



**TENDERFOOT MOVING FORWARD:
Bridging the gap between arts and education**

**SUMMARY DOCUMENT
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Background

Tenderfoot is The Civic Theatre, Tallaght's apprentice theatre programme for second level students. Each year, Tenderfoot offers fifty Transition Year students from schools in South Dublin County the opportunity to learn about theatre by making theatre. Established in 2007, in collaboration with South Dublin County Council Arts Office and Veronica Coburn as theatre artist-in-residence, the programme is now in its thirteenth year.

So far, 550 Transition Year students from eleven schools in South Dublin County have completed the programme. 204 of those young people have written plays and, of those 204 original works, 79 have been produced. Over 3,000 students from schools in South Dublin have been to The Civic Theatre to see the plays written by their peers.

In 2015, a volume of plays, *'Tenderfoot: A Volume of Plays By and For Young People'*, featuring thirteen plays and three monologues written by a number of Tenderfoot's fifteen/sixteen year-old playwrights, was published by The Civic Theatre in association with South Dublin County library. The work in the volume is central to a new drama module, 'Page to Stage', offered to secondary school teachers by Tenderfoot and The Civic Theatre as part of the new Junior Cycle Training for Teachers programme.

Tenderfoot has always worked in close collaboration with schools, aligning with Transition Year and its broader approach to curriculum. Transition Year offers students the possibility to try new activities and explore different ways of learning, with an emphasis on experiencing real world work environments. Utilising a model of apprenticeship, Tenderfoot provides a space where young people can actively learn about theatre by working alongside professional playwrights and theatre artists.



Tenderfoot in action, The Civic Theatre

Tenderfoot is now entering a new phase.

Since Tenderfoot began working in South Dublin County in 2007, important changes have taken place in the landscape which connects education and the arts at a national level, for example, more explicit policy connections between education and the arts, and changes in curricula, with more focus on creativity and innovation.

South Dublin County is one of the most youthful and culturally diverse regions in Ireland. According to the latest data from the 2016 Census of Population, there were 278,767 people residing in South Dublin County, with over ninety-three nationalities and over 17.5% of the overall population born outside of Ireland. **Over 35% of the population is made up of children and young people, higher than both the state average and the Dublin average.** There are thirty-five secondary schools in the area, catering for young people between the ages of eleven and eighteen.

The Tenderfoot programme continues to be extremely successful, with fifty Transition Year students having the Tenderfoot apprentice theatre experience every year. The programme could successfully and meaningfully continue as it is for many years to come. However, the changing landscape provides fertile ground for positive change; it invites ambitious and visionary thinking. In 2018, we launched an ambitious strategic development for Tenderfoot, 'IMPACT – Tenderfoot Going Forward'. Through IMPACT, in the context of the changed arts and education landscape, Tenderfoot aims to achieve what would have been impossible to imagine in 2007.

'IMPACT, Tenderfoot Going Forward' is a strategic development plan with two distinct strands:

Expansion

Tenderfoot has always been about access and inclusivity. The programme currently works with eight schools in South Dublin County each year. Five of Tenderfoot's schools have been part of the programme since its inception in 2007, with a changeover of three schools at various points. Tenderfoot has worked with a total of eleven schools to date. Through the inclusion of ALL second level schools in South Dublin County (a total of thirty-five), Tenderfoot will shift from being a stand-alone localized programme to a systematic regional programme, connecting all schools in the region with The Civic Theatre.

Development

Tenderfoot's core concept is the valuing of the artistic voice of the young person. Tenderfoot provides a space where that voice can be articulated and encountered. IMPACT provides for the development of the possibilities of, and opportunities for, that voice through:

- The development of in-school activities inspired by Tenderfoot. This stream aligns with The Arts Council's Creative Schools Programme.
- The development of South Dublin County's theatrical youth voice beyond Tenderfoot, through associated programmes such as Giant Wolf, The Civic Theatre's Youth Theatre, and future next step programmes.
- The development of professional work for, and eventually by, young people.

By working inclusively across the region, Tenderfoot will become a model of cultural engagement that also has national relevance for both schools and local cultural/arts organisations.

