Helium is Seeking Visual Artists (freelance)

To Join our Freelance Associate Artist Panel in multiple locations across Ireland

2027 - 2029

Inspiring life through art

General Description

Helium invites applications from professional, multi-disciplinary Visual Artists who work across art-forms with a strong collaborative and inclusive arts practice with experience / interest in working with children and young people with lifelong physical conditions and additional needs, including disabilities, to join our Freelance Artist Panel as Associate Artists.

Artists will be contracted on a project to project, (e.g. seasonal programme work) freelance basis over the next two years, to deliver our Creative Health Programme in a variety of settings (hospital, community and online) associated with our Creative Health Hubs in **Cork, Dublin, Galway, Limerick, Kilkenny** and surrounding counties which include; **Clare, Mayo, Tipperary** and **Greater Dublin area** and for our national **online delivery.**

We are open to all applicants but are particularly interested in applicants based within an hour's travel to **Galway City, Dublin North / Dublin South** and **Castlebar Co. Mayo** and those interested in delivering **online workshops.**

The role of Associate Artist is to deliver inspiring collaborative arts programmes which are responsive to the needs and vision of children and young people with lifelong physical conditions, additional needs, including disabilities. Artists should have a genuine interest in building supportive relationships and a working

understanding of inclusive arts practice relevant to the needs of participants including a flexible approach to children and young people and how workshops are facilitated. Training, wellbeing supports and professional development opportunities will be provided on a continual basis to the freelance panel as part of our Artist Training and Development Programme. Successful applicants will receive paid time to participate in both in-person and online induction training sessions which includes Artist shadowing opportunities throughout our Spring 2027 programme.

Applications due by: Monday 4th January 2027 at 16.00 / 4pm.

How to Apply: See page 7 of document.

Application Support: Should you require any support to help you apply, please do not hesitate to reach out - you can email hr@helium.ie.

Shortlisting Key Dates*

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an online interview and an in-person interactive workshop as part of the selection process. Online Interviews will take place in the week beginning 18th January 2027.

- In-Person interactive workshops in (Venue TBC - likely Dublin / Limerick artists will be allocated to the closest location from their base) in the week beginning 25th January 2027 / 1st February 2027. Exact date to be confirmed asap.
- Travel expenses, in line with our expenses policy, will be covered for anyone who lives over one hour from in-person workshop location.
- Selected candidates will be notified by week beginning 8th February 2027.
- Applicants must be in a position to attend both online and in person interviews in the weeks mentioned above upon making your application or state in your application if this may be an issue.

*Helium will endeavour to adhere to the schedule outlined above however dates may be subject to change.

About Helium

Helium empowers children living with long-term physical health conditions through creativity and the Arts, giving them an opportunity for connection, belonging and imagination. We know from research that children with health conditions can feel isolated or different to their peers. Through our programmes in hospitals, in community workshops and online, it has been proven that children develop their confidence and independence, to promote their wellbeing. We believe in a world where all children living with long-term health conditions in Ireland are connected to their creative powers so they can live life to the full.

https://helium.ie/

Overview

Role Title:	Associate Artist on Helium's Artist Panel
Location:	Various - Creative Health Hubs are based in Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny & Limerick including surrounding counties; Clare, Mayo, Tipperary, Greater Dublin area.
Main Contact:	Community and Hospital Programme Manager with support of wider Programme Team.
Contract:	Two year freelance panel membership
Fee:	€200 per workshop delivery day (2 workshops a day) €200 prep day per workshop delivery day €150 for training days €50 for online training of 1-2 hours Support Artist Fee Structure for Assisting Workshops also provided

	Contribution to travel costs and lunch provided for in person training days
Benefits What we offer:	• Regular and ongoing paid time to participate in Training and development, which includes in person and online training day(s), externally facilitated Quarterly Artist Wellbeing check ins and a more in depth monthly support programme for 3-4. Artists selected by application from the full panel of Freelance Associate Artists. Above is funding dependent. • Access to an active peer network of 35+ strong Professional Artists on Helium's panel all working in Arts & Health. • Access to Helium Arts EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) via Wisdom Wellbeing
Panel Start Date:	2027
Terms:	Acceptance onto the panel does not guarantee the artist will receive paid assignments for workshop facilitation or other work on the programme. This will be dependent on Helium's successful fundraising and programme sales throughout the two years. However, there will be a minimum of one to two paid training days per year for all Associate Artists. Candidates will receive full terms upon success of their application.
Selection:	We will be recruiting artists based on areas of need geographically, on skills, experience, and qualifications as professional visual artists, as well as their location of work.

General Role Overview

- Plan and deliver inspiring collaborative visual arts programmes in community settings (often during mid term breaks or on a Saturday), which are responsive to the needs and vision of participants (aged 6-16 years)

living with lifelong physical health conditions, additional support needs and or disabilities.

