



Eikon Exhibition Centre, Lisburn
24 – 26 February 2026

NEW
VENUE



IFEX 2026

Salon Culinaire

SCHEDULE OF COMPETITIONS



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Welcome to IFEX 2026 – Eikon Centre, Lisburn

Salon Culinaire

We are delighted to bring IFEX to its new home at the Eikon Centre, Lisburn for 2026. This year marks an important moment for our industry. The skills gap is widening, and now more than ever, we must champion excellence, invest in talent and showcase the remarkable ability within Northern Ireland's hospitality and tourism sector to compete globally.



IFEX Salon Culinaire remains the leading stage where chefs, service personnel, students and professionals come to benchmark their skills and demonstrate mastery of the International Standard for Excellence.

We are honoured to welcome Chef Niall McKenna to open the show. His leadership, contribution and long-standing commitment to Northern Ireland's hospitality sector are widely recognised, and we are delighted to have his support for IFEX 2026.

We are thrilled to expand once again the WorldSkills Northern Ireland Skills Hub, in partnership with WorldSkills NI and our six Centre of Excellence Further Education Colleges. This vibrant live arena will highlight the breadth of our industry, restaurant service, fishmongery and butchery and the in vogue "Wild Food" skills which will be performed live, in real time, by industry professionals.

Our competition programme, shaped by our Salon Culinaire Hospitality Strategy Group, reflects the needs of today's industry and tomorrow's workforce. New for 2026, we are honoured to introduce the "Tim Andrew" Trophy – Northern Ireland Young Pastry Chef of the Year, sponsored by Andrew Ingredients. This exciting award celebrates innovation, artistry and technique within the discipline of pâtisserie, and gives emerging pastry chefs their moment to shine.

We take great pride in seeing previous IFEX competitors now leading kitchens, earning Michelin stars, global awards and

international recognition—proof that the talent developed here is world-class. To our college lecturers, mentors and trainers: thank you for your dedication to developing the skilled professionals our industry urgently needs.

Our sincere appreciation goes to our sponsors and partners including WorldSkills NI, Stephens Catering Equipment, Andrew Ingredients, Keenan Seafood, Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland, Riso Gallo, and our wider network of supporters. Thank you to Billie and Toby and their amazing team at 365 Events Ltd. for their expertise, hard work, commitment and finance in delivering, what we know will be our best ever IFEX 2026.

We are ready for an inspiring, competitive and forward-looking showcase.

To all exhibitors, competitors, judges, visitors and supporters, simply said, Thank You and welcome to our new venue for IFEX. 24th, 25th & 26th February 2026.

Let's celebrate our craft. Let's champion our skill. Let's move our industry forward.

Yours sincerely

Sean Owens MCGC LCGI MIH AFHEA
IFEX 2026 Salon Culinaire Skills Director

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Thank you to our
partners & sponsors



An Roinn
Geilleagair



EXHIBITION OPENING HOURS

Tuesday 24th February

10:00 - 17:00

Wednesday 25th February

10:00 - 17:00

Thursday 26th February

10:00 - 16:00

Competitors can gain early access to the hall, and full joining instructions will be sent when competition places are confirmed end of January 2026.

365 events

ChefSkills – Live Theatre



IFEX ChefSkills – Live Theatre will feature six adjacent workstations in which a series of back-to-back, fast-paced hot live cooking competitions will take place.

The ChefSkills line-up will comprise a wide and exciting array of competitions, so whatever your skill level, experience and sector of the industry you work in there will be something for you! This is a great opportunity to showcase your culinary talents.

Entries are invited from all chefs based in education or industry; some competitions are restricted by age or industry sector so please check your eligibility before entering. There will be limited places available so early entry is recommended.

Deadline for entries: 30th January 2026

Please visit www.ifexexhibition.co.uk/salon-culinaire where you will find an entry form rules and judging criteria.



SENIOR CLASSES *Open to chefs who are 23 or over on 24th February 2026*

SCS1: Senior Fish Culinary Freestyle

(35-minute competition)

Sponsored by Keenan Seafood

35 minutes will be allowed to prepare, cook and present two same plated portions of a fish / shellfish dish of the competitor's choice. The mise-en-place permitted will be pre-washed and peeled vegetables, not cut. Fish stock must be made within the competition time. No shells on plate. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. Judging will favour competitors who use MSC **Marine Stewardship Council** recognised sustainable Fish and Seafood. A brief restaurant style typed menu, with allergens highlighted must be displayed on the workstation.

