



**Call for Artists for**

**Public Artwork**

**for the**

**Oranmore Railway Station**

**Redevelopment**

**Iarnród Éireann**

**January 2026**

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# Call for Artists – Public Artwork for the Oranmore Rail Infrastructure Upgrade

Iarnród Éireann invites visual artists to submit proposals for a site-specific artwork that will accompany the forthcoming Oranmore rail infrastructure upgrade. The project—comprising a new 185 metre platform, a one-kilometre double-track passing loop, an under-pass with step-free access, a dedicated cycle route and a range of passenger-amenities—offers a unique canvas on which to celebrate the town’s heritage, its evolving identity and its role as a gateway to the wider Iarnród Éireann network.

## Purpose and Vision

Oranmore sits at the confluence of rural tradition and modern connectivity. Historically a fishing village on the eastern shore of Galway Bay, it has grown into a vibrant commuter hub for the city of Galway while retaining strong ties to the surrounding landscape, maritime culture and Gaelic roots. The upgraded station will dramatically increase service frequency, improve accessibility and encourage multimodal travel. An artwork installed within this context should therefore:

- **Anchor place-making** – become a recognisable visual marker that instantly signals “Oranmore” to passengers, cyclists and motorists alike.
- **Reflect local character** – draw upon the town’s seafaring legacy, agricultural surroundings, linguistic heritage (An Órán Mór), and contemporary community spirit.
- **Enhance the journey** – enrich the experience of waiting, boarding and alighting, offering moments of contemplation, surprise or delight.
- **Promote sustainability** – employ durable, low-maintenance materials and, where possible, integrate renewable energy or recycled components.

## Consideration

- **Railway safety:** Ensuring any placement does not impede on the safety of railway infrastructure and services.
- **Environmental:** Ensuring all consideration is given to environment that surround the piece and the minimal installation impact. Aim to achieve a visual enhancement with considerate to the area.
- **Ensuring best audience:** Allowing opportunities to achieve the largest audience to the piece. For both using the station and those passing by.
- **Materials:** Where possible, use of local sourced and sustainable products with consideration to railway materials without becoming a literal interpretation of said materials.
- **Installation:** Working with the project developer to ensure a safe and efficient installation.

## Background Brief – Oranmore Rail Infrastructure Upgrade (Galway, Ireland)

### Project Overview

- **Scope:** Construction of a 1 km double-track passing loop, a new 185 m platform (north of the existing one), and an under-pass providing step-free access, cycle routes, lifts, ramps and stairs.

Ancillary works include shelters, CCTV, lighting, passenger-information displays and a multi-storey car-park design.

- **Contractor:** Mayo-based civil-engineering firm **P&D Lydon** was awarded the construction contract for the under-pass and associated works.
- **Funding:** Co-funded by the **Department of Transport** (via the National Transport Authority) and the **Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage** under the **Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) Call 2**. Additional URDF resources support an Ecopark/Local Centre at Garraun, a density-typology study, and design of a multi-storey car-park.

## Strategic Context

Aspect	Relevance
<b>Network bottleneck</b>	The Athenry-Galway line is currently single-track, limiting train movements to a single direction at a time. The new passing loop will enable <b>30-minute headways in each direction</b> , effectively doubling service frequency.
<b>Regional connectivity</b>	Oranmore is a fast-growing commuter town for Galway city. Improved rail capacity supports sustainable commuting, reduces road congestion, and aligns with the Irish government's <b>National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2028</b> which targets modal shift to public transport.
<b>Multimodal integration</b>	The under-pass includes a dedicated <b>cycle route</b> linking the station to northern lands, encouraging active travel and supporting Galway County Council's broader cycling-infrastructure agenda.
<b>Accessibility</b>	Lifts, ramps and tactile way-finding meet <b>EU accessibility standards</b> , ensuring barrier-free travel for passengers with reduced mobility.
<b>Economic regeneration</b>	URDF funding ties the rail upgrade to wider urban regeneration (Ecopark, local centre, housing density studies), leveraging transport investment to stimulate local employment, housing supply and commercial activity.

