



Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme



Rialtas Áitiúil Éireann
Local Government Ireland



Culture & Creativity Strategy

2023–2027



Limerick

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Forewords

Foreword from Mayor and Chief Executive

The Creative Ireland programme aims to mainstream culture and creativity in everyday life. This ambition closely aligns with the priorities of Limerick City and County Council. This Creative Ireland Culture and Creativity Strategy for Limerick is a valuable addition to our existing strategies, and at its core, is a vision that everyone in Limerick should be given the opportunity to engage and participate in cultural and creative activities.

The five priority areas which are outlined in Chapter Five are all of equal importance, and the strategy builds on the legacy, growth and reimagining of Limerick as a creative place over the last number of years.

Understanding the nature of creativity as a process, as well as its transformational power, is a central ambition within our new Culture and Creativity Strategy, and it is the many artists, makers, practitioners and creative workers who help us to harness this power for the benefit of all. Across the City and County, and encompassing everyone, from infants to those living in care homes, we believe that culture and creativity should be accessible and open to everyone.

This strategy embodies a number of core principles, which are fundamental to our approach. These principles include equity and accessibility, risk-taking, sustainability, the voice of the child and co-design practices, as well as renewed alignment with the concept of age-friendly places. In the development of this

new Culture and Creativity Strategy for 2023–2027, we have identified a number of strategic enablers, and it is through these enablers that we aim to work towards our new shared vision for Culture and Creativity in Limerick.

These enablers include our community of highly skilled artists and creatives, the process of strategic integration with local policies, our civic festivals and events, and a variety of funding strands. Other key enablers include the use of innovative technologies to foster connections, and the support of networks, partnerships and active participation. Focusing on selected projects, our work is also informed by research, evaluation and empirical data, which informs future action.

Our Creative Ireland Culture and Creativity Strategy for 2023–2027 is integrated with the Limerick Cultural Strategy (2016–2030) as well as with other interdepartmental and cross-sectoral strategies and policy documents, including the Limerick Development Plan (2022–2028), Limerick City and County Council Corporate Plan (2019–2024), Limerick 2030 Vision: An Economic and Spatial Plan, The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), Limerick Heritage Plan (2017–2030), Global Limerick Diaspora Strategy (2021–2025), Limerick’s Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019–2024), the Library Development Plan (2021–2025), Belonging To Limerick: Limerick City and County Integration Plan (2018–2022) and Innovate Limerick Growth Strategy (2021–2026) among others.

It is also closely aligned on a National level with the priorities for the Creative Ireland Programme (2023–2027), The Arts Council’s ‘Making Great Art Work’ Strategy (2016–2025), the Government

of Ireland’s Culture 2025 Strategy (2020–2025), the Local Authority Museums Network (LAMN) Strategy (2022–2026) and the Healthy Ireland Framework (2013–2025), as well as on an international level with the guiding principles of the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

As outlined in the Limerick Cultural Strategy (2016–2030), our understanding of the term ‘culture’ is informed by the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, which describes it as a “*set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs*”.

This interpretation of culture and its powerful impact on society has been a driving force behind Limerick’s regeneration initiatives over the past number of years, and it continues to guide our planning, policies and practices. Building on the concepts of multiplicity and belonging, which are fundamental themes within the Limerick Cultural Strategy (2016–2030), Limerick continues to provide inspiration and opportunities to connect, discover and celebrate our shared identity.

Our dedicated and experienced Culture and Creativity Team are in place to deliver on this ambitious new strategy, and the future for culture and creativity in Limerick has never looked brighter.

Cllr. Francis Foley

Mayor of the City and County of Limerick

Dr Pat Daly

Chief Executive of Limerick City and County Council



Artists Cleary and Connolly in the Eco Showboat Mayfly solar boat, in front of Deirdre Power and Chelsea Canavan’s Mayfly banner at the Curraghgour Boat Club during the project launch in May 2022. Limerick City and County Council. **Photo credit:** Dermot Lynch.

