

The background of the cover features a stylized map of Limerick, Ireland, rendered in various shades of blue and green. The map is composed of geometric shapes, creating a mosaic effect. Several birds, including swans and geese, are depicted in flight across the map. A large, stylized 'L' shape is prominent in the center, containing a detailed landscape with a river, hills, and a bridge.

# GLOBAL LIMERICK

## 2021 - 2025

LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL'S DIASPORA STRATEGY

Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**  
**Limerick** City  
& County Council

  
**GlobalLimerick**  
CONNECTING HEART & HOME

ATLANTIC EDGE  
**LIMERICK**  
EUROPEAN EMBRACE

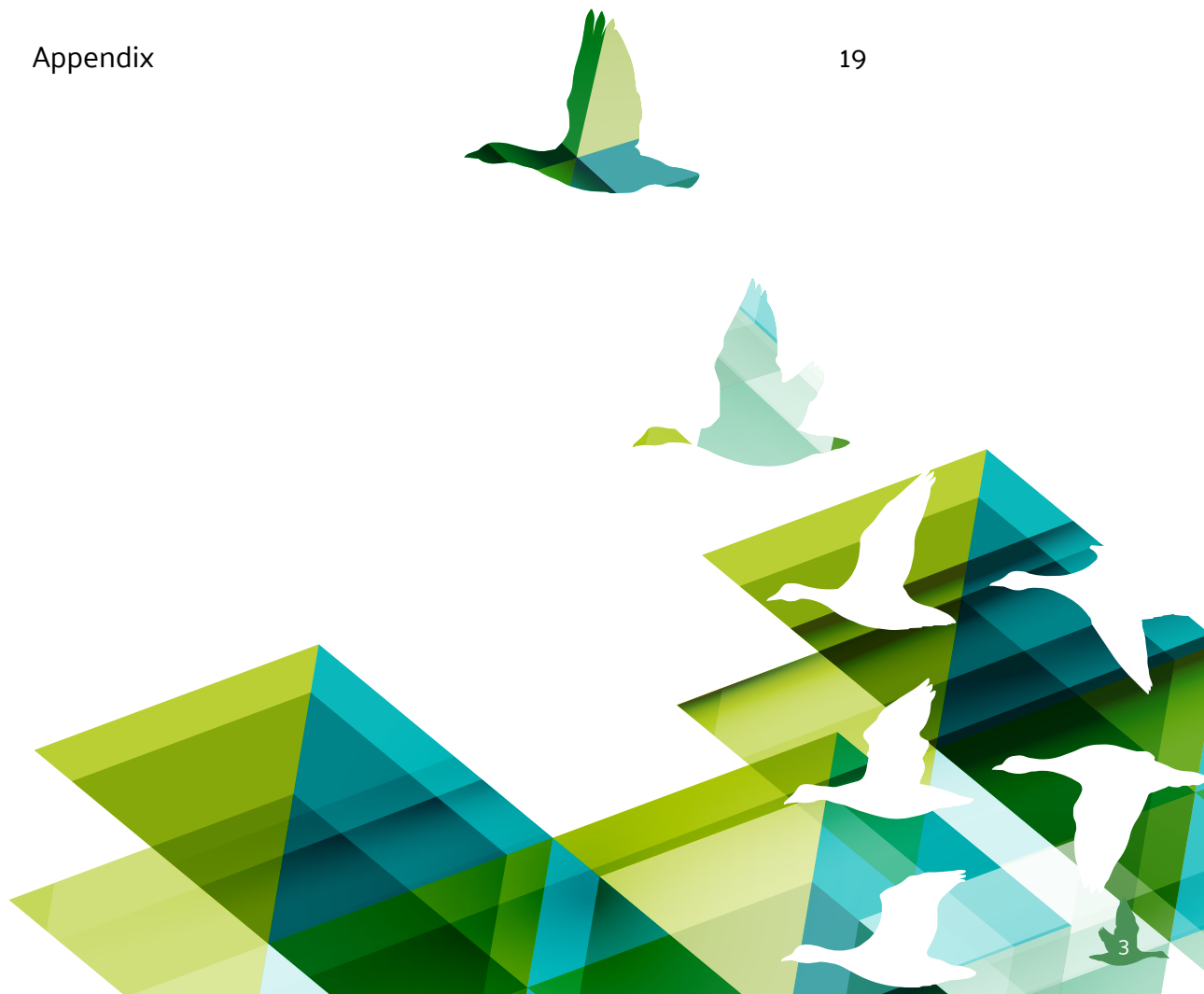






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## Global Limerick 2021-2025

### Chairperson's Foreword

As Chair of the Global Limerick Advisory Group, I am honoured to introduce this important new initiative being launched by Limerick City and County Council (LCCC).

