

Lú Louth

Sraithéis Chultúir agus
Chruthaitheachta 2018–2022

Culture and Creativity
Strategy 2018–2022



Ábhar

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AN CHÉAD EAGRÁN, PROFA AMHÁIN | FIRST EDITION, PROOF VERSION ONLY



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Cathaoirleach's Foreword

AS CATHAOIRLEACH OF County Louth I welcome the development of Louth's Culture and Creativity Strategy 2018–2022. This strategy forms part of the Irish Government's Creative Ireland programme, which seeks to encourage everyone in our society to realise their full creative potential and aims to put culture at the heart of all government policies.

This strategy is Louth's statement of strategic intent in delivering the Creative Ireland vision in our County. It outlines our strategic priorities and core objectives for the development of culture and creativity in County Louth which will be delivered within the five-year period commencing 2018.

Our Cultural and Creative Strategy seeks to embed culture and creativity as an integral part of the daily lives of the people of Louth and specifically in fulfilling Louth County

Council's mandate of Enabling Creativity in Every Community, by delivering a planning framework to enable the development of cultural communities across our County.

Our strategy will be delivered by the County Louth Creative Ireland Culture Team, led by Mr Frank Pentony, Director of Service. It is framed in alignment with the existing strategies for arts, heritage, libraries, etc. in the County, towards the enhancement of cultural development locally, ensuring that artists and communities across the County have the opportunity to realise their creative and cultural potential.

I look forward to seeing the outputs of this strategy reap dividends for all the citizens of County Louth in the coming months and years

Cllr. Liam Reilly
Cathaoirleach Louth County Council



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Chief Executive's Foreword

CREATIVE IRELAND PROGRAMME
Louth is home to a rich cultural and creative sector which includes significant cultural infrastructure, built heritage, internationally-acclaimed galleries and creative spaces, traditional and indigenous craft sector and a range of cultural festivals, events and programmes held in multiple locations across the County. Our cultural heritage incorporates the Irish language and music and a craft and making culture in particular.

For many years Louth has been a leader in the area of cultural and creative development. It was one of the first counties in Ireland to appoint an Arts Officer to its Local Authority. It developed a significant and recognisable cultural brand – Create Louth, and assisted the development and delivery of the Creative Spark initiative at a time when the value of the creative industries was not wholly appreciated in Ireland.

Louth County Council recognises the value of culture and creativity as important element of sustainable local communities, with the well-being of its citizens of primary concern. This has been evidenced by the enhancement of cultural spaces including; An Táin Arts Centre, Droichead Arts Centre, Highlanes Gallery and the Louth County Museum amongst others; and through significant investment in cultural heritage infrastructure underpinned by the existing arts, heritage and libraries strategies for County Louth.

The Creative Ireland Programme is built around themes of identity, culture and citizenship with core operating principles of Collaboration, Communication, Community,

Empowerment and Global Reputation. This programme provides an opportunity for Louth County Council to look closely at how it will plan for continued engagement, participation and access to culture and creativity. Local authorities have a crucial role in the overall delivery of the Creative Ireland programme locally and are mandated to deliver Pillar 2 of the programme – **Enabling Creativity in Every Community.**

The Louth Creative Ireland Culture Team has carried out a process of engagement, exploration, consultation and analysis with key stakeholders and the wider community to arrive at the strategic priorities for cultural development as outlined in this document. This process included public consultation meetings held during May 2017, an online survey and stakeholder interviews held during the first quarter of 2018 and continued work by the County Louth Culture Team in aligning the findings into this document. The Culture Team will implement a series of annual delivery plans over for five years up to 2022 to fulfil the objectives of this strategy.

Louth's Cultural and Creativity Strategy will enrich the cultural planning process and programme development framework for the County in line with the Creative Ireland programme vision and I look forward to experiencing and enjoying enhanced creative output and cultural expression of our citizens in the years to come.

Ms Joan Martin
Chief Executive County Louth Council

3 Culture and Creativity in County Louth

IRELAND HAS LONG been recognised as a nation to which creativity and cultural achievement come easily and naturally. Words are our currency, story-telling is in our blood, making in our hands and music and dance central to our well-being and identity. The word 'Ildánach' forms part of County Louth's motto – with the meaning of 'being versed in all the arts, multi-talented, versatile and accomplished' and so the Creative Ireland programme and what it represents is central to our work in continuing to develop Louth as a place of cultural and creative significance.

AFTERMATH Project

After peace agreements have been signed and the military / paramilitary apparatus of hostilities removed often little visible remains in societies as evidence of the conflict that recently took place. But for many who lived through that experience, or had to flee from it, the scars they carry are all too real and ever-present. Regardless of what side they took in the conflict, or none, they now must make sense out of what happened and where they go from here.

The AFTERMATH Project is a project which aimed to heal through remembering. It used discussion and creative, artistic approaches to story-telling and life stories to highlight the issues and needs of the participants drawn from target groups. An inclusive process of working with participants to highlight their issues and needs and to offer support and advice where possible made this project a resounding success in the lives of those living close to the border region on both sides of the divide.

The makeup of our local authority Culture Team represents the depth of cultural and creative practice and provision across the County and a shared understanding across functional areas of the value and potential of enhancing this lattice of creative pathways.

We are a unique place of rivers, drumlins, mountains and coastline encircling both a rich agricultural land, architectural and monastic heritage and two of Ireland's largest towns. Louth connects Ulster and Leinster in the region of Oriel, formerly the most important centre for the creation of poetry and literature on the island of Ireland. The history of the region is etched on its landscape, With many heritage properties peppering our fields and townlands and much of Ireland's national epic 'An Táin Bó Cuailgne' easily read across our region. Our native language also retained an unbroken line here until 1969, with the area around Omeath being the last Irish-speaking area in Leinster.