## Policy & Political Drivers

- **Minister of State for Transport – Seán Canney** (International, Road Transport, Logistics, Rail & Ports) officially marked the contract signing, emphasizing the project as a “game-changer” for commuters and part of a nationwide rollout of station upgrades (e.g., Galway Ceannt, Cork Kent).
- **National Transport Authority (NTA)** oversight ensures alignment with the **Transport Strategy for the Greater Galway Region (2022-2032)**, which prioritises increased rail frequency, electrification pathways, and integrated ticketing.
- **Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF)** reflects a cross-departmental approach, linking transport infrastructure to housing, green space and community amenities.

## Timeline & Milestones

Construction of the main station works will start early in 2026 and the project is expected to be completed in Summer 2027.

Phase	Expected Timing
<b>Planning &amp; enabling works</b> (signalling, telecom, electrical relocations)	Completed
<b>Construction start</b> – Expected Early 2026	Early 2026
<b>Completion of double-track &amp; platform</b> – Summer 2027, enabling 30-min services thereafter.	Summer 2027
<b>Ancillary works</b> (car-park, Ecopark, cycle route) – phased 2026-2028.	2026-2028

(These dates derive from Iarnród Éireann public statements and planning submissions [galwaybeo.ie](http://galwaybeo.ie))

## Anticipated Outcomes

1. **Service Frequency:** From the current ~hourly service to **30-minute intervals** each way, improving reliability and attracting new customers.
2. **Capacity Gains:** Ability to run longer trains and accommodate future demand spikes (e.g., post-COVID commuter rebound, tourism growth).
3. **Environmental Benefits:** Modal shift reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions; the project aligns with Ireland's **2050 net-zero target**.
4. **Local Economic Impact:** Construction creates ~200 jobs; improved access stimulates residential development around Garraun and Oranmore.
5. **Social Inclusion:** Fully accessible stations and enhanced cycling links promote equitable mobility for all demographics.

## Wider Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail Modernisation

- The Oranmore upgrade is part of a **€1 billion+ investment programme** announced in the NDP, covering line electrification (Dublin-Cork, Dublin-Belfast), new rolling stock, and station refurbishments across the country.
- Similar projects at **Ceannt Station (Galway)** and **Kent Station (Cork)** illustrate a coordinated effort to expand platform capacity and improve inter-city connectivity. [connachttribune.ie](http://connachttribune.ie)

## Budget

The budget for this commission is €100,000

The successful artist will be responsible for the design and creation of the artwork including final installation within the budget. The budget is to include all costs, artist fees, expenses, materials, insurance, fabrication, engineer's reports, any relevant consultations and installation fees.

The budget for this commission is inclusive of VAT.

## Concept & Materials

There is no set theme or concept, artists are asked to consider the values of the Irish Rail and the mixed cultural, social and commercial identity that many consider the uniqueness of Oranmore. The commissioners are open to the artists taking their own preferred direction and having creative freedom in their design.

The artwork is intended to be permanent and of high quality. The brief does not specify the materials to be used however due consideration must be given to selecting materials that will be durable and easily maintained over time. Aesthetically, the design and materials should complement the unique design elements of the architecture, landscape design, lighting design, and open public spaces. The materials used should take into consideration the environmental demands of the site and occasional extreme weather conditions, including high winds.

All proposals must consider the long-term maintenance requirements and show a full understanding of the longevity of materials to be used.

## Artwork Location

The artist(s) may suggest a single location for an artwork or multiple locations for a series of interventions.

The commissioners have suggested Station area as the primary location. Supplementary locations could include surrounding areas.

All proposals should carefully consider if the artwork will impact on the usage and safety aspects that are unique to Iarnród Éireann locations, for example significantly restricting access, visibility or vantage points.

