



# **Galway European Capital of Culture 2020**

**Second Monitoring Meeting**

**Report by the Expert Panel**

**Brussels, July 2018**

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture  
Directorate Culture and Creativity  
Unit D2

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## Introduction

This report follows the meeting in Rijeka on 28th June 2018 between the panel and Galway, one of the two European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) in 2020<sup>1</sup>. Galway was designated European Capital of Culture 2020 in Ireland in September 2016 on the basis of the panel's selection report<sup>2</sup>. Its bid-book is available on Galway 2020 website<sup>3</sup>. There was previously a 1st monitoring meeting in March 2017 in Brussels: the 1st monitoring report by the panel can be accessed on the European Commission website<sup>4</sup>.

This report is addressed to the Galway 2020 organisation (Galway Cultural Development and Activity CLG) and will be published also on the European Commission's website<sup>5</sup>.

## Attendance

The panel members:

Sylvia Amann (Chair), Cristina Farinha (Rapporteur) and Agnieszka Wlazel, appointed by the European Parliament 2018-2020

Ulrich Fuchs, Aiva Rozenberga and Pauli Sivonen, appointed by the Council of the EU 2016-18

Beatriz Garcia, Jiří Suchánek and Suzana Žilič Fišer, appointed by the European Commission 2017-2019

Alain Hutchinson, nominated by the Committee of the Regions 2016-2018 (absent)

For Galway 2020:

Hannah Kiely – CEA, Galway 2020

Damien Egan – Director of Operations and Finance, Galway 2020

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<sup>1</sup> The European Capital of Culture action is governed by Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and the Council for the titles 2020 to 2033, which provides for three formal monitoring meetings between designated cities and the panel.

See Decision at:

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L\\_.2014.132.01.0001.01.ENG](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2014.132.01.0001.01.ENG)

<sup>2</sup> See selection report at:

[https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/library/ecoc-ireland-2016-final-selection-report\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/library/ecoc-ireland-2016-final-selection-report_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> See bid-book at:

<http://galway2020.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/G2020-Bid-web.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> See first monitoring report at:

[https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/library/ecoc-2020-galway-first-monitoring\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/library/ecoc-2020-galway-first-monitoring_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/tools/actions/capitals-culture\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/tools/actions/capitals-culture_en.html)

Marilyn Gaughan Reddan – Programme Manager and European Funding, Galway 2020

Denise McDonagh – Artistic Digital Programme Manager, Galway 2020

Mark O’ Donnell – Capital Projects Manager, Galway City Council

Gary McMahon – Director of Culture, Galway City Council

Also in attendance were observers from the European Commission (DG EAC) and from the Irish Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht - Ministry of Culture.

## **Report from Galway 2020**

The Organisation submitted a detailed and comprehensive written progress report in advance of the meeting that outlined its activities from April 2017 to date in preparation for the ECOC 2020.

At the meeting Galway 2020 made a presentation which included the following points:

**Cultural leadership:** The team members were introduced, and the CEO referred to the resignation of the Creative Director (Chris Baldwin) appointed in the summer 2017 who left in May this year. As a consequence, the strategy is now to reflect on the intended type of cultural leadership for the ECOC in a phase when the programme is supposed to move from conception to implementation without losing its integrity. To help in this endeavour, Martin Green (former CEO Hull UK City of Culture) had just been engaged for a period of 4 to 6 weeks to identify the needs and propose a corresponding strategy for the company.

**Long-term cultural strategy/legacy:** The city representatives reiterated that the political engagement is strong from all levels of territorial governance, notably from the National Government – there was a visit by the Prime-Minister in April 2018. Galway cultural sustainability framework 2016-2025 “Everybody matters” was now published, integrating the experience of being one of the Agenda 21 for Culture Pilot Cities 2016-2018 and adapted to the Creative Ireland national programme. Its values and aims under the motto “People, Place and Process” are embedded in the concept and operations of Galway 2020. The implementation has started in collaboration with the city cultural institutions and the UNESCO City of Film. A political and functional merging of the local authorities is expected to take place from 2021 on, also in what culture governance is concerned. A Galway 2020 three-day conference, using the Future Search methodology, took place the week before in Galway gathering around 84 key local to international stakeholders, including policy makers, cultural operators, representatives from different sectors such as business, environment and youth to discuss legacy, from which 12 agreed common ground statements came out.