Research and reflection

2019 has been a period of research and reflection for Tenderfoot, funded by the Creative Ireland Programme Scheme. Through research on the ground, both locally and internationally, the combined aims of this research have been to ground IMPACT in reality, and to inspire thinking beyond its original vision, so that Tenderfoot can move forward as an inclusive, ambitious, exciting and systematic programme.

With this in mind, the **objectives** of this research have been:

- To make 'meaningful contact' with each second level school in South Dublin County;
- To **map the current landscape** of professional theatre arts access and provision for secondary school students in South Dublin County and to **create an understanding of current thinking** in terms of the aims and needs of theatre arts provision and access;
- To clarify the **philosophical underpinnings** of an expanded Tenderfoot programme;
- To **outline a comprehensive model of professional arts provision**, in this case the art of theatre, based on a 'young person as artist' approach, with a focus on access, inclusivity and contemporary practice.

The research has comprised three key steps.

- **Mapping the landscape of theatre provision in second-level schools in South Dublin County**

Throughout this research, we have been making gradual contact with every school in South Dublin County. Through a process of contact and discussion with 'liaison teachers', and a survey completed by these teachers, we have been gradually mapping out what exists in second level schools in terms of theatre and drama provision.

- **Arts and Education Forum**

This key step essentially moved Tenderfoot into the next stage of its evolution. On 28 September 2019, Tenderfoot and The Civic Theatre hosted an 'Arts and Education Forum' in The Civic Theatre. This event brought together teachers from secondary schools in South Dublin County, artists working with young people through theatre (both Irish-based and international), and arts consultants and funders, to further explore what is needed to create a 'culture of creativity' in schools. Key speakers included Martin Drury (Senior Arts Consultant) and Tony Reekie (Creative Producer, Lyra, Scotland). The material from this forum, combined with information from the surveys completed by liaison teachers, is informing thinking around the expansion and development of Tenderfoot.

- **International case studies: Lyra, O Teatrao and Kopergietery**

The third step has been to establish contact with a small number of selected organisations outside of Ireland who are working in challenging and ground-breaking ways with young people. In a period of reflection, learning and development for Tenderfoot, this has been an important aspect. Conversations with members of three international companies are feeding into a better understanding of Tenderfoot's own work, as well as creating the first steps towards international collaborations.

This document:

- Summarizes the findings of our research in 2019;
- Provides an overview of the philosophical underpinnings of Tenderfoot; and
- Outlines updated expansion and development plans for Tenderfoot.

More detailed findings from our research may be found at the following links:

- [Tenderfoot: an apprentice theatre programme for young people.](#)

We outline the Tenderfoot model, exploring some of the key aspects which make up its practical approach as well as its philosophical foundations.

- [Arts and Education: Where does Tenderfoot fit?](#)

We look at the changing landscape connecting arts policy, education and young people in Ireland, and the place of Tenderfoot within this landscape.

- [Research with Schools in South Dublin County: creating a culture of creativity](#)

We share the results from our survey and from discussions at the Arts and Education Forum on the provision of theatre-related activities for secondary school students, looking at what is needed and what is valued, and at some of the benefits and challenges of working with young adults through contemporary theatre.

- [From the Local to the International: Tenderfoot connects](#)

We outline how Tenderfoot is moving from the local to the international, connecting with international companies working with young people through theatre and incorporating learning from these connections into Tenderfoot's own development.



Tenderfoot in action, The Civic Theatre

Arts and Education Policy in Ireland

This research aims to show that Tenderfoot, through its work with young people, schools and community, **is a prime model fulfilling the commitment to creative engagement of regional arts, national arts and arts in education, as well as contributing more generally to a creative society in Ireland.** Forming a creative society happens through SUSTAINED INTERACTION, and the development of Tenderfoot is about looking forward and supporting this vision.