Heritage gives us a sense of who we are, where we come from, where we belong. Heritage enhances pride of place and makes our location a place in which to invest, live and visit. The County has an internationally important, and protected, coastline with associated wildlife, landscapes, geology and archaeology. A rich and productive farmland has made Louth a centre of brewing, distilling and baking for centuries. Towns sprang up at Louth's natural harbours and these developed into important ports for export and import. Railway lines developed to link counties Armagh, Cavan, Meath and Monaghan to Louth's ports. Dundalk's Great Northern Works were long a national centre of railway engineering with Ireland's most impressive railway engineering feat being the magnificent Boyne Viaduct in Drogheda. The cultural significance of Louth's built and natural heritage is important from a tourism and economic point of view; however its real value lies in the way in which this heritage is utilised, understood, appreciated and engaged with by those who live in the County. This heritage connects people and place, as an integral part of our cultural identity creating a pathway from the past, through the present to the future.



CreateLouth, the Arts Service of Louth County Council, supports local arts development with a dedicated Arts Officer serving the County. CreateLouth connects and supports artistic planning, practice, performance and potential and it provides a range of funding opportunities to enhance capacity in the arts and cultural sector and in the promotion of public art commissions. CreateLouth is a founder-partner, along with Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, of Music Generation Louth, and core-funds a wide range of innovative arts organisations within the county, such as Louth Contemporary Music Society and Drogheda Classical Music. Supporting artists is a core element of the work of CreateLouth.

Frances Lambe – Ceramicist

Artist Frances Lambe was born in 1961. A native of Dundalk she studied Education at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. She taught art at second level for several years. In 1996 she became a founder member of Bridge Street Studios in Dundalk and began making sculptural ceramics. She currently works in a studio at her home in County Louth, Ireland.

Her work has been exhibited at national and international exhibitions. Recent exhibitions include *In Residence II*, London, *Artgeneve*, Switzerland, *Artmontecarlo*, Monaco, *Shadow of Sodeisha*, National Museum Collins Barracks Dublin, *Touchstone*, Farmleigh Gallery Dublin & National Design & Craft Gallery, Kilkenny.

Frances creates sculptural work that is rooted in the natural world and of the place where she lives on the east coast of County Louth. Her work explores landscape forms as well as growth patterns found in plants and animals. Her interest in the sea underscores her work. The coast where sea and land meet is a place of constant change and a feature of her local landscape.

Our County's two main towns, Drogheda and Dundalk are home to a wide range of high quality cultural infrastructure including; the Droichead and An Táin Arts Centres, Highlanes Gallery, Millmount Museum and Creative Quarter, County Museum Dundalk, Creative Spark, Oriel Centre, Carlingford Heritage Centre, Louth County Archives Service, Bridge Street Artists' Studios, Dundalk Institute of Technology and the Library Service, all of which celebrate and promote the rich cultural identity of the region through festivals, events and programmes – engaging artists and communities across the County. The County's three Brass bands, one Concert Band, three youth theatres, three branches of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, as well as Scoraíocht Lann Léire, numerous amateur drama groups, musical societies, pantomime societies, and art groups, all contribute to ensuring that the arts in Louth are more of a publically-owned utility than a private enterprise.

Significant in this regard is the Droichead Youth Theatre which was established in 1991 and has played a significant role in the cultural life of Drogheda and the wider North East region over the course of its 27 years. Founded by Declan Mallon and Aileen Hanratty, and supported and hosted from its inception by Droichead Arts Centre, the youth theatre has been committed at all times to providing an open, all-comers platform for creativity, learning and social development for young people between the ages of 12 and 18. It not only stimulates an early love and appreciation of the arts but also encourages mutual respect, intellectual questioning and active citizenship. It is a foundation training pitch for potential future artists, a living, proven platform for innovative arts and creativity as a staple in the lives of young people in Drogheda and across County Louth.

From its early days, the group has been an active member of the National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD) / now Youth Theatre Ireland and has contributed to national policy studies as well as hosting regional and cross-border youth theatre network events and residential programmes.

Louth hosts no fewer than thirteen arts festivals and series of significance annually including multi-disciplinary arts festivals, single genre music festivals, youth festivals and the national Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann which will be hosted in the County in 2018 and 2019. Such festivals include the Drogheda Arts Festival, An Chúirt Chruitireachta – the Drogheda Classical Music Series, International Festival of Irish Harp and the Louth County Fleadh, alongside smaller scale events and celebrations in towns and villages across the County. These cultural gatherings connect people drawing on their collective imagination and creativity.

Drogheda Arts Festival

For well over a decade, Drogheda Arts Festival has presented an eclectic mix of creativity for all ages across all art forms. During the Festival Drogheda's historic urban landscape comes alive with the best of music, spoken word, visual arts, theatre, performance and play. Programmed and produced by volunteers, made up of venues, arts organisations and practitioners the festival collaborates, commissions and celebrates the arts community County Louth and beyond into the wider north east region.

Artists are central to the festival's development and in 2018 a new Drogheda Arts Festival commission for artists working and living in the region was introduced, with Louth-based Quintessence Theatre, scooping the inaugural award.

Drogheda Arts Festival is an opportunity to explore the joy of the extraordinary in the ordinary; from street corners to street lights, from laneways to hilltops, across the rich cultural heritage of Drogheda town and its environs.

