

'Our Learning Island'

A Shared Island Learning Cities Programme



Shared Island Initiative



Cork City 29th Nov – 1st Dec 2022

Context :

The Shared Island Programme, supported by the Irish Government Dept. of the Taoiseach and the Dept of Housing, Planning, Local Govt. and Heritage, supports projects and initiatives between Local Government partners North and South. Working with the support of all city partners, and with match funding committed by Derry-Strabane Council, the programme launched in Cork will involve a series of exchanges and consultation workshops in all five cities culminating in a Learning City conference in Derry in June 2023.

All five cities have committed themselves to becoming Learning cities, all are members of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities and in 2018 formed the Irish Network of Learning Cities (INLC).

In 2019 the Mayors of all five cities signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committing to work together and to supporting each others development as Learning Cities. The vision behind this commitment is to improve the quality of life for everyone in our cities, by delivering on the UN Sustainable Development Goals and making sure that no-one is left behind.

Day 1 : Tuesday 29th November

Cork Lord Mayors Chambers & Millennium Hall, Cork City Hall

Delegates from all UNESCO Learning Cities on the island – in Dublin, Belfast, Limerick, and Derry/Strabane enjoyed a **Welcome Reception in Cork Lord Mayors Chambers at Cork City Hall** hosted by Deputy Lord Mayor Cllr Damien Boylan



Delegates then attended the 2022 **Cork Celebrates Lifelong Learning Awards** in Millennium Hall, Cork City Hall alongside 170 shortlisted nominees, recognising individuals, groups and organisations across a variety of categories who have contributed to Lifelong Learning initiatives and innovations in Cork over the year.



An Roinn Tíochta,
Rialtais Aitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



Day 2 : Wednesday 30th November 2022

Cork Council Chambers, Cork City Hall

'Our Learning Island' launched by Lord Mayor of Cork Cllr. Deirdre Forde with Derry-Strabane, Belfast, Limerick and Dublin Learning Cities Chairs and steering group members in the Cork City council chambers.



The Learning City delegations from Derry-Strabane, Belfast, Limerick and Dublin were welcomed by Cork Lord Mayor Cllr. Deirdre Forde, Chief Executive Ann Doherty, Director of Services Adrienne Rodgers and Cork Learning City Coordinator Mr Denis Barrett to the launch of the seminar exchange in Cork City Hall on Nov 30th. This initial Planning Session in Cork is the first in a series of planned Shared Island exchanges and consultation sessions in all UNESCO Learning Cities on the island to follow - in Dublin, Belfast, and Limerick, culminating in a final event hosted by Derry-Strabane in June 2023.

Presentations on the joint initiative were by Garreth Harvey (Chair, Derry/Strabane LC) who referenced the Irish Network of Learning Cities (INLC) as a support between each Learning City Steering Group. Eimer Brophy (Chair Limerick LC) spoke to the INLC as a support between co-ordinators of Learning City/Learning Festivals and Danny Power (Chair Belfast LC) reflected on the INLC as a joint platform, supported by the MOU, to support activities in each Learning city. Denise Mc Morrow (Co-chair Dublin LC) referenced how the INLC engaged in Joint activities while Willie McAuliffe (Co-Chair Cork LC) presented on sustaining the Learning City momentum across all cities, and now with the Shared Island Programme as a platform to expand our networks.



'Our Learning Island' Ideas Exchange Presentations :



Ciarán Lynch - Cork ETB & Cork Access Network (CAN)
Paula Mc Carthy - CETB & Learning Neighbourhoods (Cork)



Isaac May - Community Programmes Manager, Belfast Metropolitan College
Patricia Lavery - Head of Community Arts and Education with Arts Council NI



Aoife O'Connor - Limerick City and County Council Community Development
Patricia O'Sullivan - Mary Immaculate College, (Limerick)



Alison Wallace - Strategy Manager Waterside Neighbourhood Partnership
Alison Carlin - Business Development Manager
- Access Elemental Social Prescribing



Emer Murphy - Dublin Learning City Coordinator & Learning Champions
Kathleen O'Toole Brennan
- Dir. Trinity Access Prog./ Founder College Awareness Week

Day 2 : Cork City Site Visits :



A. A river runs through it

All our cities are located on rivers and harbours. Corks traditional boatbuilders Meitheal Mara have used Corks waterways as a space for inclusion and engagement. This presentation included a visit to the Bantry Longboat on the river Lee and Meitheal Maras workshop at Crosses Green where groups a variety of use the rowing and building of traditional boats and dragon boats to promote team building, social enterprise, health and wellbeing.



