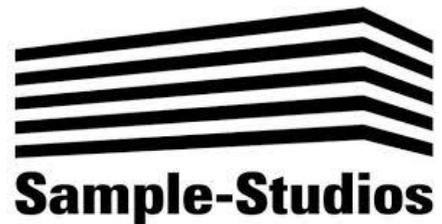


**Sample-Studios**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2020**

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## **1. About Sample-Studios**

### **Reporting Period:**

This Annual Report refers to the reporting period January 1st - December 31st 2020

### **Organisation Name and Address:**

Sample-Studios CLG.

Churchfield Industrial Estate, John F. Connolly Road, Churchfield, Cork City, T23 XV50

### **Organisation Contact Details:**

director.samplestudios@gmail.com

0863509668

**Company Number:** 495880

**Registered Charity Number:** 20205874

## 2. Our Story: Summary of Sample-Studios' Purpose & Activities

### 2a) Mission

1. Provide affordable individual and shared workspaces for emerging and practicing artists of various disciplines
2. Promotion of research and community outreach projects
3. To promote accessible art and promote inclusivity
4. Foster national networking and collaboration with a view to developing opportunities nationally and internationally for members to show their work
5. Provide professional development developed through our artist and curatorial residency programmes and our TACTIC Visual Arts exhibition programme which provides an opportunity for graduates to develop practical skills in art curation
6. Our Sample-Studios exhibition programme, artist talks and educational workshops seeks to promote better connection with the local and artistic community in Cork City.

### Purpose

Our purpose is to support and promote emerging and established contemporary practitioners of the arts from Cork and beyond, through affordable artist-run studios, to sustain and develop local, regional and international initiatives and to promote research and community outreach projects.



## **2b.) Chairperson's Statement**

Sample-Studios is a not-for-profit arts organisation that supports the professional development of contemporary arts practitioners in Cork City and beyond. What began as a volunteer-led initiative in 2011 has grown into a professional arts organisation with a dedicated team of staff and volunteers that manages: artist studios and shared facilities in Churchfield, the city-wide TACTIC Visual Arts Programme, the Lord Mayor's Pavilion exhibition and project space, and a successful Graduate Residency Programme and new Education Programme.

As we look ahead to our 10th anniversary in 2021, we reflect on the year 2020 which was a year of unprecedented challenges for the artistic community. Sample-Studios joined our colleagues in cultural Cork in facing this adversity with the creativity, ingenuity and resilience that has defined our organisation from its foundation, a decade ago. Despite the challenges presented by ongoing closures of our studios and gallery spaces throughout 2020, Sample-Studios continued to grow its membership and deliver a programme of exhibitions in its venues, adopting new and innovative solutions to present work and support our members. We increased our offering to members with in-person and online group crits, events, professional development and mentorship opportunities. We expanded our impact in the community through a new schools-based education programme and successful community project PhotoGo, which has since been shortlisted for the Business to Arts Awards. Alongside the growth of our membership, we welcomed the growth of our team with the appointment of new Artistic Director, Aoibhie McCarthy and new Board Member, Dr. James O' Sullivan. Significant strides were made in 2020 in relation to sustaining our organisation and expanding our capacity including more than doubling our organisational income for 2021 and diversifying our income sources, achieving charitable status and securing a further 6 year lease on our studio premises.

We are grateful for the continued support of our major funder The Arts Council of Ireland who support provision of high quality and affordable workspaces for our artists, and our exhibitions programme through the Workspace Scheme and in 2020, we secured new funding, the Young People, Children and Education Project Award and Capacity Building Fund for future developments in 2021. We wish to express our appreciation also to Cork City Council with whom we have agreed a three year lease for the use of The Lord Mayor's Pavilion, offering Sample-Studios a prominent public space in the City Centre for a year-round programme of exhibitions supported through their Arts Grant. We welcome the appointment of Michelle Carew as Cork City Arts Officer and former member of Sample-Studios Siobhán Clancy as Community Arts Coordinator and wish them the very best in their new roles. We also wish to acknowledge the support of our sponsor Gurrabraher Credit Union who supported our

PhotoGo Community Photography Project and Education Programme. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with GCU to enhance our impact in Cork City's Northside.

I am grateful my fellow Board Members who, through commitment and tenacity, steered Sample-Studios through this challenging year to a strong and sustainable future and our team who have worked diligently to ensure our organisation, members and audiences can look ahead to greener pastures. In particular, I wish to thank Kim-Ling Morris who concluded her role as Acting Artistic Director and supported the transitional period for our new Artistic Director, Aoibhie McCarthy, whose positive impact on the organisation in the early months of her appointment in 2020, has been keenly felt and Sinead Barrett who has supported the exhibitions and graduate residency programme with dedication in her role as Curator in Residence.

The year ahead will be a transformative one for Sample-Studios as we mark a decade of supporting and sustaining over 500 creative practitioners, at the heart of the cultural life of the City. In celebrating our 10th anniversary, Sample-Studios will present an ambitious programme of exhibitions and events in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion and St. Luke's Crypt through new and ongoing partnerships with Create, Cork Midsummer Festival, Spike Island, Cork Harbour Festival, 126 Gallery, Cork Printmakers, Edinburgh Printmakers, Gurrabraher Credit Union and Glow Festival to name but a few. As well as supporting creative careers by providing a pathway to professional practice through our Graduate Residencies, Sample-Studios will enhance our impact in the local community by supporting primary and secondary schools to explore the creative industries. Our new Education Programme 'Cork Creative Careers' will offer a 4-6 week programme of workshops for local 6th class and 4th year students in partnership with Crawford Art Gallery, Cork Printmakers, Cork Libraries Services, Cork World Book Fest and First Cut Youth Film Festival. The 'Cork Young Curators and Critics' Programme will further serve to support the next generation of cultural practitioners here in Cork, and our role in that. We are grateful to the Arts Council and Cork City Council for their support of our new Education Programme.