Artists can propose alternative locations for the artwork within the Oranmore development and should provide a rationale for their suggested location in their project description. The final location for the artwork or artworks will be agreed in consultation with the Project Design team and the selected artist.

## Application Process

This is a two-stage commission process. Stage 1 is open to artists at all stages of career based in Ireland and internationally. The selection panel will shortlist up to 5 artists who will be invited to further develop their proposals at Stage 2. Artists invited to Stage 2 will be paid a proposal development fee of €700.

## Stage 1 Applications

Stage 1 is an initial expression of interest process and applications for Stage 1 should include:

1. Summary of your proposal for the commission (max 100 words)
2. Early-stage visualisations or technical drawings
3. Project Plan: outline your concept and how you will approach the commission (max 700 words)
4. Outline how you feel this proposal will enhance the public space and Oranmore (max 150 words)
5. An indication of budget breakdown (material / fabrication quotes where necessary)

### Essential Supporting Material

1. Examples of up to three previous projects or works. Include images, dates and locations
2. Artist CV

Stage 1 applications must be made through email to [arts@irishrail.ie](mailto:arts@irishrail.ie)

Closing date for Stage 1 submissions is 4pm on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026

#### **Please note:**

Stage 1 is open to artists at all stages of career.

#### *With extensive experience*

Artists with extensive experience in public art may request to be shortlisted based on the merit of previous work and a Basic Outline Project Plan that includes

1. Summary of Proposal and
2. Early-stage visualisations only at Stage 1.

For this category, artists will need to provide at least three examples of completed projects of a similar scale to the Oranmore Commission (outdoor, permanent works with budgets higher than €100,000) to be considered for Stage 2 without providing a full Project Plan. A reference from at least one previous commissioner will strengthen an application.

#### *Without extensive experience*

Applications from artists without extensive experience working in public art will be considered for Stage 2 by the selection panel based on the merit of their Outline of Project Plan.

The artist must be able to demonstrate a professional approach and the viability of their project within their project plan and that they will include consultation with experts on the design, fabrication or structural integrity where appropriate.

## Stage 1 Selection Criteria:

The selection process will adhere to public art commissioning guidelines. The proposals will be marked with the following criteria:

- Artistic merit, visual distinctiveness and ambition of the proposed artwork (20/100)
- Proposed artwork will contribute to a sense of place for the public for generations to come (20/100)

- Proposed artwork will contribute to the architecture and landscape design features of the Oranmore Project (10/100)
- Consideration of environmental values in process and/or materials (5/100)
- Durability and implications for future maintenance (5/100)
- Your ability to manage the project demonstrated by: (40/100)  
Quality of previous work and experience managing commissions of a similar scale and works in the public realm

**and / or**

Project plan shows clear evidence of the ability to deliver the project within budget and timeframe

The shortlisted proposals will be the ones awarded the highest marks across all criteria by the Selection Panel.

The Selection Panel expects to meet and make their decision by End of March 2026

**Please note:**

A Preliminary Review Panel will be convened to evaluate the feasibility of each proposal before progressing for review by the Selection Panel. The Preliminary Review Panel will include a representative from Iarnród Éireann Capital Investments division, Chief Civil Engineers department and members of the Corporate Communications as well as representatives from the Arts Department of Galway County Council and Visual Arts Ireland (VAI).

The Preliminary Review Panel will evaluate submissions for feasibility ONLY. A feasible proposal will be one that scores a minimum criteria score of 30 against the Stage 1 Selection Criteria:

Your ability to manage the project demonstrated by: (40/100) Quality of previous work and experience managing commissions of a similar scale and works in the public realm

**and / or**

Project plan shows clear evidence of the ability to deliver the project within budget and timeframe

The Selection Panel will then evaluate the qualifying submissions against the full Stage 1 Selection Criteria and choose a shortlist of up to five proposals. Shortlisted artists will be invited to make a more detailed

Stage 2 proposal. Following receipt of second stage proposals, the Selection Panel will make a final decision.