- Design workshop plans in line with proven methodologies adopted by Helium to ensure quality and consistency is maintained across each of the Creative Health Hub Programme locations.
- Build supportive relationships with participants and families, raising awareness of the benefits of creativity for wellbeing in collaboration with Helium's Programme Team.
- Supervise volunteers, and where applicable; student placements / shadowing artists and support artists, ensuring the adults present at a community workshop are clear on their individual roles as well as the objectives of the workshop.
- Liaise with medical support personnel, ensuring the adults present at a community workshop are clear on their individual roles as well as the objectives of the workshop.
- Manage the supply and stock of arts materials within budget.
- Document the programme in line with agreed procedures, working efficiently and effectively to submit plans, reports, data, content and testimonials to head office.
- Ensure compliance with all financial, contractual, legal as well as health and safety requirements.
- Ensure compliance with all Helium's policies pertaining to child safeguarding, data protection and other legal requirements. The role carries a duty of care and responsibility for the safety of children and young people.
- Participate in induction, ongoing training, and development opportunities.
- Other duties as required by the Programme Team.

Essential Criteria - Skills and Experience:

- Strong record of collaborative visual arts practice working across disciplines and art-forms with children and young people.
- Experience of inclusive arts practice relevant to the needs of children and

young people living with long-term health conditions, additional needs and disabilities.
- An open and personal communicator with a natural ability to build supportive relationships.
- Awareness of child safeguarding and welfare promotion.
- Outstanding time management, planning and coordination skills.
- An adaptable self-starter who is confident and comfortable working remotely; individually or as part of a team and embracing team spirit.
- Demonstrable experience of stakeholder management.
- Committed to developing own arts practice within arts and health.

Required experience:

- Minimum of 3 years experience of collaborative arts practice working with children and young people.
- Minimum of 2 years experience of working with children and young people with additional needs.

Desirable Criteria:

- Experience of inclusive arts practice relevant to the needs of children and young people who have been historically systematically discriminated against or marginalised and or who come from vulnerable backgrounds.
- Experience working with children and young people whose first language is not English.
- Experience across age groups including 6-8, 8-12, 13- 16 years.
- Experience of remote and/or online arts facilitation.
- Experience supervising volunteers.
- Experience of communicating across sectors and strong presentation skills.
- Experience of developing arts and health programmes/projects.
- Experience of documenting, monitoring and evaluating programmes/projects.

- Experience of using inclusive communication tools - e.g. Lámh ; PECS

How to apply:

Applicants are invited to submit a **single pdf** containing;

- CV outlining relevant experience (max 2 pages)
- A letter of motivation, outlining your reasons for applying, and addressing how your relevant experience meets the role specifications
- Three examples (photos/video/audio) of collaborative artwork with children, via images inserted into above PDF OR via the following links only e.g. to websites, google drive link. Please do not email examples of artwork separately or link to instagram posts. If emailing via google drive link ensure permissions are set to 'view all with access to this link'.
- Applications should be emailed to hr@helium.ie with Associate Artist Panel Application 2027 in the subject line.

Application closing date: Monday 4th of January 2026 at 16.00 / 4pm

Please Note:

- Helium reserves the right to request up to two references from previous employers / collaborators.
- Applicants should have the right to work in Ireland.
- Whilst Helium promotes the use of public transport, a full clean driving licence and access to a car would be an advantage.
- Due to high volumes of applications, individual feedback cannot be provided to all candidates.

Training Dates for Successful Candidates

A mix of online and in-person sessions will take place across February and

March 2027. Exact dates are TBC. Please note that selected applicants must successfully complete the required training days to be eligible for freelance work in 2027.

Health and Safety

Helium adheres to all National Health Protocols and Child Safeguarding Regulations. Its Health and Safety Statement and Child Safeguarding training is available on joining the organisation. Ongoing training and support will be provided.

Helium is a registered charity, RCN: 20075200 and has secured 2025 'Triple Lock' status from the Charities Institute of Ireland.

Helium's Recruitment Privacy Notice - available here
Helium's Artists Pay and Conditions - available here

HOW WE WORK - Helium Creative Health Hub Model and Programme

Supported by key partners and stakeholders, Helium established and piloted the first year of the Creative Health Hub in 2019 in Limerick and Cork. The Hub was the vehicle through which an arts and wellbeing programme called the Children's Creative Health Programme was delivered across University Hospital Limerick, Cork University Hospital and surrounding local urban communities. The programme has since extended to include University Hospital Galway, Mayo University Hospital, CHI Dublin (Connolly & Tallaght Hospitals plus Inclusion Health Lynn Clinic) and the following counties Clare, Dublin, Mayo & Tipperary. In 2025 a new hub was established in Kilkenny.