2021 will be a year of significant infrastructural enhancements in Sample-Studios, particularly in terms of our digital presence. The Arts Council Capacity Building Fund will support the development of an upgraded website in Q2 of 2021, the presentation of a monthly podcast to compliment our exhibitions programme and a monthly programme of professional development workshops for our members and our team in support of digital upskilling and resilience. With increased and diversified income sources, we will create a new part time Programme Coordinator role and the Artistic Director's role will become fulltime in 2021, improving our capacity to deliver on our mission, with passion, dedication and resilience.

## **2c.) Company Secretary's Statement**

### **Overview**

2020 marked a year of unprecedented challenges presented by Covid-19 and protracted periods of lockdown. In spite of these circumstances the membership grew and a programme of public engagement was maintained through online / social media outlets and live exhibitions when restrictions were eased. Members were retained and membership increased. The Churchfield lease was secured for another 6 years and after a successful pilot period in 2019 a three year lease for The Lord Mayor's Pavilion was secured with Cork City Council.

### **Board of Directors**

The Board continued to seek new members and in November, Dr. James O' Sullivan (UCC) joined. In October, Peadar Lamb retired from the Board after 5 years of service. The role of Treasurer was advertised and continued into early 2021.

### **Staff**

Fiona Ni Leamra joined the staff for a temporary period to assist Kim-Ling Morris in her role as Acting Artistic Director. In early 2020, the Board began to actively seek a new Artistic Director. Kim-Ling Morris continued in her role as acting Artistic Director and Financial Manager of Sample-Studios until August when Aoibhie McCarthy was appointed as Artistic Director and Kim-Ling stepped back to become part time Financial Manager. Sinead Barrett continued her graduate Curator in Residence role.

### **Charitable Status**

In November 2020, Sample-Studios were granted charitable status and undertook the process of auditing steps towards compliance and planning for Board and organisational governance training in 2021.

### **Financial**

In 2020 we more than doubled our organisational income for 2021 and diversified our income sources, thanks in great part to our new Artistic Director's drive and commitment. The Arts council Workspace Scheme funding increased to €40,000. We secured significant new funding of €55,000, from the Young People, Children and Education Project Award for a new education programme. We secured €20,000 Capacity Building Fund to upgrade our website, launch a podcast and provide the Board, team and members with professional development training. Cork City Council continued to support our visual arts programme with an Arts Grant of

€5000. We also secured the Cultural Capital Stream D funding to purchase new computer equipment in early 2021. For the second year, Photo Go was sponsored by Gurrabraher Credit Union. Details of finances will be outlined in Section 5. Thanks to The Arts Council, Cork City Council and Gurrabraher Credit Union for their continued support.

The accounts for 2019 were returned in October 2020 and those for 2020 are due in September 2021.



**Sample Studios Member Seiko Hayase working in the Project Room**

### **3. Structure, Governance and Management**

#### **3a) Trustees, Board Directors/Committee Members**

Chair: Carl Dixon: Attended 11 2020 Board Meetings

Company Secretary: Rebecca Bradley: Attended 11 2020 Board Meetings

Minutes Secretary: Eileen O'Hara: Attended 8 2020 Board Meetings

Oisín Creagh: Attended 8 2020 Board Meetings

Sarah Jayne Booth: Attended 12 2020 Board Meetings

John MacMonagle: Attended 11 2020 Board Meetings

Kate O'Shea: Attended 7 2020 Board Meetings

Peadar Lamb (Retired in Oct 2020): Attended 10 2020 Board Meetings

Dr. James O' Sullivan: Attended 3 meetings from appointment in Oct 2020.

#### **Company Members**

Aideen Quirke

Padraig Spillane

Kim-Ling Morris

#### **Brand Strategy Subcommittee Members:**

Chair: Carl Dixon

Sarah Jayne Booth

John MacMonagle

Eileen O'Hara

Board Meetings are held on a monthly basis and not less than 10 times annually. Brand Strategy Subcommittees meetings are held every two months. A Board Member may propose a candidate to the Board for consideration and they are elected by Board vote. The maximum term of office is 9 years, with annual reelection at Sample-Studios' AGM.

### 3b) Governance Structures



**Legal structure:** Sample-Studios is a Company Limited by Guarantee and became a Registered Charity in 2020.

**Governance Standards:** Sample-Studios is planning on compliance with the Charities Governance Code by 2021.

### 3c) Staff

Kim-Ling Morris was Acting Artistic Director and Financial Manager from the period January 1st - July 31st 2020.

Aoibhie McCarthy was appointed Artistic Director from August 1st 2020.

Kim-Ling Morris was Financial Manager from period August 1st - December 31st 2020.

In 2020, staff were supported by short term contract positions, including Norah Porter and Catriona Osborne as Gallery Assistants and Sinéad Barrett in her voluntary capacity as Curator-in-Residence.