South Dublin County Council is committed to the development of the arts in the county, in particular the development of an arts service that is 'inclusive, accessible and sustainable', as evidenced by their **Arts Development Strategy 2016-2020**. The Council 'recognises that the arts contribute substantially to a county's growth and viability and makes an essential contribution to local quality of life'. It also recognises the 'need to create conditions that sustain a concentration of artists, creative people and arts organisations within its boundaries'. The document outlines four themes in its development strategy. Under the second theme, 'Engagement, Learning and Participation', South Dublin County Council aims to 'provide opportunities for children and young people to explore their creative potential and expand their experience of the arts'. Tenderfoot at The Civic Theatre is named here as one of several 'creative learning initiatives' which will support the provision of these opportunities.

As well as aligning closely with **Creative Ireland** priorities around 'Creative Youth', and the integration of arts in education, the development of Tenderfoot at The Civic Theatre aligns with the five pillars which form the core of the Creative Ireland programme: Children and Youth/Enabling the creative potential of every child, Creative Communities, Cultural Investment, Creative Industries and Global Reputation.

In recent years, there has been increasing acknowledgement in Ireland that there is an important intersection between education, the arts and young people. There is increasingly an understanding of the importance and the value of artistic experience and engagement as part of a rounded education, as reflected in changing national policy and consequent changes in the Irish curriculum. The **Arts in Education Charter 2012** outlines both an **onus on schools** to develop policy to reflect commitment to the arts and an **onus on publicly funded arts organizations** to address arts-in-education 'explicitly and in a policy-based fashion'. Tenderfoot connects these two requirements through one programme.

The new **Junior Cycle Framework**, established in 2012, supports a holistic approach to learning and to education, with creativity at the heart of this. The framework is underpinned by eight principles, which include 'creativity and innovation', 'engagement and participation' and 'well-being', both individual and collective. The recent changes in the Junior Cycle, with its attention to communication, flexibility and creativity among other areas, are indicative of future shifts in education. Following these changes in the Junior Cycle, the Senior Cycle is now under review. The Tenderfoot programme fits very clearly with these recent shifts in priorities in education, as well as with the existing **Transition Year** programme, which is the first part of the Senior Cycle. Transition Year offers learners an opportunity to mature and develop without the pressure of an examination, with a focus on personal development and learning through experience.

Research and development: grounding and expanding the vision

Throughout this research period, we have made meaningful contact with sixteen schools in South Dublin County and hosted an 'Arts and Education Forum' for teachers and artists at The

Civic Theatre. We have also visited and explored the work of three international case studies working with children and young adults through theatre: Lyra, Edinburgh, Kopergiety, Ghent and O Teatrao, Coimbra.

The original aim was to have made contact with all thirty-five schools in the county by the end of 2019. While contact has been slower than originally envisaged, with 'liaison teachers' now established in twenty-five schools, and seventeen of these categorised as 'meaningful contact', the contact we have made has been extremely positive, and has yielded important findings, both through a survey sent to 'liaison teachers' and through the Arts and Education Forum at The Civic Theatre.



Tenderfoot in action, The Civic Theatre

Key findings from our research with second-level teachers in South Dublin County show that:

(A detailed description of these findings can be found [here](#))

- There is a general under-engagement of second level schools in South Dublin County with theatre/drama, either through in-school activities or through attending performances outside of school. In the majority of schools surveyed (60%), liaison teachers estimated that over their six years of secondary education, under 20% of students would take part in some kinds of drama/theatre activity; and that each student would have the opportunity to see a play/performance in a professional venue once or twice.
- Contemporary theatre and playwriting, both by contemporary playwrights and by students themselves, appear to be generally undervalued in second level schools. This manifests both in the theatre that is performed in schools, as well as that which young people are exposed to in professional venues. Several teachers expressed a pressure to bring students only to plays which are directly on the curriculum.
- Findings point towards schools having access to very little external funding for drama/theatre activities, with the majority of drama/theatre activities being voluntary on the part of teachers. Any drama/theatre activities in 67% of the schools surveyed was voluntary.

Tenderfoot, an apprentice theatre programme for young adults, based on a 'young person as artist' approach, with a focus on access, inclusivity, articulation of a young voice and contemporary practice, successfully addressed these absences.

(A detailed discussion of the philosophical underpinnings and practical approach of Tenderfoot can be found [here](#)).