1 Creative Ireland 2023–2027

The Creative Ireland Programme is an all-of-government initiative committed to enhancing access to, engagement with, and enjoyment of Ireland’s culture and creativity. Within the broad range of available definitions, creativity is considered as *a set of innate abilities and learned skills; the capacity of individuals and organisations to transcend accepted ideas and norms and by drawing on imagination to create new ideas that bring additional value to human activity.*

The vision of the Creative Ireland Programme 2023–2027 is to mainstream creativity in the life of the nation so that individually and collectively, in our personal lives and in our institutions, we can realise our full creative potential thereby promoting individual, community and national wellbeing.

The Creative Ireland Programme will deliver through collaboration and partnership promoting understanding and appreciation of the value of creativity in all its forms — whether through the arts, culture, heritage, or technology.

The Creative Ireland Programme will prioritise its work around five aspects for the period 2023–2027:

1. Creative Youth
2. Creative Communities
3. Creative Industries
4. Creative Health and Wellbeing
5. Creative Climate Action and Sustainability

Through the Creative Ireland Programme, *Creative Communities* supports the partnership between the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and Ireland’s local authorities. This partnership enables citizens and communities to explore their culture and creativity at local level and, where appropriate, leverage that creativity to strengthen wellbeing, advance social cohesion and support economic development.

Creative Communities is also innovative in deploying creativity to achieve greater integration across targeted policy priorities. This has delivered new creative engagement initiatives in relation to for example children and young people, older persons, climate action, and local economies. Individuals and communities perception about the role and value of culture and creativity as central to our wellbeing in its broadest sense is being enhanced.

The opportunity embraced within the Limerick Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023–2027 is to support people’s participation, inclusion and expression within communities, and further strengthen local creative economies.



Limerick Youth Dance, *Cruinniú na nÓg* 2022. Limerick City and County Council. **Photo credit:** Alan Place.

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Culture and Creativity in Limerick

Culture and creativity are at the heart of Limerick's revitalisation and growth. Culture and creativity are also central to many of the public policies and strategies which articulate Limerick's forward momentum and ambitions for the future. At the core of Limerick's strategic cultural development is the Limerick Cultural Strategy: A Framework (2016–2030), which sets out an ambitious vision for Limerick's future and the role that culture plays in that future.

The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) for Community, Leisure and Culture is committed to the development and promotion of culture in Limerick, as well as harnessing the power of creativity to reimagine our City and County, and to improve the quality of life of its residents. Limerick was the first Local Authority in Ireland to create an SPC for culture; our experience in this area has enriched the current SPC and continues to ensure that the arts, heritage, culture and creativity remain central to Limerick's development and growth.

Arts and cultural activity have played an integral role in the ambitious reimagining of Limerick. Our experiences in deploying creativity to achieve enhanced wellbeing, social cohesion and economic development is considered to be one of Limerick's key strengths. Our designation as Ireland's first National City of Culture in 2014, and our subsequent bid for European Capital of Culture (ECOC) in 2020 continue to be a source of inspiration. For Limerick, the 2018–2022 Creative Ireland Programme was invaluable, as it allowed us to build on this momentum and enabled us to continue expanding our arts, cultural and heritage provision across the City and County.

These initiatives helped to establish new models of working, inspired fresh ideas and brought knowledge, expertise and European connections to Limerick. The Creative Ireland Programme provided inspiration, framework support, and resources, while also acting as a powerful catalyst for creativity and connections. Much has been learned through these processes, and with the support, staffing and resourcing from Creative Ireland and Limerick City and County Council, we will continue to learn, grow and innovate.

Since the beginning of the Creative Ireland Programme in Limerick, over €800,000 has been invested in creative and cultural projects across the City and County. Over 60 different projects have been supported through the Creative Ireland "Made in Limerick" grant scheme, with grants totalling over €175,000 being awarded. More than 270,000 live public engagements have been registered across Limerick's Creative Ireland Programme since 2018. In 2021 alone, 30 creative practitioners were engaged to deliver cultural activities and projects.