## Stage 2 Applications

Artists shortlisted for Stage 2 will be provided with a Stage 2 Brief that will include notes from the selection panel and any additional information necessary to prepare detailed proposals.

**Stage 2 proposals / project plan will need to include:**

1. Visual representation of the proposed work in the context of the location (using maquettes, drawings, computer generated images or photographs).
2. Detailed description of the artwork.
3. A detailed explanation of the proposed materials for the artwork and its dimensions (scaled drawings, etc.).

4. Details of the technical specifications, location, construction, structural and installation process for the artwork, including details about any subcontractors who will be involved in fabrication. The names and professional qualifications of all personnel to be engaged as part of the artist's team should be included.
5. Details of any ground preparation, foundation works or heavy equipment that will require co-ordination with the Project Contractors or Design Team.
6. A detailed budget breakdown for the project including quotes.
7. A proposed timeline to the point of installation.

#### **Stage 2 Selection Criteria:**

The selection process will adhere to public art commissioning guidelines. The proposals will be marked with the following criteria:

1. Proposed artwork will significantly contribute to a sense of place for the public for generations to come (25/100)
2. Proposal demonstrates clarity and ambition (15/100)
3. Proposed artwork will contribute to the architecture, landscape design and lighting design features of the Oranmore Project (15/100)
4. Consideration of environmental values in process and/or materials (10/100)
5. Durability and implications for future maintenance (15/100)
6. Stage 2 project plan and timeline show clear detail and evidence of the ability to deliver the project within budget and timeframe (20/100)

The successful proposal will be the one awarded the highest marks. The selection panel reserves the right to not select if proposals do not meet the necessary level of quality and relevance to the Oranmore project.

The selection panel expects to meet and make their decision by the end of May2026.

## Selection Panel

The selection panel at Stage 1 and Stage 2 will consist of:

Representative from Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail

Representative from Galway Arts Office

Representative from Project Design Team - Senior Architect / Landscape Architect

Independent Professional Artist

Independent Curator

## Information Session

Artists will have the opportunity to attend an online Information Session will take place on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January from 14.00hrs to 14.45hrs. We will be joined by project managers for Oranmore and representatives from the Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail Design Team who will be available to answer questions.

Please register to attend the Information Session by emailing [arts@irishrail.ie](mailto:arts@irishrail.ie).

Attending the Information Session is not a requirement; queries can also be submitted by email to the same address.

## **Timeline**

The Oranmore project is due for completion in 2027. It is expected the commission will be installed prior to Project Completion on site. A proposed timeline will be agreed with the commissioners and the artist prior to signing of contract.

Information Session: Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January

Stage 1 Application deadline: Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Stage 2 Application deadline: End of April 2026

Contracts signed: , to be agreed with artist and Design Team

Installation on site:, to be agreed with artist and Design Team

## **Queries**

If any additional information is required in relation to the commission, development or technical specifications of the site, please contact: [arts@irishrail.ie](mailto:arts@irishrail.ie)

# Appendix 1: Terms & Conditions

## Insurance

The artist will be responsible for insurance of the artwork until it is installed on site. The Commissioner shall be responsible for insurance of the artwork after installation is complete. The artist will require Public liability Insurance and Employers liability Insurance for any sub-contractors engaged by the artist and assisting with the installation of the work on site.

## Copyright

All applications must contain a statement that the proposed design is of the sole creation of the artist and that no other person has or will have any legal call on the work. Copyright for the work proposed will remain at all times with the artist.

## Health & Safety

All work shall be carried out in line with the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (Nr.10 of 2005), supporting regulations, codes of practice and any industry best practice associated with the works being undertaken.