Throughout the centuries, Limerick city and county have been intrinsically connected to the wider world. In the early 1690s, following the historic Treaty of Limerick, came the Flight of the Wild Geese, when approximately 15,000 people left Limerick for continental Europe. Today, literally millions of their ancestors are scattered throughout Europe and the world carrying the DNA of Limerick with them wherever they go. In the modern era, Limerick and the region have become synonymous with international travel. For a period in the 1930s, Foynes was the centre of the emerging global aviation industry as the first commercial transatlantic flights, the flying boats, used it as their European base. In 1939, as land-airports emerged as the future, the Irish Government looked across the Shannon Estuary to Rineanna as the location for what became Shannon Airport, a critical new gateway for Ireland to the world. Meanwhile, the unique deep-sea harbour at Foynes became increasingly strategically important for the new State's connectivity to the world and continues to be such today as Shannon Foynes Port.

The point of this brief pen-picture is simple – Limerick, both through the city and through its towns, villages and communities around the county, has had a global vocation from its very earliest times and continues to value that vocation deeply today. Supported by those two powerful connecting portals, Shannon Airport and Shannon Foynes Port, modern-day Limerick has a multiplicity of global linkages at the heart of its everyday life. Many household names of global industry have large, highly successful operations in Limerick, spread across a whole range of sectors. Indigenous Limerick companies do business all around the world every day. Tourism, Sport, Arts, Culture, Heritage and Education play a huge role in the life of Limerick and in each case, global connectivity is critical to their success. The Department of Foreign Affairs has an office with a staff complement of around 130 on Henry

St., Limerick where, it co-ordinates over €800 million of annual overseas spending by Ireland in support to developing countries, international organisations and NGOs.

Central to that global web of connectivity is Limerick's Diaspora, the huge numbers of people of Limerick birth, heritage or affinity who live and work around the world, but for whom that bond to Limerick as their Home Place is powerful, ever present and enduring.

For that reason, LCCC has been working for a number of years on deepening and enriching that connection to Limerick's people around the world (and, of course, around the rest of Ireland too).

In 2013, during the National Year of the Gathering, a project devised by the Government of Ireland whereby families and communities all around the country invited their kith and kin living internationally to visit during the year, Limerick, via LCCC played a central role and was one of the counties hosting large numbers of Gatherings. In 2014, the year Limerick was the Inaugural National City of Culture, the Council established a working group to explore the possibility of closer links between Limerick and its Diaspora, not just for a once off event like the Gathering but on an ongoing basis. This led to a project called Global Limerick which has been up and running for a number of years. In 2020, the Council decided to take a further step and develop a Limerick Diaspora Strategy. To support it in that process, an advisory group was established, which I have the honour to chair and, despite the complexity of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have been working over the last year or so to complete the strategy which we are now delighted to be launching.

In writing the foreword for this strategy, I wanted to make a number of broad, contextual points.

Firstly, in taking this whole initiative forward we have been working in close concert with the relevant government authorities, and in particular the Department of Foreign Affairs, who as mentioned have a major office in Limerick. A brief

word, therefore, about what has been happening at national level. In effect, Ireland has been going through a process of reflection on its national connection to the wider world, including in the context of Brexit. In 2018 the Government decided to double Ireland's footprint internationally between then and 2025 in a new plan called "Global Ireland 2025". That policy was re-affirmed as a key element of the Programme for Government of June 2020 and forms part of the policy framework of many Government agencies. A central pillar of the Global Ireland Plan is Ireland's relationship to its estimated 70 million strong Diaspora. In a further evolution in that regard, the Department of Foreign Affairs published 'Global Ireland, Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025' in late 2020.

It is the wish of the Government that over time other public bodies, including local authorities, would also align their international engagement with the Global Ireland Plan and with the National Diaspora Strategy. Accordingly in devising this Limerick Diaspora Strategy – which we are calling "Global Limerick – 2021-2025" – we have drawn heavily on the National Diaspora Strategy and sought to ensure the closest possible alignment with it. This will be important also in terms of the implementation of Global Limerick, since as we take that forward we will be seeking the support of, and working closely with, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Government of Ireland Embassies, Consulates and Offices around the world. Domestically, we will work closely with all the relevant government bodies to ensure maximum synergies with their activities – for instance, the IDA, EI, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Culture Ireland, Creative Ireland and so on. We will also be availing of the support and expertise of Ireland Reaching Out, the Government-funded project which works with parishes all around Ireland in helping them to connect with their Diaspora, particularly in the context of ancestry research.

I should also make clear that in devising Global Limerick, we sought to ensure that there was close alignment as well with LCCC's overall and ambitious vision for Limerick, the Limerick 2030

Plan, in respect of which Limerick's international reach plays a pivotal role. That reality is exemplified by the fact that when Limerick was recently designing a new brand to match its 21st century identity, it chose "Atlantic Edge, European Embrace", signifying that Limerick and the world go hand in hand.

A further key contextual point is that the focus of the Global Limerick Strategy is very much based on a mutual relationship of trust between Limerick and its Diaspora. In this regard, one of the learnings of the Gathering project of 2013 was the power of the invitation by the "Home Place". In this case, Limerick is the 'home place' and taking the initiative. We are saying that our relationship with our Diaspora is critical to us and that it is entirely one of mutuality. This is captured powerfully in the vision for the strategy, as follows: "Global Limerick – a vibrant, integrated global community comprising those living in the Home Place of Limerick and those based around the world who have a connection to it by birth, heritage or affinity".

