



Ireland:  
*Where*  
Creative  
is Native

# Irish Creative Influence Survey

*13 Aug - 15 Sep 2021.*

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# Introduction

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In August, IAPI, canvassed creative talent for its inaugural survey.

The aim? To gain an understanding of how creative professionals in the commercial creativity and communications industry in Ireland are feeling about a number of issues, which include the quality of work being produced, to how they feel about working in Ireland right now and whether living here influences their creativity.

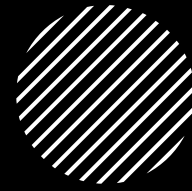
The research was carried out in collaboration with **The Irish Times** as part of the Ireland: where Creative is Native initiative aimed at promoting Irish commercial creativity at home and abroad.

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## == Participation

225 Respondents completed the survey.

The majority of respondents were Irish, working in Ireland.

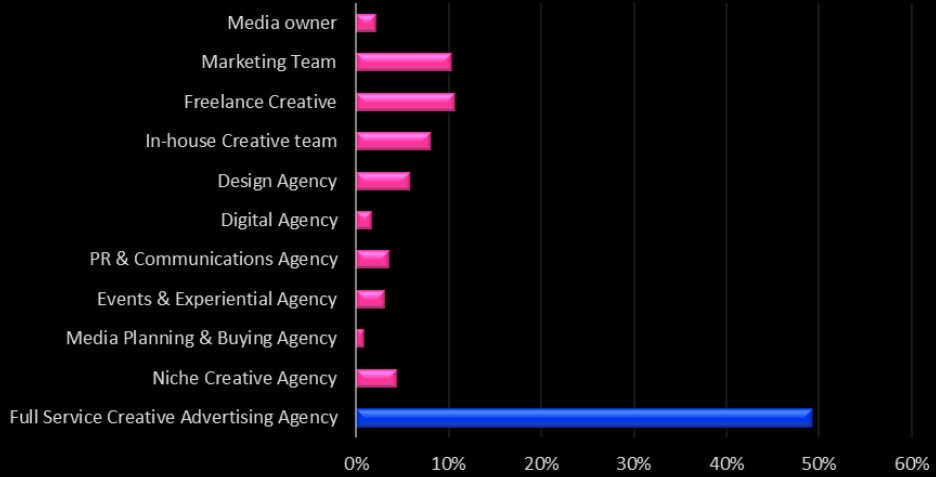
2 out of 3 were senior creatives, the remaining 1/3 were junior to mid level.