The Irish language is an integral part of our history, heritage and cultural identity, and organisations such as Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, Conradh na Gaeilge and Comhluadar Luimnigh play a vital role in promoting the Irish language, as well as supporting the wealth of traditional music making, Irish dance and song across City and County. Funded through the Creative Ireland Programme, projects such as "Ag spreagadh le Scéalaíocht, Ealain agus ár nOidhreacht" (Inspiring through Storytelling, Art & Heritage), help to promote Irish as a living language. The recent appointment of an Irish Language Development Officer for Limerick is another positive development in this area.

Among the many projects which were initiated as part of the 2018–2022 Creative Ireland Programme is "Future Creators", which is a youth-focused collaboration between the lead partner the Irish Aerial Creation Centre (IACC), the Irish Chamber Orchestra Youth Orchestra (ICOYO), and the "Limerockers Crú" hip hop dance group.

Our partnership projects "Musicians on Call" with Music and Health Ireland (which registered over 15,000 engagements in 2021) and "Yard Duets" with Dance Limerick, which are funded through Creative Ireland's "Creativity in Older Age" programme, are examples of successful cross-departmental and cross-sectoral initiatives which harness culture and creativity to improve quality of life and wellbeing within healthcare settings. "This is Art", a visual art competition for young people which began in 2021, has reached tens of thousands of people, with visual art being displayed outside Limerick's iconic Potato Market.

In the area of Climate Action, our innovative community-based project "Decarbonising Together", which was funded by the Creative Climate Action Fund, invited five communities from the Limerick Metropolitan area to examine how meaningful climate action could become part of their day-to-day lives. Almost €120,000 has been invested in this initiative, with Garryowen Community, the Limerick Civic Trust, Island Community Partners, Meadowbrook Residents Association and the Munster Indian Cultural Association all delivering grassroots, community-led, collaborative climate action projects with huge potential for long-term impact and legacy.

The impact of Creative Ireland's flagship initiative *Cruinniú na nÓg* in Limerick is also strongly felt and welcome. In 2022 alone, over 15 separate events took place across Limerick. These events were attended by 1,200 audience members, with a further 1,890 virtual engagements registered. Limerick Arts Office delivers the annual *Cruinniú na nÓg* in partnership with Fresh Film, who play a central role.

The film-focused programme has introduced children and young people to the art of filmmaking, and complements other film-based initiatives in Limerick. Demonstrating a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach, Limerick's *Cruinniú na nÓg* programme is delivered in partnership with a wide range of other organisations and groups; including the Library Service, the Hunt Museum, Music Generation, the Irish Chamber Orchestra Youth Orchestra, Limerick Youth Dance, Limerick City Gallery of Art, the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, and the Local Creative Youth Partnership, among others.

Limerick has a broad range of urban and rural communities with a young, diverse and growing population. Based on preliminary results from Census 2022, Limerick City and County's current population is over 205,000, representing an increase of over 10,000 persons (5.4%) since 2016. Based on latest available data (Census 2016), 40% of Limerick's population is under 30 years and 25% under 18 years.

In the inner city, some 47% of the population were not born in Ireland and Limerick is home to just under 100 nationalities, with a growing population of dual Irish and non-Irish nationals. Just under 15% of Limerick City and County's population are from non-Irish ethnic or cultural backgrounds. The recent re-settlement of refugee populations has also brought new communities to Limerick. This diverse and multicultural community of Limerick is part of the fabric of our identity, and we believe that social cohesion, integration and partnership approaches can be enormously powerful when creativity and culture is placed at its centre.

The amalgamation of Limerick City Council and Limerick County Council in 2014 continues to present opportunities for collaboration, cross-pollination of ideas, and the sharing of resources across an area which includes one of Ireland's major cities and a population living across a large rural area. Cultural initiatives, projects and activities, networks and opportunities are widely shared through public platforms such as www.limerick.ie, www.creativeireland.gov.ie and through the Limerick Arts Office e-newsletter.