Building on that foundation stone of mutuality, we are suggesting a new compact between Limerick and its Diaspora, in which the people living in Limerick today pledge to be guardians or keepers of the Home Place, heritage and ancestry of those who have left, and the Limerick Diaspora agree to be supporters and allies of today's Limerick in a complex, global world. In that way, each side is providing something of value to the other and our intention is that this mutuality will be at the heart of everything we do together.

This vision and compact are intended to be strongly inclusive and embrace also the many people from other countries and cultures who have made Limerick their home in recent decades and who have enriched us with their energy and talents. It also includes those who have no family connection to Limerick but have an affinity through time spent there as a student or working or just feel Limerick in their soul! Limerick has a long history of valuing diversity and that will be a hallmark also on this strategy.

The goal of this strategy is to give life to that vision and that compact on a daily basis by means of a series of tangible goals and these are set out in this document. We are excited about taking them forward over the coming years.

To help us ensure we are positioning the strategy on a basis that takes the fullest possible account of the views and perspectives of our Diaspora, we undertook some months ago a survey of Limerick people living around the world. The findings were very helpful and interesting and have helped inform the strategy in several respects. We are very grateful to everybody who took the time to contribute to the survey.

There is one further contextual reason why the publication of this strategy now is particularly timely. One of the unexpected consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the exponential growth in virtual communications technology. Zooming, webinars, virtual conferences and gatherings of all kinds have meant that connecting people globally is now in effect a new norm. That has obvious positive implications for any initiative aimed at promoting closer bonds between home places and their Diaspora. To that end, we will be putting a big focus in the implementation of the strategy on developing an enhanced digital platform which can facilitate such communication in the fullest way possible.

Global Limerick 2021-2025 should also be viewed in the context of the decision by the Government, supported by the people of Limerick in a plebiscite in May 2019, to establish a directly elected Mayor of Limerick with executive functions. While at the time of writing of this strategy, the scope and nature of the role is being considered in legislative terms, it is expected that a key focus of the directly elected Mayor will be Limerick's engagement with the wider world, and in particular Limerick's Diaspora. Once elected, we would see the directly elected Mayor as a key leadership figure in terms of that engagement, building on the important work of previous Mayors in that regard.

In terms of implementation of the Strategy, our

focus will be on "learning by doing" and will very much be action-oriented. We wish to be nimble and agile and to adapt as we go. This strategy document itself is intended as the overall roadmap, signposting the broad direction of travel. We will be following it up with a detailed action plan which will contain the individual projects and actions and how we are going to implement them. While the overall reach of the strategy will be world-wide, we intend to begin with several pilot projects which will help to ensure that our approach is practical and sustainable. LCCC wishes this to be a long-term commitment and believe that it is important that the foundations are solidly-based.

In personal terms, I have long been interested in Diaspora engagement. As Chairman of the advisory board of the Gathering Ireland 2013, I saw first-hand the powerful impact a two-way engagement can have on Diaspora and the "Home Place" when the latter takes the lead in inviting and convening. As a Limerick-native, I am very proud of the major focus LCCC is placing on the area and I pay tribute to the Council led by Mayor Michael Collins and Chief Executive Dr Pat Daly and his colleagues Vincent Murray and Pat Fitzgerald in this regard. My special thanks to Rory Corbett at LCCC for his labour of love on this work.

I am also most grateful to my colleagues on the Global Limerick Advisory Group. The full list of the Advisory Group is set out in the attached Appendix and I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of them for their invaluable input. Each has contributed with great interest and insight. We have been greatly assisted by the support on an ex-officio basis of Donal Cronin, the Head of the Irish Aid Office of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Limerick and his colleagues at the Department's HQ in Dublin, in particular, Brendan Rogers, John Concannon and Micheál Smith. We greatly value the close working with the Department on this and look forward to continuing that in the implementation of the strategy.

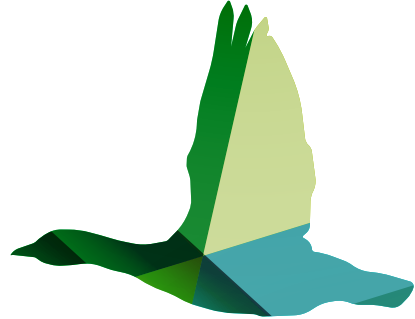
Finally, I would like to draw your attention to a special photograph included below. Courtesy of



Patrick O'Neill, it depicts the scene on 16 March 1948 in the Manhattan Centre in New York at the St Patrick's Eve Ball of the Limerick Association of New York. The old saying "a picture is worth a thousand words" has rarely seemed more apt! To me, this photograph summarises the enduring power of the bond between Limerick and its Diaspora and serves as an inspiration to us in taking forward this strategy. We greatly look forward now to writing a new chapter in this timeless story.

