

Chapter 3: Funding and Resources

Introduction

Youth theatres record extremely different levels of income and expenditure each year. The vast majority of youth theatres aspire to a larger and more secure income that would allow them to either maintain or extend their youth programme.

Youth theatre funding and resources are explored under the following headings:

- 3.1 Income
- 3.2 Expenditure
- 3.3 Space

3.1 Income

Youth theatres secure extremely different levels of income from a broad range of sources each year. Income levels ranged from €1,958 to €181,759 among the youth theatres that submitted financial information to the *Centre Stage +10* research project. These differing levels of income should not influence how the quality of the youth theatres' work is perceived. Youth theatres aspire to different levels of income depending on the nature of their activities, their structure, aims and ethos.

Leaders made it clear during interviews that the vast majority of youth theatres aspire to higher levels of income. For some, an increase in funding would allow them to develop and extend their existing work, for others an increase would support and enrich basic day-to-day activities and for a few youth theatres an increase in income would prevent an impending decrease in activity levels and closure.

Participating youth theatres were asked to share basic income and expenditure details from 2007. This year was chosen to provide youth theatres with enough time to audit their accounts. Some of the youth theatres that provided information on their income during 2007 receive a considerable amount of in-kind support from their parent or other partner organisations. This in-kind support may involve the wages of core youth theatre leaders, space hire or administrative support. Youth theatres were unable to estimate the value of this in-kind support and did not note it as part of their income details.

Youth theatre income is explored under the following headings:

- 3.1.1 Funders
- 3.1.2 Membership Fees
- 3.1.3 Box Office
- 3.1.4 Other Income
- 3.1.5 Funding Priorities
- 3.1.6 Funding Challenges

3.1.1 Funders

Youth theatres access a broad range of funding schemes and organisations. However, youth theatres were accessing a similar range of funding bodies 10 years ago during *Centre Stage*.

- **The Arts Council**

The Arts Council currently funds three youth theatres directly – Waterford Youth Drama, Galway Youth Theatre and Dublin Youth Theatre. This is not based on an Arts Council policy but rather on an historic precedent. The three youth theatres received a combined total of €190,000 from the Arts Council in 2007.

However, many youth theatres are funded indirectly by the Arts Council through Local Authority Arts Offices. In 2007, the Arts Council gave €137,160 directly to Local Authorities for 16 youth theatres: Clare Youth Theatre, Co. Carlow Youth Theatre, Co. Sligo Youth Theatre, Co. Wexford Youth Theatre, LYTC Carrick-on-Shannon, LYTC Carrigallen, Manorhamilton Youth Theatre (MYTH), Mayo Youth Theatre – Ballina, Mayo Youth Theatre – Castlebar, Mountrath Youth Theatre, Portlaoise Youth Theatre, Rathdowney Youth Theatre, Roscommon Co. Youth Theatre, Stradbally Youth Theatre as well as two youth theatres that are not included in this research, Westmeath Youth Theatre and Mountmellick Youth Theatre in Laois.¹

Also in 2007, the Arts Council gave €218,180 to Cavan County Council, Cork County Council, Galway County

¹ Mountmellick Youth Theatre in Laois ceased activities in 2008.

Council, Limerick County Council, Longford County Council and North Tipperary County Council as unspecified amounts for seven youth theatres: Backstage Youth Theatre, Cavan Youth Drama, Co. Limerick Youth Theatre – Abbeyfeale and Lough Gur, Galway Youth Theatre, Lightbulb Youth Theatre and North Tipperary Youth Theatre (not included in the research). Fingal County Council, Louth County Council, South Dublin County Council and Wicklow County Council all received unspecified amounts towards youth drama in their area, with South Dublin County Council receiving funds for youth theatre training, Kildare County Council receiving funds for a youth theatre festival and South Tipperary County Council receiving Percent for Arts funding which was directed towards a number of community groups, including youth theatre.

There are also a number of youth theatres who receive Arts Council support through the direct funding of their parent organisation. Activate and Physically Phishy Youth Theatres receive funds through Graffiti Theatre Company, Kilkenny Youth Theatre receive funds through Barnstorm Theatre Company, Dreamstuff Youth Theatre receive funds through Young Irish Film Makers and WCAC Youth Theatre receive funds through the West Cork Arts Centre.

Na Crosáin Youth Theatre receives funding from Ealaín na Gaeltachta for their work in Connemara through their parent organisation, An Taibhdhearc.

Arts Council support of youth theatres has increased significantly over the past 10 years. However, no funding strand exists within the Arts Council for youth theatres to receive money that supports their day-to-day activities and sustained development if the youth theatre:

- is not run directly from a Local Authority Arts Office or in receipt of an annual grant from a Local Authority Arts Office;
- is not run directly by a parent organisation that can apply for regular annual funding from the Arts Council;
- is not one of the three existing youth theatres that receive regular funding from the Arts Council.

The new Youth Ensemble Scheme introduced in 2008 funds specific projects rather than annual running costs. Some youth theatres have received monies through the Artist in Youth Work scheme, another project-specific scheme which is part-funded by the Arts Council and administered on their behalf by the National Youth Council of Ireland.

• **Local Authority Arts Offices**

Local Authority Arts Offices are major funders of youth theatre in Ireland at a county level. Arts Offices channel considerable amounts of Arts Council money towards their youth theatre initiatives, but Local Authorities also contribute significant amounts of money towards youth theatres from their own funding.

Some Local Authority Arts Offices give grants to youth theatres in their area. For example, Lightbulb Youth Theatre receives an annual grant of €6,000 from Cork County Council and Backstage Youth Theatre received a once-off grant of €500 from Longford County Council. Waterford Youth Arts and large autonomous youth theatres such as Dublin Youth Theatre and Galway Youth Theatre also receive regular funding from their City Councils. Youth theatres are welcome to apply for Local Authority Arts Office funding through the appropriate funding scheme.

Local Authority Arts Office support of youth theatres has increased significantly over the past 10 years. However, the majority of Arts Offices funding is directed towards their own youth theatre initiatives. Arts Offices do not have a track record of funding autonomous youth theatres or youth theatres with a different parent organisation where they have their own youth theatre initiative.

• **Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs**

The Youth Affairs Section of the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs² funds a few youth theatres through the Special Funding for Youth (SPY) Scheme. This scheme is targeted at disadvantaged youth and is channelled through the Vocational Education Committees (VECs). Galway Youth Theatre, Limerick Youth Theatre and Waterford Youth Arts all receive funding through this scheme. Outside of this fund, Youth Affairs only fund national youth work organisations.

• **Vocational Education Committee (VEC) and Local Youth Services**

Youth theatres access youth work funding at a local level through the Vocational Education Committees (VECs). VECs operate the Local Youth Club Grant Scheme, which provides grants for local voluntary youth groups. Youth theatres have acknowledged VEC grants ranging from €200 to €1000.

