



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council



Local Enterprise Office

Oifig Fiontraíocht Áitiúil

Evaluation Report for The Professional Development Programme for Festival and Event Organisers Limerick

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Objective 2 Limerick Cultural Strategy: A Framework 2016 - 2030:

“To grow the physical and human resources, infrastructure and support for staging large scale interventions, performances, festivals and productions”.

In May 2018 as a result of the recommendation from the assessment panel for Festivals and Events Grant in 2017 Limerick City and County Council Culture and Arts Department in partnership with Local Enterprise Office Limerick ran a pilot bespoke programme of training and mentoring for festivals and events. This programme, Professional Development for Festivals and Events, was the first ever programme of its kind to be delivered in Limerick City and County Council.

The Professional Development Programme for Festival and Event Organisers has been designed and delivered in accordance with the Limerick Cultural Strategy 2016 – 2030. It adheres to all six roles of Limerick City and County Council as referred to in Limerick Cultural Strategy;

- Advocate: Consolidating and valuing the role of culture in Limerick in a local, national and European context
- Broker: Connecting people, organisations and opportunities through culture
- Innovator: Successfully developing new ways of working, new business opportunities and supporting growth
- Supporter: Continuing to create sustainable support, resources and investment in cultural sector
- Promoter: Finding new interesting ways to showcase, host or promote culture in Limerick, identifying exciting ways for Limerick’s city towns and villages to “be the venue”
- Reflector: Reviewing, monitor, analysing and critiquing the cultural strategy

In line with Limerick City and County Council’s role as reflector the methodology employed for this evaluation incorporated the use of questionnaires, which were carried out using a combination of telephone and face-to-face interviews, trainer observations and preceding reports. 14 of the 15 participating Festivals and Events were interviewed to gather information and feedback.

The following report provides an analysis of the subsequent evaluation and provides a series of recommendations.

Programme Context

The Professional Development Programme for Festivals and Events Organisers was developed following a recommendation made by an assessment panel of national experts and elected members. The panel made the recommendation as part of their review of grant applications to the Limerick City and County Council Festivals and Events Grant Scheme 2017 Strand 3.

Strand 3 of this grant scheme sought to fund actions which supported the long term sustainability of arts, culture and heritage Festivals and Events by supporting the development of organisational structures such as: the carrying out of feasibility studies; business plan development; reviews of governance structures; development of new Festival and Event concepts; marketing and audience development strategies; brand development; clustering initiatives which support collaboration through shared resources and/or expertise amongst 2 or more Festivals and Events.

Within the assessment panel's Report on Recommendations to Council it was recommended that a portion of the funding be ring fenced to design and deliver a bespoke programme of training and mentoring. This training would then be offered to applicants to the grant scheme as:

- A condition of funding
- A alternative reward to direct financial assistance

This recommendation was passed by the Council on the 27th of November 2017. 16 applicants were awarded places on the programme, 15 participated.

Who were identified to take part in the Programme

- This programme was awarded to festivals and events, which were run by individuals who are involved in the delivery of a Festival and Event located in Limerick as a volunteer, part-time or full-time member within an organisation or as an individual.
- Festivals and Events focused on growing their Festival or Event or developing a new Festival or Event.
- Festivals and Events identified as having a need for improvements in areas of governance.
- Festivals and Events identified as having a requirement to put systems and processes in place to aid the development and sustainability of the Festival or Event into the future.

Aim and Objectives of Professional Development Programme for Festivals and Events

Aim

- 1 This Pilot programme was delivered on behalf of Limerick City and County Council in collaboration with Local Enterprise Office Limerick (LEO)
- 2 To give participants an understanding of the benefits of planning a Festival or Event
- 3 To create a Festival or Event Strategy for their organisation
- 4 To understand the fundamental requirements when organising a festival or event
- 5 To build capacity around grant writing
- 6 To support the professionalization within the sector
- 7 To improve sustainability within the sector

Objectives

- 1 Improve business know-how and capability
- 2 Improve grant preparation and writing skills
- 3 Create more informed organisers within these organisations
- 4 More professional approach to Festival and Event organisation
- 5 Creation of an environment to support and facilitate networking

Deliverables

- 1 Generate a business strategy for the Festival or Event
- 2 Greater success in grant applications
- 3 Greater professionalism in management, coordination and reporting of Festivals and Events

Summary of Programme Delivery

Summary of workshop dates and topics

Limerick Culture and Arts Department worked in partnership with Local Enterprise Office Limerick to design and deliver the pilot programme which would bring coherence to the current range of offerings in Limerick and provide a structured and strategic approach to future Festival and Events strategies.

