial focus and insufficient collaboration.

As one of a handful of local authorities that employs a festival and events coordinator, Sligo has the advantage of being able to provide supports, not just grant aid, to encourage the sector towards growth and sustainability.

6.3. Strategic Partnerships

There are a number of other funding mechanisms available to festivals and events in Sligo, and the strategy recommends that Sligo County Council work closely with funders such as LEADER, LEO Sligo and Creative Ireland to optimise total available funding.

It is also recommended that Sligo County Council form strategic partnerships to deliver on the non-financial supports outlined in section 3.9. This could include collaborations with:

- Sligo BID and The Arts Council for festival research
- ATU for research and event management
- Sligo Volunteer Centre for recruiting and working with volunteers

6.4. Financial

Financial sustainability is key to long-term viability. Actions to support festivals achieve financial sustainability include:

Grant aid

Recommended actions	
1.	Funding agencies to explore if they can provide assurance regarding multi-annual funding so that festivals can plan with certainty from year to year. This is particularly relevant where the timing of application deadlines and/or announcement of funding awards coincides with festival dates.
2.	Explore ways of streamlining grant application and payment drawdown procedures so that they are commensurate with the level of grant, and that they take account of the fact that most festivals are run by voluntary committees.
3.	Ensure information about different funding sources is regularly communicated in an easy-to-understand format on appropriate online and offline platforms.
4.	Ensure that festivals with ambitions to scale up are aware of the new Fáilte Ireland Festival fund and support relevant festivals to apply for same.
5.	Festival promoters to explore funding opportunities with Sligo Business Improvement District (BID).

Sponsorship

Recommended actions	
1.	Work with the business representative organisations to identify potential sponsorship opportunities amongst multinational and indigenous companies.
2.	Provide training and a toolkit for festivals on how to approach potential sponsors, how to prepare and pitch sponsorship proposals using language and information that answers the sponsors' questions, and the importance of safeguarding long-term potential from sponsorship.
3.	Provide training on the development of Festival Friends programmes, whereby individuals and businesses can support and engage with a festival in return for a membership fee. Benefits for festival friends usually include priority booking, complimentary tickets or exclusive access to selected shows, merchandise and recognition on festival platforms.

Commercial revenue generation

Recommended actions
1. Provide training to stimulate commercial revenue generation to avoid under-pricing tickets or having too big a proportion of free events.
2. Work with festivals to agree targets for increased commercial revenue generation.
3. Provide training or mentoring support to help festivals set themselves up for online ticket sales.

Cost management

Recommended actions
1. Provide training on financial management
2. Provide training on obtaining best value on insurance, health and safety statements, printing, festival-specific infrastructure, etc. All individual festivals incur these costs – savings through bulk centralised buying on behalf of a group of festivals should be explored.

Sligo International Summer School and Jazz Festival

6.5. Marketing and sales

A two-pronged approach to year-round marketing and sales is recommended.

1. Festivals and events should form a core part of annual marketing communications and a continuous message that there is always something happening in Sligo will be motivating to potential visitors.
2. Timely marketing by individual festivals in the lead-up to festival dates.

Recommended actions
1. Make festivals and events a central pillar in Sligo's promotion as a tourism destination across all publicity and promotional activities.
2. Continue to enhance and develop the annual calendar of events. Final details of festival programmes do not have to be known in order for this to happen – dates and a flavour of the type of events are usually enough for the print copy, and the online copy can be regularly updated as events are finalised.
3. Close cooperation and year-round engagement between Sligo County Council and festivals to ensure that everyone understands timescales, content format, opportunities and limitations for joint marketing.
4. Develop and agree a programme whereby Sligo County Council promotes festivals on its social media platforms and in its PR programmes.
5. Provide guidance on timelines for marketing communications e.g. next year's dates announced immediately after this year's event, media launch 6-8 weeks ahead of festival opening and ongoing marketing communications and sales plan in the lead up to and throughout the festival.
6. Provide training on how to engage with Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland for domestic and overseas marketing. Explore opportunities for festivals to take part in relevant Fáilte Ireland training programmes and how to upload their festival information onto Fáilte Ireland Events Portal so as to be listed on DiscoverIreland.ie.
7. Provide training on copyright-free content creation that can be used for and by festivals and tourism businesses i.e. copy, imagery, video, using AI, etc.
8. Advocate on behalf of festivals for media placement, radio interviews and advertorial in print media.
9. Provide training on the creation of and management of media partnerships – at local, regional and national levels.
10. Provide training on sales/distribution channels for ticket sales and card payments.
11. Develop festival itineraries for promotion to tour operators and bulk buyers.