² At the time the Centre Stage +10 research was carried out the Youth Affairs Section was housed within the Department of Education and Science.

A few youth theatres, such as Celbridge Youth Drama and Clondalkin Youth Theatre, are affiliated to their local youth service and receive financial support through occasional small grants or discount insurance rates. Local Youth Services contribute higher levels of funding to youth theatres that they run directly themselves. For example, Roundabout Youth Theatre is funded through Ballymun Regional Youth Resource (BRYR).

- **National Youth Council of Ireland**

The National Youth Council is not a funding organisation but it does administer the Artist in Youth Work Scheme and the Youth Arts Development fund on behalf of the Arts Council and the Youth Affairs Section of the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. Some youth theatres have received funding through these schemes in recent years. These schemes fund specific development or artistic projects and do not provide mainstream funding.

- **European Funding**

Many youth theatres fund European exchanges and activities as well as national events and programmes through Léargas. In 2007, Tallaght Youth Theatre and Kildare Youth Theatre received a total of €18,254 for youth initiative projects and exchanges. In 2008, Waterford Youth Arts, Kildare Youth Theatre and Griese Youth Theatre received a total of €25,462 for youth initiative projects and exchanges.

Youth theatres have also benefited from previous rounds of Peace and Reconciliation funding. Cavan Youth Drama and Boomerang Youth Theatre acknowledged Peace and Reconciliation funding that they had received in the past.

- **Development Agencies**

Youth theatres have been successful at accessing resources from a number of local development agencies and programmes such as RAPID (Revitalising Areas by Planning Investment and Development), LEADER+, the Local Drugs Taskforce, the Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund as well as Garda Diversion Project Funding. These youth theatres tend to be located in areas specifically identified as disadvantaged.

- **Foundations and Charities**

Youth theatres have received once-off project funding from a variety of foundations and charities such as the AIB Better Ireland Awards, Irish Youth Foundation, The Ireland Funds and programmes like the Dublin Bus Community Support Programme.

Two youth theatres had also received funding from local Youth Banks. Youth Banks were founded by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, the Community Foundation for Ireland and the Irish Youth Foundation and are run through a network of grant-making committees run by young people.

CASE STUDY: Waterford Youth Arts – funding

Waterford Youth Arts has successfully built up a combination of different funders over the past 25 years, balancing a mix of local and national funding as well as arts and youth work funding. They have also received funding from foundations such as The Ireland Funds and are one of the few youth theatres in the country to secure corporate funding. Their major funders include:

- The Arts Council
- City of Waterford VEC Waterford Youth Committee
- Waterford City Council
- Waterford County Council
- FÁS
- The Ireland Funds
- Bausch & Lomb Ireland, Ltd.

CASE STUDY: Backstage Youth Theatre – funding

Backstage Youth Theatre is run by voluntary leaders from an amateur theatre company. Just over a third of their income is sourced from grants that are available at a local level and support from some of NAYD's schemes such as 'Go See YT'. The youth theatre has received a small grant from the Youth Bank in Longford and has also received a once-off grant of €500 from the Local Authority Arts Office.

3.1.2 Membership Fees

The vast majority of youth theatres charge a membership fee. Some youth theatres do this out of necessity in order to supplement existing funding or, in some cases, provide the only reliable funding stream for the youth theatre. Other youth theatres believe that asking young people to pay a small fee encourages them to place value on their participation and take their commitment to the group more seriously. The Ballina and Castlebar branches of Mayo Youth Theatre ask members to contribute to the youth theatres 'savings' instead of charging a membership fee as it is Local Authority policy not to charge for its arts services. Youth theatre members pay €2 per workshop towards savings that are used to organise theatre trips or events during the year.

All youth theatres that charge a membership fee will waive that fee if they feel a young person is unable to pay. Leaders believe strongly that youth theatres should be accessible to all young people and that a youth theatre's ability to remove financial barriers distinguishes it from other more commercial drama opportunities that are available to young people in Ireland.

Youth theatres approach this sensitive issue in different ways. At the beginning of a new youth theatre year or after a recruitment drive, leaders will talk to the group about membership fees and ask the young people to have a chat if they feel the fee might be a problem. Generally, youth theatre leaders need to rely on their own knowledge of the group to judge when to ask a young person if they want to discuss the fee or when to simply stop mentioning it. Youth theatre leaders are concerned about dealing with this issue in a discreet manner and without the knowledge of the rest of the group. Youth theatres can be flexible about how they accommodate these young people, taking into account the young person's situation and wishes. They can excuse the young person from paying the fee, offer a term / week-to-week fee or offer 'scholarships' to young people who are unable to afford the fee. One or two youth theatres who work with older members ask young people if they would like to do some work experience instead.