Research on the ground with both schools and with international case studies has confirmed the importance of the philosophical underpinnings and practical approach of Tenderfoot. Research, in particular, with international case studies has inspired our work and expanded our vision for Tenderfoot beyond national boundaries, confirming the importance of the development of international connections and collaborations. Discussions with artistic teams of Lyra, O Teatrao and Kopergietyery have confirmed for us, among other things, that:

Tenderfoot is not working in a void. The international companies which we have connected with share Tenderfoot's priorities, namely:

- The importance of a 'young person as artist' approach, with the creativity of young people at the heart of the work.
- The importance of working in a long-term, sustained way with both young people and with schools, with schools as a long-term means of fostering creativity in a population. Discussions with members of these companies have confirmed for us that effect and change come from long-term engagement, rather than one-off projects.
- The importance of freedom of expression for young people, and of theatre, and the space of the theatre itself, as a space to deal with difficult or 'taboo' issues. Our discussions throughout this research have shown that content and age-appropriate

material are complex issues for both teachers and artists working with young people to navigate. However, they have also shown that strict age guidelines are not necessarily useful, but rather that 'difficult' issues need to be dealt with in a context-based, sensitive and supported way.

Our research has also shown that **Tenderfoot is quite unique** in terms of its emphasis on the articulation of young voice through its model of writing and apprenticeship. Work WITH and FOR young people is extremely important, but there are very few organisations which simultaneously prioritise work BY young people.

Tenderfoot is an ambitious project. And IMPACT is an ambitious plan for Tenderfoot – a vision.

Through this research, we have been working both locally and internationally in order to simultaneously ground our strategic plan, IMPACT, in reality, and to inspire us to develop this plan beyond the original vision.

We have now adapted our strategic plan, 'IMPACT - Tenderfoot Going Forward', to reflect this learning as well as the reality of progress.

'IMPACT - Tenderfoot Going Forward' was created in 2017 and outlined a five-year programme of development spanning from 2018 to 2023. The plan confirmed **articulation**, in the form of Tenderfoot's written work, plays written by young people, as the beating heart of the programme. That commitment to articulation permeates everything we do. Performance is, through the prism of a character, an articulation of the young performer's emotional, physical, intellectual and psychological being. Design - set, costume, sound, music or moving image - is the aesthetic articulation of concept, theme and form. Stage management is an articulation of a young person's organisational capability drawing on intellect, intuition and common sense. **This is broad curriculum in action.** This way of working is about the coming together of learning; it is applied learning. And in having meaning, the learning leads to an outcome: a public performance of which 99.9% of Tenderfeet over the years have said they were proud. This way of working is effective.

Tenderfoot is, first and foremost, about learning and learning to articulate: what you have to say, what you want to say, what you think is important to say. It is also about learning to listen - to other opinions, perspectives and viewpoints. It is about developing critical thinking through discussion and investigation, a way of working which is not based on right or wrong. It is about learning all of that through the medium of theatre and, in so doing, learning that theatre, and the arts in general, and the spaces attached to them, theatres, galleries, concert halls are for you. Our 'Tenderfeet' learn that they are creative beings capable of taking their place in a creative society.

"It gave me such a clear view of what I want to do. I learnt so much about myself."

"I'm a more confident speaker and actor."

"It has made me confident and proud."

"It has made me more confident and more sociable. I have made friends and am a happier person."

'Young Person as Artist' approach

The function of Tenderfoot was never and is not to produce the artists of tomorrow. That may happen and it is a wonderful thing if it does. The function of Tenderfoot will always be to afford our young people a space where they can **function as artists**, because the need to explore and to understand and to provoke, in the safety of an artistic space where the tools are concept, aesthetic form, and the stuff of what it is to be human - feeling, psychology, intellect and the physical body - does not lie dormant until the age of eighteen. And our young people need to engage with art (theatre in the case of Tenderfoot) that speaks directly to them, that is made for them. Tenderfoot is not about the professionalization of our young people. It is about the integration of our young people in the professional arts sector. It is about recognising the fact that the arts, as a leader in the field of creativity, is a vital part of our society, and if that society is to flourish, then our young people need to be integral in our arts infrastructure. Participatory programmes such as Tenderfoot, which see professional artists working with young people, break down barriers and make possible the reality of a creative society.