The programme commenced on May 14th 2018 and ran for six evening workshops, starting at 6.00 p.m. and finishing at 9.00 p.m. Workshops were held at the Kilmurry Lodge Hotel as a central location to those who were travelling from outside of the City. In addition to the scheduled workshops each Festival and Event group received two one-to-one mentoring sessions as a part of the programme and these were delivered in the weeks of June 4th and June 19th.

15 Festivals and Events attended every module. On average 18 people attended each workshop. Feedback from the group was positive and it was felt that they had all gained value for their Festival and Event by attending the programme.

May 14th Workshop 1	An introduction to Festival and Event Planning
May 21st Workshop 2	Governance for Festival and Event management Groups
May 28th Workshop 3	Business Strategy Development Workshop
Week of June 4th	One to one mentoring
June 11th Workshop 4	Marketing and Promotion
June 18th Workshop 5	Evaluating your Festival or Event
Week of June 19th	One to one mentoring
June 25th Workshop 6	Grant Application preparation and writing

Programme Module Summary

May 14th Workshop 1

An introduction to Festival and Event Planning

delivered by Theresa Mulvihill

- Introduction to planning – What can planning add to your Festival or Event?
- Introduction to business plans and the business plan canvas adapted for Festivals and Events
- SWOT Analysis
- Agreeing a Vision and Mission for your Festival or Event
- Goal setting and review techniques
- Festive and Event audit
- Resources required to drive your Festival or Event – people, money and creativity

May 21st Workshop 2

Governance for Festival and Event management Group

delivered by Mairead O'Connor of (The Wheel)

- Key structures for non-profit organisations
- Techniques to bring an effective group or committee together
- Legal obligations of the committee
- Financial management and obligations
- Record keeping and reporting mechanisms
- Managing people and personalities

May 28th Workshop 3

Business Strategy Development Workshop

delivered by Theresa Mulvihill

- Review of module 1
- Revisit the business plan canvas
- Who are our audience? Where are they?
And why will they choose our Festival or Event
- What do we know about our audience and how big is that market?
- Who are we competing with?
- How much income do we need to cover our costs?
- How can we generate income to cover our costs and grow our Festival or Event?
- Where and how can we look for innovative ways to keep our Festival or Event current and relevant?
- Introduction to promotion

Week of June 4th

One to one mentoring with Theresa Mulvihill

June 11th Workshop 4

Marketing and Promotion

delivered by Theresa Mulvihill

- Online promotional techniques merging with traditional techniques
- Setting and managing promotion budgets
- Negotiating with media
- Getting Public Relations
- Introduction to Search Engine Optimisation
- Using digital to get your message out there
- Drafting your Festival or Event promotional plan

June 18th Workshop 5

Evaluating your Festival or Event

delivered by Theresa Mulvihill

- What are 'Key performance Indicators'? (KPI)
- Setting and reviewing KPI's
- Research and analysis tools and techniques
- Recording and evaluating information
- Implementing an evaluation action

Week of June 19th

One to one mentoring with Theresa Mulvihill

June 25th Workshop 6

Grant Application preparation and writing

delivered by Theresa Mulvihill

- Introduction to writing grant applications
- The Do's and Don'ts of writing a grant application
- Why grant applications get funded. Why applications get declined!
- Review of some applications
- Taking time to review your most recent application: where it worked well, and areas for attention
- Questions and discussion
- Course content and delivery methods

Impact of Training Programme

Impact of Participating Festivals and Events on Local Community

The 15 participating Festivals and Events on this Programme have an important role to play within our local communities. In 2018 it is anticipated that they will attract and entertain over 35,000 visitors to their combined local communities. Overseas and domestic visitors to Limerick are worth an average of €29.05 per day. The Festivals and Events which they run will have a combined spend of almost €400,000 within the City and County of Limerick.