SCS2: Senior Lamb Culinary Freestyle

(45-minute competition)

45 minutes will be allowed to prepare, cook and present two same plated portions of a lamb dish using a suitable cut of the competitor's choice. The only mise-en-place permitted will be pre-washed and peeled vegetables, not cut. Pre-prepared stocks may be used (basic stocks only, no reduction permitted). Competitors should show as many skills as possible. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. A brief restaurant style typed menu, with allergens highlighted must be displayed on the workstation.



OPEN CLASSES *No Age Restriction*

OCS1: Modern Trend – World Cuisine – Sustainable Kitchen Practices

(45-minute competition)

Sponsored by Tugo Food

45 minutes will be allowed to prepare, cook and present a two-course genuine ethnic /international meal using sustainable practices for two covers with accompaniments. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. A brief restaurant style typed menu in original language with English translation must be displayed on the workstation with allergens highlighted. Competitors must also describe and display the sustainable attributes of the dish in no more than 100 words; this should be emailed to the Salon Director at: cora@365-events.co.uk

OCS2: Restaurant Innovation – IFEX Northern Ireland Dessert of the Year 2026

(1 hour competition)

Sponsored by Andrew Ingredients

One hour will be allowed to prepare, cook and present two same plated portions of a modern sweet dish of the competitor's choice. The dessert may be served hot or cold. No prior preparation will be allowed. A brief restaurant style typed dish description must be displayed on the workstation. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor.

OCS3: Plant Based Chef Challenge (Vegan Optional)

(40-minute competition)

Competitors will be allowed 40 minutes to prepare cook and present, two same plated portions of a plant-based dish, hot main course, this dish must be plant-based and may be vegan. Judges will be looking for a balance of flavours and taste, plus the level of skills used in the competition. Competitors will need to provide a typed recipe for the judges to review. **60% of all ingredients** used must be plant based. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. A brief restaurant style typed menu, with allergens highlighted must be displayed on the workstation.

OCS4: Northern Ireland Chef of the Year 2026

(2 hours, 30 minutes competition, plus 30 minutes set-up)

Sponsored by Food NI and Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

All entries for IFEX Chef of the Year 2026 must submit a CV or describe their career path to date in no more than 200 words, plus devise a three-course menu consisting of a **Starter, Main Course and Modern Dessert** for two covers. In addition, all competitors should produce a **Plant-Based Amuse Bouche**.

Competitor CV & menu must be emailed to the Salon Director at eventsteam@365-events.co.uk. Any identifying marks will be removed from the entries before they are scrutinised by an independent panel of judges. Competitors will be selected from these submissions.

Actual preparation and cooking time is 2 hours, 30 minutes. In addition a set up time (no cooking) of 30 minutes will be permitted before the competition commences to set up your station with ingredients and small equipment.

A pre-judged mise-en-place amount of 20% will be permitted, this prep must be the competitor's own work. Pre-prepared items such as stocks may be used as well as gels, peeled vegetables but not cut, pre-made fresh pasta, pre-made puff pastry, feuille de brick or filo may be used but not baked. After the IFEX COTY briefing, you will be asked to provide the judges with your declared 20% pre-prepared ingredients which will be scrutinised during the "mise en place" inspection by the IFEX 2026 Chairman of Judges.

NEW FEATURE: Judging will be live and all dishes will be served to the panel of judges and adjudicated in front of the IFEX 2026 audience.

The plant based amuse bouche should be produced for the judges within 30 minutes of the start of the competition. All dishes must be served in course order. Chefs may be assisted by a commis chef (who must be 23 years or under on 24th February 2026) for cleaning and organisational purposes only. No cooking will be permitted by the commis chef but they will receive an IFEX 2026 Certificate of Participation.

Competitors will be judged on skills, flavour, taste, butchery techniques, menu balance, presentation and hygiene.

Total Time: 3 hours – 30 minutes set up plus 2 hours 30 minutes will be allowed for all courses to be served.

continued...