"It has opened my eyes to new experience."

"I have learnt so much in terms of experience and skill."



Tenderfoot in action, The Civic Theatre

Tenderfoot Going Forward

The work of IMPACT to date has been in planning. 2020 sees the first stage of implementation, with the benefit of learning from this research. **Tenderfoot's foundation is the work, the plays that the young people write.** This work is an articulation of a fresh, seldom heard, artistic voice. This work is particularly resonant and relevant to a peer audience. IMPACT centres all future development on the work: increasing the quality of the work, increasing access to the work, and imagining a future for the work.

The developed strategy outlined by IMPACT builds up and out from the work, with key aspects being:

- An expanded main programme, which supports the development, production and public engagement of the work, and which facilitates the inclusion of more schools and allows for a higher number of performances to provide for peer audience demand;
- A new first-step writing initiative, six new *Writing For Theatre* hubs, to increase the number of opportunities available to young people to try their hand at writing for the stage;
- A new follow on *Writing For Theatre Two Week Summer Intensive* to build writing skills.

All of the initiatives above feed directly into the main programme, enriching it exponentially in terms of quality and effect. There will be an exponential positive effect throughout the student body who encounter the work directly, either through direct participation or as part of a peer audience. A further positive exponential effect is anticipated throughout each individual school, resulting in a '**theatre positive attitude**' developing throughout the student body. Current participating schools report a high level of awareness of Tenderfoot throughout the student body. Students often make Transition Year choices so that they are free to 'try out' for Tenderfoot. For schools with in-house drama activity, Tenderfoot, for students, acts as a highlight. For staff, it acts as a beacon, a leader in the field, providing opportunities for discourse on the form and function of theatre and drama in an educational context.

"Tenderfoot has to be the best experience not only for TY but for my entire secondary school years."

"The best school experience of my life. Made me so happy all of the time. I learnt so much about myself."

"I've never been happier than in Tenderfoot and I'm dreading going back to school because I'm constantly sad there."

If Tenderfoot is not about the professionalization of students, then what is it about?

It is about participation and articulation. It is about 'developing ability' rather than 'displaying talent'. In asking students to select what department they will work in - performance, costume design, visual design, sound design & music composition, or stage management - Tenderfoot acknowledges that everyone has the ability to be creative. Tenderfoot is not about choosing the 'best' but creatively developing everyone to the 'best of their ability'. Tenderfoot's definition of excellence, which we work to, is everyone, mentor and young person alike, working to the best of their ability. Tenderfoot, in producing plays written by young people, plays that are meaningful to the young writers and thus meaningful to a peer audience, also introduces a conversation on the function of theatre. In presenting theatre that reflects on the lives of the young writers, that explores the world as it is for them, young people experience theatre as 'a live art form', as 'a vibrant and relevant art form', and so theatre becomes part of

'contemporary culture'. And in becoming part of contemporary culture, it becomes a viable means of expression, alongside song writing and spoken word poetry and painting and sculpture. The art form lives and is no longer merely 'historical' or 'educational' or 'irrelevant'. And that attitude provides an educational gateway to other texts and other subjects, particularly those, like SPHE, that is tasked with helping our young people navigate an increasingly complex world. And for schools with little or no drama activity, Tenderfoot introduces a new way of working. For all participating schools, Tenderfoot opens doors for the development of in-school drama activity.

That concept of Tenderfoot having a **positive exponential effect** is supported by preliminary feedback on a pilot programme currently running in Tallaght Community School (which has been involved with Tenderfoot since 2010), in association with The Civic Theatre and Veronica Coburn. Aptly called **INSPIRE**, and funded through The Civic Theatre's philanthropic fund, the programme is investigating the effect of systemic and systematic exposure to theatre on a school population over six years. Starting in 2017, each year, an incoming first year class is selected to participate. That class is brought to see three or four contemporary pieces of theatre in The Civic over the course of the school year. The programme has the full support of Tallaght Community School staff, in particular the relevant class teachers, and could not operate without their cooperation. The pilot, now in its third year, currently has three classes attending theatre in The Civic: the original class who are now in third year, the second class who are now in second year and the most recent class who are midway through their first year of secondary school. At the height of the pilot, there will be one class from each year involved in the programme. Feedback, thus far, has been extremely positive, with teachers noticing a 'higher than average willingness to participate in lessons, specifically reading parts in plays, discussing scenes and characters and displaying a higher than average level of interest and engagement'.