12. Encourage festivals to release and sell tickets early. Best practice shows that if tickets are released 2-3 months in advance, it gives another PR opportunity and can also influence people to travel specifically for the festival.
13. Get commitment from festivals to use the Visit Sligo brand and the Wild Atlantic Way brand in their promotional campaigns and material.

6.6. Collaboration and central supports

Recommended actions
1. Facilitate networking and collaboration between festivals and funders so that each has a better understanding of the other.
2. Facilitate collaboration between festivals and the local authority with a central information source for queries regarding issues such as Health & Safety, casual trading licences, programming, suppliers, contacts, etc.
3. Facilitate collaboration between festivals and hotels and hospitality providers to better understand needs on both sides. Festivals offer accommodation providers and other tourism providers content that can encourage overnight tourists to choose Sligo or to stay an extra night supporting the nighttime economy and aligning with the Purple Flag Destination. Hotels and other tourism providers can use their own sales and marketing channels to promote the festival message in general and specific festivals that will resonate with their customer base at different times of year.
4. Food and drink are important to a festival experience. Explore opportunities for festivals and restaurants/bars to collaborate and bring the festival to life through food and drink, particularly where there is a link with the festival theme.
5. Encourage the Sligo Volunteer Centre to create a 'virtual bench' of volunteers with particular skillsets appropriate to festival needs.
6. Meet with Sligo Festivals Collective to agree a way forward that supports festivals in a way that maximises LEADER funding such as marketing, training, operational and promotional resources, etc.
7. Encourage festivals to share items commonly used e.g. barriers, portable toilets, bunting, gazebos, tear drops, tables, chairs, staging, props, equipment, generators, marquees, headsets, warehousing to store equipment, etc. If the items required are not available, festivals can apply to LEADER for funding.

6.7. Capacity building and training

Recommended actions
1. Work with Sligo LEO to develop and deliver a management development programme for festivals. Topics could include marketing, digital marketing, financial planning, GDPR, Health & Safety, programming, environmental sustainability, etc. Programme to be developed based on a review of existing festival supports and seeking input from festivals on areas for further development / gaps.
2. Provide training and/or mentoring on completing funding applications.
3. Engage with LEO to provide practical mentoring supports where relevant to festival groups in the areas of finance, social media and marketing.
4. Encourage festival and event organisers to participate in LEO Sligo training programmes across topics such as social media, using artificial intelligence in marketing, festival website review, etc.
5. Encourage festivals to participate in free Failte Ireland supports and training available through https://supports.failteireland.ie/

6.8. Programme development

Recommended actions
1. Provide supports to festival organisers (both new and established) on programme development. Topics to include how to craft an engaging programme, how to capitalise on unique strengths and attributes, how to incorporate elements of the Visit Sligo and Wild Atlantic Way brand propositions, etc. Supports could take the form of training workshops, best practice learning journeys, guest speakers from other festivals and familiarisation visits to other festivals.

Sligo Chess Tournament

6.9. Governance

Reflecting the voluntary nature of most festivals, it is not realistic to expect that they will be expert in all of the disciplines required for the sustainable growth of their festival. Whilst many strive to attract the skills they are missing by expanding their committee/board, it is challenging to find volunteers with the right skills.