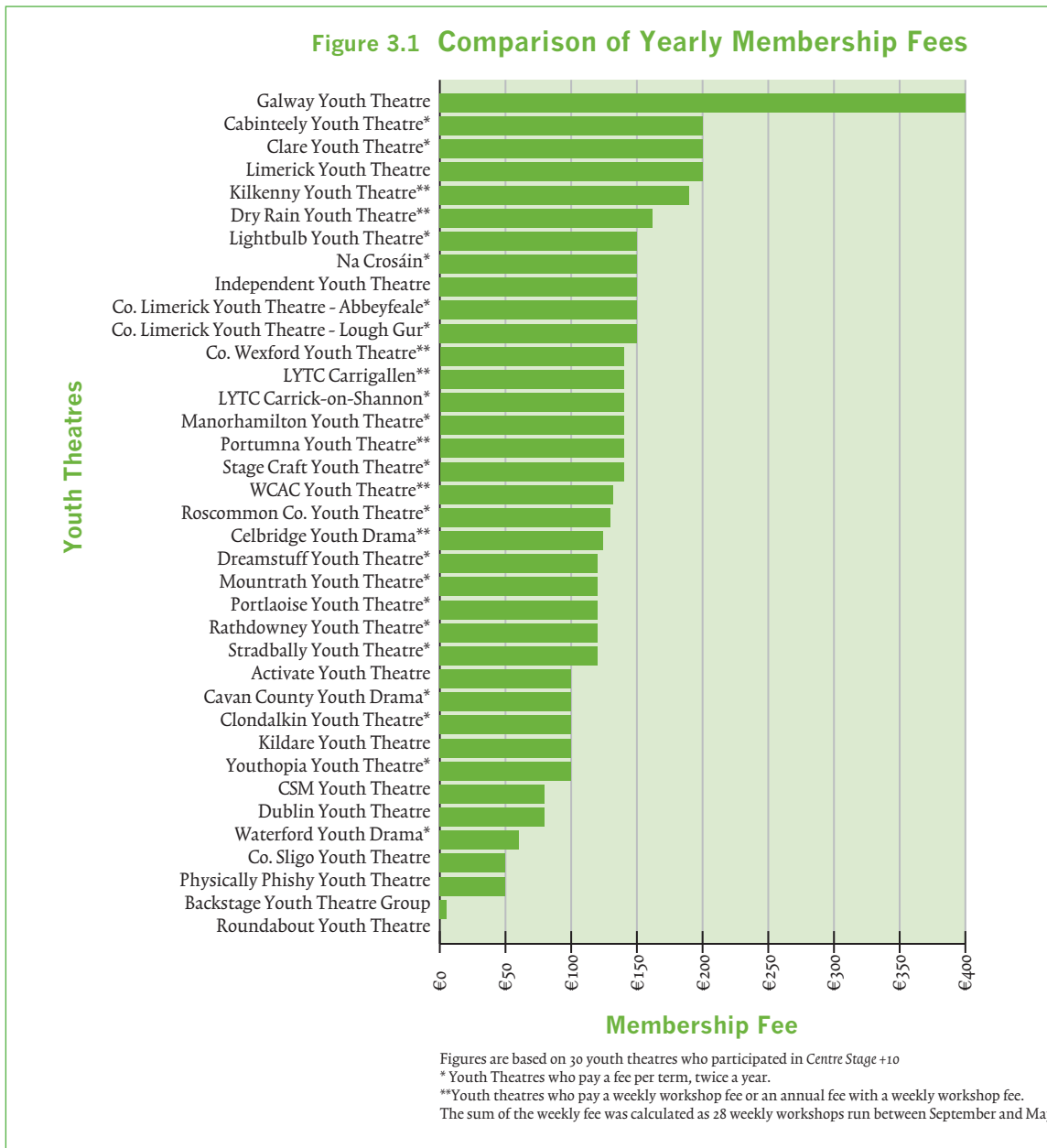
Roundabout Youth Theatre in Ballymun is the only youth theatre included in the research that does not charge a membership fee. It is run by a local youth service, Ballymun Regional Youth Service (BRYR), which has a policy of not charging young people to participate in any of its projects and believes in providing open access to quality arts experiences within disadvantaged areas. Core funding and support from the youth service enables the youth theatre to offer activities for free.

Traditionally, youth theatres charged membership fees on a workshop basis. Most youth theatres have now moved to a term or yearly fee. Leaders find this easier to administrate, reporting that they don't lose time collecting money during each workshop and some feel the term fee is better value for young people because of the amount of activities that are arranged per term. Leaders stated that young people are used to paying on a term/yearly basis for different activities and that the parents of younger youth theatre members are more accustomed to this payment structure.

Of the 45 youth theatres that participated in *Centre Stage +10*, 37 provided details of their membership fees:

- 51.35% of youth theatres charge a fee per term;
- 29.73% of youth theatres charge an annual fee;
- 8.11% of youth theatres charge a weekly workshop fee;
- 10.81% of youth theatres charge a yearly fee and a workshop fee.

Figure 3.1 Comparison of Yearly Membership Fees



Youth theatres charge a wide range of membership fees and seem to differ on an accessible and acceptable membership fee for young people. The average membership fee was €122 per year. The scale of membership fees cannot simply be explained according to youth theatre models or existing levels of funding within the youth theatres. Factors can be identified that can contribute to high or low fees:

- **High Fees**
 - A lack of an annual funding source or grants creates a reliance on membership fees as a main source of income. This happens particularly in autonomous youth theatres but can happen within any youth theatre with low levels of annual funding;
 - Youth theatres that offer a wider programme of activities and a longer youth theatre year may have higher annual running costs and youth theatre members may participate in higher levels of activity that reflect the higher fee;
 - A production-focused youth theatre will have higher annual running costs and this may contribute to a higher level of membership fee.

- **Low Fees**
 - A secure source and better levels of annual funding make it easier for youth theatres to offer low fees. It also makes it possible to have the principle of free membership;
 - High levels of voluntary leadership matched with high levels of free or heavily subsidised workshop and

- theatre space make it possible for some youth theatres to offer lower membership fees;
- High levels of support from a parent organisation through staff, space, utilities and administration support make it possible for some youth theatres to offer lower membership fees;
- Youth theatres offering a simpler programme of activities (involving lower levels of production activity and a shorter youth theatre year) may be able to offer lower membership fees.

3.1.3 Box Office

Production costs form a considerable area of expenditure for many youth theatres and box office receipts offer youth theatres the possibility to cover some of their costs or, in some cases, make a profit that can be fed back into core youth theatre activities.

The price of tickets for youth theatre productions has increased since *Centre Stage*. This increase is in line with inflation and general increases in ticket prices. It also occurs because some youth theatres are performing in higher status venues within their area and placing greater commercial value on their own work.

Most youth theatres now offer pricing structures similar to professional theatre with full price and concession tickets. Full price tickets can range from €8 to €20, while concession rates can range from €5 to €15. Ticket price is not necessarily an indicator of the quality of the production or of the amount of work leaders and members have put into the production.

Factors that can influence the price of a ticket are:

- The cost of theatre or venue hire;
- Other production costs including directors, designers, etc;
- The profile of the youth theatre;
- The aspirations of the youth theatre.

Box office receipts can be a significant source of income for a youth theatre. Youth theatre productions can attract large audiences because of the ready-made audience created by the extended families and friends of members and leaders.

Youth theatres can earn significant money from box office receipts when they are performing in venues that have been donated, are owned by their parent organisation or where they pay low rent. Youth theatre leaders report that this form of income can be helpful because it does not involve the extra bureaucratic work involved in application and evaluation forms for funders.

However, a large number of youth theatre leaders report that income from box office receipts is drastically depleted by the cost of venue hire for productions. Ten youth theatres gave details of their box office income as part of their overall statement of income during 2007. These details are provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Comparison of Box Office Income

Youth Theatre	Income from Box Office Receipts 2007	Percentage of Total Income
Clare Youth Theatre	€3,614.14	21.04%
Co. Sligo Youth Theatre	€3,420.45	6.07%
Activate Youth Theatre & Physically Phishy Youth Theatre	€2,950.00	44.70%*
Limerick Youth Theatre	€2,881.00	2.68%
CSM Youth Theatre	€2,800.00	87.50%*
Kilkenny Youth Theatre	€1,300.00	18.31%*
Co. Limerick Youth Theatre - Abbeyfeale & Lough Gur	€1,219.00	20.66%
Backstage Youth Theatre Group	€883.00	28.46%

* The income figures of these youth theatres do not reflect the support of their parent organisations in terms of core Youth Theatre leaders wages, space hire or administration support.