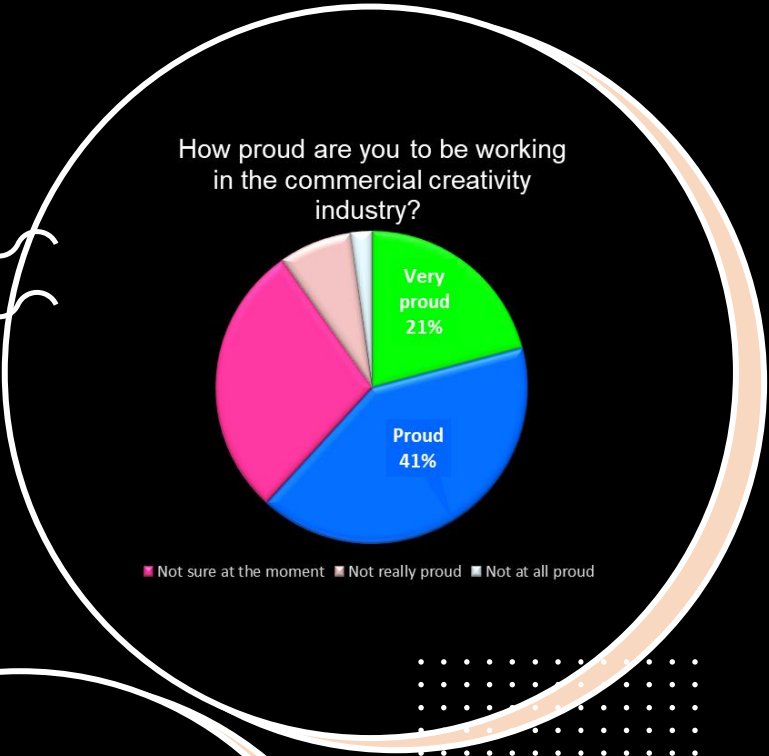
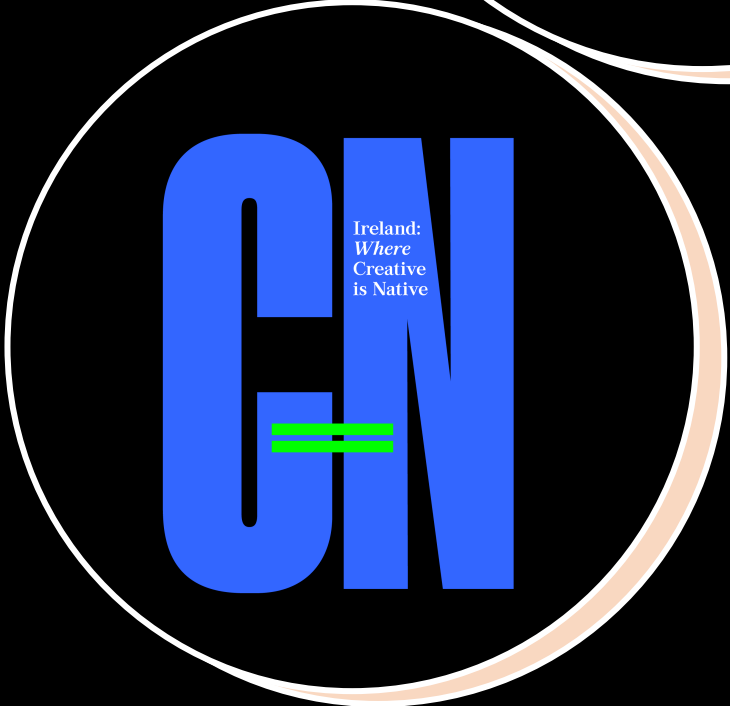
Half work for Full Service Creative Agencies, 18% either work in Marketing teams or in-house agencies, with the remaining half spread across other agency types.

56% were male, 42% were female with 3 identifying as gender fluid.



Agency Type

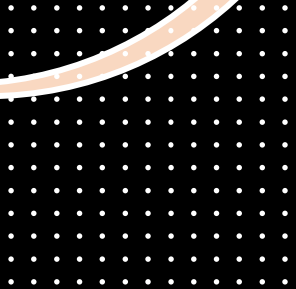




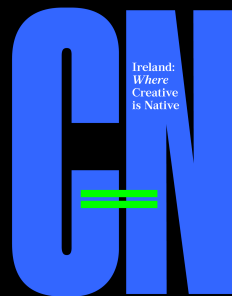
## == Pride in the Industry

The results show a resurgence of pride in the industry among creatives. 62% of respondents said they were either 'very proud' or 'proud' to be in the industry.

However, 1 in 4 respondents are still not sure how they feel about working in the industry.

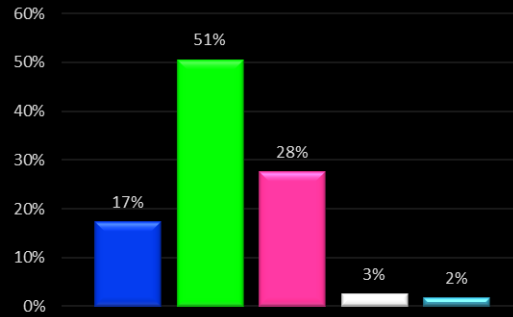


*"Irish creativity is showing a pride in Irish culture and heritage right now. It wasn't always the case, and is a positive sign of our growing national awareness and confidence"*  
commented one respondent.