OPEN CLASSES *No Age Restriction*

All equipment and ingredients must be supplied by the competitor.

A reminder that this is now an Open Class. Please note that this is NOT a mystery box competition

Fridge and freezer space are available.

OCS5: Duck Culinary Freestyle

(45-minute competition)

45 minutes will be allowed to prepare, cook and present two same plated portions of a duck dish of the competitor's choice. A 2.2kg duck must be used and must be supplied by the competitor. The only mise-en-place permitted will be pre-washed and peeled vegetables, not cut. Pre-prepared stocks may be used (basic stocks only, no reductions are permitted). All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. A brief restaurant style typed menu, with allergens highlighted must be displayed on the workstation. Competitors must use both leg and breast in reasonable proportions.

OCS6: Northern Ireland Culinary Ability Awards

(40-minute competition)

Sponsored by Culinary Ability Awards

This competition is open to chefs and cooks with a learning difficulty or physical disability currently working in the hospitality industry or studying with a recognised training provider. 40 minutes will be allowed to prepare, cook and present two same plated portions of a chosen main course showcasing local ingredients. A brief restaurant style typed menu must be displayed on the workstation. Realistic amounts of mise-en-place will be permitted e.g. pre-washed and peeled vegetables and potatoes, not cut. Pre-prepared stocks may be used (basic stocks only, no reduction permitted). Competitors should show as many skills as possible. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitors. Each individual competitor must be accompanied by a qualified mentor who may assist. A printed recipe and description of your dish must be submitted with your application and must include a brief background of yourself, your establishment and mentor details (max 150 words). All NI Culinary Ability Awards applications must be submitted directly to eventsteam@365-events.co.uk no later than the **10th January 2026**.

Student & Junior Classes



Students – Any competitor will be deemed a student if studying for a part-time or full-time qualification and studying with a recognised college, university or training provider. **(No age limit)**

Juniors – All students in part-time, or full-time education, or junior competitors working in industry. Junior competitors must be aged 23 or under as of the 24th February 2026.



SJCS1: Classical Junior Chicken

(45-minute competition)

45 minutes will be allowed to prepare, cook and present two plated portions of a chicken dish of the competitors' choice. A whole fresh (giblet free chicken – 1.5kg) must be provided by all competitors. Competitors are encouraged to use white and dark meat in their final dish. The only mise-en-place permitted will be pre-washed and peeled vegetables, not cut. Stock will be allowed, no glazes. Competitors should show as many skills as possible. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by competitor. A brief restaurant style typed menu, with allergens highlighted must be displayed on the workstation. Judges are NOT expected to try any chicken that is not cooked through.

All raw chicken is unsafe to eat, regardless of the conditions that the birds have been kept in.

As this class demonstrates classical skills and techniques using recognised classical recipes, all competitors should refer to:

Escoffier: **The Complete Guide to the Art of Modern Cookery / Le Guide Culinaire**

ISBN: 978-0-470-90027-7 by Auguste Escoffier (Author),

H L Cracknell (Editor), R J Kaufmann

SJCS2: Northern Ireland Young Seafood Chef of the Year 2026

(60-minute competition)

Sponsored by Keenan Seafood

60 minutes will be allowed to prepare, cook and present two same plated portions of a modern restaurant style starter using shellfish, plus two same plated portions of a main course using sustainable white fish which must be brought in on the bone. The mise-en-place permitted will be pre-washed and peeled vegetables, not cut. Stock must be made and used if required. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. A brief restaurant style typed menu, with allergens highlighted must be displayed on the workstation and must use classical menu terminology.

SJCS3: Student Culinarian of the Year 2026

(2-hour competition)

Sponsored by Sysco Ireland

This competition is open to all students studying for a recognised cookery / culinary arts qualification. Competitors are required to devise & submit a menu for a two-course meal (main course and dessert) for two covers, and forward to the Salon Director at eventsteam@365-events.co.uk. Recipes and method for each course must be provided. Any identifying marks will be removed from the entries before they are scrutinised by an independent panel of judges. Competitors will be selected from these submitted menus only. Two hours will be allowed to prepare, cook and present a two-course meal in course order for two covers highlighting the use of Irish produce. Chefs may be assisted by a commis chef (who must be 23 years or under on 24th February 2026) for cleaning and organisational purposes only. No cooking will be permitted by the commis chef but they will receive an IFEX 2026 Certificate of Participation. Stocks and glazes may be used. The only mise-en-place permitted will be pre-washed and peeled vegetables, not cut. Competitors will be judged on skills, flavour, taste, butchery techniques, menu balance, presentation and hygiene. All equipment and ingredients must be supplied by the competitor. A brief restaurant style typed menu, with allergens highlighted must be displayed on the workstation at all times.