**Cultural infrastructure:** An update by the City Council Representative regarding infrastructure delivery was presented as satisfactory including references to the

extension of the city museum; the creation of the children creativity hub; and the multi-functional cultural hub that will be a space for work and rehearsal for performing and visual arts and one of the ECOC 2020 icons. A multidisciplinary team is said to be looking into the feasibility of this venue; Bia Innovator, the food innovation hub, was announced as one of the outcomes of the three titles held by the city in these years – the European Green Leaf, the European Region of Gastronomy and the ECOC; new film studios are going to locate at former Galway Airport site; cultural heritage projects involving castles & historic places are being developed; and an application of 2 million EUR was made to Enterprise Ireland for the creation of a creative industries incubation space in collaboration with the GMIT (Institute of Technology); the refurbishment of existing spaces is also being taken care of as a priority to allow conditions for the ECOC 2020 programme.

**Governance and staffing:** Around 70 applications were received for the Board members (all non-executive) and a selection was made in view of having a diverse set of skills and gender balance. There are some Board sub-committees also in place, such as for communication, audit, and the programming. Regarding the team, presently with 16 members, there are expectations to increase it to 20 by the summer plus 12 more by the end of this year. The positions of Cultural leadership as well as Stakeholder engagement, International Relations-Ambassadors & Diaspora, Sponsorship, and Legacy are among those posts to be still advertised.

**Financials:** The financial director informed that a risk-based approach to budgeting was developed, presenting two scenarios that consider a funding decrease from 2018 on, after reviewing the expected national, local and county contributions and their schedule. National contribution of 15 Million Euros is secured. Expectations are to achieve a re-profiled budget V.2 of approx. 39,7 Million Euros, in case the originally planned County contribution of 6 Million Euros isn't provided to the full, while the budget initially foreseen in the bid-book was 45,75 M. Programme funding applications have been progressing, with some funding already secured notably from Erasmus+. The planned operating expenditure ensures that all budget scenarios allow 73% for public facing activity (in line with the bid-book) and 5% for contingency. The sponsorship strategy for 2019-2020 will be launched in 2018.

**Outreach:** Community engagement is fully integrated into the development of the programme, as in the case of Small Towns Big Ideas flagship. Many meetings with diverse stakeholders have been held in view of establishing partnerships and engaging with different audiences, as for example, 22 public speak outs-briefing community groups as well as 12 business group engagements, among others. Agreements/secondments were made to ensure the necessary links and technical support with diverse TV channels, city and county councils, liaison teams as well as Fáilte Ireland information bureau. The partnership with NUIG – the National University of Ireland Galway – has led to the allocation of a specific fund within the University to support University activity in support of Galway 2020, the availability of a team of 20 headed by a Professor to support the ECOC, notably in research, volunteering, conferences, venues, monitoring and evaluation. The volunteering manager is about to start this July to start the development phase and Galway 2020 is working with Hull UK City of Culture 2017 for best practices. The volunteering programme “Wave Makers” is partnering locally, nationally and

internationally, notably with ECOCs such as Liverpool, Wrocław, Pafos, Matera and Plovdiv. Expectations are to re-engage all those volunteers from the bid phase. Media coverage continues to grow. The cooperation with TV channels and local media allows considering savings and good media exposure. Work with the Irish diaspora worldwide is planned, notably via an Ambassadors programme that has selected key personalities.