The County's Library Service develops and delivers programmes which assist the development of creative communities in line with the objectives of the national Public Libraries Strategy¹. These programmes underpin the continued development of the public library system over the next five years and position the public library at the centre of the community to meet the information, learning and cultural needs of individuals and communities alike. The County library service in Louth delivers a series of events and programmes which support these needs on a regular basis across the County's library network.

Louth County Archives collects, preserves and makes available the public and private archives that document the life, history and development of the County. It contains a wealth of information about Louth's places, people, buildings and events and is an important cultural asset contributing to the County's creativity, economy, heritage and tourism and. We possess a 'high-quality' collection of core public archives with the urban archives of Drogheda being 'one of the largest and best collections seen' and those of Ardee being 'one of the oldest in the country'². Louth is home to a developing creative community and an emerging ecosystem supporting creative entrepreneurs and practitioners. Particularly evident is the growth and development in recent years of an innovative creative media, music and film culture, nurtured and supported by local authority, educational and private industry partners.

¹ The Government's new Public Library Strategy 2018 – 2022 is intended to be published Spring 2018

² Report of the Steering Group on Local Authority Records and Archives, Department of the Environment, 1996, appendix



Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is our third level partner with a complement of 5,300 students and 500 staff drawn from the County, its hinterland and beyond. Its role includes maximizing the impact that the Institute can have on the economic, social and cultural life of the people living in its catchment. Its dedicated Department of Creative Arts and Media and Music fosters and develops creative practitioners and entrepreneurs. The Department hosts an extensive annual programme of public events which incorporate links to the Oriel region in which it is located. Its Creative Arts Research Centre supports a number of research initiatives and has delivered a wide range of internationally-recognised creative outputs to date.

Louth's past influences all its artforms and our traditional culture is deep-rooted in the County ranging from indigenous crafts, language, oral traditions and the celebration of the Irish Harp, our national instrument. In the south of the County an important song tradition, which has been handed down through local families, has been collected and celebrated by musicians and academics. Drogheda is home to this tradition, with many young people now singing the songs of the Usher and Carolan families.

Culture and creativity form pathways to participation in civic dialogue, to developing artists and creative practitioners and to building strong and engaged communities in the County. These pathways offer opportunities to embrace the cultural identities of our new communities as an integrated part of our contemporary cultural development and as bedrock for the development and sustainability of a healthy society.

Hear Our Voices: Change the Record, Change the World
Adults with intellectual disability often find themselves excluded from higher education opportunities, spaces and settings. They are disempowered and prevented from experiencing the transformative powers of continuing education that can help them transform the society in which they live.

The Hear our Voices project facilitated collaboration between DkIT music students and a local resource centre for adults with intellectual disabilities. The project was developed from specific ideas articulated by the participants. The participants worked with artist-facilitators to realise their dreams of writing and performing songs that told stories of their experiences. The project culminated in a concert of songs written by the participants and performed by DkIT music students.

The project has raised awareness of the need for inclusivity in education and the requirement to find spaces, in which people can connect, communicate and cooperate to begin to address societal challenges. The concert shone a light on local issues, generating awareness amongst the wider community of the power of culture in engaging communities and making a difference in our society.

4 The Creative Ireland Vision for Louth

THE CREATIVE IRELAND Programme is the Government's Legacy Programme for Ireland 2016—a five-year initiative which places creativity at the centre of public policy. It is a culture-based programme designed to promote individual, community and national wellbeing. Its vision is:

"That every person living in Ireland will have the opportunity to fully realise his or her creative potential' "

The programme is the main implementation vehicle for the priorities identified in the Government's policy document, Culture 2025—Éire Ildánach which states that arts and culture are intrinsic to the Irish State, acknowledges the need to increase access to, and participation in the arts, boost our creative industries, and preserve our heritage with a particular focus on language, landscape and the environment.

The Creative Ireland Programme is built around themes of identity, culture and citizenship with core operating principles of Collaboration, Communication, Community, Empowerment and Global Reputation. This Strategy sets out the plan for Louth in this national initiative. It outlines our priorities for cultural and creative development, resonates with the core values of the Creative Ireland Programme nationally with a focus on delivering Louth's vision as:

"A place where culture is embedded in how we live, work, play and think; where culture is planned and provided for; where creative careers are nurtured and flourish; where the value of culture is understood and appreciated and where each citizen has the opportunity to fulfil their creative and cultural potential."

Since Creative Ireland's inception in 2017 Louth's Culture Team has developed new working practices which deliver an integrated approach to cultural development in the County. Working in concert they have developed collaborative programmes between functional areas in Louth County Council and county-based cultural organisations and education partners, which maximise opportunities for shared resourcing, marketing and communications across culture and the creative industries. The team played a key role in the development of this strategy, informing the public consultation process, working with local communities and artistic / creative voices to hear their views on how the local authority can enable creativity locally and coming together to identify the strategic priorities outlined in this document and the mechanisms for their successful delivery over time.

This plan is the culmination of their work and has at its heart a response to what the people of Louth want for their cultural development. They will continue to deepen this working relationship over the duration of the programme, ensuring a coherent approach to cultural support, development and programming, which reflects the objectives of relevant existing plans and strategies for the County, the needs of the people of County Louth and the Creative Ireland vision.