If no menu is supplied, the entry will not be considered / judged.

Student & Junior Classes



SJCS4: Riso Gallo UK & Ireland Young Risotto Chef of the Year – All Ireland Heat

(60-minute competition)

Sponsored by Riso Gallo UK & Ireland

Riso Gallo's UK & Ireland Young Risotto Chef competition is one of the most respected culinary events for young chefs aged between 17-23 by the 10th January 2026. Open to young chefs either in culinary education or professional service. This competition is a wonderful opportunity for young chefs to spread their culinary wings and compete to be the best. We're delighted to be holding the 2026 Irish Heat at IFEX, we're looking forward very much to seeing the best of the best in Ireland!

One hour allowed to prepare cook and present two plated portions of your risotto dish using Riso Gallo Rice supplied by the sponsor. All entries will be scrutinised by an independent panel of judges. The winner of this heat will compete at the United Kingdom & Ireland final in London.

New Competition for IFEX 2026

SJCS5: All Ireland Young Pastry Chef of The Year – 'Tim Andrew Trophy'

(3-hour competition)

Sponsored by Andrew Ingredients

This competition is open to competitors under 23 years of age on 24th February 2026.

Three hours will be allowed to prepare /cook /bake and present the following pastry/confectionery items:

Part 1 – Friandises/Sweetmeats

Reference: the culinary terms above encompass a variety of bitesize fine confections – distinguished by their refinement, presentation, and skillset. They are intended as a final, elegant gesture to complete the dining experience.

- ▶ 12 individual pieces of: Pate de Fruits confections using Agar Agar or Pectin & Fruit Puree.
- ▶ 12 Individual pieces of Gluten Free Mini Decorative Biscuits.

Part 2 – Breads: Preparation/Baking /Presentation

- ▶ 1 x Artisan Flavoured Bread must use a chemical raising agent – Product weight 500g +/-30g
- ▶ 1 x Fermented Bread (must use a supplied pre fermented dough mix, but no other ingredients are to be added until the competition begins) – Product weight 500g +/-30g

Part 3 – Plated Modern Desserts – 2 covers

Competitors must prepare, cook and present two same plated portions of a modern sweet dish of the competitor's choice.

The dessert may be served hot or cold. No prior preparation will be allowed.

A brief restaurant style typed dish description of all three parts of this competition must be displayed on the workstation.

Competitors must show as many patisserie/confectionery skills as possible. All equipment and ingredients (except for the 500g pre fermented basic bread dough, supplied by Andrew Ingredients) must be supplied by the contestants.

Student & Junior Classes



TIMETABLE OF CLASSES

Tuesday 24th February

COMPETITION	TIME
OCS3 Plant Based Chef Challenge (Vegan Optional)	08:20 – 09:00
SCS2 Senior Lamb Culinary Freestyle Heat 1	09:15 – 10:00
SCS2 Senior Lamb Culinary Freestyle Heat 2	10:15 – 11:00
OCS2 Restaurant Innovation – IFEX Northern Ireland Dessert of the Year 2026	11:15 – 12:15
SJCS4 Riso Gallo UK & Ireland Young Risotto Chef of the Year – All Ireland Heat	12:30 – 13:30
Lunchtime awards	13:30 – 13:45
SJCS3 Student Culinarian of the Year 2026	13:45 – 15:45
OSC6 Northern Ireland Culinary Ability Awards	16:00 – 16:40
Daily Awards	16:40 – 17:00