A rich tapestry of arts, culture and heritage is a major feature of Limerick's attractiveness, for locals and visitors alike. Limerick boasts stunning areas of natural beauty and noteworthy heritage sites, as well as first class contemporary cultural facilities including the Lime Tree Theatre | Belltable, Limerick City Gallery of Art, the Hunt Museum, Limerick Museum, Limerick Printmakers, Ormston House Cultural Resource Centre, Dance Limerick, the Irish Aerial Creation Centre, Friars' Gate Theatre (Kilmallock) and the Honey Fitz Theatre (Lough Gur). Locations of particular historic significance include King John's Castle, St Mary's Cathedral, Kilmallock Historic Town, Adare, Lough Gur Heritage Centre, Desmond Castle Demesne and the medieval village of Askeaton, to select just a few.

Limerick's network of libraries and community centres provide valuable and accessible creative spaces for people living in the locality. Limerick City and County Council's recent Audit of Community, Cultural and Arts Facilities (2021) found that over 200 facilities are being used

for a wide range of cultural activities, including music and dance lessons, arts and crafts, concerts, exhibitions and theatrical productions. While these facilities provide valuable resources to the people of Limerick, evidence from recent consultations shows that there are space requirements that need to be accommodated for the creative sector.

Limerick has a vibrant cultural scene, with thriving cultural organisations and groups including Limerick Youth Dance Company, Fresh Film, Emerging Limerick Film Makers (ELF), Bottom Dog Theatre Company, Fidget Feet, Limerick Youth Theatre and the County Limerick Youth Theatre, calling Limerick their home. Among Limerick's most well-known cultural figures are the Grammy winning actor Richard Harris, broadcaster Terry Wogan, Pulitzer prize-winning author Frank McCourt, Grammy nominated rock band The Cranberries and Riverdance composer Bill Whelan, as well as other successful independent artists including The Rubberbandits, Hermitage Green, Rusangano Family and Denise Chaila.

The Irish Chamber Orchestra (ICO) is based in the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick, and the ICO's Sing Out With Strings programme continues to bring the joy of music to children in Limerick City. Limerick City and County is also home to numerous music schools, youth and community orchestras, bands and choirs, each of which is passionate about sharing the transformational power of music within their communities. Limerick has a rich tradition of concert bands, pipe and drum bands, fife and drum bands and marching bands dating back over 170 years, and these groups continue to offer accessible and inclusive music education opportunities for people of all ages, often in areas of social disadvantage. Following its successful establishment in Limerick City, the Music Generation programme is also being expanded into Limerick County.

Festivals and large-scale events continue to be a source of pride for Limerick, and there are approximately 80 different festivals across City and County. Limerick hosts Ireland's only International Band Championships, which sees bands from all over the world, as well as local bands from Limerick City and County, performing along Limerick's main street in front of thousands of spectators. This event is part of Limerick's St. Patrick's Festival, which is recognised as Ireland's largest regional St. Patrick's Day Festival. Another annual highlight in Limerick is Culture Night, which sees an average of 20,000 people participating and engaging annually.

Along with the rest of the world, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was strongly felt in Limerick, and the arts and cultural sector was impacted by extreme levels of uncertainty. In response to this crisis, the Community, Leisure and Culture Strategic Policy Sub-Committee commissioned a report on the Impact of COVID-19 on the arts and culture sector in Limerick, which identified four key priority areas. These included the development of multi-purpose creative spaces, capacity and career development, support for new creative enterprises and collaboration. Many of these priorities are reflected in the new Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023–2027.

Limerick was awarded a UNESCO Learning City Award in 2017, and is home to world-class creative education facilities, including the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick (UL), the Limerick School of Art and Design (LSAD) at the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), Mary Immaculate College's arts programmes and the SAUL School of Architecture at UL. As a city with over 3,500 young people studying a diverse range of creative disciplines at third-level, these students form a vital part of Limerick's cultural and creative eco-system.

