

14th January, 2016

**To: The Mayor and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council**

**Report to Council on Limerick 2020 and proposal for the second round selection process for European Capital of Culture**

A Comhairleoir, a chara

In November 2015 the European Capital of Culture 2020 selection panel short listed Limerick, Galway, Waterford (on behalf of Three Sisters) to go through to the second round of the competition and invited each to submit revised bids for the final selection. This is wonderful news for Limerick, the region and the many people who are so actively supporting the bid process. A report on the panel's findings was published in December and the short listed cities must take into account the assessments and recommendations of the panel in this report.

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/documents/ecoc/2020/ireland-preselection\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/documents/ecoc/2020/ireland-preselection_en.pdf)

The deadline for submission of revised applications of the Bid Book is 17th June 2016.

The final selection meeting will be held in Dublin on 14-15 July 2016 which will include a presentation and Q and A session by Limerick and the other candidates to the 10 person Jury.

Two to four members of the panel will pay a one-day visit to the three short listed cities in the week before the jury presentation (from the 11th -13th July) to obtain more background information. Representatives of the European Commission and the ministry will accompany the panel members as observers.

The Limerick 2020 Team are currently engaged in all that is required for the second round process. This includes bringing new members on board to address the advice of the Jury report in developing the second Bid Book proposal. The focus will be on the developing the Cultural Programme and the European Dimension. We will be paying particular attention to the panel's request for a greater international focus with more co-curation and co-production evident in the projects making up the bid.

We note the overall view of the panel and its positive critique. "the panel was impressed with the commitment to a long term cultural strategy as a core element of the city, and regional, development. The goals for 2030 with building infrastructure, new developments such as the Troy Studios are ambitious. The consultation and citizens engagement has been conducted widely and openly. Limerick's successful national city of culture programme in 2014 could form the basis for a successful ECOC. The panel consider that the programme as outlined needs considerable development with a particular emphasis on the European Dimension criterion"

As part of our preparations for the second round, to build capacity in the cultural sector and to develop more long term projects in a European context, we request permission to utilise funding up to a maximum of €300,000 of the funds that have set aside for this purpose in the adopted budget. Finally, the visit to Limerick by members of the panel will form a key part of the decision making process. With your support we look forward to showcasing Limerick at its best, through its citizens, culture, heritage and commitment to being European Capital of Culture 2020.

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Mike Fitzpatrick  
Director