

Kilkenny Arts Festival Pay the Artist Policy – 2026/7

Kilkenny Arts Festival has an open, prompt and transparent payment process with its artists. Kilkenny seeks at all times to maximise its ability to attract leading artists and nurture emerging and younger artists at key stages of their careers through a variety of means – by creating a positive and affirming festival environment for both artists and festival goers; by creating attractive and meaningful opportunities for artists in which to work and collaborate with other artists and by offering fair and appropriate remuneration with clarity and by agreement.

In some rare cases we work with artists and companies in creative ways to enable events to be staged during the festival by taking a risk sharing approach – in all these instances the arrangements include a guarantee fee from the Festival, and are weighted fully in favour of the artists in terms of % split after guarantee. These instances are rare, always involve a funded company, project award, and are never used for a solo artist.

We also work with key third parties in co-presenting work or cost-sharing arrangements in order to maximise the available funds for artists fees.

Kilkenny Arts Festival liaises with local, national and international colleagues, both festivals and other bodies on best practice and current union agreements, such as CMC guidelines, IMRO usage licence guidelines, and MUI/Equity pay agreements. Kilkenny Arts Festival is fully compliant with IMRO and makes a return of all repertoire and associated box office within 6 weeks of each festival.

Kilkenny Arts Festival is committed to the principle of fair remuneration for professional artists and arts workers. Remuneration is *fair* when it equates to what is asked of an artist in terms of their time, input and expertise. It will account for the status of the artist and reflect the value created by their engagement. We also emphasise *equitable* remuneration because we are committed to equality and diversity in the arts. In some circumstances, such as artists with disabilities, Kilkenny Arts Festival ensures the artist is supported to undertake their engagement according to their needs, such as the cost of an assistant and/or specialist accommodation.

We are committed to working with artists and their representatives, with individuals and organisations and engaging with them to ensure a positive and professional sector. We seek to continue to be a bulwark against a system of artists being underpaid or working for free in return for ‘exposure’; instead continuing to foster a culture of fairness and equitable treatment.

Kilkenny Arts Festival approach:

- Being open, transparent and upfront in communications with artists to ensure clarity from both perspectives on the ask and the offer.
- Complying with rates, terms, practices and standards recommended by representative and resource organisations, and utilising available toolkits and resources to support the contracting process.
- Paying artists no later than 30 days from engagement, with 50% of fees payable by deposit on request, or by payment schedule for larger engagements. In the intense period following the festival event, individual artists are prioritised for final payments in the first week after the festival.
- Paying artists ex-fee agreements in advance, e.g. flight or travel costs where artists prefers to organise travel themselves.
- Aiming for continued improvement in rates; although Kilkenny Arts Festival is generally a more fee-based model, those fees are informed by the rates offered by third party organisations.

- Ensuring all engagements are covered by a contract, or written agreement.
- Ensuring that remuneration and contracts/agreements reflect the full scope of what an artist is expected and required to deliver; and revising remuneration agreement if scope for the artists is increased or expanded.
- In the case of residency artists, core main fees are negotiated in advance, regardless of the amount of events undertaken, recognising the advance work of residency artists in devising their programmes at Kilkenny Arts Festival; additional fees are added where additional performances are devised during the festival event itself.
- Ensuring that artists and/or their representatives have a voice in negotiating terms and conditions.
- Being clear about the nature and status of an engagement—i.e. whether the contract is an employment contract or a contract for services— as well as any associated tax, social-security benefits/obligations arising (e.g. holiday pay, PRSI, etc.)
- Ensuring that payments reflect and/or differentiate between fees and expenses, including per diems or other relevant payments.
- Being clear and upfront about how and when payments will be made and ensuring that contracted companies or agents can negotiate up front/deposit payments to ensure artist can be paid for advance scheduled rehearsals/and avoid 'out of pocket' travel costs.
- Ensuring that artists' fees are ring-fenced within project budgets so as to ensure they are protected against budget overruns in other areas.
- Ensuring that artists copyright is respected, both in terms of moral and economic rights.
- Where Kilkenny Arts Festival is a co-copyright or mechanical rights holder with an artists, it will negotiate in the best interests of the artists, and ensures the relevant artist is the beneficiary of any income
- There are no occasions where remuneration would not apply. Artists who are asked to perform in 'pop-up' concerts, workshops, open rehearsals etc are paid either an agreed rate (MUI, Equity etc) for that activity, or the activity is included in their residency fee or contracted fee agreement.
- Visual Artists invited to exhibit at the Festival Gallery are paid a fee up front
- The sale of Visual Art does not incur a commission payments to Kilkenny Arts Festival – 100% of the sale is retained by the artist, but sales are facilitated through the Festival Gallery.
- Kilkenny Arts Festival does not take commission on any performing artists' merchandise, album sales etc., but sales are facilitated through its FOH and Box Office.

Updated May, 2025.