Festival or Event	Annual Budget	Average Audience Figures
Éigse Michael Hartnett	€25,000	400
Limerick Food Group	€12,000	6660
Cappamore Show	€80,000	4000
Limerick Market Trustees	€12,000	1400
The Limerick Opera Festival	€5,000	1200 Anticipated*
Féile Luimní	€35,000	6000
Saint Keiran's Heritage Association	€19,000	500
Broadford Concert	€4,000	250
Broadford Com Housing & Childcare Facility CLC	€41,530	900
Light Moves	€40,000	2000
Lumen Street Theatre	New Initiative	3000
Limerick Literary Festival	€16,000	1000
Fleadh by the Feale	€30,000	6000
Pig N Porter	€80,000	2200

Classification of Festivals and Events who attended

There were common themes in the classification of the Participating Festivals and Events. One of which was a genuine interest and commitment to delivering cultural programming and a reason for local people to return to stay in the local community. Literature, Arts, Theatre and Folklore are all themes which these Festivals and Events are attempting to preserve in their localities.

Festival or Event	Art form	Classification
Éigse Michael Hartnett	Literature and Arts	■ ■
Limerick Food Group	Promotional of local food	■
Cappamore Show	Agriculture	■ ■
Limerick Market Trustees	Garden/Horticultural	■
The Limerick Opera Festival	Opera	■ ■
Féile Luimní	Music, Arts and Gaeilge	■ ■
Saint Keiran's Heritage Association	Heritage	■
Broadford Concert	Classical and Musical	■
Broadford Com Housing & Childcare Facility CLG	Community and tradition	■ ■
Light Moves	Dance, Film and Media	■
Lumen Street Theatre	Celebration of Folklore	■ ■ ■
Limerick Literary Festival	Literature, Cabaret and Music	■ ■
Fleadh by the Feale	Traditional Music	■
Pig N Porter	Music and Sport	■ ■



Collaboration Opportunities identified

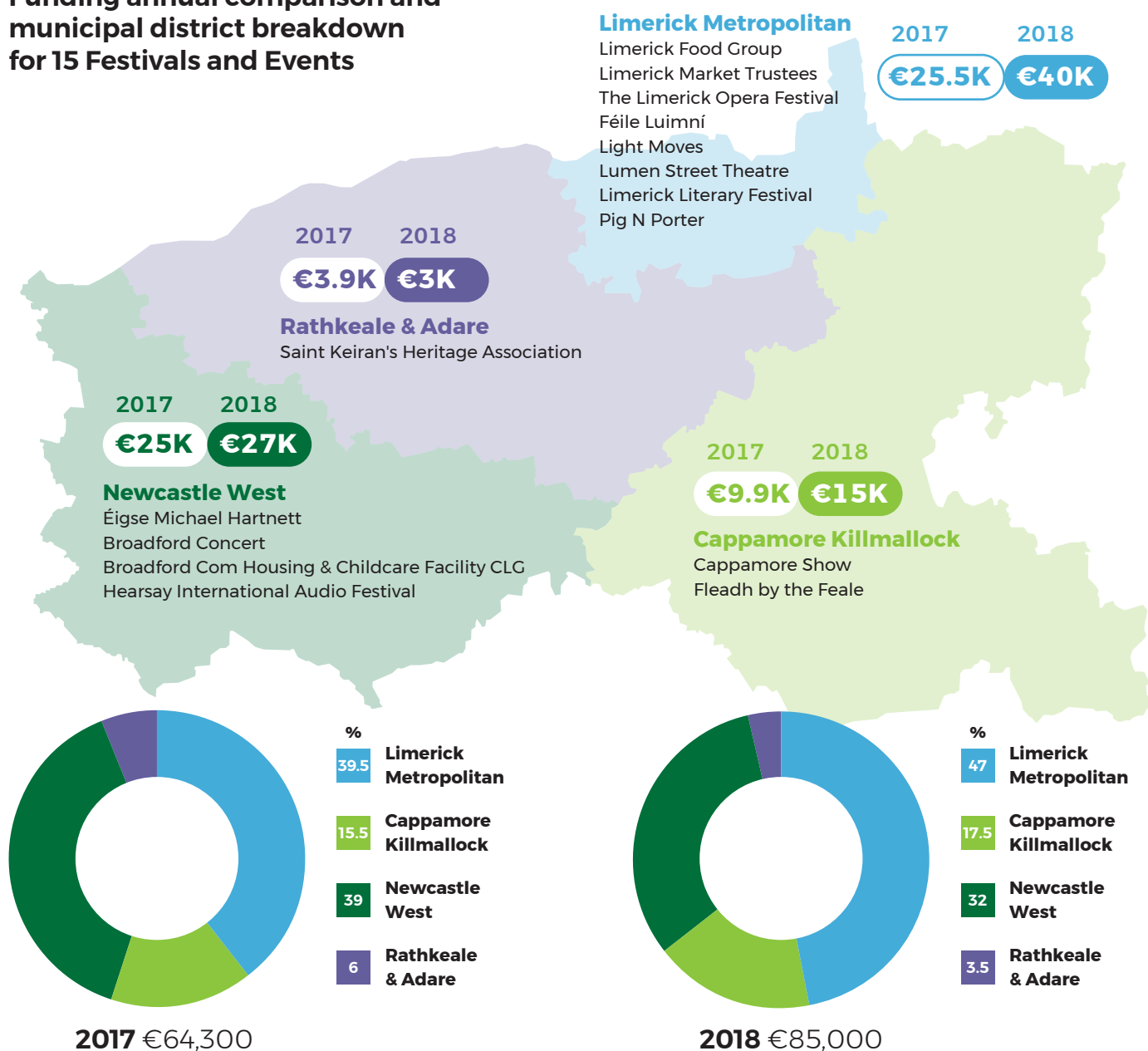
Overall feedback from the group of Festivals and Events who took part in the evaluation of the programme, (14 out of the 15) commented on the excellent opportunity which the programme provided for networking. Only two of the participating Festivals or Events did not identify with a potential collaboration partner in the room. Over the 6 weeks each representative was open and willing to share areas of expertise. Peer learning was an integral part of the learning experience during this programme. See below the Festivals and Events in attendance and the collaboration partners which they identified. The bar chart which presents details::

