

Press release

New visual, performance and community arts centre opens in Offaly

From [Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media](#)

([/en/organisation/department-of-tourism-culture-arts-gaeltacht-sport-and-media/](#)).

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Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin, has today welcomed the opening by Uachtarán na hÉireann, Michael D. Higgins, of a new state-of-the-art visual, performance and community arts centre in Tullamore Co. Offaly.

The Esker Arts Centre received a grant of €2 million from the Minister's department, as part of a major project to create a modern and vibrant arts centre for the local community in Tullamore, and the wider community, who will travel to enjoy the many and varied events and activities that the centre will provide. The new Centre already recognises the importance of showcasing works by professional and community-based artists across disciplines of theatre, drama, visual arts, music, literature, and workshop facilitation.

Esker Arts Centre comprises of a main performance auditorium, exhibition galleries, changing rooms, rehearsal and workshop spaces, an outdoor amphitheatre, and spaces for individual and shared artist studios.

President Higgins said:

"I am delighted to officially open this superb new community facility for Tullamore, the Esker Arts Centre. It has been a privilege for me that throughout my public life, I have had the opportunity of highlighting and valuing the importance of the arts and culture as a source of enrichment in the day-to-day lives of communities. It is so often through our encounters with literature, drama, music and art that we come to understand the human condition, resonate with each other, finding our perceptions challenged, clarified or enhanced.

"It is through the design and provision of community spaces such as this one that we continue to ignite and celebrate creativity amongst our citizens as we embed the arts into the physical design of our areas, into the calendar of a community's year, and into the experience of our citizens. The commitment here in Esker Arts to a wide range of diverse arts programming and activity for local and wider communities with which to engage is so evident. I have no doubt that the Esker Arts Centre will play an important role in the provision of the cultural space that we so dearly need in Ireland as we continue our journey of building an inclusive, equitable, sustainable republic, one that places a high value on artists and cultural practitioners and the participation of the arts by all of its citizens."

Minister Martin said:

"Esker Arts Centre will provide a state-of-the-art facility for the visual and performing arts. It will also provide a vital community arts centre to serve the local and wider communities. My department's provision of €2 million in funding towards the project highlights our commitment to promote, nurture and develop Ireland's culture and arts in the regions. I congratulate Offaly County Council on the delivery of this long-awaited Arts Centre in Tullamore."

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