In the areas of film, media and the wider creative industries, Limerick's Troy Studios is the largest film studio in Ireland, and the national broadcast station RTÉ lyric fm is also based in Limerick. As part of the Limerick 2030 Vision, over €1 billion is being invested in enterprise and investment infrastructure and our national role in the area of creative enterprise will continue to grow in the coming years. Limerick's reputation and status within the traditional and contemporary craft and design sector also continues to develop with the "MADE-Limerick" Arts and Craft Co-operative and Limerick's Fab Lab providing accessible shared workspace, facilities and retail opportunities for a broad range of creative practitioners, artists and makers of all kinds.

We have witnessed first-hand the power that culture and creativity have in building resilient communities, enhancing quality of life, supporting wellbeing, improving social cohesion, integrating diverse groups and nurturing economic development. We will continue to build on our previous successes, working towards our shared vision for Limerick City and County.

3

The Creative Ireland Vision for Limerick

Our vision for Limerick in 2027, is a City and County which is creative, integrated, confident and excited about the future. We envision a multicultural Limerick, where culture and creativity is part of everyday life. Citizens will be proud of Limerick's arts, culture and heritage, and everyone will feel welcome, supported and encouraged to participate. We are all curators of our cultural engagement, and we feel empowered to play this role.

Nationally and internationally, Limerick is recognised as a powerful creative incubator, an artistic inspiration and a prominent stage for creative expression. For artists, arts practitioners and creative workers of all types, Limerick is a place where they can earn a living from their creative practices and they are appropriately paid for the work they do.

The role of voluntary groups, amateur artists and non-professionals within the arts, cultural and creative industries is recognised. With support, investment and collaboration, the wider creative industries are booming, making a valuable contribution to the local economy and bringing talented creative and cultural practitioners to live, work and thrive in Limerick.

Quality of life and a sense of fulfilment and wellbeing continues to improve across Limerick, as engagement with arts and cultural activity becomes increasingly part of everyday life. Across an age-friendly city and county, participation in creative activities increases across all demographic groups, leading to a greater sense of shared identity and integration across different communities.

Limerick has a reputation as a culturally vibrant and creatively innovative place. Ongoing investment has enabled the infrastructure for the arts, culture and heritage to continue improving and expanding. Insights from targeted research projects will help to inform our ongoing investment in the sector, and our decision-making is based on robust evaluation and empirical data.

Limerick's multicultural communities are widely celebrated, valued and provided with the support they need to flourish. Through cultural and creative activities, meaningful intergenerational connections are made every day, across the City and County. Culture and creativity are intrinsic to our education system, from primary school through to third-level and adult education. Creative minds, both young and old, are stimulated, invigorated and celebrated.

We are firmly focused on the future and are taking calculated, strategic steps to continue building on previous successes. Limerick is recognised as culturally vibrant, and this plays a central role in how Limerick is represented to the world. Our international ambitions, our geographic location and our cultural expertise means we are well-positioned to participate in large-scale EU cultural projects.

Our Culture and Creativity Team is recognised, confident and active, and they continue to work collaboratively and inter-departmentally. They have the combined expertise and influence to positively enhance public policies and the provision of civic services, as well as having the administrative support and leadership needed to do so. Culture and creativity act as the catalyst that drives innovative and positive change across a wide range of sectors including healthcare, education, youth engagement, the justice system and in other areas of our society.

This Is Our Vision. This Is Our Future.
This Is Limerick.



Arathi Surendran celebrates the Onam Festival with the Thiruvathira dance performers and the Munster Indian Cultural Association, Limerick Racecourse. Artists Deirdre Power & Chelsea Canavan were invited to the harvest festival of Kerala and shared their creative climate project 'Grounds for Change' with the Munster Indian Cultural Association.
Photo credit: Deirdre Power.

Cruinniú na nÓg 2022. Limerick City and County Council.
Photo credit: Alan Place.