**Programme:** Marilyn Gaughan Reddan spoke about the state of the art of the ECOC programme development "Making Waves", built around the three main themes: Language, Migration and Landscape. She explained the MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) process set in place for each project implementation, from contract, delivery and archive to legacy. The former Creative Director has reviewed all the bid-book projects. As recommended by the panel, support is being given to promoters via ongoing meetings. Budgets are now being stress-tested. Some projects are now hiring their teams. Funding applications progressed when necessary while communication plans are outlined for each project. Assessment of equipment and resources across the digital projects is underway. In relation to the next steps, the move to contracts is expected to start from July onwards for the majority of the projects. Audience development is a pillar of every project, leading up to a broader strategy that will be in place by September. The appointment of the rest of the Creative team is also underway. New calls are also planned: 2nd call for Small Towns Big Ideas in January 2019 and call for an Artist in Every Place in November 2018. Examples of projects were presented, such as for "Arial Sparks", "Galway Community Circus - Wires Crossed", "Symphonic Waves", "BAA BAA", and "Every Child" (with digital components). Small Towns Big Ideas received more than 140 applications to its 1st call, 52 projects having been selected across the territory with 54% to be delivered in the County area.

**European dimension:** The European dimension was said to be embedded in each project via participation of EU partners being re-confirmed by the MOA process. The capacity building programme is ongoing with workshops delivered by Ars Electronica and CREW and more planned for end of 2018. 26 Artists "go see's" with EU partners now complete and 15 more underway. Galway 2020 has ongoing conversations with other ECOCs, notably Aarhus, Leeuwarden (Iepen Mienskip) as well as Rijeka (27 Neighbourhoods). There is close work with other ECOCs in regards audience development.

**Digital Programme:** The newly appointed Artistic Digital Programme Manager announced that the programme was up and running and had got two main dimensions: capacity building (training to diverse audiences given by Ars Electronica & CREW, among others); and children and young people. The creative digital programme team is a co-created model with backgrounds in art, film, engineering, science, technology, communications, education philosophy and research. The digital communications team is working across the programme on digital engagement and participation, including social media, website and live streaming. Evaluation and also legacy components have been considered, notably a reflection on what is a digital EU citizen; and a toolkit and impact indicators transferable to other European cities.

## Discussion

During the subsequent discussion, the panel sought clarification on a number of issues and offered experience and advice. Topics discussed included the following:

- The panel started up by enquiring why the mission statement of the ECOC project put forward by the CEO did not highlight its due **European dimension**. It was then re-affirmed that each project has got European partners and results from European collaborations as the ECOC's three main themes speak to Europe. Despite the exemplary internationalisation of some of the city initiatives, Galway's cultural scene has remained local. Yet this is being gradually overcome by an increased participation in European networks as encouragement is being given to organisations to move and look further away. Example was given of the circus project that has promoted mobility from and to Galway. It was also said that the European dimension is embedded in the cultural strategy framework and in the capacity building process. The next wave of cultural operators, also as a consequence of participating in EU cooperation funding programmes, will have an increased engagement in the European scene. The city three EU designations promoted (Green Leaf, Gastronomy and Culture) meant to connect local communities with European peers.
- The panel then asked about an apparent loss of enthusiasm on the **communication** of the initiative and whether there was a gap between the project on the one hand and the city and its communities on the other hand. The challenge is how to conceive a communication to convince others about the vibrancy of the city and to trigger off interest in participating in Galway 2020. The team answered that the enthusiasm and energy of the bid phase were there, yet they needed to take a breath and stop in order to appoint the Board, the main team elements and review the plans. There is now renewed will to deliver as one great team. The Galway 2020 "Creating the legacy" conference has allowed for renewed ownership of the project by diverse stakeholders and improved connections. So, the artists and the communities are passionate and in line with the project. Additionally, it was said that they were working on the Communications Strategy slogans and messages to have something for everybody to be presented to the panel in November. The Communications Director was not in attendance as part of the delegation to give further detail.
- The leadership and progress of the application of the Agenda 21 for Culture in the city **cultural strategy** implementation were asked. The City Director of Culture, in charge of this file, explained that they had put in place an overarching framework that also linked through Creative Ireland the project to the national level. Concerning Agenda 21 for Culture there is interaction with the city structures and they are working on how to increase the communities' representatives.
- The discussion on **evaluation and monitoring** plans followed next as the submitted progress report did not contain an update on this important item. How to document, report and communicate the project? Who is assuming this function

and collecting the baseline data? How to address the delays in setting a framework for evaluation? The team acknowledged the delay in this matter. Articulation with the university is being done which actually has got the needed baseline data already. They are now tracking the data and formulating the indicators as well as plan to develop also a methodology for the team on how to collect the data by developing an evaluation toolkit.