**Tim O'Connor**

**Chairperson  
Global Limerick Advisory Group**



## Introduction

Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) is pleased to launch this important new initiative in respect of Limerick's engagement with its Diaspora by creating a first Global Limerick Diaspora Strategy. Closely aligned with national diaspora approaches, LCCC sees the strategy as a statement of the importance it attaches to the relationship between the people of Limerick and its Diaspora around the world.

When we talk about Limerick Diaspora, we are talking about people who are natives of Limerick or anyone with an affinity to Limerick, through ancestry, education, work, culture, sport or other interests but now live in a foreign country or indeed elsewhere in Ireland. Diaspora can be emigrants or descendants of emigrants, whose identity and sense of belonging have been shaped by their migration experience and background. It is estimated that Limerick Diaspora may now exceed over 3 million people worldwide, the origins of much of which can be traced back in particular to the 1690s "Flight of the Wild Geese", when approximately 15,000 people left Limerick for continental Europe.

As mentioned in the Chairperson's Foreword, our vision for Limerick is also one that celebrates inclusion and diversity and embraces the many Irish of mixed heritage among us - people of migrant origin or from other countries and cultures who have made Limerick their home and who have enriched us with their energy and talents. We greatly value their presence among us. We look forward to the exciting contribution they can make to this Diaspora strategy and have devised particular goals in that regard.

The Chairperson's foreword also mentioned the survey of Limerick Diaspora around the world which was undertaken as part of the preparation of this strategy. The survey findings gave us great insights about our global community, and where

they are based. There is a real interest on the part of a significant group of people with a connection to Limerick, whether through heritage or affinity, in maintaining a bond to the "Home Place". Wherever they are in the world, Limerick remains a strong part of their identity. The survey suggests that there is particular interest in the connection on the part of people living in the United States. There are probably many reasons why that is the case - that was the country of destination for the largest grouping of Irish emigrants over the years, the fact that US society in many ways is an emigrant society with "hyphenated identities" a common feature etc. Interest in ancestry and family roots, and travelling to Limerick in furthering that, suggests that this too should be a focus of our strategy if we are to be relevant to the lives of our Diaspora. Culture, heritage and the arts, together with a focus on travel/tourism, will have an important part to play. These insights will help shape future Diaspora engagement initiatives both in Limerick and abroad. A report on the findings of the survey can be found on Limerick.ie via this [link](#)

We recognise that, in order to support economic development and to attract investment and tourists into our city and county, we must ensure we have a strong brand and reputation internationally. This strategy builds on important initiatives of recent years, such as the Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan and the adoption last year of a new brand identity for Limerick, "Atlantic Edge, European Embrace".

This Diaspora Strategy comprises a number of elements as follows:

- **Our Vision Statement;**
- **Our Mission Statement;**
- **A set of Strategic Objectives.**



As already mentioned, the strategy is action-oriented and the focus is on the achievable and taking an incremental, “learning by doing” approach. The goal is to demonstrate what is possible and then over time to build on what has already been delivered. The detailed action plan which will follow the publication of this strategy will set out the specific projects which will be delivered, beginning with a number of pilots. In taking this approach we are recognising that while there is undoubtedly huge potential in the most enhanced engagement possible between Limerick and its Diaspora, we also acknowledge that there are many complexities involved which need to be treated carefully and with respect. We hope that in this strategy we have got the balance right.











## Our Vision

Global Limerick – a vibrant, integrated global community comprising those living in the Home Place of Limerick and those based around the world who have a connection to it by birth, heritage or affinity”.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to animate and mobilise the connection between Limerick and its Diaspora. Based on a new joint compact, Limerick will support its Diaspora with their connection to the ‘home place’ and the Diaspora in turn will act as ambassadors and champions for Limerick in a wide range of areas – primarily business, culture, heritage, the arts, tourism, international education and sport. This will be a two-way street of engagement and inter-connection, based on a spirit of inclusion, diversity and mutual respect. Driven by Limerick City and County Council, Global Limerick will be fully aligned with the Government of Ireland’s Global Ireland 2025 Strategy and the Department of Foreign Affairs Diaspora Strategy.

## Strategic Objectives

- 1. Our People:** Connecting our communities, at home and abroad, will be at the heart of our Diaspora Strategy.
- 2. Our Prosperity:** Limerick will embrace economic ties with our Diaspora in regions of strategic importance on the basis of mutual benefit.

## 3. Our Arts, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Tourism:

Arts, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Tourism are key drivers of the relationship between Limerick and its Diaspora. This strategy will place a strong focus on these areas.

## Implementation Goals

Based on our vision, mission and strategic objectives, we have devised a set of practical goals through which the strategy will be implemented.

### 1. Our People

Connecting communities, at home and abroad, will be at the heart of what we do. When we say ‘our people’, we mean those living in Limerick today and those of Limerick origins or affinity living elsewhere around the world, or indeed elsewhere in Ireland, but for whom Limerick will always be their ‘home place’.