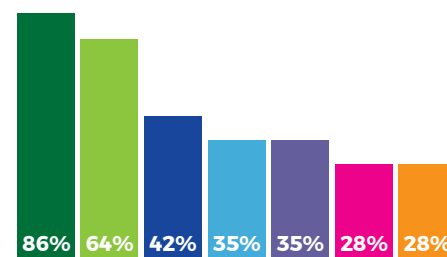
Festival/Event	Collaboration partners identified
Éigse Michael Hartnett	Limerick Food Group · Hearsay International Audio Festival
Limerick Food Group	Éigse Michael Hartnett · Saint Keiran's Heritage Assoc. · Lumen St Theatre
Cappamore Show	Limerick Food Group · Saint Keiran's Heritage Assoc.
Limerick Market Trustees	Éigse Michael Hartnett · Limerick Food Group · Lumen St Theatre
The Limerick Opera Festival	Identified collaboration opportunities outside of the group
Féile Luimní	Lumen St Theatre · Limerick Literary Festival
Saint Keiran's Heritage Association	Limerick Food Group · Cappamore Show · Lumen Street Theatre
Broadford Concert	The Limerick Opera Festival · Féile Luimní
Broadford Com Housing & Childcare Facility CLG	Limerick Market Trustees · Fleadh by the Feale
Light Moves	Limerick Food Group · Hearsay International Audio Festival
Lumen Street Theatre	Limerick Food Group
Limerick Literary Festival	Identified collaboration opportunities outside of the group
Fleadh by the Feale	Broadford Com Housing & Childcare Facility CLG
Pig N Porter	Limerick Market Trustees

Distribution of 2018/2019 funding

15 Festivals and Events took part on the training programme. 3 of the groups who attended did not apply. 12 of those who participated applied for funding in the current round. 11 of the participating Festivals and Events received funding from the 2018 open call. 75% of those who attended significantly increased the level of funding they received from 2017 to 2018 (please see below table comparing levels of funding in 2017 with levels of funding granted in 2018). 1 Festival received funding directly from the GMA fund. Please see below a map detailing the distribution of monies across the City and County.