- The **programme development and implementation** were the subsequent concerns of the panel as the present phase is critical. What has advanced since the last monitoring meeting? Was a revision done on the project's budgets - is the budget balanced - is it worth spending a great deal of the whole budget on a single theatrical production? What are the plans for the artistic director? It was repeated that Martin Green would help the team to define the profile of the cultural leadership while retaining the programme concept. They intend now to move from the MOA phase (already a very successful process and a solid basis for all future developments) to contractual phase and concentrate on completing this task from July/August and thereafter. They have strong production partners in place, developed via the MOA process, so capacity to deliver is ensured. In regard to the theatre production mentioned by the panel, this was a key project in the bid-book – it consists of a very large-scale project, a site-specific theatre piece, a spectacular event divided into 3 tales, with a capacity building component, and therefore it is a justified investment.
- Still in relation to the **programme**, the panel enquired if it was planned to explore Brexit as a topic, being such an actual discussion in the region at the political level. The team left the door open to include this issue within the planned history as well as arts festivals.
- The panel further asked about the relationship between Galway 2020 and the **cultural sector community** in the city in view of media news reporting on an alleged lack of trust and confidence towards the ECOC project. The team acknowledged there was some nervousness amongst the cultural producers, but this was normal with any project as it moves to the contract stage. The insecurity resulting from the fact that the budgets were not entirely committed led to a difficult communication with the media that they believed would change soon. The team also stated that they had good working relationships with the many city cultural institutions and operators. Again, the legacy conference also allowed for many stakeholders to re-connect and regain confidence.
- The **cultural leadership** was target of debate again. The team re-affirmed their commitment to putting in place new cultural leadership for the project and this process is underway. Their deadline are the upcoming 4-6 weeks, having already 5 names shortlisted.
- The panel sought also further details on the **organisational chart** that it found too horizontal. The delegation clarified that they are working on finalising the organisational structure needed to deliver the project.

- Clarification was also sought for regarding the **digital programme** as it was an essential asset of Galway's 2020 bid and now seems to have lost its protagonist role. The team reassured that there were digital components to each project and that a relevant digital capacity building programme was ongoing. Communication and evaluation are also being associated to the digital programme. They intend to leave a legacy locally, nationally and European wide and contribute to job creation, by challenging the school system and organisations. They are working with organisations across Ireland as well as from abroad, developing mentorship programmes, training for teachers, taking national and European artists to schools.
- **Regional involvement and support**, including at the funding level, was another issue brought by the panel. Moreover, the panel asked about the participation of the islands in the programme. The team guaranteed that the programme was well covering Galway city and county territories. Three projects actually include the islands, notably the realisation of a conference and collaboration with Aarhus. Then projects such as "Aerial Sparks", "Small Towns Big Ideas" are very much linked to the territory and its communities, spanning also the Irish language areas. They have been building synergies with several regional organisations, showing them the benefit of participating in the ECOC. Regarding the funding contribution of the county, though only 2 Million EUR have been secured, they are still counting on receiving the full planned amount (6 M.). The team reassured the panel that the county was integrated into the strategy and aligned to the project. Furthermore, during the legacy conference, urban and territorial aspects were affirmed as crucial alongside the need to repurpose spaces for culture, to create hubs.
- Further on **communication**, the panel noticed that there were only 3 upcoming projects being announced on Galway 2020 website which is not a good signal at this point. The team explained that their website was going for tender process as they needed to update it. Moreover, the panel also asked about the state of affairs of the collaboration with the tourism board to present the project abroad, including which markets have been targeted. The team reiterated there was a huge engagement with the tourism board and announced the planned national roadshow for September as well as the participation in international tourism fairs. Priority markets considered are the USA, UK, European regions and Australia.
- The panel also asked about **audience development** plans for the European audiences. How to bridge from local to European? The team referred that they were using both bottom up and top down processes to respond to local, national and European audiences, as well as the American diaspora too. It was reaffirmed that the ECOC 2020 in Galway was a national programme, and that the ECOC designation matched a dynamic context in Ireland in this field.
- Regarding **funding and budget**, the panel inquired why there was a dramatic drop of the budget for 2021 and a higher amount for 2019 than for 2020, while the staff contracts end in January and March 2021 putting into risk the evaluation and legacy. The team explained that the bulk of the National Government