Recommended actions	
1.	Explore availability of training courses or webinars on topics such as governance, succession planning, etc.
2.	Provide information/training/supports to ensure that festivals are registered with the Charities Regulator where appropriate. Organisations that have exclusively charitable purposes (of benefit to the community) and provide a clear public benefit should have charitable status.
3.	Ensure provision of training to ensure festival committees/board members are aware of their duties and obligations.
4.	Encourage festivals to use resources such as Board Match when recruiting new board/ committee members. https://www.boardmatch.ie/

6.10. Animating towns and villages

Sometimes festivals can appear to be hidden away in venues. A town en-fête creates a sense of curiosity, a vibe that something is happening, an invitation to explore and stay. Festivals, the local authority and other stakeholders can work together to create the feeling that the towns and villages of Sligo are en-fête.

Recommended actions	
1.	Identify signage/billboard sites, currently “empty” that can be used to promote festivals.
2.	Identify locations for pole signs, billboards, flags etc and use environmentally friendly materials.
3.	Liaise with business representative organisations to create a shop window competition for some festivals to encourage retail and high street engagement.

Wild Atlantic Shanty Festival

6.11. Research

Measuring and understanding audience size, audience satisfaction and the economic contribution of the festival to the local economy are just some of the metrics for long-term festival sustainability. In terms of measuring audience size and satisfaction levels, there is currently no consistent approach across Sligo's festivals, and the accuracy of audience measurement is suboptimal for many.

It would appear that few of Sligo's festivals have undertaken an economic impact study so it is impossible for them or for stakeholders to fully appreciate how much festivals (individually or collectively) contribute to the local economy.

Recommended actions	
1.	Liaise with Fáilte Ireland to develop a common template that festivals can use for audience research. A common approach can support future funding applications and make it easier for funders to make decisions on who and what to support.
2.	In collaboration with ATU, undertake audience research and economic impact studies – perhaps commencing with a pilot study in the first year, which could be rolled out in subsequent years.
3.	Ensure festivals and stakeholders understand differences between audience size and unique visitors e.g. one person may attend three different events and thus be counted three times as part of the overall audience, but just once as a unique visitor. Calculate bednights based on the number of nights each unique visitor spends in Sligo rather than audience size.
4.	Collaborate with accommodation providers to calculate bednights and economic impact.

6.12. Sustainability and accessibility

Recommended actions	
1.	Support festivals on their journey to becoming more sustainable and more accessible – e.g. training, case studies, lists of vendors, etc.

6.13. Conclusion

The timing of this strategy is appropriate as there is an enthusiasm and energy to grow Sligo's festivals and tourism economy.

Strategy is about choice. If the strategy is adequately resourced and implemented, the effects can be transformational. The time is right for Sligo to make brave decisions, to prioritise financial supports for high potential tourism festivals, with local festivals continuing to avail of community funding as well as non-financial supports. This approach will deliver the best results.

7. Appendices

I Consultees

Thank you to the following for taking part in the research and consultation for this strategy.

Name	Festival / organisation
Alison Hunter	Artist
Jackie Maguire	Artist
Sam Bishop	Another Love Story
Domhnall Melly	ATU
Joanna Sweeney	ATU
Mary McGuckin	ATU
Philip Brett	ATU Haunting
Seamus McCormack	Ballintogher Traditional Festival
Cllr Thomas Walsh	Ballygawley Music Festival
Valerie Lougheed	Ballygawley Music Festival
Jennifer Scott	Black Pig Music Festival
Stephanie Pawula	Cairde Sligo Arts Festival
Tara McGowan	Cairde Sligo Arts Festival
John McGettrick	Coleman Traditional Music Festival
Committee member	Enniscrone Show
Colin Hindle	Fáilte Ireland
Luke Murray	Fáilte Ireland
Bob Coggins	Hagstravaganza
Rebecca Stevens	National Surf Centre
Micheál Ó Domhnaill	Remembering the Armada
Eddie Gorman	Remembering the Armada
Sharon Carty	Sligo Baroque Music Festival
Edel Doran	Sligo BID
Gail McGibbon	Sligo BID
Joseph Fogarty	Sligo Camino
Craig DuBose	Sligo Chess Tournament
Aoife Porter	Sligo Destination Forum
Gerry Moore	Sligo Destination Forum