Opinion on Quality of Creative work in Ireland



*"On the up, going from strength to strength, not far from excellent,"*  
A respondent remarked.

## Quality of Irish Creative work

68% of respondents said the quality of creative work being produced in Ireland's commercial creativity sector right now is good to excellent

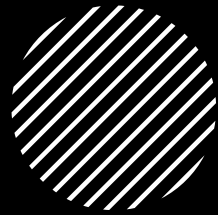
28% said it is average, and only 3% rated it as poor.

Others offered balance. "A couple of agencies are pushing for great work but it can be extremely tough to get it created," a respondent said, with another commenting, "I think the work the world is seeing through international awards is excellent. The everyday work the Irish consumer is seeing is not."

Some think the pandemic has had an effect on the creative process. "Working from home has certainly had an effect of watering down some of the stronger creative ideas over the past 16 months," said one respondent.



# The impact of Irish Culture on Creativity



When it comes to what fuels that creative process in the first place, the question of how Irish culture and environment contributes to the quality of creative output was given considerable thought. **9 out of 10** respondents said it had an influence on the quality of creative output.

"I think Irish people are passionate about their Irish culture and heritage and it comes across in the work. There is always room to see more diverse insights and stories coming through, say from different communities within Ireland," **said one respondent.**

Respondents were keen to point out that notions of Irish culture have changed. "The environment, i.e. cost of living in major cities and low salaries drives down the quality of creative output," said one, with another commenting that, "though we are influenced by Irish culture, we are living in times where the prevalent culture is global."

**Of those innate aspects of Irish culture that stimulate commercial creativity, it was our irreverent sense of humour that came out top for the survey's respondents with 60% of them citing it as their top stimulus.**

Writing skills honed down the years, inherited and learned from literary greats, came in at 31%.

Ireland's progressive society was also a factor for many, with 36% citing it as a stimulating factor.