The importance of harnessing a mutually beneficial relationship with our people cannot be over-stated. Diaspora play an important role for social and economic development, growth opportunities, and connections between communities in Limerick and countries throughout the world. Engagement between our people at home and abroad is a vital strategic asset to Limerick. Our Diaspora can be our best global ambassadors, promoting our value proposition and providing assistance in increasing our brand value.

As we make clear in our vision and mission statements, it is critical that the engagement with





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our Diaspora is a two-way street, based on mutual respect. For our part, therefore, we will be very much seeking to ensure that we support them in every way we can in their connection to Limerick as their 'home place'. Our survey has been very helpful to us in identifying specific ways we can do that and this Strategy will deliver on particular actions in that regard. Often the question has been asked "what can our Diaspora do for us?". A key question we are seeking to answer is "what can we do for our Diaspora?".

Rewarding and recognising Diaspora who make a significant contribution to Limerick can generate a positive reaction from our global community. This recognition will help highlight many of the efforts made on the part of particular individuals or organisations, which can otherwise go unrecognised.

#### **We will:**

- Act as guardians of our shared 'home place', its heritage and the ancestry of those who have left.
- Create a formal system whereby we recognise and acknowledge the contributions of members of our Limerick Diaspora.
- Support organisations and communities that protect heritage sites and memorials of Limerick emigrants and our forgotten Diaspora.
- Identify tribes with strong Limerick connections with a view to encouraging and supporting those involved to organise Clan Gatherings.
- Expand Limerick's digital outreach by developing a single digital platform providing content and resources for all Diaspora groups.
- Work with the Irish of mixed heritage living in Limerick to develop projects which recognise the particular richness that they can bring to the Limerick diaspora story.
- Through a partnership with Ireland Reaching Out, we will provide a digital solution for Diaspora seeking to gather information about their ancestral roots in Limerick.

- Create an online Diaspora directory to raise visibility of organisations and activities and provide a communications resource for Limerick community groups.