Name	Festival / organisation
Eddie Lee	Sligo International Summer School & Jazz Festival
Freda Danaher	Sligo LEADER Partnership
June Murphy	Sligo LEADER Partnership
Sally O'Connor	Sligo Live
Stephen Walshe	Sligo Local Enterprise Office
Finbarr Filan	Sligo St Patrick's Day Festival
Gail McGibbon	Sligo St Patrick's Day Festival
Brian O'Sullivan	Sligo St Patrick's Day Festival
Allen Banks	Sligo Summer Festival
Brian O'Sullivan	Sligo Summer Festival
Cllr Thomas Walsh	Sligo Summer Festival
Joe Corcoran	Sligo Tourist Development Association
Deirdre Cox	Sligo Traditional Singers / Frank Finn Traditional Singing Festival
Henry Cox	Sligo Traditional Singers / Frank Finn Traditional Singing Festival
Brendan Tierney	SO Funny Comedy Festival
Séana Haughey	South Sligo Summer School
Edel Doherty	Spilt Milk
Istvan Kontz	Sundance Salsa Festival
Tony Travers	Sundance Salsa Festival
Anthony Gray	Taste of Sligo Food Festival
Glenn Gannon	The Model
Patrick Curley	The Model
Michael Carty	Tread Softly
Dermot Morahan	Tubbercurry Old Fair Day
Marie Brouder	Tubbercurry Old Fair Day
Bryan Bailey	Warriors Run
Michelle McKim	Western Drama Festival
Jenn McKee	Wild & Well Festival
Ruairí Davis	Wild Atlantic Shanty Festival
Willie Murphy	Wild Atlantic Shanty Festival
Susan O'Keeffe	Yeats International Summer School

Note: In addition to those named above, there may be others who attended the festivals workshop but did not sign the sign-in sheet – thank you to everyone who participated.

II Fáilte Ireland supports for festivals

Fáilte Ireland provides a number of online supports for festivals.

To access these online supports, festivals need to register on the Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal which can be done here: register as a new user

- Online supports include short (usually no longer than two hours), live courses which are instructor-led and free to attend. See here: **https://supports.failteireland.ie/support-programmes-schedule/**
- There are also a number of recorded courses with supporting materials that festivals can access at any time: **https://supports.failteireland.ie/resources/**
- Of particular interest to many festivals are the "Sales & Marketing How To Video Series" – a series of short videos (average 7 minutes each). **https://supports.failteireland.ie/business-supports/sales-and-marketing/**
- Information on managing sponsorship for festivals can be accessed here: **https://www.failteireland.ie/Product-development/Festival-and-events/Festivals-Events-Business-Supports.aspx**
- To promote a festival or event on **www.discoverireland.ie**, which is Fáilte Ireland's consumer website, organisers can add details of their festival on the Fáilte Ireland Events Portal for Event Organisers: Fáilte Ireland Events Portal

III Sustainability resources for festivals

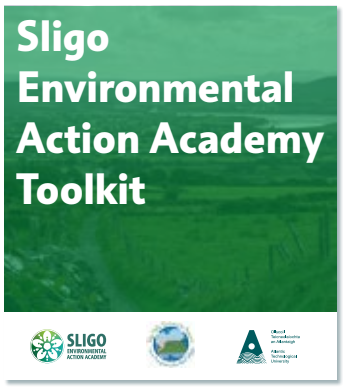
Fáilte Ireland's Sustainable Festivals Guidelines 2023 contains tips for festivals across the areas of energy, travel & transport, materials & waste, food & beverage, water, nature & biodiversity, and governance.

The Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO) coordinate and support local government to lead transformative change and measurable climate action across our cities and counties.
Its website is very useful as a resource for all things climate/sustainability related.

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications has developed a useful guide to plastic free festivals and events.

The Sligo Green Festival Guide contains advice, tips and good environmentally friendly practises to minimise the negative impact of an event on the local environment.

The Sligo Environmental Action Academy Toolkit is a useful resource for festivals and events.



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