### **Contractor Status and Approval**

The selected artist or their appointed contractors must obtain Infrastructure Maintenance (IM) Approved Contractor status prior to undertaking any work on the Oranmore Station site. If the artist subcontracts fabrication or installation, those subcontractors must either hold an IM Approved Contractor Certificate or be granted an IM Contractor Certificate of Exemption by the relevant Departmental Safety Manager (CCE).

Access to site must be authorised by the Accountable Line Manager, and coordination with the CCE Safety Manager and/or Safety Executive is required to determine applicable approvals.

### **Competency and Supervision**

The artist's project plan must identify competent persons involved in fabrication and installation and include supervision arrangements. All works on or near the line must be undertaken by Contractor Personal Track Safety (PTS) -certified personnel under appropriate supervision. The local CCE Safety Executive will inspect all activities for compliance with safety standards and method statements.

### **Method Statements and Risk Assessments**

Prior to installation, a detailed site-specific Method Statement and associated Risk Assessment (RAMS) in line with Section 19&20 SHWVA (2005), must be submitted for review and acceptance. These should describe the sequence of:

1. Operations
2. List of materials including Safety Data Sheets where required
3. List of equipment and certifications where required
4. lifting or fixing methods

5. emergency procedures
6. welfare provisions
7. Interaction with the Iarnród Éireann Design and Safety Teams.

### **Site Access and Local Safety Briefing**

Access to the Oranmore Station site must be prearranged with the Accountable Line Manager. The artist and all team members must attend local safety induction briefings, covering site hazards, emergency procedures, and Iarnród Éireann's Drugs & Alcohol Policy. Non-English-speaking staff must be supported by English-speaking supervisors and receive translated safety information where necessary.

### **Monitoring and Inspection**

The CCE Departmental Safety Manager will include the installation works in the programme of unannounced Contractor Management Inspections. Any identified non-compliances will result in a Corrective Action Notice to be acknowledged and resolved within 48 hours. The project will also be reviewed through the bi-monthly Contractor Safety Review Workshop.

### **Insurance, Health & Safety and Legal Compliance**

The artist must maintain Public and Employer's Liability Insurance in line with Iarnród Éireann requirements (€6.5m and €13m respectively). All activities must comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the Construction Regulations 2013, and the Railway Safety Act 2005. The artist remains responsible for safety and compliance until formal handover to Iarnród Éireann.

### **Record Keeping and Handover**

A full project dossier must be retained, including IM contractor approval certificates, risk assessments, method statements, inspection reports, and safety briefings. Upon completion, the artist must provide as-built drawings, structural certification, maintenance instructions, and written confirmation of safe handover to Iarnród Éireann Facilities/Capital Investment teams.

### **Suggested Compliance Clause for Call to Artists Document**

The appointed artist or their nominated contractor must comply with Iarnród Éireann's Infrastructure Manager Safety Management Standard IM-SMS-005: Management of Contractors. This includes obtaining IM Approved Contractor or Exemption status, submitting site-specific method statements and risk assessments, participating in safety briefings, and complying with inspection, supervision and corrective action requirements.

## Contract

Prior to the commencement of work or payments, a contract must be agreed and signed by the artist and the commissioner. A contract will be drafted to include all timeline, payment schedule, copyright and insurance details.

## Procurement

The selection panel, whose decision is final, has the right to clarify any issue that may arise during the course of the selection. Iarnród Éireann reserves the right not to award the commission if none of the proposals received at Stage 2 meet the minimum qualifying mark of 80/100 and in this instance reserve the right to pursue another procurement process.

## Privacy Policy

Information and data collected in the course of this procurement process will be treated in accordance with the Iarnród Éireann privacy policies

## Submissions

Stage 1 applications will be accepted by email only. Posted applications will not be accepted. Late applications will not be accepted. Stage 1 applications will be kept for six months for the purpose of documenting the selection process and ensuring transparency of the selection process. Stage 1 proposals, including designs, will be deleted after six months.

## Appendix 2: Reference photographs and drawings