Some youth theatres use a history of healthy box office receipts to negotiate profit-share arrangements with venues. The Civic Theatre and Tallaght Youth Theatre have negotiated profit-share arrangements in the past and Kildare Youth Theatre has contributed box office income from productions to the Riverbank Arts Centre as part of its residency agreement.

3.1.4 Other Income

Some youth theatres are very active fundraisers. Fundraising has always played a part in the activities of youth theatres, primarily because youth theatres had no other means of raising money to run their activities. Fundraising can be attractive to youth theatre leaders who are keen to involve young people in the running of the youth theatre and encourage them to work actively for the projects they want to take part in. Fundraising can also be a practical way to augment youth theatre finances at certain times of the year, to cover unforeseen expenses or to fund an unexpected opportunity to participate in a project, event or trip. Youth theatre leaders and members are the decision makers when it comes to fundraising.

- Celbridge Youth Drama runs an annual table quiz;
- Cork School of Music Youth Theatre generally supplement their annual production costs with a bag-pack in their local supermarket;
- Activate Youth Theatre in Cork hold what youth theatre members call 'The Long Stand' where members take the place of mannequins in shop windows around Cork City and collect money from the general public for their youth theatre;
- Griese Youth Theatre have held a tractor rally, table quizzes and a garden party to raise funds in the past.

CASE STUDY: Lightbulb Youth Theatre – fundraising

Lightbulb Youth Theatre (an autonomous youth theatre) raised €5,024.89 through fundraising during 2007. During Census Week, the volunteer board members and youth theatre members were fundraising busily in a number of different ways.

Half of their activities (four out of eight) during Census Week were related to fundraising. Nineteen young people and six voluntary board members were involved in eight hours of bag-packing in their local supermarket, raising €700. Three of the voluntary board members spent two and a half hours the following day counting all the coins. Three of the voluntary board members then met for 45 minutes at one of their homes to plan the next fundraising task, a Poker Classic in a local pub. The event was a huge success for the youth theatre and raised €1,300. Three of the voluntary board members ran the event over five and a half hours. Youth theatre members and leaders raised €2,000 during one week to contribute to the production costs of their next performance.

Fundraising is not an option for all youth theatres. Youth theatres run by Local Authority Arts Offices report that they are not in a position to fundraise because their activities form part of a public arts service provided by the Local Authority. It is easier for autonomous youth theatres and those whose parent organisations have charitable status to fundraise.

A few youth theatres in Ireland produce their own t-shirts, hoodies or DVDs of performances that are then sold to members. Leaders comment that this generally develops at the request of the youth theatre members and is linked to the development of a group identity within the youth theatre. Though youth theatres list these items of youth theatre merchandise as income, it appears that they do not make a profit on them. During 2007, Backstage Youth Theatre spent €1,379 creating Backstage Youth Theatre hoodies and received €510 from sales, while Lightbulb Youth Theatre spent €915.80 on hoodies for their youth theatre members and received €660 from sales.

3.1.5 Funding Priorities

The funding priorities that youth theatre leaders proposed focused on key resources which they believed would improve the day-to-day running of the youth theatre and allow scope for the artistic development of their work. Funding priorities centred on permanent youth theatre staff, improved space for the youth theatre to work in and the annual programme. Youth theatre members and stakeholders echoed the priorities of the leaders when they identified the top 10 resources that every youth theatre should have during *Centre Stage +10* interviews and Member Workshops.

Table 3.2 Top 10 Youth Theatre Resources as chosen by Youth Theatre Members and Stakeholders

Youth Theatre Members Top 10 Youth Theatre Resources		Stakeholders Top 10 Theatre Resources	
1	A group of committed members	1	A group of committed members
2	Money for productions	2	A skilled paid leader
3	A skilled paid leader	3	Money for productions
4	A skilled voluntary leader	4	A rented workshop space that you share with other people
5	A workshop space that your Youth Theatre owns	5	Guest workshop facilitators
6	A store of props and objects for rehearsals / devising	6	An office with a computer and telephone
7	Lighting and sound equipment	7	A group of helpful voluntary adults / parents
8	Guest workshop facilitators	8	Guest directors
9	A rented theatre space that you can book	9	A rented theatre space that you can book
10	A rented workshop space that is exclusively yours	10	Money for exchanges & festivals

* 112 Youth theatre members completed this task during *Centre Stage +10* Member Workshops and 25 stakeholders completed this task as part of their stakeholder interview.

The key funding priorities of youth theatre leaders were:

- **Permanent Staff**

Many youth theatre leaders were keen to access funding that would allow them to have permanent part-time or full-time positions both for administrative and artistic roles. Some youth theatre leaders wanted to find funding to allow some key staff to move from token payments to proper part-time wages.

- **Space**

Youth theatre leaders were keen to access funding that would enable them to pay for the rental of their regular workshop space as well venue/theatre hire once or twice a year for productions. Some youth theatres identified a need for additional resources to improve spaces (office space as well as workshop space) that they were already occupying.

- **Annual Programme**

Youth theatre leaders wanted funding to allow them to maintain their regular programme of workshops and rehearsals and allow them the scope to plan for a new project or event during the year.

Some youth theatres with consistent levels of annual funding prioritised project and production funding. A few youth theatre leaders said they had no funding priorities at all and were happy with their level of income. These leaders were generally employed as facilitators in Local Authority Arts Office youth theatres and did not have any responsibility for financial management or fundraising.

3.1.6 Funding Challenges

Though funding levels have increased over the last ten years, the vast majority of youth theatres are still struggling to find the resources that will allow them to develop their work and in some cases simply sustain basic levels of activity. During *Centre Stage +10* interviews, youth theatre leaders and stakeholders were asked what they believed were the key funding challenges for the youth theatre sector. Their responses are summarised below:

- **No funding ladder**

Youth theatre leaders reported that it is very difficult to move from being a youth theatre that receives occasional grants to an annually funded one. They commented that there is no funding ladder that allows them to move

upwards to higher levels of income once they have proven they can deliver high quality youth theatre work. Only one of the autonomous youth theatres founded since the last Centre Stage has secured annual funding.

- **A lack of Annual Funding**

A large percentage of the funding opportunities available to youth theatres are project specific and funders show a definite preference for project funding. Youth theatres find project funding enormously helpful for once-off projects, productions and events and it helps them fund outside facilitators, directors, writers, etc., to work with their members. However, this preference for project-specific funding means that youth theatres that cannot access annual funding may struggle to fund the heart of the youth theatre programme: members and leaders working together as an ensemble through an ongoing series of activities.

