



National Playwriting Competition 2006/2007

What is Bioethics?

Bioethics is a discipline dealing with the ethical implications of research and practice in the biological sciences and medicine. It facilitates a deeper understanding of a range of moral choices, which can inform decision-making in areas of public policy and with respect to the direction and control of science. Bioethics is also a forward looking discipline, working to anticipate future questions of concern, encourage awareness about them and stimulate progressive debate amongst the public.

Who are The Irish Council for Bioethics?

The Irish Council for Bioethics (ICB) is an independent, national body set up by the Government in 2002 to consider the ethical questions raised by biological research and biomedicine, such as stem cell research, IVF, genetic modification and euthanasia. An important objective of the Council is to promote public understanding, informed discussion and education with respect to bioethical issues.

Why are we running this competition?

In Europe the relationship between science and the arts has grown over the last number of years with an increasing number of initiatives such as the Science and Arts Foundation coming into being and with more artists working on projects with science institutions.

Given Ireland's strong literary tradition the Council has decided to run a competition for playwrights to write a stage play with strong bioethical content. Because of its ability to pose contemporary questions that confront humanity bioethics is an area, which is well suited to the realm of drama.

The Prize

The winner of the competition will be commissioned to write a full-length play. There is a prize package worth €11,000.

- A commission of €7,500 to write a play based on an initial proposal. The commissioning award will allow the ICB to take an option on the staged reading and first production of the play.
- €500 research expenses, which could be used for travel, buying books etc.
- A staged reading (worth €3,000) in association with Fishamble: The New Play Company.

Those shortlisted will be asked to write 10 pages of dialogue in order for the adjudicators to select an overall winner. A fee of €250 will be paid for this task.

The Adjudicators:

We are delighted to announce that our esteemed panel of judges will be: Jim Culleton (Artistic Director, Fishamble: The New Play Company), Liam Cunningham (Actor), Aideen Howard (Literary Director, Abbey Theatre), Richard Hull (Member, ICB), Gavin Kostick (Literary Officer, Fishamble: The New Play Company), Orlaith McBride (Director, National Association for Youth Drama), Helena Nolan, (Office of Science & Technology, Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment), Siobhán O'Sullivan (Scientific Director, ICB), Alan Stanford (Actor, Director at the Gate and Artistic Director, Second Age Theatre Company).

Note: This competition is now closed.