Tenderfoot in action, The Civic Theatre

Beyond Tenderfoot

It is also anticipated that the exponential positive effect of Tenderfoot will be felt in the youth arts and professional theatre sector. The Civic Theatre is committed to developing a youth arts pathway for young people who have come through Tenderfoot. We recognise that Tenderfoot, for many, is a first encounter with theatre and indeed the arts and we want to support our young people; we want to enable our young people to take further steps. In pursuit of that, The Civic has two initiatives for 'Tenderfeet'. Resonating with the Tenderfoot programme which develops expressive and organisational abilities, there are two in-house follow-on opportunities. Our Tenderfeet can become involved in The Civic's voluntary usher programme and they can also apply to become a member of our in-house youth theatre, Giant Wolf, under the artistic leadership of Lloyd Collins and Calanthe Forde.

Tenderfoot's vision aspires to culminate in the professional theatre sector with the professional production of contemporary work, to tour to schools or for production in The Civic, specifically for young adults. If that work were penned by a young playwright, then The Civic's cup would surely overflow.

IMPACT comprises five strategic lines:

- **Connect:**
Engage with all thirty-five second level schools in South Dublin County through the implementation of six new *Writing For Theatre* programmes for Transition Year students.
- **Excel:**
Increase the diversity of the written work through the placement of leading contemporary playwrights as mentors on the new writing programmes.

Increase the quality of the written work by implementing a follow-on *Writing For Theatre Two Week Summer Intensive* to facilitate development of interested and interesting young writers.
- **Engage:**
Review the current production module, which sees a number of the young people's plays rehearsed, designed, produced and performed in The Civic Theatre to a peer and public audience, with a view to including all participating schools and facilitating increased peer engagement via additional performances. The current production module caters for participation, both direct engagement and peer engagement as audience, of eight schools.
- **Articulate:**
Articulate a fresh, artistic voice that fully and effortlessly reflects its demographic in terms of class, culture and gender.
- **Integrate:**
Integrate Tenderfoot into the wider community, the local community, the community of each individual school, the interschool community, and the professional arts community. Integration, in this context, is effect. It is envisioned that Tenderfoot will have a systemic and systematic effect on the communities living and working in South

Dublin County, friends, family, neighbours, fellow students, working artists, all citizens, thus creating a widespread culture of creativity.

The expanded effect of Tenderfoot will take place through:

- A **receptive culture in participating schools**, paving the way for in-school initiatives ranging from peer play readings, in-school productions of plays written by students, the development of in-school youth theatres, and the emergence of inter-school theatre exchanges or mini theatre festivals of new work.
- The further **nurturing of South Dublin County's artistic youth voice** through connection to the national youth theatre movement through Giant Wolf, The Civic's Youth Theatre, and through the development of professional work by or for young people produced by The Civic Theatre.



Tenderfoot in action, The Civic Theatre

Tenderfoot Going Forward

Following this period of research, **2020** will see:

- The implementation of three new *Writing For Theatre* programmes, catering for sixteen of South Dublin County's second level schools, under the mentorship of the following playwrights:

Dylan Coburn Gray and Amy Conroy
Fionn Foley and Sian Ní Mhuirí
Davey Kelleher and Michelle Read

It is anticipated that the number of new *Writing For Theatre* programmes will increase to six in 2021, offering engagement to all thirty-five of South Dublin County's second level schools. This staggered development is welcome for a number of reasons: it allows for the initial roll-out to be that of a pilot to facilitate learning; and it allows each writing group to be dual mentored. The benefit of dual mentorship includes diversity, reinforcement of opinion over the axis of right/wrong (in other words, it is healthy for the young people to see their mentors both agree and disagree), and manageability of workload.