B. Music as an instrument of social inclusion

Music is in Cork's DNA, but like many cities, access to music education has not always been equally shared. Music Generation Cork City was established in 2012 with seed funding from U2 and the Ireland Funds to address this. Delegates met young musicians in action in The Kabin in Knocknaheeny, and explored how community music partners have brought new generations into the city's diverse musical traditions, ranging from Rap to Rock, Brass Bands to Irish traditional music. They visited Cork City library Hollyhill and learned how to play an Indonesian Gamelan.



C. Urban Green spaces for Health, Learning and Enterprise

Delegates participated in a tour of Nano Nagle place and met some of the people behind a range of Corks urban growing and sustainable food initiatives, in a session located in a green space at the heart of the South Parish Learning Neighbourhood. During the visit to a range of sites delegates met with leaders in sustainability and local learning initiatives.



Day 3 : Thursday 1st December 2022

University College Cork (UCC)

Hosted by Cork Learning City lead partner UCC the morning programme featured 3 distinct elements :

1. Irish Network of Learning Cities

A workshop among Chairs and steering group members on governance, advocacy and development plans during 2022 - 2023 of the Irish Network of Learning Cities

2. UCC Green Campus

A workshop with Dr. Ger Mullaly, on UCC's journey as the first university worldwide to be awarded the 'Green Flag', and the ongoing progress of university staff, students and faculty to deliver on the sustainable development goals and climate change.

3. UCC Tour

A tour of UCC Campus, dating from 1845 when it was founded as Queens College Cork; one of 3 Queens Colleges with QUB Belfast and Galway NUIG established at the same time.



'Our Learning Island'

Purpose, Principles & Guidelines

The three-day programme hosted in Cork involved delegates in a series of sessions to make contacts and develop links with people from similar backgrounds and with shared interests in future projects on an all-island basis. Principles and guidelines which were agreed during the seminar

- **Exchanges** will be between well-established groups with strong **leadership**
- We will ensure **respect** for different traditions in all our communications
- Our programme will focus on **Social Inclusion** - Seeking to work across ALL communities in all that we do
- Opportunity to develop **policy and advocacy** strategies for the INLC
- Final Shared Island Exchange - **strategic leadership** encouraged to attend
- Venues & programmes- Selected by the host cities;
Proposed Length of visits - 2 x overnights =
to allow time to **build sustainable relationships**

INLC Calendar including proposed Shared Ireland Visits 2022 / 2023

2022	City	Event
November	29 Nov - 1st Dec Cork	Steering Group Exchange
2023		
February	21 - 22 - 23 Feb Dublin	INLC Group Exchange / visit
March	7-Mar Cork	Lifelong Learning Festival Launch
	14 - 15 - 16 Belfast	INLC Group Exchange / visit
	15-Mar Belfast	Learning Festival Launch
	20 - 26th Belfast	Lifelong Learning Festival
	27 Mar - 2 April Cork	Lifelong Learning Festival
	27 Mar - 2 April Limerick	Lifelong Learning Festival
April	30-Mar Cork	Conference/visit during Cork Festival
	25 - 26 - 27th Derry / Strabane	INLC Group Exchange / visit
	TBC Dublin	Festival Launch
May	3rd - 5th Dublin	Lifelong Learning Festival
	15th - 16th May Limerick	Proposed INLC Group Exchange / visit
June	14 - 15 - 16 Derry / Strabane	Closing Event / Conference

'one of the most insightful and enjoyable exchanges that I have ever been involved in.'