Funding annual comparison and municipal district breakdown for 15 Festivals and Events





Top 3 changes made as a result of the programme 2

- Identified collaboration opportunities as a direct result of attending the programme
- Made changes or improvements to Governance
- Made changes or improvements to Marketing
- Have put structures in plan to develop a strategic plan for their Festival or event
- Made changes or improvements to financial planning
- Changed their approach to grant writing
- Made changes or improvements to succession planning, growing the team or delegating

The figures presented in this chart are expected to increase over the coming 12 month period.

Tangible outcomes of the programme

Key areas targeted for improvement during the delivery of this programme included providing the participants with key skills and information while assisting them in building sustainable Festivals and Events. An element of creating successful Festivals and Events is to implement structures, systems and processes to manage all elements of the Festival and Event. All participating Festivals and Events were asked what tangible outcomes they have achieved or that they will put in place as a result of the programme. Key areas cited are:

- Marketing and promotional strategy
- Governance and procedures
- Succession planning and growing a committee
- Financial planning and budgeting
- Change to the approach in grant writing

Most of the Festivals and Events have made changes to several of the above. Some have commented that they have not met as a committee or have not yet had the time to put these changes into effect to date. However, they are confident that changes will be made in the above areas. The chart to the right of the page presents the changes have been made to date. This is a baseline chart based on data collected seven weeks after the Programme was completed. It is anticipated that these figures will increase over the coming twelve month period.

Tangible documents produced as a result of the programme

	Marketing or promotional plan	Budget	Growth or development strategy	Governance plan and procedures	Other
Éigse Michael Hartnett	Yes	Yes	Under Review	Yes	Succession Plan
Limerick Food Group	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Cappamore Show	Yes	In Place	Under Review	Yes	
Limerick Market Trustees	Yes	Yes	In progress	In Place	
The Limerick Opera Festival	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress	
Féile Luimní	Under Review	Yes	Under Review	In Place	
Saint Keiran's Heritage Assoc.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Broadford Concert	Yes	Yes	Yes	In Place	
Broadford Com Housing & Childcare Facility CLG	Yes	Yes	Yes	In progress	
Light Moves	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Lumen Street Theatre	Yes	Yes	In progress	In progress	
Limerick Literary Festival	In progress	Yes	In progress	In progress	
Fleadh by the Feale	Under Review	Yes	In progress	In progress	
Pig N Porter	Yes	Yes	Yes	In progress	

Key Observations and Feedback

Participant Observations and feedback

- Some participants welcomed the programme as an opportunity to learn
- All feedback from participants was very positive in relation to the content and delivery of the training programme. Participants found the information useful and relevant albeit a lot to take in over a short and intense period of time.
- Participants enjoyed the Professional Development Programme and found the opportunity to meet and network with other Festivals and Events groups to be one of the highlights of the programme.
- Participants have requested the availability of more workshops, similar in nature to this programme, but spread out over a longer period of time. They felt that the networking opportunities are an essential part of this type of programme. Events will take a similar format to the existing model used by the Local Enterprise Office. This model could be adapted to suit the committee members and specific requirements of Festivals and Events.
- The participants engaged well with the trainer and other participants.
- The programme was well attended by individuals and committees as a whole.

Areas for Development

- Some participants saw the programme as a distraction to organising the Festival or Event. Attitudes in relation to the programme tended to change over time. Opinions also differed among committee members of the same Festivals or Events.
- Some participants commented that the programme required a significant level of commitment. They found that the timing of the programme was not ideal. The Programme could have been improved by running the Programme during off peak Festival and Events times.
- Overall they felt that the delivery of the "Grant writing application" module could have been delivered earlier in the Programme to facilitate those who were submitting application for the 2019 call. The timing of this Programme was deliberate and planned to ensure that all Festivals and Events who were applying in this call received a fair and equal opportunity.
- Some participants expressed disappointment that the funding they received from Limerick City and County Council Festivals and Events Grant Calls was considerably less than what they had applied for. Albeit they recognised the competitive nature of the fund and agreed that they received funding in line with other Festivals and Events of similar size in the City and County.

