



PRAXIS STATEMENT ON THE BIA POST-PILOT SCHEME ANNOUNCEMENT

Praxis, the Artists' Union of Ireland, welcomes the decision to place the Basic Income for the Arts scheme on a more permanent footing. This acknowledges that artists are workers whose labour underpins Ireland's cultural and creative life, and that income insecurity is a structural feature of that work. It is important to acknowledge the advocacy undertaken by Praxis activists, the NCFA and others in bringing this policy forward.

As a trade union, we remain concerned that key elements of the revised scheme risk reproducing precarity rather than addressing it. A three-year time limit builds instability into what should be a structural support for artistic labour. A genuine basic income should function as long-term public investment in the sector as a whole, not as a time-bound award to selected individuals. Individualising the scheme risks increasing division and resentment within a sector already shaped by scarcity, rather than strengthening collective stability.

The proposed annual audit of recipients, the details of which have yet to be clarified, also raises important questions. Artistic work is cyclical and contingent. Any assessment model that relies on narrow measures of short-term productivity would misunderstand the realities of cultural labour. An approach focused on confirming continued eligibility would be more appropriate.

We are also concerned about the interaction between BIA payments and social protection, particularly disability-related supports. Treating payments as self-employment income for means testing, without clear safeguards, risks disadvantaging some of the most economically vulnerable artists. If this measure is to fulfil its promise, it must provide genuine security for artists as workers and strengthen the sector collectively.

Praxis has set out detailed proposals for how the scheme should be expanded to all artists on a permanent basis in our paper, [The Case for a Basic Income for the Arts](#).

We look forward to engaging constructively with the government to ensure the scheme develops in a way that genuinely supports artists over the long term.

QUOTES FROM PRAXIS MEMBERS:

"I'm honestly delighted that the BIA has been kept. Feels like austerity times again so it's a huge win that the scheme is now permanent. I'm also really proud that we fought for the BIA and won. I've felt a lot more part of an artistic community since the scheme began so it's also an organisational win as well as an artistic one.

But the details have me worried. I was on the BIA pilot scheme and worked part-time, and for a period, full-time, to have enough savings for future periods focusing on artistic work. Will the annual audit take this into account? Under the new rules, will I be able to get pregnant and have a baby, or will I not get enough creative work done to satisfy the audit?"

"Glad that the scheme is being made permanent as my expectations are low, but having artists in and out of cycles is the very definition of instability"

"The situation where you could be unsuccessful in the first two lotteries and then still lose out on the third one potentially to individuals who were successful the first time... bound to harbour resentment"