## **4. Objectives, Achievements and Performance**

### **4a) Objectives for 2020**

- 1) Deliver affordable workspaces for artists and creative practitioners
- 2) Continue to maintain and grow our membership
- 3) Identify and secure use of City-Centre exhibition space
- 4) Present year-round programme of TACTIC Visual Arts Programme exhibitions and public events, including our Graduate Residents.
- 5) Identify opportunities to cultivate and strengthen relationships with and demonstrate our positive impact in the local community.
- 6) Deliver a studio exchange programme with A4 Sounds (Dublin) and Engage Art Studios (Galway).
- 7) Support members to engage in peer-to-peer mentoring and peer-led events.
- 8) Increase our income sources from public, private and self generated sources.
- 9) Recruit a new Artistic Director and increase our organisational capacity.
- 10) Secure a lease for our current premises in Churchfield or identify an alternative viable space in consultation with stakeholders.
- 11) Secure Charitable Status.
- 12) Grow and diversify the skillset of our Board.

### **4b) Overview of 2020**

In a year of unprecedented challenge for the wider arts sector and society, Sample-Studios continued to deliver on its mission to provide affordable workspaces for emerging and established artists and creative practitioners, to promote their work and arts participation in the community through a programme of ambitious exhibitions and events, as well as professional development opportunities in support of the growth of our members' practices. Despite two periods of enforced temporary closure, Sample-Studios continued to grow its membership and its offering for members, employing innovative ways to address their needs safely, remotely where needed and in a tailored way.

Sample-Studios presented an innovative programme of exhibitions in the newly secured premises in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion, having secured a three year lease from Cork City Council and we have continued to support its graduate artists by offering a series of supported solo exhibition opportunities in St. Luke's Crypt. Sample-Studios' team and members presented peer-led professional development workshops and events for members and the arts community, as well as public engagement events

and educational programming in local schools, fulfilling its mission to support arts participation in the community.

Sample-Studios strengthened its professional network by securing funding support to grow and enhance the Cahoots Exchange with A4 Sounds in Dublin and Engage Art Studios in Galway, offering a fortnightly programme of events and workshops from August to December, culminating in an online exhibition and series of filmed artist interviews, with plans for a podcast episode and publication in early 2021.

Sample-Studios successfully diversified and increased its sources of income and capacity, securing sponsorship from Gurranabraher Credit Union and securing new funds from Cork City Council Commemoration Fund for 2020 activity, the Cultural Capital Stream D Fund, the Arts Council Capacity Building Fund and the Young People, Children and Education Project Award for 2021 Programming. By securing additional and diversified funding sources, Sample-Studios increased its capacity to deliver its mission. From August - December 2020, Sample-Studios successfully doubled its income in support of a better resourced organisation and enhanced programme in 2021.

In support of this mission, Sample-Studios appointed a new Artistic Director, Aoibhie McCarthy who joined the organisation in the part time role in August 2020. Aoibhie is a curator, arts manager, educator and marketing professional with over 12 years experience and joins Sample-Studios from her most recent role as Marketing & Fundraising Manager of Cork International Film Festival and Business to Arts Fundraising Fellow. Aoibhie continues to work alongside former Acting Artistic Director, Kim-Ling Morris as Financial Manager who has overseen a smooth and productive transition phase, and Sinéad Barrett has continued to deliver a well managed and impactful TACTIC Programme. In September 2020, Peadar Lamb stood down from the Board after 5 years of membership, during which time he oversaw the change of premises, creation of new studio spaces, supported settling the new Sample community and supported us in gaining charitable status. In October 2020, the Board welcomed new member Dr. James O' Sullivan, writer, editor, publisher and lecturer in Digital Humanities in UCC. In 2020, Sample-Studios entered the final year of its current lease and secured a further 6 year lease on the Churchfield site. This security of tenure will allow Sample-Studios to continue to work with its funders and partner, Cork City Council to identify a permanent home.

#### 4c) Summary of Key Achievements and Outputs in 2020



#### Summary of Key Achievements:

- 1) Delivery of affordable workspaces, professional development and opportunities to present work safely for artists and creative practitioners, despite significant challenges presented by Covid-19
- 2) Growth of Membership - Studio-based and Associate Membership
- 3) Secured 3 year lease of Lord Mayor's Pavilion
- 4) Presented year-round programme of exhibitions and public events in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion, St. Luke's Crypt and Plugg'd, adopting innovative approaches such as digital exhibitions, window-based exhibitions, outdoor and blended event formats to successfully deliver our programme
- 5) Established and successfully delivered a community outreach and education programme, with 2 local schools and engaging over 4000 members of the local community.
- 6) Successfully delivered a multifaceted studio exchange programme with A4 Sounds (Dublin) and Engage Art Studios (Galway) virtually.
- 7) Presented professional development, mentorship and peer-led upskilling events for our members.
- 8) Diversified and increased our income sources from public, private and self generated sources -more than doubled our income for 2021 in 2020.
- 9) Appointed a new Artistic Director and fundraised to make the role full time in 2021. Achieved funding to appoint a Programme Coordinator.

- 10) Secured a further 6 year lease on our main premises in Churchfield, offering Sample-Studios security of tenure from which to grow and continue to work with stakeholders to identify permanent premises.
- 11) Achieved Charitable Status.
- 12) Appointed a new Director to our Board - Dr. James O' Sullivan, UCC Dept of Digital Humanities.
- 13) Engaged Cork Film Centre as a new organisational member of Sample-Studios, offering our members access to new darkroom facilities, new upskilling opportunities in relation to artist experimental filmmaking and photography and cross pollination of practices amongst artists, experimental filmmakers and multidisciplinary practitioners.