- **Criteria of Grants Dictating Programming**

Youth theatres often find that they need to adapt their programme to suit the criteria of available grants. Project-specific funding, as well as some annual funding, can dictate the content, process or outcomes of youth theatre work. This can be especially difficult for youth theatres that are not in receipt of annual funding and may not have many project-specific funding options available to them. A few youth theatre leaders also noted that a significant percentage of project-specific funding was not accessible to them because funds were often targeted at designated areas of disadvantage.

- **Levels of Funding Restricting the Ability to Plan Ahead**

There is a significant relationship between annual funding and the development of an annual programme. Youth theatres that are not in receipt of annual funding find it difficult to plan ahead because of insecurities over levels of income they might be able to generate during the year. It can be a struggle for these youth theatres to create an annual plan, although potential funders still expect high standards of strategic planning from these groups. Youth theatres in receipt of annual funding are required to plan in advance for funders without knowing the young people who will be taking part. Leaders note that the annual plans they deliver to funders need to be flexible to enable the youth theatre leader to adapt projects / activities to suit the needs of their group.

- **Replacing Large Funders**

Medium to large sized youth theatres who come to the end of an annual funding agreement find it impossible to replace the shortfall in their income. Cavan Youth Drama was unable to replace Peace and Reconciliation funding with another type of annual funding and was forced to re-structure its activities. This may prove significant over the coming years for any other Local Authority Arts Office that seeks funding partners to help them support the youth theatres that they founded.

- **Lack of Transparency**

Many youth theatre leaders felt confused as to why some youth theatres were in receipt of certain funding when they were unable to access it or had been turned down. Many youth theatres reported a general lack of transparency and cited in particular the Arts Council's decision to give annual funding directly to three youth theatres but not to any others.

- **Frustration and Workload Associated with Fundraising**

Youth theatre leaders reported frustration at the amount of time they spend applying for funding which they believe they are unlikely to receive due to competition for funding schemes. In relation to small grants of €200 to €500, leaders believed that levels of administration and evaluation were too high and not in proportion to the size of the grant. Stakeholders indicated some difficulties communicating the aims, ethos and activities of youth theatre to funders.

Youth theatre leaders spoke positively about some funding opportunities. For example, some leaders spoke of the ease with which they could access funding for exchanges through Léargas.

3.2 Expenditure

Youth theatres record diverse levels of expenditure each year, in accordance with the wide variety of income levels. The level of expenditure varies according to the model of youth theatre and the level of in-kind support it receives from parent or partner organisations. Other factors include the size of the youth theatre, the breadth of its workshop and production programme, staffing levels and related fees as well as how and where the youth theatre is housed. Twenty-six youth theatres provided expenditure details for 2007³. Of these youth theatres, one had an annual expenditure of €182,150 and three youth theatres had an annual expenditure of between €46,000 and

³ Youth theatres include: Activate Youth Theatre; Backstage Youth Theatre; Celbridge Youth Drama; Clare Youth Theatre; Co. Carlow Youth Theatre; Co. Limerick Youth Theatre – Abbeyfeale and Lough Gur; Co. Sligo Youth Theatre; CSM Youth Theatre; Galway Youth Theatre; Kildare Youth Theatre; Kilkenny Youth Theatre; LYTC Carrick-on-Shannon; LYTC Carrigallen; Lightbulb Youth Theatre; Limerick Youth Theatre; Manorhamilton Youth Theatre (MYTh); Mayo Youth Theatre Ballina and Castlebar; Mountrath Youth Theatre; Physically Phishy Youth Theatre; Portlaoise Youth Theatre; Rathdowney Youth Theatre; Roscommon Co. Youth Theatre; Stradbally Youth Theatre; Tallaght Youth Theatre.

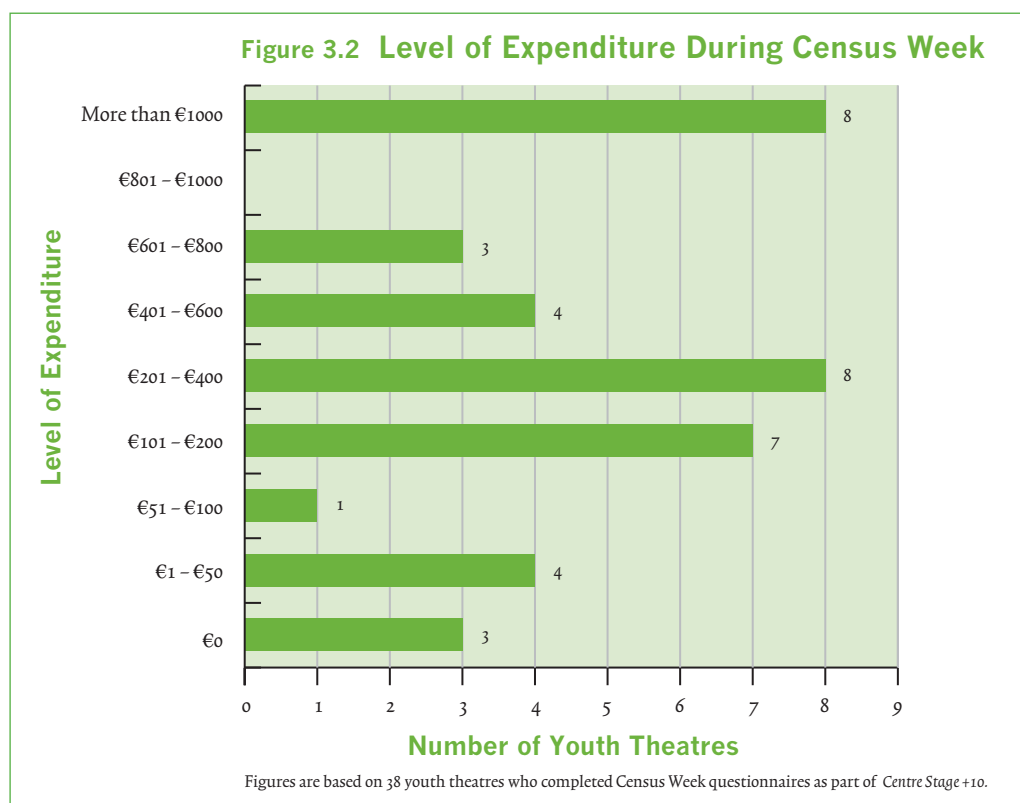
€83,000. Seven youth theatres had an annual expenditure of less than €6,000.

These details are collated in Table 3.3 and can be used as an indicator of the main areas of expenditure in youth theatre. It is important to remember that these figures illustrate key expenditure areas but are not a true representation of the amount of money it takes to run 26 youth theatres. Table 3.3 does not include estimates for the significant amount of in-kind support that youth theatres may receive through voluntary activity, donated venue and workshop space and support of a parent organisation through staff, space and administration.