## What aspects of Irish culture stimulate your creativity?

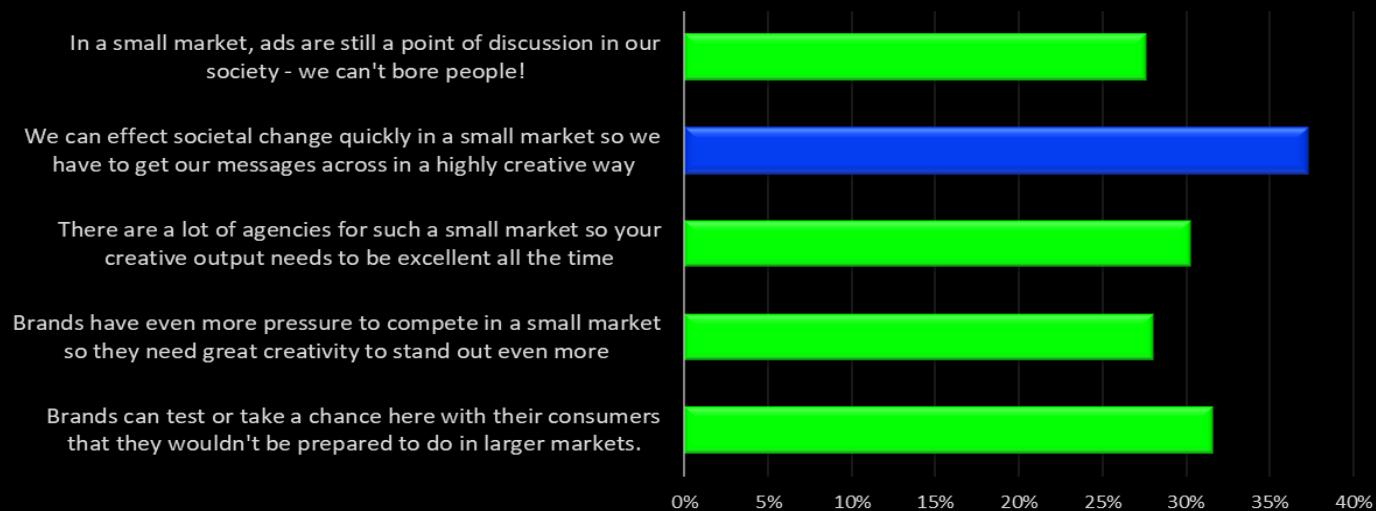




# The positive aspects of creating in Ireland



## What aspects of working in a small country like Ireland helps produce great creative work?



Nearly one third per felt brands can test or take a chance here with their consumers that they wouldn't be prepared to do in larger markets.

"Ireland has access to brands and accounts that creatives in other regions of the world wouldn't get to touch. There are masses of opportunities in that sense," **said one respondent.**

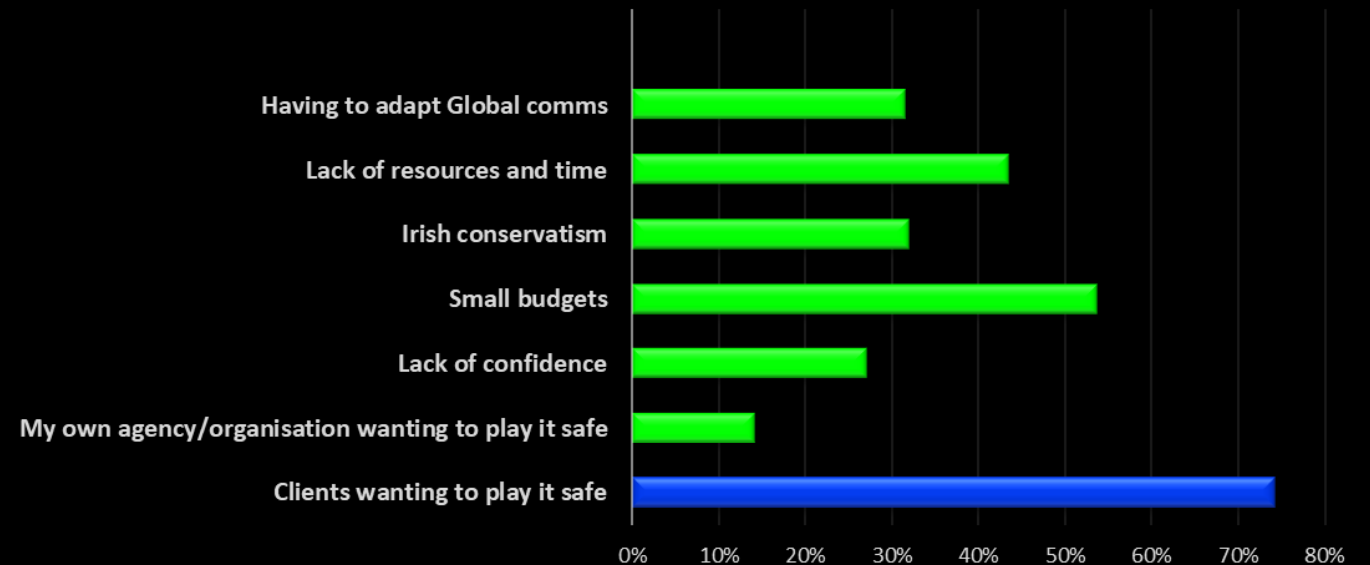
## == The negative aspects of creating in Ireland

75% of the creative respondents feel that clients wanting to play it safe hampers their creative output.

*“It is the role of the Creative talent in our industry to push for the best possible creative interpretation of the brand’s message and they should be lauded for that.*

*IAPI’s view is for them to continue to push for greater creativity, within the framework of the brand and business strategy. Effie Awards Ireland is designed to encourage just that. Through the Irish jury programme globally as well as through entry to our own awards, the education process is starting to gain traction. The emphasis is on “**effective creativity**”. The more we demonstrate the power and effectiveness of great creativity, the more leeway we will be given to push the creative bar. We look forward to raising that bar even further over the next few years”, says Charley Stoney, CEO, IAPI.*

### What hampers Creatives from producing great creative work in Ireland?





# Creatives urge clients to take more creative risks to engage Irish consumers

I think the work the world is seeing through international awards is excellent. The every day work the Irish consumer is seeing is not.