## **Key Outputs in 2020**

### **Artists Studios and Creative Workspaces**

In 2020, Sample-Studios entered the third and final year of its lease in Churchfield Industrial Estate and has embarked on a further six year lease in this building. This site affords its members 29 shared and private work spaces as well as:

- Process Room
- Project Room
- Darkroom
- Storage Facilities x 2
- Computer Suite
- Canteen

Site enhancements undertaken in 2020 by Sample-Studios included the addition of an external shipping container and storage facility by the site landlord, an external spray tent for members using spray paint and other materials requiring greater ventilation, a ring doorbell with live camera and motion sensor, additional exterior solar lighting and the addition of a new studio space and darkroom in the Process Room.

As a result of Covid 19 and government guidelines, Sample-Studios complied with two periods of temporary closure in 2020 during which time members were not able to access the Churchfield premises for 15 weeks. In a small number of cases, partial fee forgiveness was facilitated. The Health and Safety Policy was reviewed and a Covid-19 Policy and procedures were implemented to ensure members and team safety during the pandemic. Members' safe access and use of the space was facilitated and managed throughout periods of restricted access by necessitating the wearing of

masks at all times, adoption of social distancing practices and hand sanitising stations were located and maintained throughout the building.

### **The Lord Mayor's Pavilion**

In June 2020, thanks to an initial approach by Pádraig Spillane and further groundwork by Sarah Jayne Booth and Rebecca Bradley, Sample-Studios agreed a three year lease on The Lord Mayor's Pavilion in Fitzgerald's Park with Cork City Council. The Lord Mayor's Pavilion offers Sample-Studios a high traffic/high visibility, City-Centre exhibition venue, which enables the organisation to present members work, as well as present audience engagement initiatives and profile raising exhibitions year-round. The Lord Mayor's Pavilion also affords Sample-Studios an additional studio space which supports the Programme Coordination and the development of an artist-in-residence programme.

In 2020, Sample-Studios facilitated four artist residencies in The Lord Mayors Pavilion, an artist talk, 4 workshops and six exhibitions. During the periods of partial and full closure necessitated by Covid 19 restrictions, Sample-Studios adopted an approach of facilitating audience through the windows and displaying work directly in the windows and audience engagement activities were facilitated online and/or in smaller socially distanced groups. When permitted to host exhibitions with public engagement, contact tracing measures were adopted, tracking the details of all visitors. With glazing on all 4 sides of the building, there was significant scope to adopt such innovative approaches to continue to engage audiences with our exhibitions, despite Covid-19, engaging significant press interest and increasing audience awareness of Sample-Studios.

### **St. Luke's Crypt**

In 2020, Sample-Studios continued to work with Cork City Council to offer a programme of ambitious and diverse visual arts exhibitions in a variety of media by its members and graduate residents. In 2020, two exhibitions were successfully presented amid ongoing closures necessitated by Covid 19. One exhibition was postponed from October 2020 until Spring 2021.

While this city-centre deconsecrated church offers Sample-Studios a large scale flexible City-Centre exhibition venue, there are challenges in its use as an exhibition venue in that drilling into the walls to hang works is prohibited, there is no current blind or window covering mechanism to exclude light for projections and we have to apply for each use of the space as we do not have exclusive use of it.

In 2019, Sample-Studios invested in work-around measures for hanging schemes such as free standing temporary walls. In Q4 2020, Board Member Oisín Creagh undertook a review of the potential to line the walls of this protected structure to enable work to be safely hung from the walls, with investment by Cork City Council and to work in partnership with Cork City Council to prevent deterioration of the building due to damp by ensuring regular ventilation.

## Our Membership



In 2020, Sample-Studios successfully grew its membership to over 60 active members - growing studio-based and Associate Memberships and maintaining Creative Network members. Sample-Studios continued its commitment to launching creative careers and supported eight emerging graduate artists in tailored residencies:

- Aoife Claffey, CIT Crawford graduate was given a 6 month studio-based residency and will have a solo exhibition in St. Luke's Crypt in 2021 (Fine art printmaking)
- Rosalind Spencer, CIT Crawford graduate was given a 6 month studio-based residency and had a solo exhibition in St. Luke's Crypt in September 2020 (Drawing, Installation)
- Calum Fenton, CIT Crawford graduate was given a 6 month Associate Membership residency and had a solo exhibition in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion in August 2020 (Film, Installation)

- Nellie Corbett and Trevor Boyle, CIT Crawford graduates were given a residency and had a solo exhibition in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion in October 2020 (Film, Sound).
- Deirdre Frost, CIT Crawford graduate was given a 6 month studio-based residency and will have a solo exhibition in St. Luke's Crypt in 2021 (Fine art painting)
- Elinor O' Donovan, Edinburgh College of Arts graduate was given a 6 month studio-based residency and will have a solo exhibition in St. Luke's Crypt in 2021 (digital media)
- Lily O' Shea, CIT Crawford graduate was given a 6 month Associate Membership residency and will have a solo exhibition in 2021 (Performance/ installation)

Members were offered regular in-person and online events through the year, offering peer-to-peer skills development opportunities. Members Events included:

- 1 Digital Collage Workshop for Members facilitated by artist Tom Doig
- 1 Expressive Drawing Workshop for Members facilitated by artist Cassandra Eustace
- 1 City-wide Soundmapping Outdoor Workshop facilitated by artist Dr. Sean Taylor
- 2 'Art and Language' Workshops facilitated via Zoom by artist Nicola Anthony
- 1 'Writing your Artist Statement' Workshop facilitated via Zoom with Sue Rainsford
- 1 'Writing Proposals' Workshop facilitated via Zoom with Maeve Mulrennan

Members were offered 3 Open Call opportunities as part of Cahoots: The Space Between, Uileann Group Show (Submissions received and exhibition to take place in 2021) and the Winter Members Exhibition in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion. In addition, members were offered one-to-one meetings in support of their general practice and in support of preparing funding applications. Members-led initiatives included 4 group crits and postponed life drawing classes which will resume when safe to do so in 2021. Bimonthly members meetings offered members an opportunity to connect, find out about upcoming opportunities, present their work-in-progress to peers and discuss forthcoming members initiatives.

Members were kept up to date on opportunities, events and news in a monthly newsletter and funding/ exhibition opportunities were highlighted in a new 'Funding Friday' weekly post in the members whatsapp, in which members' achievements were also highlighted and celebrated, offering welcome motivation and morale.

Demand for studios and membership is steady, as demonstrated by one studio vacancy that was publicly advertised and welcomed over 25 applications. In support of continuing to enhance our membership, a Membership Assessment Matrix was introduced to enable the Artistic Director to enhance our membership with active, professional, committed and profile-raising members who will contribute to the betterment of Sample-Studios.

### **TACTIC Visual Arts Programme**



In 2020, Sample-Studios succeeded in its mission to present a programme of diverse and ambitious visual art public exhibitions in a variety of mediums by its members, graduate residents and engaging the local and national artistic community.

TACTIC Visual Arts Programme is coordinated by 2019/2020 Graduate Curator in Residence, Sinéad Barrett, overseen by Aoibhie McCarthy, Artistic Director and supported by the Curatorial Team, Kim-Ling Morris, Financial Manager and Board Members, Rebecca Bradley and Sarah Jayne Booth. The TACTIC Visual Arts Programme also benefited in 2020 from 12 hours of volunteer arts management work experience undertaken by member Phoebe McDonogh. A new partnership with UCC MA in Arts and Cultural Management was established in 2020 but postponed due to Covid 19 and will be pursued in 2021 in support of TACTIC.

In 2020, the TACTIC Visual Arts Programme of independently curated exhibitions included:

- EVIL Performance Workshop and Performance in Plug'd

- 4 first solo shows for 5 graduate artists in residence. These provide valuable work experience and a solo exhibition in a supported environment, bridging the gap between academic study and the world of work:
- 'Dominion' Rosalind Spencer in St. Luke's Crypt
- 'Looking Glass' Callum Fenton in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion
- 'The Movements' Nellie Corbett and Trevor Boyle in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion
- 'Revolve' Aoife Claffey in in St. Luke's Crypt (postponed).
- 4 Artist Residencies facilitated in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion including live stream open studios, with 5 artists Tom Doig, Sinead Barrett, Nellie Corbett and Trevor Boyle
- 2 Open Studios
- 2 Public figurative life drawing workshops led by Aoife Claffey and Rosalind Spencer on Culture Night.
- 1 Artist Talk: Callum Artist in Conversation with Pdraig Spillane facilitated online to mark his solo exhibition 'Looking Glass'
- 2 Residency and Exhibition Videos Produced: Aoife Claffey, Nellie Corbett and Trevor Boyle
- 'Host' partnership print and installation exhibition in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion with Cork Printmakers
- 'PhotoGo' Community Photography Competition and Exhibition in the windows of The Lord Mayor's Pavilion. The public photography competition was launched on Culture Night and attracted over 100 entries, responding to the theme of 'legacy' to mark the centenary year of the Burning of Cork and to celebrate local communities. 6 free schools workshops were delivered in St. Vincents Secondary School and Gaelcholaiste Mhuire A.G by member Kate McElroy. PhotoGo included the popular People's Voice Award which attracted 4000+ public votes and a winner and runner up were awarded €300 and €200 respectively. An overall PhotoGo Award presented the winner with a prize of €200 and the two participating schools were presented with a voucher for €500 each for camera equipment, sponsored by Gurrabraher Credit Union, who produced a commemorative calendar with shortlisted entries. A digital exhibition of PhotoGo was supported by Cork City Council Commemoration Fund and a commemorative calendar was

distributed to members of the local community by Gurrabraher Credit Union.

- Winter Members Exhibition - Open Call for all Members and City-Wide billboard promotional campaign in 15 prominent sites throughout Cork City for 12 weeks.
- 'Cahoots: The Space Between' exchange digital exhibition with invited Guest Artist Curator Nicola Anthony. 26 submissions received and 11 members selected, including 4 members from Sample-Studios, 4 from A4 Sounds and 3 from Engage Art Studios. Members work was presented in a digital exhibition and a series of filmed artists interviews developed.

Despite the impact of closures necessitated by Covid-19, only 2 exhibitions had to be postponed until 2021 and none were cancelled.