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Creative Ireland Culture
Team County Louth

THE CULTURE TEAM in County Louth team represents the wide and varying fields of arts, culture, libraries, education, museum, archives, and heritage and conservation services in the county. From the outset County Louth considered carefully the composition of their Culture Team and made the decision to work beyond the confines of those individuals within the Local Authority who have culture as an integral part of their brief, and sought to develop a more holistic approach to cultural development by incorporating expertise from within and outside the County Council structure from cultural and creative players across the county. The management of the Culture Team however remains within the County Council and is led at Director of Service level by Mr Frank Pentony. The Creative Ireland Culture team County Louth is tasked with outlining a unified approach to cultural development through the implementation of this strategy over the next five years. The County Louth Culture Team comprises:

FRANK PENTONY (CHAIR)
Director of Services

Frank Pentony is Director of Service for Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development in Louth County Council. As part of this portfolio he is charged with the development of culture in the County and in this role is Chair of the County Louth Culture team. Frank is committed to the development of culture as a broad church within the County Council, encouraging a partnership approach to sustainable culture-led planning—where infrastructure meets community—towards the delivery of the Creative Ireland programme for County Louth.

ADÈLE COMMINS

Head of Department of Creative Arts, Media and Music, Dundalk Institute of Technology

The Department of Creative Arts, Media and Music in DkIT is home to an exciting and innovative range of programmes and events. It is the creative hub of the Institute and has an important role to play in fulfilling DkIT's strategic objectives in the areas of outreach, engagement and research, while simultaneously celebrating the rich cultural heritage and talent of the region in which it is located. Adèle is a graduate of NUI Maynooth with a PhD in musicology; her role is in nurturing the development of the Department over time.

SARAH DALY

Executive Director, Creative Spark

Creative Spark is a centre for creativity and innovation, based in Dundalk. Established almost six years ago the hub is the first of its kind in the north east region. Sarah oversees the management and development of the space which to date has supported the creation of 87 new jobs, with 58 people employed in 32 businesses. Sarah has a background in Fine and Applied Arts and is experienced in business development for SMEs, particularly in the creative sectors. She has a specific interest in community development and engagement through creative practice.

ANGELA DULLAGHAN

Architectural Conservation Officer, Louth County Council

Angela in her role as Architectural Conservation Officer protects the architectural heritage of Louth through the identification of Protected Structures, the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs), the safeguarding of designed landscapes and historic gardens, and the recognition of structures and elements that contribute positively to the vernacular and industrial heritage of the County.

COLETTE FARRELL

Director, Droichead Arts Centre

Droichead Arts Centre presents, nurtures and promotes the arts within Drogheda and its surrounding area. The Centre provides a curated professional arts programme in a broad range of contexts including children and young people and is made up of two buildings, one of which houses an intimate 169 seater theatre, and a large white box gallery space. Collette's previous work includes; the Education Department in the Abbey Theatre; teacher in the Gaiety School of Acting, and General Manager and Programme Manager of the City Arts Centre, Dublin. For 14 years, she was Producer with Calipo Theatre & Picture Co. Drogheda. She is currently co-chair of Drogheda Arts Festival.

BRIAN HARTEN

County Arts Officer, Louth County Council

CreateLouth, the Arts Service of Louth County Council, works with artists, communities, organisations and funders to make engagement with the arts a realistic, valuable, and rewarding experience for all citizens in our county. Brian is also a member of the Board of Directors of Youth Theatre Ireland, An Táin Arts Centre, Highlanes Gallery, and Creative Spark. He is a member

of the Governing Body of Dundalk Institute of Technology, Chair of their Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, and a Board member of Music Generation Louth.