Table 3.3 Main areas of Youth Theatre expenditure (2007)

Areas of expenditure	Amount
YT leaders fees	€213,200.78
Production expenses	€143,289.91
Theatre trips / Events / Festivals / Travel	€50,066.29
Freelance facilitator / director fees	€35,675.00
Special projects	€23,709.24
Rent for weekly workshop space	€22,361.25
Training / Development	€20,080.00
Miscellaneous	€20,075.11
Utilities / Administration Costs / Canteen	€15,543.34
Publicity / Print / Design / Dvds / Stationary and postage	€13,200.35
Materials / Equipment	€6,003.40
Insurance	€3,582.00
T-shirts / Hoodies	€2,782.43
Audit/ Accountancy fees	€2,075.00
TOTAL	€571,644.10

A more detailed examination of youth theatre expenditure according to youth theatre model and situation can be made using expenditure records for the Census Week. Figure 3.2 provides an overview of the expenditure totals of 38 youth theatres during Census Week.



€0

Three youth theatres spent no money running their youth theatre activities during Census Week: Tallaght Youth Theatre, Cork School of Music Youth Theatre, Backstage Youth Theatre. This level of spending is only possible when youth theatres have low levels of activity and a combination of volunteer staff / donated space or paid staff / staff provided by a parent organisation. Tallaght Youth Theatre ran one workshop for members with a voluntary leader in a donated space. Cork School of Music Youth Theatre also ran one workshop for members with a leader whose wages were paid as part of their role within the parent organisation, in a space owned by the parent organisation. Backstage Youth Theatre ran one activity for members with voluntary leaders in a donated space.

• €0 – €51

Four youth theatres spent up to €50 running their youth theatre activities during Census Week: Physically Phishy Youth Theatre, Activate Youth Theatre, Clondalkin Youth Theatre and Youthopia Youth Theatre. All of these youth theatres ran one main activity with a group of young people. In Activate and Physically Phishy Youth Theatres, money was spent on an outside facilitator and transport. €50 was spent by Clondalkin Youth Theatre on the regular youth theatre leader and €20 was spent by Youthopia Youth Theatre on rent for the weekly workshop space. Again, all these youth theatres combine at least one of the following elements: donated workshop space, free space at a parent organisation, voluntary leaders, staff paid for by a parent organisation.

• Over €1000

Eight youth theatres spent over €1000 running their activities during Census Week: Cavan Youth Drama, Dreamstuff Youth Theatre, Galway Youth Theatre, Kildare Youth Theatre, Leitrim Youth Theatre: Carrick-on-Shannon, Limerick Youth Theatre, Stagecraft Youth Theatre and Waterford Youth Arts. Six of these youth theatres have a large membership and involve multiple groups. Carrick-on-Shannon Youth Theatre (a smaller sized youth theatre) and Kildare Youth Theatre were involved in productions during Census Week.

Table 3.4 Detailed Expenditure from Census Week

Youth Theatre	Total Expenditure during Census Week	Was the level of spending typical?
Kildare Youth Theatre	€6,330.00	More than usual
Waterford Youth Arts	€3,635.90	Less than usual
Co. Cavan Youth Drama	€1,697.50	Typical
Galway Youth Theatre	€1,650.00	Typical
Stagecraft Youth Theatre	€1,285.00	Typical
Limerick Youth Theatre	€1,130.00	Typical
Dreamstuff Youth Theatre	€1,111.00	Typical
LYTC Carrick-on-Shannon	€1,100.00	More than usual
Co LYT - Lough Gur	€800.00	More than usual
Roundabout Youth Theatre	€800.00	Typical
Griese Youth Theatre	€620.00	Less than usual
Roscommon Co. Youth Theatre	€550.00	More than usual
Carlow Youth Theatre	€540.00	Typical
Co. Sligo Youth Theatre	€510.00	Typical
Na Crosáin Youth Theatre	€440.00	More than usual
MYT Ballina Youth Theatre	€380.00	More than usual
Lightbulb Youth Theatre	€375.00	Typical
LYTC Manorhamilton	€350.00	More than usual
Clare Youth Theatre	€350.00	Typical
Dry Rain Youth Theatre	€345.00	More than usual
Celbridge Youth Drama	€340.00	More than usual
WCAC Youth Theatre	€254.00	Typical
Portumna Youth Theatre	€220.00	Typical
Co LYT Abbeyfeale	€170.00	Typical
Kilkenny Youth Theatre	€156.00	Typical
Portlaoise Youth Theatre	€101 - €200	Typical
Mountrath Youth Theatre	€101 - €200	Typical
Rathdowney Youth Theatre	€101 - €200	Typical
Stradbally Youth Theatre	€101 - €200	Typical
Droichead Youth Theatre	€100.00	Typical
Clondalkin Youth Theatre	€50.00	Typical

Physically Phishy Youth Theatre	€50.00	Typical
Activate Youth Theatre	€30.00	Typical
Youthopia Youth Theatre	€20.00	Typical
CSM Youth Theatre	€0.00	Less than usual
Backstage Youth Theatre	€0.00	Typical
Tallaght Youth Theatre	€0.00	Typical

- 65.71% of youth theatres felt this level of spending was typical;
- 25.71% of youth theatres felt this level of spending was more than usual (generally because the youth theatre was building up to a performance, was in production week, had scheduled an activity that didn't usually take place, or was working in a different space than usual);
- 8.57% of youth theatres felt this level of spending was less than usual (generally because they were having a quiet week and believed that if they were involved in productions or events, their costs would increase accordingly).

3.3 Space

Youth theatres run activities in a wide variety of spaces including arts centres, community centres and halls, theatres, youth centres, youth arts centres and schools. More youth theatres than ever before say they are working in spaces which they can describe as their youth theatre 'home.' However, there are still a significant number of youth theatres that are run from the car boot and home of the youth theatre leader and that locate their youth theatre activities in whatever local space they can afford to rent in any particular year.

• YOUTH THEATRES WITH 'HOMES'

The number of youth theatres with stable homes that incorporate a combination of office space and workshop space and in some cases, performance space has increased since *Centre Stage*. This is largely because of the increase in youth theatres run by parent organisations and the partnerships and contracts negotiated by large autonomous youth theatres. This stability is brought about through ownership, long-term leases and partnerships, residencies or inclusion in an established parent organisation.

The four large autonomous youth theatres (Dublin Youth Theatre, Galway Youth Theatre, Limerick Youth Theatre and Co. Sligo Youth Theatre) all have their own homes:

- Dublin Youth Theatre is still the only youth theatre in the country which owns its premises, however, they regularly rent spaces for workshop and rehearsals due to space restrictions in their own building;
- Galway Youth Theatre is resident at the Galway Arts Centre and Limerick Youth Theatre is resident at the Belltable Arts Centre. Both youth theatres have office space in these centres but would balance this residency with the rent of workshop space and performance space;
- Co. Sligo Youth Theatre has its own premises called The Factory on a long-term lease. It includes office and workshop space and was developed in partnership with Blue Raincoat Theatre Company.