Within the Creative Health Programme families attending hospital outpatient clinics can meet Helium artists and volunteers, try out creative activities and, if they wish, register for the community programme. The community programme

delivers creative activity camps and weekly group workshops in community venues (e.g. family resource centres, libraries) and cultural venues over six weeks, for children aged from 8 - 16 years. On-site medical cover is provided so children can participate worry free. Volunteers provide one-on-one support during the community workshops.

The Hub increases local access to the arts for this marginalised group of children and young people aged 8-16 years through a coordinated approach which will increase local capacity and resources to deliver targeted arts engagements. This is done by building strategic partnerships at a local level between the hospital and the HSE Regional Health Areas, between patient support groups, local arts/community venues and local arts organisations, and with third level institutions who can bring resources such as research opportunities and student placements.

The Hub model also provides continuing professional development, training, and mentoring for the participating artists. It also acts as a platform for the making of new collaborative art work through focused planning and resources on one Art Showcase per year.

How we work - Hospital OutPatients Programme

Helium offers children and young people the option to *create while you wait* in hospital outpatients departments. Idle and anxious moments are transformed through light table and lap based arts activities that foster creativity, playfulness and a sense of calm.

Activities are facilitated by professional artists and trained volunteers. Children, young people and their families are invited to learn more about Helium's community programme (offered free of charge) and sign-up via a registration form.

How we work - Community Programme

Within all community workshops, Helium matches participants with children and young people of a similar age and with shared life experiences. All workshops are facilitated by trained and experienced artists with medical support on hand so children and parents can participate worry free, where children's medical needs will be attended to. Our volunteers also provide support during the workshops.

Weekly Workshops

Helium's regular community workshops are aimed at children and young people aged 8-16 years. In all workshops, professional artists facilitate activities that promote and support the five habits of the creative mind: Inquisitiveness, Collaboration, Imagination, Discipline, and Persistence. The creative process is child-centred, encouraging participants to take art-making into their own hands, exploring personal and common ideas, interests, experiences. During workshops, participants are introduced to art forms and work towards individual as well as group projects ranging from murals and graffiti painting; to animation and comic art; wire sculpture and model making; set-building, and much much more!

Camps

Helium's camps offer participants the opportunity to collaborate with professional artists in experimentation with sound, visuals, performance, digital media and creative adventure-based activities. The creative process is child-centred, encouraging participants to take art-making into their own hands. Camps take place during school holidays and range in length from half-day taster sessions to 3-day camps.

Youth Meet-Ups

The youth meet-ups programme runs throughout the year taking place in Cork,

Dublin, Galway and Limerick cities, Kilkenny will launch in 2026. Young people aged 13-16 meet up once a month in their respective city for a mix of creative workshops and gallery/museum visits. They also take part in two 3-day camps, during the summer holidays and autumn mid-term break. In 2023, Helium's Annual Showcase was associated with this programme. The programme is an opportunity for teenagers, their peers and artists to meet, share ideas, interests, and experiences and make art together.

How we work - Online Programme

Helium's team of talented artists create home-based creative experiences through activity sheets dropped in your inbox with step-by-step guides, surprise postal drops, Post Pal collaborations, and virtual sharing over six weeks. The Distance Creates programme includes activities such as working together on colourful collages, recreating famous masterpieces using items at home, crafting miniature film projectors and much more. The programme is facilitated by trained and experienced artists. Participants can receive materials and artwork-in-progress by the artist as well as other participants through the post with two online Family Sharings taking place on Zoom throughout the six week programme. For young people aged 13 to 16, we offer two 3-day live online camps in summer and autumn. In 2024, Helium's Annual Showcase was associated with the Online Programme.

How we work - Helium's Methodology

We adopted the 5 Creative Habits as the basis for Helium's methodologies. All our programmes utilise these methodologies in their design. You can read more about them here: https://www.thomastallisschool.com/tallis-habits.html

Involving Children and Young People in Decision-making

We believe that young people are experts in their own lives — and their voices matter. Too often, youth are left out of decision-making simply because of their

age or identity. Our Youth Participation Framework is our commitment to changing that. It will support you to plan to include young people in decision-making.

This practical “how-to” guide outlines how we include young people in shaping our work, amplify their voices, and break down barriers to participation — especially for those living with lifelong physical health conditions. The framework sets out our inclusive vision for the next three years. https://helium.ie/youth-participation-framework/

Our Framework is based on the Lundy Model of Child Participation (2007) which has the following four inter-related concepts.

SPACE: Children must be given the opportunity to express a view

VOICE: Children must be facilitated to express their views.

AUDIENCE: The view must be listened to.

INFLUENCE: The view must be acted upon, as appropriate.

It is also underpinned by:

- The National Framework for Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-making (2021)
- The National Participation of Children and Young People in Decision Making Action-Plan (2024)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992)