Recommendations

All 15 Festivals and Events were keen to see future events and workshops take place and cited the networking opportunity provided by the programme as a key outcome. All of those who attended would like to receive more training or assistance in certain areas for their Festival or Event. Recommendations made by those who took part in the evaluation focussed on 3 key points:

- 1** Future Professional Development Programmes could:
 - a** Include the facilitating trainer visiting an actual steering committee meeting, with a view to meeting all committee members, as a way of reinforcing key areas highlighted from the Professional Development programme.
 - b** Deliver the Programme over a longer period of time to allow for implementation of learning outcomes as the density of information provided is high, this may also allow for use of more than one location to ease the travel burden for more rural participants.
 - c** Could take place earlier or later in the year to allow for immediate implementation of recommendations and suggestions from the programme and to avoid the delay caused by the holiday period.
- 2** Legacy programmes for those who participated in this programme could consist of quarterly workshops in partnership with Local Enterprise Office Limerick. The format of the events would take a similar format to existing Local Enterprise Office Limerick Events. Events could include but limited to; Facilitated networking, collaboration and a common topic for discussion, ideally with an update from the Culture and Arts Department.
- 3** Topics for inclusion in the workshops could include but are not limited to; Finance and Budgeting, Marketing, Promotion and Sales, Managing people, Understanding people and personalities, building a successful committee, Communication, Public Relations, Grant Writing, Setting, Managing and recording Key Performance Indicators.
- 4** Grant Writing Workshops were highlighted as a key area for development, which could be provided in advance of Grant Calls. The Culture and Arts Department does provide clinics to potential applicants each year.
- 5** The development of a Toolkit for Festivals and Events to build strategies, achieve success and sustainability as a shared resource.
- 6** All participating Festivals and Events who attended this Programme have the potential to scale. Key to the success and sustainability of each Festival and Event are resources and a strong structured committee with the commitment, determination, and vision to drive their Festivals and Events.

Appendix 1

Participating Festivals and Events Profiles

01 Limerick Food Group

Metropolitan District

Olivia O'Sullivan attended all workshops on behalf of the committee. There are 11 committee members leading the Limerick Food Group. They provide a series of promotional Festivals and Events in Limerick which promote Limerick-based food business. These Festivals and Events are targeted at local food business owners, the local community, and visitors to the area. They provide a networking platform for food business owners. Following the programme, they have made some significant changes in the area of governance and will be launching a membership policy for the organisation in the coming months.

02 Cappamore Show

Cappamore/Killmallock Municipal District

P.J. Blackwell was the contact person for the Cappamore Show. This group attended all modules and multiple committee members attended each workshop. They have 140 committee members with 15 people on the Executive Committee. They are an agricultural show, and the community is at the core of what they deliver. They engage the community annually by hosting this show and maintain links with those who have left the town, region or country. In 2019 their festival programme will focus on the theme of promoting positive mental health and awareness. This will be supported by Government agencies, farming bodies and authorities.

03 Limerick Market Trustees

Metropolitan District

David Fitzgerald attended all modules on behalf of Limerick Market Trustees. They have 27 on their committee. This is made up of 18 County Councillors and 9 members from the Chamber of Commerce. Their focus is on engaging the local community. Limerick Market Trustees run a series of markets in Limerick for Limerick people. This funding application paid particular attention to the Limerick Garden festival and festival focussed on horticulture and offering a showcase for horticulture in Limerick. Their next events will take place in collaboration with Pigtown followed by the Christmas market and concert.

04 Saint Kieran's Heritage Association

Rathkeale Adare Municipal District

Richard O'Donnell and Mary Kury attended the programme on behalf of their committee. There are 5 people in total on the committee. They focus on Irish Heritage and highlight local heritage to the local community and to attract visitors to the area. They are currently focusing on building a sustainable committee to drive their Heritage Association for the future.

05 The Limerick Opera Festival

Metropolitan District

Ger Reidy attended the programme on behalf of his Festival. This festival is at concept stage. There are 4 committee members and they will run their first event in October 2018. The Limerick Opera Festival will run Operatic Events for the Limerick community to enhance the Opera Tradition within the City and County. Following on from the training programme and in particular the one-to-one session, the committee decided not to submit an application for 2019 funding.

Appendix 1

Participating Festivals and Events Profiles

06 Éigse Michael Hartnett

Newcastle West Municipal District

Vicki Nash attended the programme on behalf of Éigse Michael Hartnett. Éigse Michael Hartnett have 6 committee members. They promote Literature and the Arts. They deliver readings and visual performances from writers and readers to the general public. This festival is funded under the Framework for Collaboration with the Arts Council of Ireland.