In addition to Sample-Studios own organisational achievements in 2020, our members secured many notable accolades and awards, supported by Sample-Studios. New member, Seiko Hayase, was awarded the Arts Council Professional Development and Development Award, a Carlow Arts Festival Micro Bursary, a solo exhibition in 2023 in Ballina Arts Centre and residency in Uilleann West Cork Arts Centre. Member Sarah Jayne Booth secured a Professional Development Award from the Arts Council. Member Kevin Mooney secured an Arts Council Visual Arts Bursary and a solo exhibition in 2021 in Excel Arts Centre. Member Eanna Heavey secured a solo exhibition in 2022 with Cork Film Centre. Many of our members also completed further education and training including Graduate Resident Aoife Claffey and Kate McElroy who both graduated from the Crawford MA:AP Programme.

#### **4d) Beneficiaries**

##### **Sample-Studios key beneficiaries include:**

- Artists and creative practitioners
- Graduate and Emerging Artists, Curators and Arts Managers
- The wider arts community in Cork
- Traditional arts attendees and audiences
- General public / non-traditional arts attendees
- Communities, particularly within the Northside of Cork City
- Local schools and students

## **Sample Feedback from Beneficiaries and Stakeholders:**

### **Domhnall O Buachalla, Principal, Gaelcholaiste Mhuire AG Feedback on our Education Programme:**

“Our students thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to develop their creative skills with Sample-Studios and were very proud of their finished work. The opportunity to engage in a different type of learning is in keeping with the ideals of our Transition Year Programme. The feedback that our students gave us is that the activity was both “fun and enjoyable”; it brought out and “developed their creativity” and they loved the fact that their “own photos were there to display at the end”. This gave them a “great sense of satisfaction”. Our teachers that were involved would also like to compliment the most professional and organised approach of the tutors involved”.

### **Siobhán Clancy, Community Arts Coordinator, Cork City Council, Comment on our Exhibitions Programme:**

“We were delighted when Sample-Studios accepted an invitation to develop a 3 year programme of curated events and activities for The Lord Mayor’s Pavilion in Fitzgerald’s Park. As our largest City Centre public amenity, we expect that the excellent quality of programming there will facilitate cultural encounters for a diverse range of users. In this way and others, Sample-Studios are fulfilling key goals identified in the Arts Council’s Strategy ‘Making Great Art Work 2016-2025’ by making a valuable contribution to audience development and social inclusion efforts in our City, while at the same time, providing a platform for local, regional and national practice.”

### **Megs Morley, Independent Curator, Comment on our Exhibitions Programme:**

“As a contemporary curator, I am concerned with organisational forms and collective practices and the role that art and its institutions can play in the democratisation of power and cultural transformation. I am particularly interested in the work that organisations such as Sample-Studios do to support and care for emerging and experimental forms of practice and dialogue”

**Lisa Crowne, Co-Director of A4 Sounds Comment on our 'Cahoots' Studio Exchange Programme:**

"We have been developing our partnership with Sample-Studios since their invitation to take part in their Artist-Led Island Panel Discussion in 2016. We believe that Sample-Studios are one of Ireland's leading artist-led spaces and provide excellent supports to their member artists."

**Catherine Fehily, Head of College, CIT Crawford College of Art and Design Comment on our Graduate Residency Programme:**

"We at the Crawford value our relationship with Sample Studios highly and we continue to build on our partnership in order to support emerging artists in Cork. CIT Crawford College of Art & Design (CIT CCAD) has a long history of collaboration and partnership with Sample-Studios. Even though we no longer share a physical space with Sample-Studios, we are both committed to maintaining and developing our relationship, with Sample continuing to offer and support both a graduate studio residency and curatorial awards again this year (something they have done since 2012). Ours is a positive and continually growing relationship and I very much hope that we can continue to contribute, together, to Cork's thriving arts and cultural life.

**Noelle Gallagher, Exhibiting Artist Feedback on 'Cahoots: The Space Between' Digital Exhibition and Video Series:**

"I just want to say thank you to you personally, to Nicola (Curator) and to all the team at Sample-Studios for all your hard work on the exhibition and the videos. I'm sure it wasn't easy to translate the concepts to online presentations and I'm very appreciative of everything you've done to make it work. Making the video definitely pushed me out of my comfort zone . . . Thanks so much for giving me the opportunity to show my painting in Cahoots."

**4e) Challenges**

In a year of unprecedented challenge for the wider arts sector and society, there were a number of key challenges faced by Sample-Studios as a direct result and also ongoing challenges that were addressed or are planning to address in 2021. These key challenges included:

- **Covid-19 Closures:** 15 weeks of closure of our artist studios and creative workspaces in Churchfield meant that our 60+ members

were without access to a workspace for almost a third of 2020. This challenge was mitigated by providing online workshops and 1to1 mentorship for members online and by offering fee forgiveness on a case-by-case basis. The hardship this caused our members who couldn't work from home cannot be understated and Sample-Studios endeavoured to represent our members' needs and concerns throughout the closures to our funders, representative organisations and stakeholders including Visual Artists Ireland, the National Campaign for the Arts, Business to Arts and the Arts Council and we cultivated information sharing networks with artist studios throughout Ireland to keep abreast of the impact of changing Covid-19 restrictions on artists and creative practitioners.