4

How the Creative Ireland Programme Works

Principles and Values of Creative Communities

Creative Communities will continue to support local authorities as a wellbeing strategy through:

- **Policy** — Working in partnership across government supporting local authorities to deliver relevant local, regional, and national policies and priorities;
- **Practice** — Flexible, cross-cutting Culture and Creativity Teams providing an agile and adaptable approach central to the delivery of *Creative Communities* as it addresses locally-relevant priorities;
- **Participation** — Providing more opportunities for people to engage with and enjoy culture and creativity at local level in ways that underpin equality of access; and
- **Partnership** — Between central and local government, and Limerick City and County and our local culture and creative sectors.

This approach is based on addressing a shared, strategic agenda while delivering on the challenges and opportunities unique to each local authority area.

The Creative Communities partnership will be delivered in line with the following principles and values:

- i. Broaden access to, and participation in, cultural and creative activities locally.
- ii. Use culture and creativity as a catalyst for collaboration and innovation in achieving greater wellbeing, social cohesion, and economic development.
- iii. Strengthen the capacity of local authorities to integrate culture and creativity across place-making, regeneration, renewal, and the development of more vibrant, creative, and sustainable places.
- iv. Investing in culture and creativity to support environmental, social, and economic returns that help deliver local authority agendas — from local and regional, to national and international.
- v. Build on the agility and integrated approach of Culture and Creativity Teams to sustain further delivery of targeted collaborative programmes.



Musicians on Call – Music & Health Ireland, St. Camillus Hospital, from left, Annemarie Keaveney, Siobhan Mulcahy, Colin Kenny, Mairead Duggan, David Hope, Gráinne Hope, Eoin O’ Meachair, Dr. Pippa Little, Edward O’ Sullivan. Limerick City and County Council.
Photo credit: Keith Wiseman.

5

Strategic Priorities for Limerick

Strategic Priority 1: Place-Making **Enhancing the creative landscape and cultural infrastructure of Limerick, for the benefit and enjoyment of all.**

Culture and creativity play a vital role in changing the narrative around our City and County, and this has been demonstrated by Limerick's designation as National City of Culture in 2014 and its more recent bid for European Capital of Culture in 2020. These initiatives ignited the creative spirit of its citizens and it is our ambition to contribute towards making Limerick a welcoming and inspirational place to live, work and visit.

Aim 1: To facilitate and support the development of creative spaces

Creative spaces and infrastructure for artists, arts practitioners, creative workers and the general public are a vital component of a creative community. Working in partnership, we will contribute to facilitating and supporting residencies for creatives, networks, capacity building initiatives and professional development opportunities. We will also help to create accessible spaces; conceptual and physical, for people to be inspired, to take risks, experiment and flourish.

Building on the 2021 Audit of Community, Cultural and Arts Facilities in Limerick City and County, we aim to increase awareness of the existing creative spaces, including Limerick's libraries, galleries, community centres and cultural venues, as well as promoting and encouraging the use of outdoor spaces such as municipal parks, band stands and open spaces.

Developments such as the Engine Collaboration Centre and the new library space at Limerick's Opera Site have potential. We will continue to explore the potential for creative hubs and clusters, working with a range of partners.

With reference to the Report on Research on the Impact of COVID-19 on the Arts and Culture Sector in Limerick, we will act on the theme which related directly to the development of more creative spaces.

Aim 2: To celebrate Limerick's heritage and cultural identity

Limerick's historical and cultural significance is a source of great pride and inspiration for our artists, creatives, and historians, and it is an integral part of our cultural identity. In close alignment with the Limerick Cultural Strategy (2016–2030) and the Limerick Heritage Plan (2017–2030), we are committed to celebrating and sharing our archaeological, cultural and built heritage, by working in partnership with Limerick's museums, archives, heritage sites, libraries and cultural venues, and building the capacity of our existing cultural infrastructure.

The Irish language, as well as the wealth of traditional Irish music, dance, sean-nós and other traditional arts, are an integral part of Limerick's heritage and cultural identity. Through a partnership approach, we will help to promote Irish as a living language, as well as highlighting its significance in Limerick's history and cultural heritage through the arts and culture.