It is estimated that sixty young people will participate in the new *Writing For Theatre* programmes in 2020, with that number rising to one hundred and twenty by 2021. Each writing for theatre group will comprise eighteen to twenty young adults from five or six schools. They will spend a total of six contact days with their mentors in two blocks of three days. The first contact days will focus on introducing them to the discipline of writing for theatre. The focus will be on embodied learning through drama workshops with a focus on contemporary work. These first days will prepare our young adults for the task of writing a first draft of a play in their own time, with online support from their mentors. The focus of the second set of contact days will be on active feedback utilising group discussion, supported learning through active drama activities and one on one mentorship. Our Tenderfeet will then deliver a more developed draft of their play by an agreed date. The writing for theatre groups will culminate by coming together in The Civic Theatre for a public reading of a programme of work written by our young playwrights.

Twenty of our young playwrights will then take part in Tenderfoot's inaugural *Two Week Summer Intensive* under the mentorship of Veronica Coburn, Gavin Kostick and Davey Kelleher. The plays developed during this summer intensive will make up the performance programme for Tenderfoot in 2020/2021.

- A research trip to Ghent, Belgium, in May 2020 to see **Kopergietery's** programme with young adults in action and to build on this connection. This aligns with Giant Wolf's existing international relations in Europe, via the InterTWINed International Youth Theatre Festival in Cottbus, Germany. Giant Wolf will host its first international youth theatre exchange in The Civic in Summer 2020, laying a foundation for a vibrant artistic link to the wider European cultural body for the young people of South Dublin County.

2021 will see:

- IMPACT begin to consider professional theatre production for a young adult audience. The Civic Theatre will look at in-house presentation as well as off-site, in-school, production.
- IMPACT consider The Civic Theatre's first young writer commissions as a natural development of its work with Tenderfoot and Giant Wolf.

2022 will see:

- IMPACT invite representatives from other local authorities and arts organisations to a forum to consider its progress.

Tenderfoot, through its work with young people, schools and community, **is a prime model fulfilling current arts and education priorities, as well as contributing more generally to a creative society in Ireland.**

Participation in Tenderfoot does not incur any cost for schools.

Tenderfoot, as well as its associated pilot project, INSPIRE, are access programmes, providing pathways to publicly funded arts infrastructure, which in turn open pathways of possibility to participating students. This model of collaboration between the Arts and Education sectors fulfils the commitment to creative engagement of regional arts, in the form of South Dublin County Council Arts Office, of national policy, through Creative Ireland, of professional arts, through the Arts Council, and of education policy, through the Department of Education.

Tenderfoot connects local arts organisations to schools, a need expressed in both the *Arts in Education Charter*, and by Creative Ireland. More specifically, it connects schools to theatre/drama initiatives outside school, as expressed in Action 8 of Creative Ireland's Creative Youth document. The Tenderfoot programme fits clearly with recent shifts in priorities in education, as manifested in the new Junior Cycle, established in 2012, and the current review of the Senior Cycle. It also fits with the existing Transition Year programme, with its focus on personal development and learning through experience.

From its foundation, Tenderfoot has had an emphasis on **inclusivity and accessibility**. Through expanding its programme, Tenderfoot will eventually include all schools in South Dublin County, shifting its model from local to regional, and creating a model for a national applicability in theatre as well as other art forms.

Forming a creative society happens through **sustained interaction**, and the development and expansion of Tenderfoot is about looking forward and supporting this vision.

Summary Documents

Further information/details on Tenderfoot and on this research can be found at the following links:

[Forum video](#)

[Tenderfoot photo gallery](#)

[**Tenderfoot: an apprentice theatre programme for young people.**](#)

We outline the Tenderfoot model, exploring some of the key aspects which make up its practical approach as well as its philosophical foundations.

[**Arts and Education: Where does Tenderfoot fit?**](#)

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We share the results from our survey and from discussions at the Arts and Education Forum on the provision of theatre-related activities for secondary school students, looking at what is needed and what is valued, and at some of the benefits and challenges of working with young adults through contemporary theatre.

[**From the Local to the International: Tenderfoot connects**](#)

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