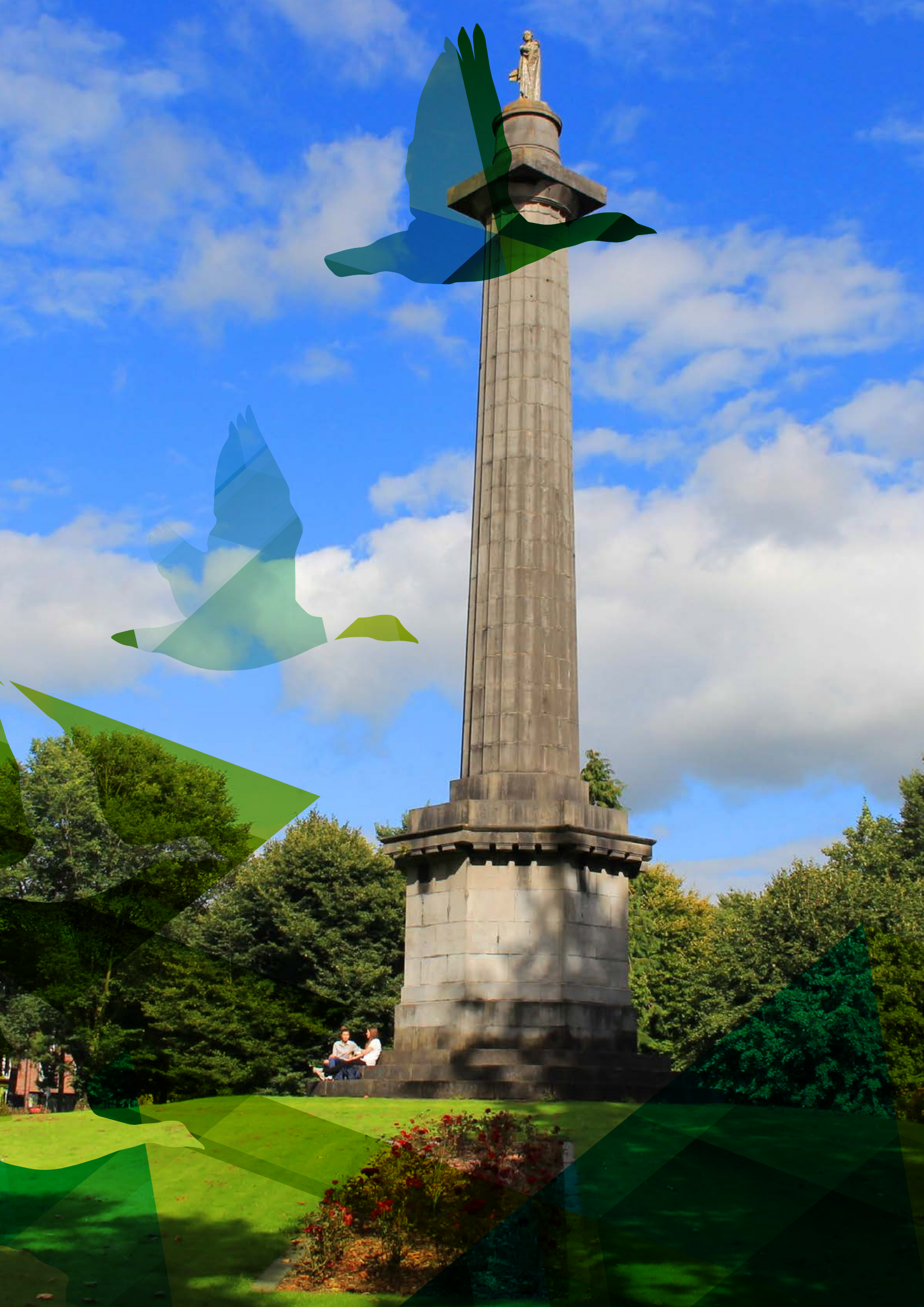
### **Returning to Limerick**

Returning emigrants bring with them skills and knowledge gained abroad that can help develop both national and local economies. We recognise that there can be practical challenges for returning emigrants in settling back into life in Ireland and it is important to have the maximum supports in place in that regard.

#### **We will:**

- Monitor barriers to returning and adopt measures to remove them where possible.
- Improve the provision of information on returning to Limerick, including via liaising with Government and other support bodies in the field, and provide information for people living overseas including information on skills shortages, housing and education.
- Explore new approaches in this regard – e.g. via the provision of global mobility expertise or a concierge-type service.







## 2. Our Prosperity

Limerick will build mutually beneficial economic ties with our Diaspora. Our Diaspora hold invaluable expertise and insights into trade and innovation across the globe. This international network has long played a pivotal role in creating and deepening economic connections between Limerick and global markets.

Our Diaspora can provide strategic mentoring and guidance to Limerick companies and organisations in pursuing trade, investment and collaborative opportunities in overseas markets. Overseas linkages in the field of education and innovation can also contribute to Limerick's growing research and development sector. Coordination groups in strategic locations where Limerick already has a strong footprint will enable us to exploit mutually beneficial opportunities across education, trade and investment.

### **We will:**

- Support the establishment of regional business forums in strategic locations where Limerick has strong economic ties
- Provide supports designed to advance Limerick businesses who wish to expand overseas
- Provide supports for our Diaspora members who wish start a business in Limerick
- Facilitate and strengthen links between Limerick, our state development agencies and our Diaspora network.

## Education and Alumni networks

The Higher Education Sector in Limerick is already highly active globally to powerful effect. All three Higher Education Institutions have strong footprints internationally and the large number of students from overseas studying in Limerick is a key factor for each of them. All three have long valued the contribution of diaspora engagement in that regard and that is why we have been pleased and grateful to have such strong support from them in the drawing up of this Strategy. We wish to work closely with them to further enhance the strong progress they have

made over the years in partnering with Limerick Diaspora. Alumni connections are particularly key in that regard. Many international students, as well as Limerick-born and other Irish-born graduates who have studied here, seek to remain connected to Limerick. The role of third level education institutions in advancing the economic development of Limerick can never be over-stated. Limerick is currently home to over 25,000 higher education students. We note the potential of the newly announced merger between LIT and AIT to create a Technological University to enhance that number further.

We also recognise the critical importance of the Further Education and Training Sector and its large student population in Limerick. We look forward to exploring with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board the potential of a partnership with them in terms of an enhanced engagement between Limerick and our Diaspora.

Not only do our education institutions provide a steady flow of talent, they also play a vital role in raising Limerick's profile internationally and contributing to our wider economy. Ireland's international education strategy supports the creation of international alumni networks.

We also note the particular contribution that can be made to diaspora engagement by the many Language Schools in Limerick, and we look forward to working with those also in executing this strategy.

### **We will:**

- Work with the Limerick institutions in the Further and Higher Education Sector to explore the role that enhanced diaspora engagement can play in their development, to the benefit of all parties.
- Support the development of global alumni associations and deepen engagement with existing associations.
- Appoint volunteer "Alumni Ambassadors" to be advocates of education in Limerick through sharing their own experiences of Limerick.
- Develop ties between alumni networks and

Limerick cultural, community and business networks.

- Work with the Language Schools in Limerick to explore how they can best contribute to diaspora engagement, on a mutually beneficial basis.

### 3. Our Arts, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Tourism

Arts, Culture, Heritage and Sport are key drivers of the relationship between Limerick and our Diaspora. This is the arena in which Limerick and its Diaspora come together in a powerful, meaningful way.

Limerick's culture has always had an international dimension and reach. In the modern era, that international torch has been carried by great practitioners such as Kate O'Brien, Richard Harris, Terry Wogan, Frank McCourt, Donald Teskey, Bill Whelan, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Dolores O'Riordan and Denise Chaila to name but a few. Many institutions and organisations around the city and county do extensive work in promoting and nurturing all forms of culture – music, dance, literature, digital and the visual arts. Similarly, Club Limerick Global and Munster Rugby Supporters Club are bringing together and connecting Limerick

people all around the world in support of our teams. The success of Munster Rugby and the Limerick Hurling Team has huge resonance with our Diaspora around the world and is a source of great pride and enjoyment to Limerick people everywhere.