PAUL HAYES

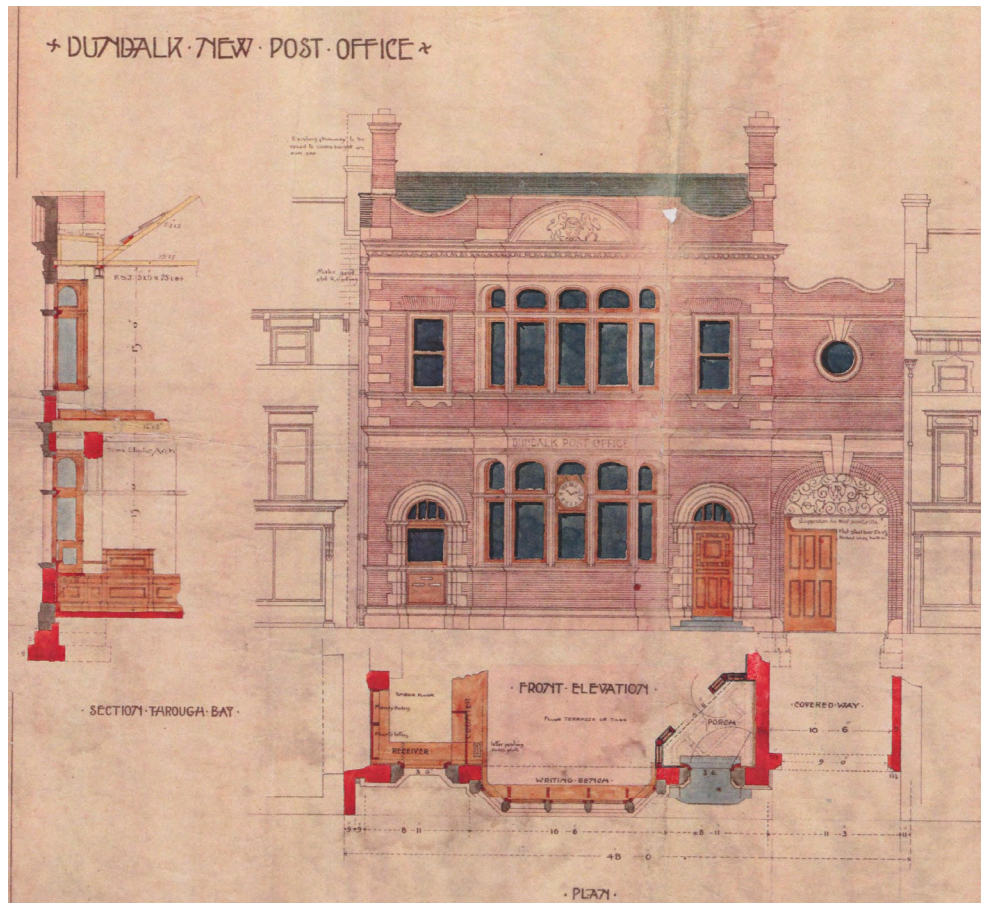
Director, An Táin Arts Centre

Paul has been the Director at An Táin Arts Centre, an independent arts space in Dundalk, since its foundation in 2014. Supported by Louth County Council, An Táin Arts Centre houses a 350 seat main theatre, a 55 seat studio theatre, a visual arts gallery and two workshop spaces. The programme is a diverse collection of local arts, national tours, workshops, exhibitions and in-house productions.

LORRAINE MCCANN

County Archivist

As County Archivist Lorraine manages, preserves and makes accessible to the public, archives of public and private origin relating to the history of County Louth in addition to providing records management services to Louth County Council. Lorraine emphasises the importance of the County Archives to the community both as a repository for historical documents and as a resource for research. Lorraine is a member of the Archives and Records Association UK & Ireland and of the Local Authority Archivists' Group.



BRENDAN MCSHERRY
County Heritage Officer

The Heritage Office of Louth County Council works to raise awareness of, and pride in Louth's heritage. Its aim is to gain the heritage dividend for Louth by using our heritage to improve our quality of life and to contribute to the county's economic development. Brendan works to ensure that the heritage of the county is made accessible to a wide audience across the county through the delivery of events and programmes both independently and in conjunction with other relevant agency partners.

YVONNE O'BRIEN
County Librarian

A recent addition to Louth County Council's library team, Yvonne is responsible for the leadership, strategic planning, management and development of the library services for the county, including five branch libraries, a mobile and school library service. Her ambition is to raise awareness of libraries as valuable and fluid spaces which assist the development of local communities through services and supports for literacy and reader development, health and wellbeing, business, enterprise and employment and cultural awareness.

AOIFE RUANE
Director, Highlanes Gallery

Aoife Ruane is the Director of Highlanes Gallery, A Municipal Art Gallery for Drogheda and the North East. The Gallery is of an international standard in terms of design, management, environmental control and security. Aoife is a member of the Governing Body of the Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire (IADT), Chairperson of Drogheda Arts Festival, a member of the Board of Directors of the Irish Museums Association, and serves on the Council of Drogheda & District Chamber of Commerce.

BRIAN WALSH
Curator, County Museum, Dundalk

The County Museum, Dundalk is a multi-award winning designated museum which has realised many national and international achievements in a diversity of fields over the past decade. Located in a beautifully restored late 18th century warehouse in the Carroll Centre, Jocelyn Street the Museum offers an extensive programme of permanent and temporary exhibitions, drama presentations, music recitals, lectures and film. It chronicles the historical development of County Louth from the Stone Age up to the present day, presenting this story through a combination interactive exhibits and artefacts. As Curator, Brian seeks to develop awareness of the Museum and its relevance to local and national history to audiences across the county, via a series of events, tours and talks.

6

The Creative Ireland
Values in Louth

THE CREATIVE IRELAND programme for Louth focuses on the theme of **IDENTITY**—of people, place and potential. Louth's Cultural and Creative Strategy reflects the views of the Culture Team, key stakeholders and the wider public in delivering what is required for a cultural and creative ecosystem to flourish. It has as a core premise that culture is for all and that successful cultural development puts the people at the heart of the process. It has at its core the intrinsic value of culture to progressive societies and the right of all citizens to participate in cultural activity, recognising that cultural participation has meaning and relevance at all stages of life. To this end it has adopted a 'cradle-to-grave' approach to cultural development in the County.

The Creative Ireland programme principles of Collaboration, Communication, Community, Participation, Inclusivity and Empowerment form the foundation for this strategy document with the following paragraphs outlining how these principles are reflected in our strategy:

Collaboration

We will develop a framework for shared learning, increased partnership and collaboration between agency partners and cultural organisations, with a focus to develop a sustainable cultural and creative ecosystem across the County and includes the voices of our creative practitioners, artists and citizens alike.

Communication

We are committed to developing awareness of and communicating the value of the Creative Ireland programme across the County, through the development and delivery of a comprehensive communications model for Creative Ireland which incorporates and

builds on the existing CreateLouth brand. This model will deliver a cohesive mechanism for programme development, delivery, engagement and participation over the five years of the strategy.

Community

The County Louth Culture Team is committed to developing culturally engaged communities and cultural practitioners; where development of their local cultural agenda is supported through a local Creative Ireland programme call—related to local need. Our strategy is inclusive in that it delivers for all communities across the socio-economic spectrum within our call, including artistic, creative and cultural practitioners, cultural managers, creative entrepreneurs, migrant and ethnic communities and cultural audiences of all ages.

We have focussed our strategic agenda on enabling communities to come together to amplify their cultural capacity, by developing a Creative Communities funding call for locally developed and produced cultural programmes which develop an awareness of the value of cultural participation as an integral part of the lives of the people of Louth.