instalments would come in 2019. Moreover, it was also said regarding funding that for each project different sources were sought and that the several applications already done were also contributing to capacity building.

- Following up the **legacy** conference, the panel wanted to know which were the main visions discussed for the future of Galway. The team re-affirmed the fact that this event gave new legitimacy and ownership back to the community. Regarding the main issues agreed, it highlighted the need to: entrust and further engage young people in the initiative and the overall city development; ensure the balance between urban and rural dimensions; repurpose spaces for culture; the unique role of the Irish language in the region. The ECOC has committed itself to deliver these visions.
- Finally, to conclude, when asked about their **top priorities** for the short-term, the team clearly affirmed the need to get the cultural leadership in place; to work on their communication; to stabilise their funding prospects; to deliver the project contracts; and to advance with the evaluation and monitoring work alongside the university.

## Recommendations

1. Continue to work on the European dimension, exploring how grassroots engagement resonates into European collaboration and spirit. Ensure that a European dimension is also present in the legacy outcomes.
2. Keep flexibility in the programme to integrate potential and actual European challenges taking the opportunity to bridge building, such as Brexit and refugees.
3. Invest even further in the relevant digital programme towards an ECOC overarching concept, promoting other forms of participation, communication and content creation. This investment is crucial to attract the younger audiences.
4. Advance swiftly with the articulation with NUIG for the evaluation and monitoring methodology, including identification of baselines, indicators and data collection methodologies.
5. Introduce measures to improve communication at all levels and ensure the spirit and the progress of the project is well understood by all diverse stakeholders.
6. Develop a strong communication strategy related to the main messages of the ECOC programme with clear European narratives and adapt it to the different target audiences.
7. Define and integrate asap a new cultural leadership plan, ensuring a flexible, articulated and constructive relationship with all members of the team.
8. Clarify the roles, hierarchies and relationships of the team within a reviewed organisational chart, making sure internal communication is fluid.

9. Prepare a detailed breakdown of the programme projects including partners, budget, and calendar.
10. Deliver the project contracts so that implementation moves on.
11. Make decisions regarding the project's production scheme, distinguishing clearly what will be produced in house, co-produced, externalised or simply labelled and adjust the staffing needs accordingly.
12. Include 2021 and 2022 budgeting in the funding agreement with the Ministry.
13. Stabilise regional engagement, support and financial contribution.
14. Prepare a strategy to support audience development and engagement with tactics to increase diversity and inclusion (and not separation) of various audiences (e.g. minorities) with baseline studies completed as soon as possible.
15. Develop with all relevant stakeholders, publicly discuss and communicate plans for 2021 and the years after.

## **Next steps**

The panel acknowledges and appreciates the work carried out by Galway 2020 since the last monitoring meeting and greets the informal and honest discussion held. Yet it would like to stress the need to solve the discussed issues in the short term, with danger of losing track with the project and incurring in further delays. In particular there is a need to appoint a cultural leadership to mainstream an artistic vision into overall programme and communication efforts and for the project to move forward swiftly from programme conception to implementation.

The panel puts itself at the disposal of Galway 2020 for any questions through the Commission services.

The panel would like to thank Galway 2020 for the informative meeting and looks very forward to the next developments of its European Capital of Culture project.

(Signed) all present panel's members