Youth theatres which are run directly from a parent organisation (such as theatre companies, youth arts organisations, youth services, educational institutions, arts centres and theatre venues) are likely to have easy access to office space, workshop space and possibly performance space:

- Letterkenny Youth Theatre is based at An Grianán Theatre and has access to office space and performance space but rents its weekly workshop space;
- Roundabout Youth Theatre is based at The Reco (The Central Youth Facility in Ballymun) and has access to office space, workshop space that can be used as performance space, a canteen and other arts resource rooms;
- Cork School of Music Youth Theatre is based at the Cork School of Music and has access to office space, workshop space and performance space that is located in the same building;
- WCAC Youth Theatre is based at the West Cork Arts Centre and has access to office and workshop space but rents performance venues in the local area for productions;
- Dreamstuff Youth Theatre has a similar combination of space available to them at their Young Irish Filmmakers base which is on a long term lease;
- Waterford Youth Arts took hold of the anchor tenancy of their home at The Arch during 2005, their 21st anniversary year. The building provides the youth theatre with office space as well as a workshop/studio space.

Youth theatres run by professional theatre companies have access to a similar range of spaces but this depends hugely on the level of funding that the theatre company itself receives:

- Activate Youth Theatre and Physically Phishy Youth Theatre have access to Graffiti Theatre Company's office space as well as a workshop and a separate performance space;
- Kilkenny Youth Theatre has access to Barnstorm Theatre Company's office and workshop space but may rent performance space;
- Boomerang Youth Theatre has access to office space at the Triskel Arts Centre through Boomerang Theatre Productions' residency but rent weekly workshop space and performance space;
- Na Crosáin Youth Theatre has access to workshop space and performance space at its parent organisation, An Taibhdhearc, (although the Connemara group rent their spaces).
- At the beginning of 2008, Kildare Youth Theatre had access to office space, workshop space and performance space at the Riverbank Arts Centre due to the residency of its parent company, Crooked House Theatre Company.

• **SMALLER AUTONOMOUS YOUTH THEATRES**

Seven of the 12 autonomous youth theatres do not have stable homes and use a combination of rented or donated workshop and performance spaces, with the homes of youth theatre leaders being used for administrative work. In situations where space is donated, youth theatres still book workshop space on a week-by-week basis and don't generally hold long-term residency agreements. Griese Youth Theatre has a more long-term arrangement with the Town Hall in Ballitore where it runs most of its activities.

These youth theatres are particularly vulnerable to competition for workshop spaces from other arts activities in their area. This competition can sometimes out-price youth theatres from their local spaces as other profit-making arts activities can afford higher prices. Leaders from these youth theatres still complete a large amount of administration and planning in their own homes, whether they are voluntary leaders, paid facilitators or board members.

• **LOCAL AUTHORITY YOUTH THEATRES**

The youth theatres run by local authority Arts Offices have different levels of access to the three main types of space needed to run a youth theatre. All have access to office space through the Local Authority Arts Office and youth theatres with part-time staff are generally based at these offices. However, the majority of administration and planning carried out by these youth theatre leaders is completed in their own homes. The majority of youth theatres in this category rent their weekly workshop space and their performance venues despite many local arts centres or venues being Local Authority initiatives. However, there are some exceptions and some examples of long-term arrangements and partnership building:

- Roscommon Co. Youth Theatre has a strong partnership with the Roscommon Arts Centre where they have all their weekly workshops and performances;
- Clare Youth Theatre bases all of its activities at their local arts centre, Glór. However the relationship is on a rental basis;
- Leitrim Youth Theatre in Carrigallen and Co. Limerick Youth Theatre in Lough Gur both have partnerships with local amateur theatre venues where their performances take place and in the case of Lough Gur, their weekly workshops as well. One of the groups that forms Cavan Youth Drama bases its workshops and performances at the Ramor Theatre in Virginia.
- Co. Wexford Youth Theatre and Co. Carlow Youth Theatre are currently developing partnerships that may allow them to become resident at Wexford Opera House and VISUAL – Centre for Contemporary Art and the George Bernard Shaw Theatre respectively.

• **PERFORMANCE SPACE**

During the *Centre Stage* research project, youth theatre performances were taking place in theatre venues, small studio spaces, local/school halls and on the street as well as in conference or leisure centres, youth clubs, schools and churches throughout Ireland. Some youth theatres were exploring street theatre and site-specific work because they could not access or afford local theatre venues. Most youth theatres involved in *Centre Stage +10* described a good level of access to local theatre venues and arts centres. Increasing numbers of arts centres around the country over the last 10 years has helped access levels. However, most youth theatres find the cost of venue hire for their performances restrictive due to a number of different factors:

- The cost may prohibit the youth theatre from renting the venue at all;
- A higher rental cost at weekends and during popular holidays means that youth theatres are not always able to afford venues at times when young people are available;
- The cost of rental may restrict the number of performances a youth theatre can arrange;
- Rental costs and agreements can restrict the amount of time young people have to rehearse in the space and learn about the technical aspects of their production for the first time.

Youth theatre leaders report that theatre venues and arts centres are not offering discounts to their local youth theatres and are generally charging full commercial rates. This occurs even with youth theatres which are run by Local Authority Arts Offices and perform in local arts centres. For example, one arts centre charged a Local Authority youth theatre €800 a night and the price almost doubled for a Sunday night performance. Another Local Authority youth theatre was charged €1300 for two nights of performances. Some small autonomous youth theatres also find it hard to afford local theatre venues:

“We only do two days a year and we hope we cover our costs and the two plays we did, didn’t have any royalties. It was €400 for the two nights. We did a Tuesday and a Wednesday. We can’t get weekend nights because it would cost too much.”

Youth theatre leaders report a general lack of negotiation around set commercial fees even in venues and arts centres that declare an interest in community and participative arts. One youth theatre that performed regularly in their local Town Hall paid €300 a night and an extra €150 if they included a matinee. The leader remarked:

“I mean we’re a local youth theatre trying to do something fun, you know? And there was no support for it. In the early days we’d write a letter and they’d give it to us but that stopped. They just put an embargo on it across the board – not specifically towards the youth theatre. It’s frustrating in itself but it’s local politics, what are you going to do? The place isn’t used as a result of it, you know?”

