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## FIRST CUT! YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL

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### CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

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First Cut! Youth Film Festival is an established annual film festival which takes place in Youghal, Co Cork which celebrates the work of Irish and international young film makers. Our festival is focused specifically on young people and their extraordinary creativity.

First Cut! embraces, welcomes, and supports diverse approaches to filmmaking. Diversity and inclusion are core values for our festival. We are committed to inclusion & involvement of young people irrespective of all backgrounds, and we aim to involve especially young people who are most at risk of exclusion.

Young people engage with filmmaking in different ways, as individuals or as part of a school or youth group and we work to reflect and accommodate that in our programming.

First Cut! initially emerged from Cork Young Filmmakers (CYF), a programme of practical filmmaking workshops for schools and youth groups run throughout County Cork, managed by Cork Film Centre, and funded by Cork County Council and the South and East Cork Area Partnership (SECAD). Our festival's origins can be traced to a consultation process involving 700 young people who emphasised the lack of creative opportunities for young people to get involved in filmmaking. Our festival continues to feature CYF films as an integral part of its programme and remains true to supporting local, grass-roots youth filmmaking.

We place great emphasis on bringing young filmmakers together. Our festival creates a safe, respectful, and caring space where young filmmakers can share their passion for making films with their peers. Our location in Youghal connects us to a historical community of filmmaking in Ireland that goes back to the early 1900's and the pioneering work of the Horgan brothers who produced the earliest surviving example (c.1910) of animation in Ireland.

We work with 2 communities in effect: the community of young people aged 12-24 who are into film, and the wider community in Youghal which includes schools, community organisations, venues, and businesses.

In practice, this means that all events are free to ensure accessibility for the widest possible youth audience, and our programming aims to serve and support young people at different stages of their involvement in filmmaking. This is why we programme a broad mix of events that includes animation workshops, screenings for primary school students, and events aimed at filmmakers in their early

twenties who are entering the film industry. We also organise panel discussions with participating filmmakers so that young audiences can take inspiration from the experiences of their contemporaries.

We create opportunities for young people to have a say and an influence in how our festival develops, and our youth-centred approach is embodied in the First Cut! Youth Advisory Council. This is a rotating group of young people who have acted as festival advisors for each edition of the festival, and they are also responsible for selecting a Youth Advisory Council Award for films in the open call screenings. This group view, discuss, debate, and select films. In this way, they enrich the festival programme while developing and using their critical skills. This is an important aspect of our work and in 2021 we established a Critics Panel to underline the role and value of independent critical thought and debate. introduced this year.

Our ability to engage with and listen to young people, and to incorporate their ideas and suggestions into our programme strengthens the work that we do.. The future of First Cut! will depend on these new generations of filmmakers and critics, and we are confident about this future.

First Cut! Youth Film Festival is an unincorporated association registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority, and our Registered Charity Number is 20106652 with a board of five trustees.

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#### *COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING:*

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The First Cut! Youth Film Project and Festival is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. We will adhere to the recommendations of Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, (2017), and Tulsa's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.

First Cut, FC, accept responsibility for keeping children and young people safe from harm who are involved in its projects, attending workshops or otherwise under its temporary care. It also recognises that good welfare and child protection policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved with the organisation's work, including staff.

We undertake to provide a safe environment and positive experience; the welfare of the young person is paramount. FC has developed policies and procedures to ensure that this commitment is imbued in all aspects of the organisation.

Participants and Personnel will be informed of procedures and policies as is relevant to the programme that they are engaged in.

This Statement will be made available to all staff and on our website. The accompanying Child Protection Policy document is also available. We are committed to reviewing the Child Protection Policy and code of practice annually. This statement and the policy were updated in January 2021. We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services.

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#### *IMPLEMENTATION*

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We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:   
(First Cut! Youth Film Festival, Director)  
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