Wednesday 25th February

COMPETITION	TIME
SCS1 Senior Fish Culinary Freestyle Heat 1	08:00 – 08:35
SCS1 Senior Fish Culinary Freestyle Heat 2	08:50 – 09:25
SJSC1 Classical Junior Chicken Heat 1	09:40 – 10:25
SJSC1 Classical Junior Chicken Heat 2	10:40 – 11:25
OCS4 Northern Ireland Chef of the Year 2026	12:00 – 15:00
Lunchtime awards	13:00 – 13:15
SJCS2 Northern Ireland Young Seafood Chef of the Year 2026	15:30 – 16:30
Daily Awards	16:45 – 17:00
SJCS6 All Ireland Inter College Cook & Serve Challenge	17:00 – 20:30

Thursday 26th February

COMPETITION	TIME
OCS5 Duck Culinary Freestyle	08:30 – 09:15
OCS1 Modern Trend-World Cuisine-Sustainable Kitchen Practices	09:30 – 10:15
SJSC5 All Ireland Young Pastry Chef of The Year 'Tim Andrew Trophy'	10:30 – 13:30
Final Awards Ceremony	14:00 – 15:15

SJCS6: All Ireland Inter College Cook & Serve Challenge

(3 hours, 30-minute competition)

This competition is open to all students studying for a recognised hospitality/culinary arts qualification. Open to FE / HE teams consisting of two front of house students, and two culinary art students to set a table for the service of four covers, and to prepare, cook and present a three-course menu (starter, main course and dessert) for a restaurant service. Tea or coffee and a mocktail of your choice must also be served. All dishes to be served in course order. One college or industry mentor is allowed at the pass per college team. A table (600 x 600) and four chairs, as well as a linen covered trestle table will be provided by the organisers, but all other equipment and ingredients must be supplied by the competitors. Customers will be appointed to each college team by the judges. Judges will be looking for effective communication between the team members. The range and depth of skills being used, working methods, personal presentation and attention to customer care.

Colleges & Competitors should note that this competition will take place on Wednesday 25th February evening between 17:00 – 20:30.

Timetable of Classes (on the right)

This is a provisional timetable only, the final timings for each competition will be confirmed once places have been confirmed in all ChefSkills competitions after the **deadline for entries on 30th January 2026**

World Skills & Wild Food Arena



The World Skills Arena will incorporate a programme of cold live competition classes or chefs to showcase some of the essential skills that will form a crucial part of their role as their career progresses. There will be limited places available so early entry is recommended.

Deadline for entries: 30th January 2026

Please visit www.ifexexhibition.co.uk/salon-culinaire where you will find an entry form rules and judging criteria.



OPEN CLASSES *No Age Restriction*

SJCS7a: Larder Knife Skills – Butchery

(20-minute competition)

Competitors must prepare and present a 1.5 kg oven ready chicken as follows:

Classical Escoffier cut – 13 Pieces for Sauté de Volaille – Bone In

1. 4 supreme pieces
2. 2 drumsticks
3. 2 thighs
4. 2 winglets/aileron
5. 3 carcass pieces

SJCS7b: Larder Knife Skills – Fishmongery

(20-minute competition)

Competitors must prepare a 600-700g whole lemon sole as follows:

- ▶ 100g fish cut for goujons
- ▶ 2 Classical folded “Delice de limande”

The only equipment supplied by the IFEX 2026 organisers is hand washing facilities, food waste bin and recycle bin (paper and plastic) and a 1200mm stainless steel work bench. Competitors must remember to bring suitable cutting boards, knives and small utensils. **NO COOKING ON SITE IS ALLOWED IN THIS CATEGORY.**

SJCS7c: Larder Knife Skills – Vegetable Cuts

(40-minute competition)

Competitors must prepare and present:

- ▶ 20g julienne of carrot
- ▶ 20g brunoise of carrot
- ▶ 60g pommes allumette
- ▶ 40g macedoine of turnip
- ▶ 6 turned pommes cocotte

Exact cut sizes are laid down by World Skills International and a skills template will be provided to all entrants.

