

Emily O'Callaghan

Achill Island Film Festival



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Emily O'Callaghan, who is originally from Dublin but is now living on Achill Island in Co Mayo, moved west in September 2021, after she decided to combine her love of films, Achill and event organising by starting the Achill Island Film Festival.

Emily had worked in the film industry in various roles for many years, as well as organising events, such as comedy nights, gigs, mini festivals and stages at Electric Picnic.

Her decision to move to her family's ancestral homeplace of Achill, where she had often holidayed as a child, was prompted by the opportunity she had to think about what she wanted from life during the pandemic, and by a sense that Dublin was becoming more of a rat race.

A keen fan of film festivals, Emily saw a gap in the market as there was no existing film festival in Achill. Indeed, the island does not even have a cinema. She also thought it would be a beautiful place for film industry professionals from all over the world to visit, meet and network with each other.

After a hectic year of planning, the inaugural Achill Island Film Festival was held in May 2022. 370 people attended the event, which screened 115 films across five venues. Plans are already underway for next year's event, and Emily, who works from home, is hoping to get office space and hire a production assistant for next year.

Emily says the festival simply would not have been the success it was without the support and structure provided by ACORNS, which helped her to prepare, focus and share her worries.

Providing early stage female entrepreneurs, living in rural Ireland, with the knowledge, support and networking opportunities to meet and even exceed their current aspirations.



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
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