Limerick's rich tradition of marching, concert and pipe bands across the City and County is also a significant thread in the tapestry of Limerick's cultural and traditional heritage. In acknowledging the valuable contribution that these organisations continue to make to our society, we will explore potential opportunities for long-term developmental support.

Strategic Priority 2: Cultural & Creative Careers **Nurturing, supporting and empowering artists, arts practitioners and creative workers across the arts and cultural sector, as well as within the broader creative industries.**

People make places, and we understand the vital role that artists, creative workers and arts practitioners play in our society and in our local economy. Artists, arts practitioners and creative workers are integral to the successful realisation of this strategy, and it is important that they are appropriately supported, valued, nurtured and empowered.

Aim 3: To support Limerick's artists, arts practitioners and cultural workers

Limerick's artists, arts practitioners and cultural workers are all crucial individual elements of its collective cultural identity. In addition to a focus on creative spaces, we aim to create more opportunities for artists across the City and County, encouraging them to use Limerick both as inspiration and as a stage.

We will continue to nurture, support and encourage Limerick-born and Limerick-based artists on a local, national and international level through the provision of funding, networks, advocacy, professional development and capacity building. We aim to ensure that Limerick is a place where artists working across all artforms and genres feel inspired, included, valued and empowered to take creative risks, as well as being a place where they can comfortably earn a living through their chosen creative and artistic practices.

Working in partnership with organisations including Arts and Disability Ireland and appropriate national bodies, we will strive to ensure that equitable and appropriate measures are in place to support artists, arts practitioners and creative workers with disabilities.

In recognition of the value of amateur arts practice for wellbeing and social cohesion, we will support and advocate for wider participation and engagement in amateur, voluntary and non-professional arts activities. We will encourage increased engagement by supporting relationship building between professional and amateur, individuals and groups.

Aim 4: To support creative entrepreneurship across the wider creative industries in Limerick

Our aim is to facilitate the incubation of innovative ideas and to support creative entrepreneurs, across Limerick's vibrant film sector, and in other areas of the creative industries including digital technology, craft, design, fashion, animation and coding.

Drawing from the networks of organisations such as Innovate Limerick (including Film in Limerick), the Local Enterprise Office and other key organisations in the sector, we will work in partnership to ensure that new ideas are supported and nurtured.

By nurturing creative entrepreneurship, design-thinking and innovation, we aim to create synergy across the broader creative industries, leading to the creation of new jobs and delivering economic, educational, social and cultural benefits.

With a focus on the broader economic development of Limerick City and County, we will embrace new ideas, and support professional development and training opportunities for creative entrepreneurs across the diverse creative industries. In line with the LEDP Strategy (2021–2026) and Innovate Limerick Growth Strategy (2021–2026), as well as the Limerick Development Plan (2022–2028), we will continue to explore the concept of incubation spaces and creative hubs.



Strategic Priority 3: Connections **Connecting people and communities** **to each other, and to the world.**

Culture and creativity have the ability to connect people and places, and act as a powerful catalyst for integration and collaboration. Limerick City and County is made up of diverse communities, and we aim to improve, strengthen and enhance the integration of different communities, as well as enabling Limerick to connect more confidently with the wider world.

Aim 5: To connect different communities across Limerick City and County by nurturing creativity

Limerick is growing and is now home to just under 100 nationalities. Evidence from public consultation indicates that more work is needed to nurture and strengthen the connections between communities. Reflecting our changing demographic, we are committed to supporting projects, partnerships and organisations which have the potential to connect and integrate communities across City and County.

Informed by the “Belonging To Limerick: Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2018–22”, established initiatives including the Creative Ireland “Made in Limerick” grant scheme will continue to support diverse communities. Festivals and events connect people in powerful ways, and Limerick is home to a broad range of festivals which are supported by Limerick City and County Council.

The 2014 amalgamation of our two local authorities provides opportunities to improve urban-rural connections, and enhance the quality of life for people living in all areas of Limerick.