The only equipment supplied by the IFEX 2026 organisers is hand washing facilities, food waste bin and recycle bin (paper and plastic) and a 1200mm stainless steel work bench. Competitors must remember to bring suitable cutting boards, knives and small utensils. **NO COOKING ON SITE IS ALLOWED IN THIS CATEGORY.**

NEW Restricted Category

RCS1: NI Hospital Caterers Culinary Skills Final – Invitation Only

(30-minute competition)

Competitors must prepare & present four individual compound salads suitable for convalescent patients using these main staples as the base of the salads:

Pre-Cooked / Ready Made

1. Rice
2. Cooked Pasta
3. Quinoa
4. Cous-Cous

The final dishes should be served cold and must contain at least two named pre-cooked or raw vegetables, with a suitable dressing. Any other cooked ingredients may be added in reasonable proportions.

Competitors should bring all ingredients and equipment to complete the tasks.

A brief menu description and recipes for all 4 dishes should be displayed with a full allergen matrix (Food Standards Agency allergen template must be used for each dish).

The only equipment supplied by the IFEX 2026 organisers is hand washing facilities, food waste bin and recycle bin (paper and plastic) and a 1200mm stainless steel work bench. Competitors must remember to bring suitable cutting boards, knives and small utensils. **NO COOKING ON SITE IS ALLOWED IN THIS CATEGORY.**

All World Skills competition timings will be confirmed after the deadline for entries on 30th January 2026, but we plan to run minimum of one heat of each competition (SJCS7a, SJCS7b and SJCS7c) each day of IFEX 2026.

continued...



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Edible Art is a visually stunning array of static exhibits using a wide variety of different mediums, that will showcase the skills and talents of the industry. The inspirational exhibits will create an area that truly is “an edible art gallery”.

Deadline for Edible Art entries: 17th February 2026

Please visit www.ifexexhibition.co.uk/salon-culinaire where you will find an entry form, rules and judging criteria.



EA1: Novelty Cake

An imaginative creation in shape and design, but predominantly a cake in appearance within an area of 18" x 18" (46cm x 46cm).

The decorations must be edible. Dummies will be permitted.

EA2: Floral Sugar Craft

A wired sugar floral spray, bouquet or corsage. Flowers should be presented on a suitable background which may be a stand, plaque or board. Artificial decorations will be permitted. Exhibit must fit within a 14" x 14" (36cm x 36cm) square.

EA3: Decorative Exhibit

A decorative exhibit of the competitor's choice using any of the following mediums: pastillage, marzipan, chocolate or cooked sugar.

EA4: Decorated Celebration Cake – Sugar Paste or Rolled Fondant

A celebration cake of any shape, coated with sugar paste or rolled fondant within a maximum area of display 15" x 15" (38cm x 38cm). Dummies will be permitted. Decorative work of the competitor's choice.

EA5: Decorated Celebration Cake – Royal Icing

A celebration cake of any shape, coated and decorated in royal icing within a maximum area of display 15" x 15" (38cm x 38cm). Dummies will be permitted. Decorative work of the competitor's choice.

EA6: Bridal Bouquet

A bridal bouquet of handmade sugar flowers. The bouquet to be of contemporary design using both flowers and foliage. Artificial decorations may be used but should enhance rather than dominate the design. Bouquet to fit within a total display area of 13" x 13" (32cm x 32cm) square. There is no restriction on height.

EA7: Wedding Cake

A wedding cake of two or more tiers. Decorative work to competitor's choice / theme. Dummy cakes are permitted.

Exhibit must be displayed as if it were an edible cake. Stands and pillars permitted. Maximum base display area 60cm x 60cm. No height restriction.

EA8: Open Food Sculpture

A decorative exhibit using any food medium of the competitor's choice. Minimum base size 40cm x 40cm. Any edible decor may be used to enhance appropriate exhibits. No visible external supports or non-edible decoration permitted.

EA9: Afternoon Tea (Tasted)

Competitors are asked to prepare and present a display for an interpretation of “afternoon tea”. The display must consist of: Three types of mini sandwiches suitable for “afternoon tea” must be presented. One fruit scone and one savoury scone suitable for “afternoon tea” must be presented. Three types of any mini cake, pastries / tartlet or fondant fancies. Judges will be looking for balance and the use of different techniques, use of ingredients and final presentation. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. A finishing area will be provided and all work must be that of the competitor only. A brief restaurant style typed menu must be displayed.