Participation

A key output of the success of our Creative Ireland programme locally will be evidence of increased cultural participation at both community and County level. All supported programmes will have a cultural participation element and 'Highlight' programmes will incorporate participative elements in their delivery which seek to engage specific communities e.g. children, young people, artists, new communities, creative industries entrepreneurs etc.

Inclusivity

Inclusivity forms a core element of local programme development in Louth. The Local Community Development Committee and Public Participation Network frameworks, the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and Louth Leader Partnership work in tandem to ensure that inclusivity is given expression in all relevant supports and programmes. The development of collaborative working relationship with these agency partners will ensure that inclusion remains central to the Creative Ireland programme agenda in the County.

Empowerment

We, Louth's Culture Team is seeking, through this strategy, to empower local communities, artists and creative practitioners to enhance their way of life through cultural expression, to build strong connected and engaged communities. The 'Cultural Communities' programme enables the agenda for culture to be set locally, reflecting local needs in the context of the wider development of culture and creativity in the County.



7 Strategic Priorities for Louth

LOUTH'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES have been developed from the outputs of the consultation and engagement process combined with strategic prioritisation sessions held with the County Louth Creative Ireland Culture Team. The four priority areas which underpin our Creative and Cultural Strategy are outlined below alongside the relevant pillars of the programme which each priority area addresses.

Priority 1: Building an ecosystem for sustainable creative and cultural planning and development in County Louth

- Enabling Creativity in Every Community
- Enabling the Creative Potential of Every Child
- Investing in our Creative and Cultural Infrastructure

Priority 2: Provision of a Creative Ireland Cultural Communities Fund

- Enabling Creativity in Every Community
- Enabling the Creative Potential of Every Child

Priority 3: Delivery of a Creative Ireland Excellence Programme

- Investing in our Creative and Cultural Infrastructure
- Ireland as a Centre of Excellence in Media Production
- Unifying our Global Reputation

Priority 4: Planning for and Communicating our Creative and Cultural Capital

- Investing in our Creative and Cultural Infrastructure

Priority 1: Building an Ecosystem for Sustainable Creative and Cultural Planning and Development in County Louth

Overview

This objective seeks to develop an ownership of culture in County Louth, an agreed framework for resourcing, delivery and evaluation of the Creative Ireland programme over the five years of the strategy and for continued connectivity and shared opportunities for cultural and creative development.

Actions

1. Embed culture as a named portfolio within the Director of Services role in Louth County Council to ensure culture is at the heart of planning in Louth.
2. Develop a memorandum of understanding for members of the Culture Team to ensure clarity of programme delivery arrangements, quarterly meetings and rollover of project coordination.
3. Design an annual, facilitated, professional development exploration and planning session for the County Louth Culture Team to ensure continued focus on realising the County's vision for the Creative Ireland programme.
4. Maximise opportunities for collaborative working across functional departments of Louth County Council and with Culture Team agency and institutional partners to enhance the delivery of the Creative Ireland programme.
5. Identify opportunities for shared use of spaces locally for cultural engagement and activities.

6. Design opportunities to increase public visibility and understanding of the individual functional areas charged with cultural development within the Local Authority and beyond.
7. Employ a part-time administration resource to deliver on the Creative Ireland programme delivery elements.
8. Develop a cohesive partnership between Louth County Council and DKIT to leverage the institution's role in contributing to the social and cultural life of the region.
9. Promote opportunities for enhanced outreach engagement and cultural participation for young audiences and connected to key programme initiatives.
10. Promote opportunities for schools for increased engagement with local cultural heritage and access to the built heritage of the County.
11. Encourage and inform of opportunities for progression to third-level studies in areas related to the Creative Ireland programme.
12. Advocate for continued investment in Louth's creative industries sector, including the development potential to support innovation and entrepreneurship in creative careers, combined with the support of artists.
13. Advocate for incentivisation of private rental market for the delivery of affordable and sustainable live / work artist's studios in urban settings.

Priority 2: Provision of a Creative Ireland Cultural Communities Fund

Overview

This priority focuses on enhancing cultural provision in local communities relevant to local need. This programme fund will enable communities to develop their own cultural capital, to plan, programme, produce and manage cultural and creative activity in their own communities across the County.

It is intended to develop local interest in cultural engagement and participation and reflect different identities, heritage and culture across the County. It seeks to make culture and creativity an integral part of everyday life, to build new local audiences for culture which in turn will connect to the wider cultural ecosystem in County Louth.

Actions

1. Develop and manage an annual Creative Ireland Cultural Communities Fund to support the development of cultural events and activities in local communities across the county.
2. Develop an Open Call to communities across County Louth to access funding call
 - 2.1 Deliver local workshops to assist uptake and understanding of the application process.
3. Develop a Cultural Communities Toolkit to assist local, sustainable cultural and creative development and assist understanding for ways in which communities can work with local artists and creative practitioners in the development and delivery of their chosen projects

4. Work with DkIT to identify ways in which students and staff in relevant creative disciplines might support the development of cultural programming and provision in local communities.

Priority 3: Delivery of a Creative Ireland Excellence Programme

Overview

The Creative Ireland Culture Team will agree annually to develop and present a series of high-quality cultural and creative events and programmes which link thematically to the Creative Ireland vision for County Louth and the Creative Ireland programme objectives. These programmes will build from the outputs of the consultation process and be set in context with local cultural plans for the arts, heritage, libraries, museums, and archives and will be developed in collaboration with key with cultural, creative industries, education and enterprise partners. This suite of events will underpin champion cultural and creative excellence in the County.