Clients are risk averse. Many don't even seem to want to get noticed and, in fact, seem to want to spend their ad budget without drawing too much attention to themselves - the complete opposite of what advertising is supposed to be about. Others are preoccupied by their internal audience instead of thinking about their supposed target market.

We are limited by traditional and safe advertising created specifically for an Irish audience. Advertising has changed. We need to change. And start thinking about Ireland from a global perspective. We need to start creating work that just doesn't interrupt but is entertaining and worthy.

*Although we may never have seen this level of success before, it feels apart from the day to day work completed for clients*

It's average, but that is not the fault of most creatives. They do their best. Clients aren't brave enough or ideas savvy. Advertising is becoming data driven and therefore soulless. This isn't just an Irish issue it's happening worldwide

Creative thinking and approaches only have currency when complemented by the key element in the equation, a client who's brave enough to run the work.

Many have the mindset that they'd rather offend nobody even if meant producing something bland rather than to create something memorable that might rub a few people up the wrong way.

There are some high profile wins in recent years and Ireland's profile within the global advertising community is certainly growing. However, nationally, we still have some very safe work being made by some clients afraid to try anything different.

A couple of agencies are pushing for great work but it can be extremely tough to get it created.

I feel that we need to take more risks, and that the Government could enable us to address more societal/cultural issues with creativity.

Invariably the talent is here but compromise and excessive research affect best on class creative

I think the work the world is seeing through international awards is excellent. The every day work the Irish consumer is seeing is not.

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Big Tech salaries appeal but only 6% believe they offer truly creative roles

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As with all industries, the commercial creativity sector is seeing high levels of Talent Churn as the “great resignation” continues. 25% of respondents stated that it is more difficult than ever to find creative talent. Nearly half simply state that it’s the same as ever as finding great creative talent has never been easy.

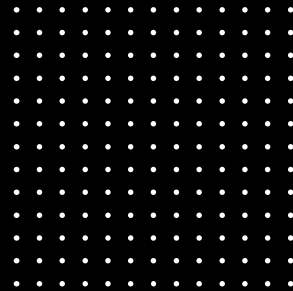
A hot topic for many, is the move into big tech with several creative folk moving into big tech firms. It seems

- 75% agreed that tech pays more but that comes at a creative cost, and the same number agreed that having experience in big tech is good for your CV.
- However, only 6 per cent think that tech offers truly creative roles and it is not surprising that money emerged as the big carrot tech can offer.
- **Only 6% believe that big tech is where’s it’s at these days, and again only 7% believe the agency model is outdate.**
- Over half think that there are very few truly creative roles in big tech and another half fear “getting lost” in big tech firms.

“Big tech offers financial security and better salaries. Agencies offer creative opportunities”, **one respondent commented.**



 The final  
word...



*"It was really encouraging to see such a large take-up of respondents to Ireland's first Creative Influence survey," says Sean Hynes, Vice-President of IAPI and Creative Director of Bonfire. "It continues to demonstrate the ownership that creatives feel they have over our creative industry and the belief they have in the energy and originality of our creative output."*

*The work we are doing to promote Irish creativity and media planning internationally is starting to pay off and our ambition to create a European centre of excellence for the industry doesn't look so far away now.*

*It is heartening to see that 40% of the creatives surveyed are optimistic that IAPI's "Ireland: where Creative is Native" programme will make a difference to the quality of our commercial creativity. This will, in turn act as a siren call for both Irish and international talent to work in all aspects of our sector."*



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For more information visit  
[www.iapi.ie](http://www.iapi.ie) / [www.creativeisnative.com](http://www.creativeisnative.com)

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