- **Security of Tenure:** As our 3 year lease on our Churchfield premises finished in January 2021, a key challenge experienced in 2020 was negotiating and securing a renewed lease. While a rental increase will come into effect in 2021, it will not commence until July 2021 and the increase in rent was mitigated by creating new studio spaces within the Process Room, without negatively impacting the quality of the shared spaces available to members and serves to increase our membership and our membership fee income to offset the rent increase in 2021. In 2020, Sample-Studios established new connections within Cork City Council and UCC to continue to work to identify a longer-term permanent home for studios, galleries and public programming.
- **Organisational Capacity:** In 2020, Sample-Studios' sites, membership and multifaceted programming was serviced by a part time Artistic Director and part time Financial Manager, supported by a voluntary Board and a Graduate Curator in Residence role. Given the scale and scope of Sample-Studios' sites, membership and programming, organisational capacity was a significant challenge. To mitigate this challenge, additional funding was sought and secured in 2020 to expand the role of the Artistic Director to fulltime and to appoint a part-time Programme Coordinator in 2021.

## 5. Finance

**SAMPLE-STUDIOS COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION RELATING TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

	2020 €	2019 €
<b>Income</b>		
Membership	39,315	42,454
Events	681	2,428
Commission/Art sale/Matl sale	451	1,078
Storage rental	883	765
Cork City Council Grant	5,000	5,000
Cork City Council- Ward Funding	-	100
Arts Council Grant	30,000	30,000
IPB Galway Participation Grant	5,000	-
Sponsorship	2,500	2,000
Deposit retention	50	50
	<u>83,880</u>	<u>83,875</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Wages and salaries	27,161	23,900
Social welfare costs	2,507	2,194
Rent payable	24,100	24,000
Studio set up costs	1,708	1,067
Studio expenses	1,683	1,837
Project & events	12,961	12,036
Insurance	575	1,368
Light and heat	4,649	7,354
Cleaning	172	527
Repairs and maintenance	382	437
Printing, postage and stationery	241	219
Advertising	1,019	1,584
Telephone	1,403	924
Consultancy fees	3,143	400
Accountancy	-	1,524
Bank charges	257	263
Discounts allowed	-	10
General expenses	-	483
Subscriptions	1,229	-
Auditor's remuneration	3,444	3,444
Depreciation	680	684
	<u>87,314</u>	<u>84,255</u>
<b>Other income</b>		
Bank interest	-	7
<b>Net deficit</b>	<u>(3,434)</u>	<u>(373)</u>

2020 was a year for developing member opportunities and Sample-Studios exhibition visibility. In 2020, Sample-Studios was awarded €30,000 from The Arts Council Workspace Scheme Grant. Sample-Studios are required to have fully audited accounts and we are working with Tomás O'Leary, Cuan Leahy and Rugile Mikalauskaite of Roberts Nathan.

Sample-Studios was awarded €5,000 from Cork City Council's Arts Grant, in support of the TACTIC Visual Arts Programme Delivery. Sample-Studios'

TACTIC Visual Arts Programme hosted 9 exhibitions at an average cost of €750/exhibition and 20 participative events. Sample-Studios welcomed the appointment of Michelle Carew as the new Cork City Council Arts Officer and met with her in November 2020 about Sample-Studios ambitions for our members, our programme, our role in the community in Cork and national artistic community. Sample-Studios looks forward to working closely with Michelle Carew in support of the realisation of our ambitions.

The PhotoGo community photography exhibition attracted renewed sponsorship in the amount of €2200 by Gurrabraher Credit Union including additional funding on 2019 for a series of schools photography workshops delivered by member Kate McElroy. The PhotoGo digital exhibition and community engagement activity was awarded a further €2,000 funding through the Cork City Council Commemoration Fund.

Sample-Studios membership and demand for studio spaces grew, achieving an average of €3,500/month. In 2020, Sample-Studios achieved an increase in Associate Membership by offering a range of events and opportunities, including professional development events, one-to-one funding application support, workshops and group crits as part of the Cahoots exchange with A4 Sounds and Engage Art Studios, for which a further €5,000 was awarded by Cork City Council and Galway 2020.

In 2020, Sample-Studios prepared to meet the forthcoming financial challenge of a 25% increase in rent from June 2021 by creating a new studio space for Cork Film Centre which will welcome a further €260 a month membership income. In 2020, Sample-Studios achieved charitable status which will ensure we are rates exempt.

## 6. Future Plans: Looking Ahead to 2021



Image Credit: 'Party', Elinor O' Donovan, Graduate Resident 2020/21

In 2021, Sample-Studios marks its 10th Anniversary - a decade in which over 500 artists and creative practitioners' practices have been launched, supported and sustained by Sample-Studios. What began as an artist-led initiative in 2011, supported solely by volunteers, has grown into a multifaceted arts organisation which is central to the fabric of cultural life in Cork and a catalyst within one of Europe's most culturally vibrant cities.

Having secured increased funding from the Arts Council Workspace Scheme and Cork City Council via the Arts Grants, Arts in Context Scheme and Commemoration Fund, and new funding from the Arts Council Young People Children and Education Project Award, Capacity Building Award, the Department's Cultural Capital Stream D funding, Sample-Studios can embark on an ambitious period of organisational growth in 2021. By more than doubling our income on 2020, Sample-Studios will expand the Artistic Director role from part time to full time and will recruit a new part time Programme Coordinator, expanding our capacity to enhance of our offering to members, to the wider arts community and the public. In 2020, Sample-Studios established a new partnership with UCC MA Programme in Arts Management and Cultural Policy and in 2021, will build upon this new partnership by hosting a 2.5 month part time arts management

postgraduate on professional work experience, further supporting organisational capacity and supporting research projects which serve to strengthen our partnership with UCC. In 2021, Sample-Studios'. We are grateful to our major funders and partners for their support which will enable us to expand our team and capacity.