Actions

1. Work with partners in DkIT to carry out baseline research into mapping of extant creative and cultural industries, cultural and built heritage assets in County Louth.
2. Build on existing Creative Ireland Programme delivery elements (events and programmes held during 2017) which enhance implementation of this strategy.

3. Further develop opportunities between agency partners for creative career development programmes which support creative media and film production in particular.

4. Leverage existing national and international networks of artists and creative and cultural professionals towards the delivery of core programme areas which are based on best practice international models of cultural planning and provision.

5. Develop a series of cultural conversations positioning the relevance of understanding and appreciating distinct cultural identities within the County and the cultural impact on communities in County Louth.

6. Continue to develop children and youth cultural activities to include the voice of young people in engagement events which will give them the opportunity to develop/have a conversation about the cultural landscape they need to fulfil their creative potential.

7. Develop a heritage programme which references the rich cultural traditions of the County including its archival and collections tradition, set against the backdrop of Louth's built heritage and natural landscape.

8. Work with DkIT and industry players to leverage opportunities for engagement with international partners through the EU and Border programmes which promote culture-led development.

Priority 4: Communicating Our Creative and Cultural Capital

Overview

Develop a communications model which builds awareness of the Creative Ireland programme across the County and amplifies what is happening locally across all elements of culture, including the ways in which individual artists, creative practitioners and communities alike can interact with the programme to achieve their creative potential

Actions

1. Review and build on the brand proposition of CreateLouth and its online platform to incorporate the Creative Ireland programme for the County.
2. Develop a communications framework which promotes both Creative Ireland programmes and all cultural and creative programmes and services across the County; creating a single point of contact for all Louth Creative Ireland programmes.

3. Further develop internal communications between members of the Culture Team to ensure timely visibility of opportunities for collaboration and project development.

4. Provide a marketing and communications budget for Creative Ireland programme administration to ensure visibility and coordinated marketing and branding of Creative Ireland supported events and programmes.

3. Provide clear branding guidelines for projects funded as part of the Creative Ireland initiative.

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Implementation

Tosaíochtaí Priorities	Eilimintí agus Gníomhaíochtaí Cláir Programme Actions	Freagracht Responsibility	Bliain an tsoláthair Year of delivery				
			2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Priority 1	Building an ecosystem for sustainable creative and cultural planning and development in County Louth						
1.1	Embed culture as a named portfolio within the Director of Services role in Louth County Council, to ensure culture is at the heart of planning in the county	Culture Team Chair	Q2				
1.2	Develop a memorandum of understanding for members of the Culture Team to ensure clarity of programme delivery arrangements, quarterly meetings and rollover of project coordination	Culture Team & Coordinator	Q2				
1.3	Design an annual, facilitated, professional development exploration and planning session for the County Louth Culture Team to ensure continued focus on realising the County's vision for the Creative Ireland Programme	Culture Team & External Cultural Specialist	Q2				
1.4	Maximise opportunities for collaborative working across functional departments of Louth County Council and with Culture Team agency and institutional partners to enhance the delivery of the Creative Ireland Programme	Culture Team	Q3 and ongoing				
1.5	Identify opportunities for shared use of spaces locally for cultural engagement and activities – e.g. Arts infrastructure, libraries, built heritage, County/museum, Protected Structures, DkIT spaces and Creative Spark	Culture Team	Q3 and ongoing				
1.6	Design opportunities to increase public visibility and understanding of the individual functional areas charged with cultural development within the Local Authority and beyond	Culture Team	Q3 and ongoing				
1.7	Employ a part-time administration resource to deliver on the Creative Ireland Programme delivery elements	Culture Team	Q2/Q3 and ongoing				
1.8	Develop a cohesive partnership between Louth County Council and DkIT to leverage the institution's role in contributing to the social and cultural life of the region	Culture Team and DkIT		Q1			
1.9	Promote opportunities for enhanced outreach engagement and cultural participation for young audiences and connected to key programme initiative	Relevant Culture Team Members	Immediate and ongoing				
1.10	Promote opportunities for schools for increased engagement with local cultural heritage and access to the built heritage of the County	Relevant Culture Team Members	Immediate and ongoing				
1.11	Encourage and inform of opportunities for progression to third-level studies in areas related to the Creative Ireland Programme	Culture Team and DkIT		Q1			
1.12	Advocate for continued investment in Louth's creative industries sector, including the development potential to support innovation and entrepreneurship in creative careers, combined with the support of artists	Culture Team	Immediate and ongoing				
1.13	Advocate for incentivisation of private rental market for the delivery of affordable and sustainable live /work artist's studios in urban settings	Culture Team and Chair	Immediate and ongoing				

Tosaíochtaí Priorities	Eilimintí agus Gníomhaíochtaí Cláir Programme Actions	Freagracht Responsibility	Bliain an tSoláthair Year of delivery				
			2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Priority 2	Provision of a Creative Ireland Cultural Communities Fund						
2.1	Develop and manage an annual Creative Ireland Cultural Communities Fund to support the development of cultural events and activities in local communities across the county	Culture Team Admin and External Cultural Resource	Q2	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1
2.2	Develop an Open Call to communities across County Louth to access funding call	Culture Team Admin and External Cultural Resource	Q3	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1
2.2.1	Deliver local workshops to assist uptake and understanding of the application process	External Resource	Q3	Q1			
2.3	Develop an Cultural Communities Toolkit to assist local, sustainable cultural and creative development and assist understanding for ways in which communities can work with local artists and creative practitioners in the development and delivery of their chosen projects	Culture Team via External Cultural Resource	Q3/Q4				
2.4	Work with Dk1T to identify ways in which students and staff in relevant creative disciplines might support the development of cultural programming and provision in local communities	Relevant Culture Team Members		Q1 and ongoing			