ISAAC MAY :
COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES MANAGER,
BELFAST METROPOLITAN COLLEGE



'lovely to meet you all and to see and hear about what Cork is doing and begin to understand the networking and connections with the other cities.'

PATRICIA LAVERY - HEAD OF
COMMUNITY ARTS AND EDUCATION
WITH ARTS COUNCIL NI



'I am starting to reflect on the visit and thinking about next steps and how I can bring the learning city work into my other work.'

JACQUELINE FRAZER
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT SENIOR OFFICER
BELFAST CITY COUNCIL



Day 1 : Monday 15th May 2023

Shannon Rowing Club, Limerick



Delegates from all UNESCO Learning Cities on the island - in Dublin, Belfast, Cork and Derry Strabane enjoyed a welcome reception in Shannon Rowing Club hosted by Mayor of Limerick City and County, Councillor Francis Foley.

Day 2: Tuesday 16th May 2023

Strand Hotel, Limerick

Strand Hotel, Limerick. Seminar attended by 66 people; including 25 people from the visiting cities. 'Our Learning Island', 'Places and Spaces of Learning' launched by Mayor of Limerick, Councillor Francis Foley with Learning City members from Derry Strabane, Belfast, Cork and Dublin. The Learning City delegations from Derry-Strabane, Belfast, Cork and Dublin were welcomed by Limerick Mayor, Councillor Francis Foley, Limerick City and County Council Chief Officer Seamus O'Connor and Learning Limerick Chairperson Eimear Brophy, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.

'Our Learning Island' Ideas Exchange Presentations :



Paul O'Donnell, Project Manager of Churchfield Community Trust CLG,



Lisa McCaul Centre for Economic Development and Social Inclusion, Belfast Metropolitan College



James Blake CEO of Learning Hub Limerick



Allan Bogle Sustainable Food Places Coordinator, Derry City and Strabane District Council

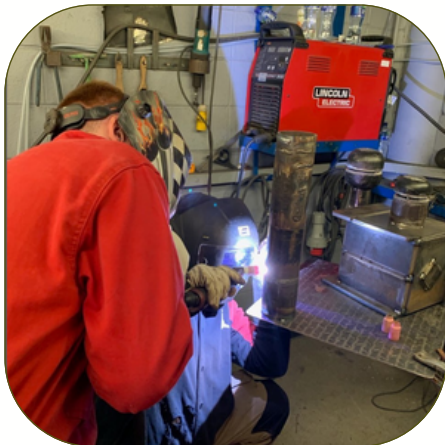


Mary Maher Director of Dublin Adult Learning Centre

Day 2 : Limerick City Site Visits :

A. Learning Hub, Kileely

The organisation was formed by a company limited by guarantee in October 2007. The Learning Hub works in partnership with parents, education providers, statutory agencies and the wider Limerick community to provide a safe, welcoming and inspiring learning environment where young people can reach their true potential. It was formed to develop and implement practical and solution focused responses to the very high levels of educational disadvantage and early school leaving experienced by local communities on the Northside of Limerick City.



B. College of Further Education and Training, Raheen Campus.

This included visits to the various apprenticeship programmes and meeting with learners at Raheen Campus. The apprenticeship programmes offered at Raheen combine and alternate learning in the workplace with learning in the training centre. It is a dual system, a blended combination of on-the-job employer-based training and off-the-job training.

C. Urban Coop

The Urban CoOp & Wellness Hub is a unique social enterprise based in Limerick. Their mission is to be a model co-operative, supplying great produce and enhancing the lives of their members, customers, and the community. Anne Maher, Managing Director, The Urban CoOp & Wellness Hub said, "As we have erred towards organic and good quality foods it naturally attracted people interested in wellness, and from that it has evolved into a community wellness hub as well as a community grocery." Selling organic wholesome food and providing space for holistic therapies, seven days a week, creates a positive gateway for the community to enhance wellbeing. Inspiring consumers to be consciously sustainable, through nourishing food, zero waste practices, and positive life-style initiatives.