In 2021, digital capacity building will be a key focus of organisational development. New funding secured from the Arts Council's Capacity Building fund will, in 2021, enable Sample-Studios to upgrade its website, incorporating a new digital exhibition platform and online booking facility. This funding will also enable the development of video content to create filmed profiles of each studio-based member, to enhance their membership profile and promote their work. In 2021, Sample-Studios will also launch a new monthly podcast series which will invite the artists, curators and collaborators involved in our exhibitions and events programme to enrich the programme with their insights and promote further engagement with the exhibitions. This fund will provide for monthly professional development workshops online for members in the area of digital upskilling and resilience. The Department's Cultural Capital Stream D fund will support the purchase of new iMacs for all Sample-Studios staff. In 2021, supported by the Capacity Building Fund, Sample-Studios Board and team will engage consultants Rowena Neville, Maighread Kelly and Catherine McIntyre to provide tailored training and support in the areas of HR, Child Protection, Governance, Disability and Cultural Management, Brand Strategy, Marketing and a review of our Mission, Vision and Purpose. Through this support, Sample-Studios will update and implement a new Operational Manual, Employee Handbook and suite of policies and will be compliant with the Charities Governance Code in 2021.

A key focus in 2021 will be growing our membership and enhancing our offering to our members through professional development opportunities and mentorship. In Q1 of 2021, a digital marketing campaign will be delivered to promote the benefits of our Associate Membership to the wider arts community, to support membership growth. A programme of monthly online professional development workshops will be provided for members, with membership consultation facilitated to identify the areas of significant need and interest. New organisational members Cork Film Centre will provide workshops in Final Cut Pro and artist experimental film. Peer-to-peer support will be facilitated through fortnightly 'Work Show Grow' group crits online and a return to in-person group crits and life

drawing as soon as public health guidelines permit. 1to1 mentorship will be provided for members to support them in accessing funding, residency and exhibition opportunities. Sample-Studios will continue to work with members to support them in mitigating the impact of Covid-19 on their practices, to continue to thrive despite the challenges.

As part of Sample-Studios' 10th Anniversary, an ambitious programme of exhibitions and events will be presented in The Lord Mayor's Pavilion and St. Luke's Crypt which will serve to expand new audiences, engage with new critical discourses within the visual arts and establish significant partnerships which will raise the profile and visibility of Sample-Studios, including:

- a major public art project with Connolly Cleary as part of Glow Festival
- 'Oilean' exhibition and residency programme in partnership with Spike Island
- A solo exhibition by artist Kate O' Shea as part of The Just City Collective
- a residency and exhibition by Anne Ffrench as part of Cork Midsummer Festival
- two partnership exhibitions with Cork Printmakers
- a touring exhibition of Sample-Studios' members with 126 Gallery in Galway
- two self reflective exhibitions focusing on Sample-Studios' legacy and the wider legacy of artist-led spaces in The Artist-Led Archive
- a Winter Members Exhibition
- PhotoGo Community Project in partnership with Gurrabraher Credit Union as part of Culture Night
- three solo exhibitions by Graduate Resident Artists, including an exhibition trail in partnership with Backwater Art Group.]
- A performance art event, curated by Aideen Quirke in Sample-Studios.

Sample-Studios will continue its commitment to launch, support and sustain artistic careers in Cork through our Graduate Residency Programme, offering a further 4 Residency opportunities for emerging artists and curators, supporting through mentorship, free studio spaces and the opportunity to present their work.

This increased funding will enable Sample-Studios to develop and deliver

ground-breaking new Education Programmes, the 'Cork Creative Careers Programme' and 'Cork Young Curators and Critics Programme'. The 'Cork Creative Careers Programme' will offer 4th years and 6th class pupils in local primary and secondary schools a series of multidisciplinary workshops with artists, printmakers, curators, filmmakers and writers, who will be engaged by Sample-Studios as tutors to enable students to explore creative career paths. This programme will be delivered in partnership with Cork Printmakers, First Cut Youth Film Festival, Triskel Arts Centre, Cork Book Fest and Crawford Art Gallery. The 'Cork Young Curators and Critics Programme' will enable young people from 14-17 years of age to engage in a creative careers focused programme of personal development in Autumn 2021 which will support them to engage directly with Cork arts festivals and organisations and engage in writing, blogging and critiquing of their experiences. This programme will culminate in a visit to the Waterford Young Arts Critics in partnership with Garter Lane Arts Centre in October 2021. A new Education Programme Working Group of the Sample-Studios Board has been formed to support this exciting new aspect of Sample-Studios offering in our local community and contribution to supporting arts engagement by new audiences.

In 2021, Sample-Studios will begin the first year of a new six year lease in our current premises in Churchfield Industrial Estate. This new lease offers us stability to continue to grow and enhance our organisational capacity, our membership, our impact in the community and expand our audiences. This security also enables us to strengthen our relationship with Cork City Council and other stakeholders in order to identify a more permanent home for our artist studios, galleries and creative workspaces so that the funding we secure can be reinvested in our community and offering within the City.



**Graduate Artist in Residence, Deirdre Frost, In Studio  
Preparing for her Solo Exhibition in The Lavit Gallery, Cork**