Tosaíochtaí Priorities	Eilimintí agus Gníomhaíochtaí Cláir Programme Actions	Freagracht Responsibility	Bliain an tSoláthair Year of delivery				
			2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Priority 3	Delivery of a Creative Ireland Excellence Programme						
3.1	Work with education partners DkIT to carry out baselines research into mapping of extant creative and cultural industries, cultural and built heritage assets in County Louth	Culture Team & DkIT	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3	Q3
3.2	Build on existing Creative Ireland Programme delivery elements (events and programmes held during 2017) which enhance implementation of this strategy	Culture Team & Coordinator					
3.3	Further develop opportunities between agency partners for creative career development programmes which support creative media and film production in particular	Culture Team & Coordinator		Q1 and ongoing			
3.4	Leverage existing national and international networks of artists and creative and cultural professionals towards the delivery of core programme areas which are based on best practice international models of cultural planning and provision	Culture Team & External Cultural Specialist		Q1 and ongoing			
3.5	Develop a series of cultural conversations positioning the relevance of understanding and appreciating distinct cultural identities within the County and the cultural impact on communities in County Louth in the context of a looming BREXIT	Culture Team Chair	Q4	Q2			
3.6	Continue to develop children and youth cultural activities to include the voice of young people in engagement events which will give them the opportunity to develop/ have a conversation about the cultural landscape they need to fulfil their creative potential	Culture Team & Coordinator		Q4 and ongoing			
3.7	Develop a heritage programme which references the rich cultural traditions of the County including its archival and collections tradition, set against the backdrop of Louth's built heritage and natural landscapes	Culture Team & Coordinator		Q3 and ongoing			
3.8	Work with DkIT and industry players to leverage opportunities for engagement with international partners through the EU and Border programmes which promote culture-led development	Culture Team		Q2			

Tosaíochtaí Priorities	Eilimintí agus Gníomhaíochtaí Cláir Programme Actions	Freagracht Responsibility	Bliain an tSoláthair Year of delivery				
			2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Priority 4	Communicating our Creative and Cultural Capital						
4.1	Review and build on the brand proposition of CreateLouth and its online platform to incorporate the Creative Ireland Programme for the County	Culture Team Programme Resource	Q3/Q4	Q1			
4.2	Develop a communications framework which promotes both Creative Ireland Programmes and all cultural and creative programmes and services across the County; creating a single point of contact for all Louth Creative	Culture Team Programme Resource	Q3/Q4				
4.3	Further develop internal communications between members of the Culture Team to ensure timely visibility of opportunities for collaboration and project development	Culture Team	Q2 and ongoing				
4.4	Provide a marketing and communications budget for Creative Ireland Programme administration to ensure visibility and coordinated marketing and branding of Creative Ireland supported events and programmes	Culture Team & Create Louth	Q1 and ongoing	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual
4.5	Provide clear branding guidelines for projects funded as part of the Creative Ireland initiative	Culture Team & Create Louth	Q1 and ongoing				

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Key Indicators
for Success

MEASURES FOR SUCCESS of the strategy will be framed from the baseline research study which will be carried out during 2018. This study will provide an analysis of extant cultural and creative industries practice, provision, supports and services, to include access and engagement in cultural and creative activity and careers across the County in both urban and rural areas. It is anticipated that this mapping process will be repeated at the conclusion of the five year Cultural and Creative Strategy implementation process.

Success of the Creative Ireland programme will be measured through the indicative list of measurements below:

-
- Delivery on the strategic priorities included in the Creative Ireland Implementation Plan
- Increased audience attendance at cultural events
- Sustained budgets for planned culture and creative development
- Increased access to publicly owned cultural and heritage infrastructure
- Increased collaborative working between functional areas of the Local Authority and industry and educational partners
- Uptake of local groups, artists and creative practitioners in accessing the Cultural Communities Fund
- Increased / sustained budgets for Built Heritage
- Increased programmes and activity for culture and creativity developed locally
- Increased participation in cultural activity locally
- Geographical spread of cultural activity across the County



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Conclusion

OUR CULTURE IS part of who we are and how we live; this Culture and Creativity Strategy expands our understanding of culture as being part of the life of everyone who lives in County Louth. It provides an opportunity for cultural players to create new ways of working which enhance the potential for increased collaboration, enhancing existing plans and frameworks for cultural development across the County. It supports the continued expansion of working relationships between industry, educational, enterprise and social development agencies and organisations, putting culture at the heart of planning and development in County Louth.

The implementation of this strategy will develop ways in which the ownership of culture can be democratised—where it is owned, managed, developed and delivered locally and

responds to the needs of local cultural players and communities; where culture is central to people's lives, delivering opportunities for all citizens by increasing access to, and engagement and participation in cultural activity.

It identifies opportunities for collaborative and embedded cultural development, enhancing the creative potential of creative individuals and communities, highlighting the leadership advantage of the County in creative industries development amongst other priority areas, ensuring delivery of the Creative Ireland programme vision locally and making Louth a place where culture is valued and supported, as positive element which contributes to the wellbeing, happiness and development of each individual, and embedded in the social fabric of the County.

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Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme
2017–2022