St. Patrick's Day is a global celebration which unites Irish communities across the world. It is a unique opportunity for diaspora groups to come together and reconnect with the 'home place'. In Limerick, the St. Patrick's Day Festival celebrates culture, music, arts and creativity and serves as a wonderful showcase for the many international and multi-cultural communities that call Limerick their home. Limerick will continue to support cultural expression among our Diaspora.

Recognised as the sporting capital of Ireland, Limerick has a strong pedigree in rugby, GAA, athletics and soccer. Our rich and unique sporting heritage, coupled with world-class facilities and the values of community participation, provide our Diaspora with a strong connection to the 'home place'.

#### We will:

- Support Limerick cultural and sporting organisations, associations and festivals around the world that celebrate our shared culture and heritage.



- Work with the Arts, Culture and Heritage community in Limerick to ensure the maximum engagement of Diaspora in Limerick festivals, events and projects.
- Work with interested stakeholders in Limerick in developing Diaspora focused events in the Arts, Culture and Heritage sectors.
- Work with our Diaspora to share Limerick culture more widely around the world.
- Promote inclusive multiculturalism and embrace the diverse range of contemporary and traditional cultural and artistic expression which Irish people of mixed heritage living in Limerick have introduced us to.
- Enhance the engagement of Limerick Diaspora in the Limerick St Patrick's Day Festival.
- Promote sporting events hosted in Limerick from Diaspora based teams.
- Highlight the participation of Limerick teams and athletes in international sporting events to our Diaspora communities.
- Support the engagement and status of women and girls in sport in the Diaspora, in line with the national strategy for women and girls.
- Develop a number of sporting and cultural exchanges.
- Work closely with the relevant state bodies involved in the Culture, Sport and Tourism Sectors.

## Diaspora and Tourism

All of these activities have the potential to make a big contribution to Limerick's tourism sector, a very important sector economically in the City and County. In recent years, LCCC has worked closely with Fáilte Ireland in exploring the potential of Diaspora engagement to make an even bigger contribution to the tourism sector, to the benefit both of our visitors and providers. In particular, the Council has collaborated extensively with Fáilte Ireland in developing the latter's Global Irish Festival Series and look forward to continuing to do so. Two

projects we have supported in that regard, I.NY and the Richard Harris International Film Festival, demonstrate the value of an enhanced focus on diaspora engagement and its impact on tourism. We set out below a short outline of each by way of illustration of the potential involved.

### I.NY

I.NY is an international cultural project held in Limerick as part of the Global Irish Festival Series. It celebrates and brings to life the shared story of Ireland and New York. With year-round audience engagement, artist collaborations and cross-Atlantic initiatives, all activity culminates in the annual I.NY Festival. Held over ten days in October each year, the festival is anchored by the I.NY Cultural and Diaspora Programmes, telling the story of the relationship through music, literature, film, theatre, dance, street-art, the I.NY Gathering, the Annie Moore talks series, and more. In addition, the festival features Enterprise and Education programming, while I.NY Explore celebrates the Irish influence on New York fashion, food, sport, politics, architecture, design, religion and more, and explores how that influence eventually returned to Ireland.

### Richard Harris International Film Festival

Limerick has a strong connection to the global film, television, moving image art and online video industries. First showcased in 2013, as part of the Gathering initiative, the Richard Harris Film Festival is an annual celebration of Richard Harris's unique talent in the city where he was born and raised. Through the festival, Irish filmmaking Diaspora are actively encouraged to showcase their work here in Limerick. It is the only film festival in Ireland which specifically encourages those of Irish descent to return home to display their work. The festival is a platform for young filmmakers, feature filmmakers from our Diaspora, theatrical performers, poets, singers and writers. With retrospective screenings throughout the year in Limerick, the festival also showcases in Cannes and at the Newport Beach Film Festival in the United States.

### The Year of the Invitation

The year 2023 will be the Year of the Invitation. This will mark the tenth anniversary of The Gathering tourism initiative. It will be a major national initiative, organised by the Government of Ireland, involving







an invitation to our Diaspora and our friends abroad to visit Ireland. Here too the Council looks forward to working closely with Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland in ensuring a strong participation by Limerick in the initiative, just as we did with the Gathering project in 2013.

### Ryder Cup 2027

Limerick's hosting of the Ryder Cup in 2027 at Adare Manor presents a significant opportunity for the region to position itself as an internationally renowned golfing destination. It is a specific action of the Limerick City and County Council Tourism strategy to work with stakeholders involved in the local golfing industry to firmly establish this reputation. The announcement that the Ryder Cup is coming to Adare means that the centenary of the world-famous event will now be held in Limerick. This event will be a huge focus for Limerick over the coming years and a fantastic opportunity to engage our Diaspora. Limerick will work closely with Fáilte Ireland, Golf Ireland and all of the relevant agencies in making this a stand-out occasion for Limerick, the Mid-West Region and Ireland.