EA10: Open Restaurant Cold Plated Sweet (Not Tasted)

Competitors are asked to prepare and present two different plated sweets of the competitors' choice. One chocolate based and one fruit based sweet must be submitted. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. A finishing area will be provided. A brief restaurant style typed menu must be displayed.



EA11: Finger Food / Small Bites (Tasted)

Competitors are asked to prepare and present six pieces of four types of finger food of the competitors' choice – 24 pieces in total to be presented. Maximum size "two bites". These may be intended hot, served cold (a suitable glaze or gel should be used) and can be savoury or sweet. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. A finishing area will be provided. A brief restaurant style typed menu must be displayed.

EA12: Restaurant Plates (Not Tasted)

Competitors are asked to prepare either Starter and Main or Main and Dessert course plated of competitor's choice. Competitors should consider balance, composition, appropriate cuts and cooking methods when presenting each dish. Plates to be intended hot served cold and a suitable gel should be used to enhance the presentation. Two plates of each course should be presented – i.e. four plates in total. All equipment and ingredients must be provided by the competitor. A finishing area will be provided. A brief restaurant style typed menu with allergens highlighted must be displayed alongside the exhibit.

EA13: Fruit and Vegetables Grand Pieces Display (Invite Only)

To Execute present a show piece combination from Fruit & Vegetables, only one type of fruit & one type of vegetable may be used with a theme "FREE STYLE" based on competitor creativity & suitability of the final piece for display as a buffet exhibit. Table space 90cm x 90cm and no restriction on height.

EA14: Fruit and Vegetables Live Practical Carving (Invite Only)

To Execute a Free Style Fruit Carving within a time limit of 180 minutes (three hour) with a named theme and display. No pre-slicing, peeling, carving or pre-preparation of vegetables with the exception of yam (taro roots) & pumpkin allowed before competition begins. Exhibits will be displayed in the Edible Art area of IFEX upon completion of practical work. Table space 90cm x 90cm and no restriction on height.

OFPI: Food Photography

Sponsored by Andrew Ingredients

Open to ALL – Professional and Amateur Photographers

(e.g. photographers, culinary students, lecturers, trainers, demonstrators, food professionals, bloggers, foodies & social media influencers.)

Interested parties will be invited to submit both individual images, and panels of related images, for judging & assessment by the IFEX26 team of experienced judges.

Marks will be awarded to SUBMITTED images as follows:

SINGLE IMAGE CATEGORY:

Themes for single image submissions are:

A: Desserts/Pastry/Bread

B: Ingredients & Food Commodities

C: Plated Restaurant Dishes

D: People In Food / Culinary-Service in Action

NB: A winner will be announced in the single image category

FOOD PANEL CATEGORY:

A selection of 3 – 5 images can be submitted ONLINE. The photos must be visually linked, tell a story & provided with a completed narrative. IFEX 26 PANEL Themes are as follows:

E: Traditionally Irish

F: Street Food / International Cuisine

NB: A winner will be announced in the food panel category.

Outline Competition Rules:

The overall winner of **IFEX FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY** awards will be chosen from all submissions by the judges and deemed **IFEX FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2026** – the judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Images must be wholly owned by the photographer submitting the image and be the true work of the person submitting the image. Images must not have been previously published by any means or AI generated.

BY SUBMITTING YOUR IMAGE, YOU AGREE THAT THE SUBMISSION IS YOURS AND YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SUBMIT SUCH IMAGE/S AS YOUR OWN WORK.

All images must have a title and the name of the photographer attached to all submitted images.

IFEX 2026 photographs must be saved in the jpg/jpeg format @300dpi, and the size of the files should not be less than 2mb and more than 4mb.

When submitting images to our photography team, entrants retain copyright of each image but you acknowledge and consent to their potential use for sales, promotional, and marketing purposes by **365 Events Ltd** and the **International Food Exhibition IFEX**.

Images should be sent digitally and in the required format to: Sean Owens LRPS **Licentiate of the Royal Society of Photographers** to: owensy@me.com



Together in food



Find out more about
**Northern Ireland's
Food Strategy Framework**

at

Stand L618



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk



nigoodfood.com



Eikon Exhibition Centre, Lisburn
24 – 26 February 2026

www.ifexexhibition.co.uk



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