

Opening Statement from Rónán Ó Domhnaill, Media Development Commissioner at Coimisiún na Meán

Gabhaim buíochas leis an gCoiste as an gcuireadh labhairt libh anseo inniu ar an ábhar seo atá tábhachtach don sochaí, don earnáil teilifíse, scannánaíochta agus raidió, don chultúr, do fhorbairt na tuaithe agus d'obair Choimisiún na Meán.

Mar thús níor mhiste liom b'fhéidir beagán cur síos a dhéanamh ar Choimisiún na Meán féin a bunaíodh mí Márta anuraidh agus a tháinig i gcomharbacht ar Údarás Craolacháin na hÉireann, an BAI.

Coimisiún na Meán was born with an expanded remit covering the regulation of broadcasters and online media and supporting media development. We believe that how Ireland, our culture, our heritage and our communities are represented on-screen matters. An Coimisiún recognises the potential of film and television productions to local communities.

Across Ireland, communities are rightly proud to see their towns and villages on the small or big screen and economically, film and television productions also bring the potential for enhanced tourism and local employment and creative opportunities to regional cities, towns and villages.

Supporting the development of the wider media sector through sectoral learning and development initiatives, funding schemes including the Sound & Vision scheme, and activities to promote the Irish language and equality, diversity and inclusion in the media sector is core to my work as Media Development Commissioner. Coimisiún na Meán supports television and film production in a range of ways.

Recently, we announced funding of almost €800,000 for 2024 under the Sectoral Learning and Development Programme and Sponsorship Scheme. These programmes deliver specific training needs and support for the audiovisual sector. This year, the allocation will see Coimisiún na Meán providing support to 50 projects across the regions.

Among those who received funding for this year are:

- The Catalyst International Film Festival in Limerick City, which amplifies diverse voices and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion in film-making
- The Dingle Animation Festival in County Kerry, which fosters dialogue, creativity and opportunity between the animation industry and students entering the workforce
- The FÍS TV Summit in Galway City, which brings creatives from the Irish and international television industry together to discuss industry trends and to foster connections
- The Community Television Association, where there has been an All-Island focus on training activities benefiting regional broadcasting groups in Leitrim, Cork and Belfast

Recent funding rounds have also seen us provide support for Glúin Nua, in partnership with TG4, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Gréasán na Meán, which supported emerging Irish language

writers and directors. Is cúis mhór mortais agus áthas dúinn a bheith in ann tacú leis na meáin Ghaeilge mar chuid dár gcuid oibre.

Separately, the Sound & Vision scheme has made an invaluable contribution to film and television production in Ireland and boasts two Oscar nominated films among its recipients namely, The Secret of Kells from 2009 and An Cailín Ciúin in 2022.

In total, over €63 million has been provided to high quality Irish television and radio productions under the Sound & Vision scheme, which includes productions occurring throughout the regions.

An important element of the Sound & Vision scheme is that it supports culturally valuable programming which in many cases, may not otherwise be made, and a key consideration when awarding funding is the extent to which a proposed production provides an opportunity for new talent and skills development.

Sound & Vision has funded 711 productions across television and radio ranging from documentaries to animation, drama to entertainment and education.

Among the sectors provided funding through Sound & Vision include:

- Nearly €54 million to independent producers
- Nearly €18 million to Irish language and bi-lingual productions
- Over €10 million to arts and cultural productions
- Over €10 million to the production of children's content, including animation

The development of a strong media landscape for Ireland is not an ambition that An Coimisiún pursues alone. It is important to recognise the support of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, having recently provided additional funding for number of Sound & Vision rounds. We also benefit from collaboration with a range of stakeholders across the sector including Screen Ireland, the independent production sector and broadcasters, working together to support and advocate for initiatives that help develop the industry countrywide.

Coimisiún na Meán will continue to support the development of a diverse and thriving media production landscape in Ireland and to support the development of content which reflects and shapes Irish society.

Guím gach rath ar obair an Choiste seo agus táim ag tnúth go mór an deis a fháil aon cheisteanna atá agaibh a fhreagairt.