

THE DEREK HILL FOUNDATION - GLENVEAGH NATIONAL PARK

VISUAL ARTS RESIDENCY 2026

This is an exciting opportunity for two visual artists based in the UK or Republic of Ireland, to spend 3 weeks immersed in the remote landscapes of Donegal, one in the spring and one in the autumn of 2026.

Introduction:

Derek Hill (1916-2000) was a British born painter who lived from 1954 - 1982 in County Donegal. He was given honorary Irish citizenship in 1999 and left his house and garden to the Irish Nation. Glebe House now hosts a contemporary art gallery while the house remains as it was with its fascinating interiors and Hill's extensive collections of paintings and ceramics. Hill was a portrait and landscape painter. Many of his landscapes are of Donegal and Tory Island where he had a remote studio hut. Under his mentorship, the "Tory School" of artists developed there. Hill studied stage design in Munich and was Art Director of the British School in Rome. He travelled extensively, was a conscientious objector in the Second World War, a lover of music and a great socialite. He set up the Derek Hill Foundation before his death as a resource to continue to provide opportunities for artists.

Glebe House and Gallery sit on the edge of Glenveagh National Park and together with The Regional Cultural Centre in Letterkenny, they form a unique and important cultural partnership.

With the support of the Irish Office of Public works and Donegal County Council, the National Parks and Wildlife Service has provided a Glenveagh gate house as a base for creative residencies. Derek Hill brought creative people to Donegal to share his love of the landscape, rural life and the people that live there. In this spirit the Derek Hill Foundation is funding an opportunity for two artists to spend three weeks here, hosted by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, The Regional Cultural Centre, and The Glebe House and Gallery.

Glenveagh National Park is one of Ireland's and Western Europe's most significant nature conservation areas. Its 165 square km of remote mountain, lake, bog, moor and ancient woodland habitat are host to a myriad of rare and endangered species of flora and fauna. Today, Glenveagh is best known for its large scale, pioneering nature and specifically woodland restoration projects.

Glenveagh Castle and Gardens are situated deep in the heart of the Derryveagh Mountains on Lough Veagh and historically they formed the administrative seat of the hunting estate

that predated the foundation of the National Park. The park receives approximately 180,000 visitors per year and has over 50 staff who service the visitor centre, castle museum, gardens and a nature education team as well as ranger service.

Residency artists will be welcomed into the Glenveagh family, with full access to the park, castle, gardens and staff. Practical support will be on hand for accessing remote areas or for information regarding historic or conservation projects. Glenveagh has a unique sense of place and its social histories are particularly valued within the local communities and in Donegal more widely.

The Regional Cultural Centre in Letterkenny is a multi-disciplinary arts space bringing dynamic exhibitions, music, film and community arts to the region.

Overtime we hope these residencies will add to the richness of the Glenveagh area as a regional centre, bringing in new ideas from creative people who in turn will have their creative practices enriched through time spent here.

The Residency offers:

- A period for research, reflection and study
- Three weeks accommodation in a comfortable cottage
- A bursary of £2000 (inclusive of travel and all expenses)
- Access to and practical support from Glebe House and Gallery, Glenveagh National Park and the Regional Cultural Centre
- Opportunities to engage with the local communities in Glenveagh and Donegal
- The possibility of visiting Tory Island

Residency Brief:

Artists are invited to explore all aspects of the area including the ecology, heritage, culture and communities. This may touch on but is not limited to, any of the following: Glenveagh as a National Park and nature reserve; the landscapes and environment of the area; Derek Hill, his practice and legacy; Glebe House and its collections; the people, social history or working resources of the area; Tory Island.

There is no studio space attached to this residency but it offers a period for research, reflection and study and we encourage participants to explore new ways of responding to the place through their experience of time spent here.

Participating artists will be expected to deliver at least one publicly engaged event (a talk, workshop, walk etc.) or if applicable, to donate an artwork created during their residency (such as a sketch or study). A written and visual report of how their time was spent will also be expected at the end of the residency before receiving the final bursary payment.

Participating artists are asked to retain work produced during or in response to their time in Glenveagh for exhibiting alongside work by other resident artists at the Glebe Gallery, National Park or Regional Cultural Centre in 2029 (tbc). There would be further funding in support of this.

Selection Criteria:

- We welcome visual artists from a wide range of disciplines and experience to apply but no students, those within the first three years of their practice or pairs/ groups of artists.
- Applicants must be resident in the UK or Republic of Ireland for a minimum of 5 years
- The quality of the applicants' creative practice
- The extent to which the applicant's proposal responds to the residency brief
- The viability of the proposal to be carried out in a self-managed and resourceful way
- Consideration of any impact the proposed project might have on the local environment

Other things to note:

- There is no designated studio space available with this residency, the cottage is to be kept a clean space
- Glebe House can offer some outbuilding storage space for equipment.
- There is no wifi in the cottage (Vodafone has best reception there). Good wifi is available at Glebe House, the National Parks Centre and the RCC during opening hours.
- The cottage is old and therefore not fully accessible. There is a front door step and narrow doorways within.
- No pets are allowed

- Glenveagh and the gatehouse is in a very rural location so applicants will need to have thought about how they will get around while there.
- Successful applicants will be expected to have their own public liability insurance (we can advise about this) and health insurance if needed.
- The successful applicant will receive a fee of £2000 to be paid in three lots:
 - £500 1st payment on acceptance to allow for travel planning
 - £1000 2nd payment on commencement of residency
 - £500 3rd payment on receipt of a written and visual report due within 6 weeks after completion of residency.

Please apply by completing the application form and emailing it with accompanying links, images and a CV to:

donegalresidency@derehillfoundation.org.uk

The deadline for applications is 11th January 2026

Shortlisted applicants will be notified by 30th January and invited for an online interview on 4th February 2026

Partner links:

Glenveagh National Park:

<https://www.nationalparks.ie/glenveagh/>

Glebe House and Gallery:

<https://heritageireland.ie/places-to-visit/glebe-gallery-and-garden/>

Regional Cultural Centre:

<https://regionalculturalcentre.com/>