CASE STUDY: Roscommon Co. Youth Theatre – space

Roscommon Arts Centre is home to Roscommon Co. Youth Theatre’s workshops every Sunday and also provides performance and rehearsal space for their productions. This significant, in-kind support is part of the centre’s policy:

‘We provide opportunities for the local community to actively engage with a range of artforms through participatory and performance-based activities. Our project space is located on the first floor level and it is here that we host our programme of classes and workshops. The space is also home to Roscommon County Youth Theatre and we soon hope to launch it as a second performance space.’ – Roscommon Arts Centre

Roscommon Arts Centre is supported by Roscommon County Council and the Arts Council and Roscommon County Youth Theatre is run by the Local Authority Arts Office.

CASE STUDY: Tallaght Youth Theatre – space

Tallaght Youth Theatre is a small autonomous youth theatre run completely by voluntary leaders. For a number of years, the youth theatre ran workshops in a local community resource centre free of charge. The relationship and rental agreement had been negotiated with assistance from staff from the local youth services.

Youth theatre leaders also negotiated a profit-share arrangement with the Civic Theatre for use of their Loose End studio space, where no charges were made up front and the box office takings were split equally. Tallaght Youth Theatre has very recently moved its weekly workshops to the newly built Rua Red South Dublin Arts Centre where space again is given to it free of charge.

An examination of the spaces used by youth theatres during Census Week highlights the combination of spaces that youth theatres are using and the conditions of their use.

Table 3.5 Combination of Spaces used during Census Week

Type of Venue	Type of Activity												
	Number of Activities	Artistic Activities involving Young People	Artistic Planning Session	Administration Task	Meetings	Theatre Production tasks	Attending a Theatre Performance (leaders only)	Training Activity	Fundraising Activity	Travel	Social Events	Other	
Home / office of youth theatre	50	15	8	19	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Youth / community centre	47	41	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	
Arts centre	39	30	0	6	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	
Home / office of leader	36	0	14	16	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	
Theatre	27	19	1		4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	
School	10	8	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Pub / café / hotel	8	1	1	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	
Public space	4	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other	22	3	1	7	0	2	0	1	2	5	1	0	

* Figures are based on 243 activities recorded by 29 Youth Theatres during Census Week as part of Centre Stage +10.

Table 3.6 Space used during Census Week: Conditions of use

Conditions of Use	Type of Activity										
	TOTAL NUMBER OF VENUES	Home/office of youth theatre	Theatre	Youth/ community centre	Arts centre	Home/office of leader	School	Pub/café/hotel	Public space	Other	
Owned by youth theatre	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
At parent organisation	50	34	9	1	5	0	0	0	0	1	
Rented / Leased	70	11	5	26	23	0	3	0	0	2	
Donated / Free	81	4	5	19	10	34	6	1	2	0	
Other	42	1	8	1	1	2	1	7	2	19	

* Figures are based on 243 activities recorded by 29 Youth Theatres during Census Week as part of Centre Stage +10. Dublin Youth Theatre owns its own premises but did not participate in the Census Week.

• SUITABILITY OF VENUE

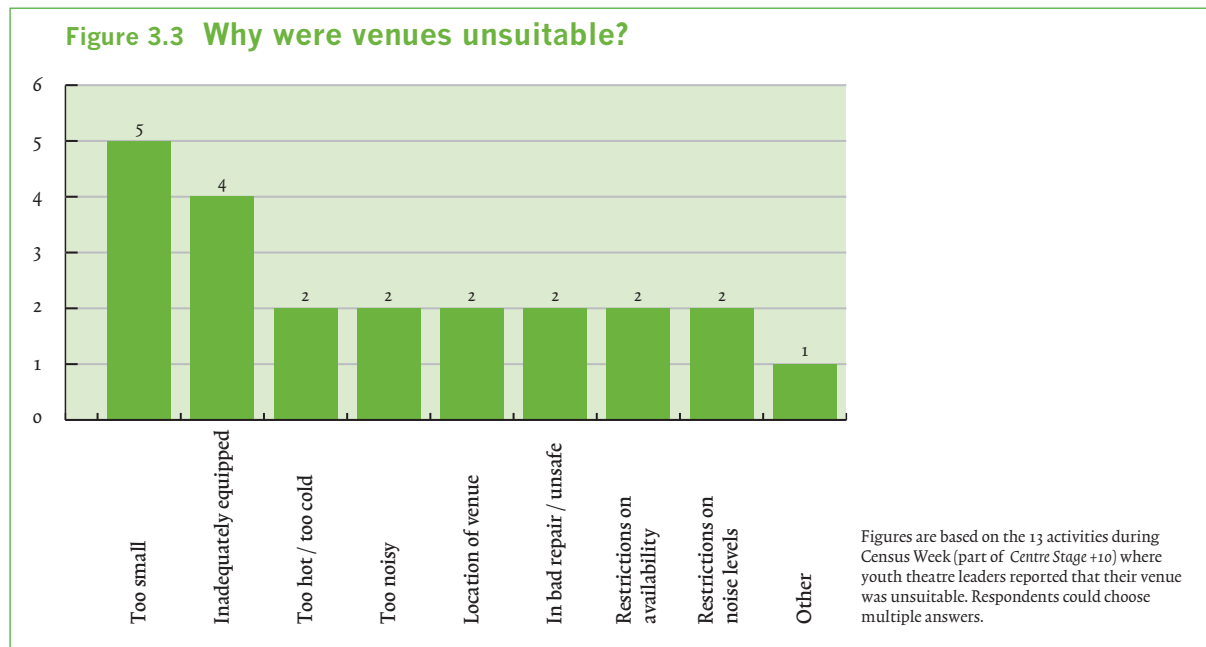
Youth theatre leaders were asked to comment on the suitability of the venues they used during Census Week in both the Centre Stage and Centre Stage +10 research projects:

- In Centre Stage, just over three-quarters of all activities during Census Week were considered to have taken place in suitable venues;
- During Centre Stage +10, 95% of the 243 activities that took place during Census Week were considered to have taken place in suitable venues.

This would indicate that a higher standard of venue is currently available to youth theatres and that youth theatre leaders are generally much happier with the venues they are using.

However, not all youth theatres were happy with the spaces they used during Census Week. The size, location and general state of the venue were listed as reasons for unsuitability. Some leaders also reported that restrictions which venues placed on availability and noise levels could make spaces unsuitable for their youth theatre. Two youth theatre activities took place in spaces that the leaders considered were in bad repair or unsafe for youth theatre members. Both youth theatres that used these spaces were small, autonomous youth theatres run on a completely voluntary basis. This indicates that suitable and affordable workshop spaces are still a concern for some smaller sized youth theatres.

Figure 3.3 provides full details on the unsuitability of the 13 venues that leaders recorded during Census Week.



The majority of these venues were used for artistic activities with young people.