07 Féile Luimnigh

Metropolitan District (operates county wide)

Eileen Fitzgerald attended the programme on behalf of the Festival. There are 11 people in total on the committee with 6 on the Executive. They provide a platform for people of Limerick and the surrounding regions to hone and develop performance skills before a live audience. They focus on themes of Music, Voice, Art and Gaeilge. The committee are currently focusing on their calendar of events for 2019.

08 Broadford Concert

Newcastle West Municipal District

Máire O'Donnell attended the programme on behalf of Broadford Concert. There are 5 members on the committee and they focus on the themes of classical and musical theatre. They provide classical entertainment locally to people in the local community. They will not focus on adding to their list of committee members and performers.

09 Light Moves and Dance Limerick

Metropolitan District

Jenny Traynor attended all workshops on behalf of Light Moves. Emer Casey attended some modules on behalf of Dance Limerick. There are 6 committee members driving Light Moves. Light Moves showcases the best of cutting edge international work to Irish audiences and provides opportunities for Irish artists to showcase their work and to participate in professional development opportunities. The festival draws local, national and international audiences by offering opportunities to watch, learn, film, compose, dance, discuss and participate. They focus on themes of Dance, film, media and the Arts. The Light Moves Festival will take place in October 2018. They are currently researching the possibility of Arts programme funding from the Arts Council of Ireland.

10 Lumen Street Theatre

Metropolitan District

Martin Shannon and Giordana Gioche attended the programme jointly on behalf of their committee. They have 3 committee members. They focus on themes of Halloween and a celebration of Limericks folklore through street theatre, night parades and community workshops. They deliver community workshops to create props and puppets for the local community to entertain and connect with the Limerick populace and expect a broader audience in 2019.

Appendix 1

Participating Festivals and Events Profiles

11 Broadford Community Housing and Childcare Facility CLG

Newcastle West Municipal District

Bridgid Curtin attended all modules on behalf of Broadford Community Housing and Childcare facility. There are 6 committee members on the board. They provide their community with a traditional annual Autumn Festival. They provide local entertainment through a carnival type event to all members of the local community. They give those who have left the community a reason to return. At the heart of what they do is their community, and they focus on themes of traditional and pop music. They are currently reviewing the strategy for the Festival to make amendments for the future.

12 Limerick Literary Festival

Metropolitan District

Marie Hackett was the main contact for the Limerick Literary Festival. There are 8 people on the committee and they shared attendance on the programme. Limerick Literary Festival are located in the metro area and focus on themes of Literature, cabaret and music. They bring literary contributors and literary figures to Limerick City to reach the local community in Limerick. This is a festival of reading to readers from readers. Over the coming year they plan to hire an administrator and plan to run more events across the city and county to promote literature.

13 Hearsay International Audio Festival

Cappamore/Kilmallock Municipal District

Diarmuid McIntyre attended on behalf of Hearsay. He was not available during the time frame to take part in the evaluation process.

14 Fleadh by the Feale

Adare/Rathkeale Municipal District

Fleadh by the Feale had various committee members attend each workshop module. Pat Quille was the main contact point for the Festival. Fleadh by the Feale has 12 committee members in total. They focus on themes of traditional entertainment, through music, storytelling and busking. They have innovatively identified a niche market of “Bone Playing” and they will focus their attention on building a festival around this tradition for the future. They promote all aspects of traditional entertainment and culture for all age groups of the community.

15 Pig N Porter

Metropolitan District Council

Pat Rickard attended all workshops on behalf of Pig N Porter. There are 8 committee members on the board of Pig N Porter. They focus on themes of entertainment with music and sport. Pig N Porter run a music and sports festival at an off-season time of the year for the local community in Limerick. They wish to focus on developing additional programming to diversify audiences and maximise use of the festival venue. To achieve this they intend to develop more events with a cultural and music focus taking place from the Thursday prior to the Rugby 7's.

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Feedback from the Participants

Excellent facilitation, excellent
networking opportunity, great
learning, fantastic opportunity,
delighted to have taken part



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& Contae **Luimnigh**

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& County Council

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