#### We will:

- Work closely with Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, other relevant bodies and providers in the tourism sector to ensure that the connectivity between diaspora engagement and tourism are explored to the full, not in an exploitative way, but rather to mutual benefit.
- Develop a specific plan to facilitate the maximum engagement by our Diaspora in signature events such as the Year of the Invitation in 2023 and the Ryder Cup 2027.

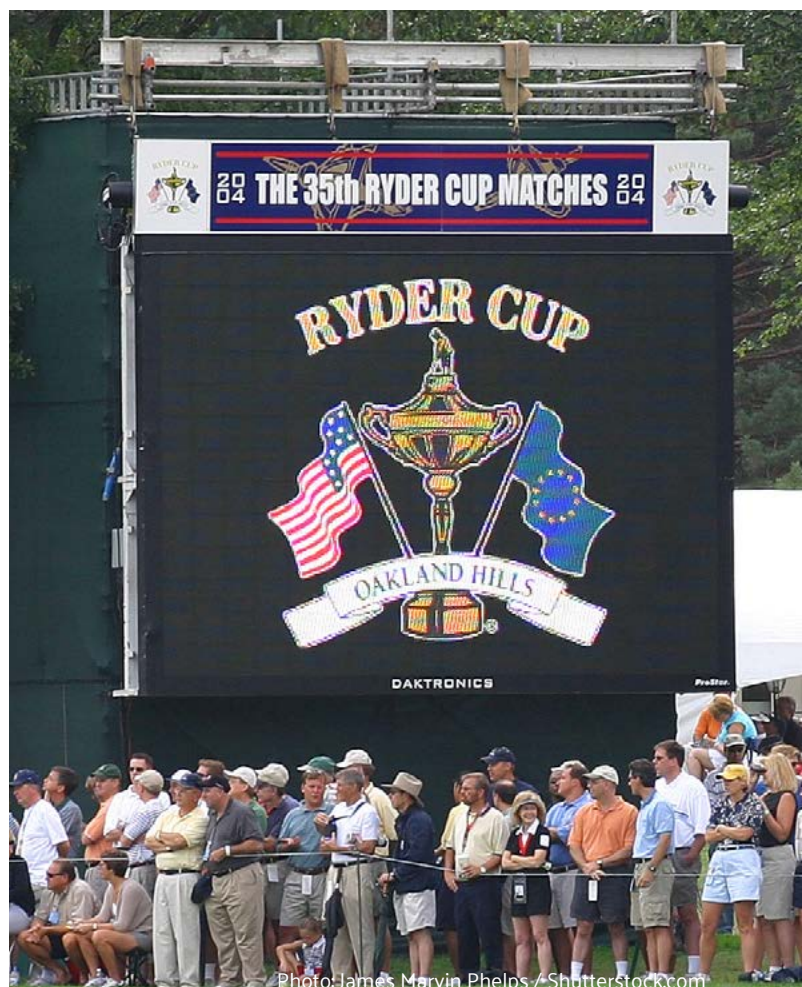
### Action Plan

As mentioned in the foreword and the introduction to this strategy, Limerick City and County Council intends as a next step to develop a detailed action plan to set out how the overall goals contained in the strategy can be turned into specific actions and implemented. We have made clear that this will be done on a practical, incremental basis, with the focus on "learning by doing" and being agile and adaptable. We intend to begin with a number of pilot projects which will involve certain locations overseas and also working with a number

of communities around Limerick. In choosing these pilots, the aim will not be to limit the scope of the strategy in any way, but rather to ensure that the strategy is implemented in a sustainable way. The action plan will also contain details of the new digital platform that LCCC is developing to facilitate the new, enhanced engagement with our Diaspora, something that will be key to the success of the strategy.

### Conclusion

We look forward to the implementation of this strategy, which will be periodically reviewed and updated based on learning as we go on. As we said at the outset, Limerick has a long history of close connection to the wider world. Our Diaspora are a key part of that wider world, of whom we are very proud in Limerick, and we are excited about starting a new chapter in our engagement with them. We hope this strategy proves a strong platform for that engagement and brings real and tangible benefits to the people of Limerick at home and all around the world. We also hope that this strategy and its implementation serve as a model for other Local Authorities to deepen links with Diaspora in their areas.



## Appendix

Global Limerick Advisory Group

Tim O'Connor, Chairperson Global Limerick Advisory Group

Dr Pat Daly, Chief Executive Limerick City and County Council

Vincent Murray, Limerick City and County Council

Pat Fitzgerald, Limerick City and County Council

Pippa Little, Limerick City and County Council

Rory Corbett, Limerick City and County Council

Geraldine Brosnan, Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

Holly Cowman, Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

Seamus Hickey, National Executive Committee, Gaelic Players Association

Donnacha McNamara, Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

Rosemarie Noone, Cultural Adviser

Majella O'Connell, University of Limerick (UL)

Brendan O'Malley, Chairperson I.NY

Dee Ryan, Limerick Chamber

Donal Cronin, ex-officio, Department of Foreign Affairs

