Aim 6: To engage, inspire and connect people across all generations

Intergenerational projects have the potential to create more resilient communities, enhance social cohesion and improve wellbeing. Collaborative approaches between Limerick’s libraries, community centres, cultural venues and third-level institutions, as well as partnerships with organisations including Age Friendly Ireland will help

to sustain intergenerational creative connections. Projects like “Musicians on Call” and “Yard Duets” continue to connect people of all ages, and the intergenerational nature of Limerick’s bands, choirs and orchestras provide opportunities for meaningful connection.

In our delivery of *Cruinniú na nÓg* and in our approach to Creative Schools, the Local Creative Youth Partnership (Limerick & Clare) and youth engagement, we will strive to ensure the voice of the child is at the heart of our engagement approaches.

We will continue to support creative projects across formal and informal education settings. The Irish language and Irish traditional arts are important cultural bridges which may connect different generations. We will continue to play our role within the Irish Network of Learning Cities, ensuring that culture and creativity remain central to the learning experiences of people of all ages.

Aim 7: To connect Limerick to the World, and the World to Limerick

Nestled on the ‘Atlantic Edge’, Limerick’s positioning brings excellent connectivity, with the US to the West, and Europe to the East. Tourism plays an important role in the local economy of Limerick, and our cultural heritage is a major attraction for visitors and the people of Limerick. Working with key partners, Limerick City and County Council aims to help promote Limerick’s distinct offering of arts, culture and heritage, as well its natural beauty, to a global audience.

In line with the Global Limerick Diaspora Strategy (2021–2025), we also seek to reconnect with Limerick’s international citizens and diaspora, to share their stories and celebrate their connection to Limerick. We will enable Limerick’s creatives to reach a global audience with their work, through showcase events and partnerships. We will embrace and contribute to cross-border projects and initiatives, where feasible and appropriate.

Strategic Priority 4: Change-Making
Harnessing culture and creativity to facilitate positive change within appropriate health care settings, social services and in the area of climate action and biodiversity.

Focusing on a number of different environments and settings, we will support the deployment of culture and creativity as a way of enhancing life-changing and life-affirming positive interventions. Our goal is to broaden access to culture and creativity across a variety of settings to improve wellbeing, mental health and enhance quality of life. Taking an interdepartmental approach, we will work towards our shared vision of a place where culture and creativity are part of everyday life.

Aim 8: To promote, facilitate and support creative change-making across a diverse range of settings

Working closely with key partners, experts and practitioners we will continue to champion the use of culture and creativity within healthcare settings and social services, with the aim of helping to improve wellbeing and quality of life. Our current projects “Musicians on Call” and “Yard Duets”, complement the work of Limerick City and County Council in delivering the Healthy Ireland Programme, in partnership with Healthy Limerick and Age Friendly Limerick and in line with the Healthy Ireland Framework (2013–2025).

Organisations such as Helium Arts provide transformational arts activities for children and young people across Ireland, including at University Hospital Limerick and within various community settings. In exploring the potential of this creative practice, we will continue to engage with specialist groups and national organisations including Waterford Healing Arts Trust (WHAT), Arts and Disability Ireland and Mental Health Ireland, to ensure alignment with best practice and progress this area.

Culture and creativity also has an important, but underutilised role to play in workplace settings, within the justice system and across other related sectors. Working with key partners, we will explore the potential benefits of creative change-making and intervention initiatives in other appropriate settings. Our goal is to enhance and supplement current provision, as well as improving the quality of life for people living in Limerick.

Aim 9: To contribute to climate action and biodiversity initiatives, advocacy and awareness raising

Combating climate change is an urgent issue of major importance. In line with the Limerick Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019–2024), and working with interdepartmental partners, we will continue to explore opportunities to raise awareness of the increasing risks associated with climate change in Limerick. In unique ways, culture and creativity can be harnessed to draw people’s attention to this issue and through creative initiatives, people can be encouraged to find solutions at a grassroots level.

A new Climate Action Plan is already being developed for Limerick, and we will play our role in supporting creative projects which help to raise awareness and complement climate action initiatives. Building on the success of the “Decarbonising Together” project, we will continue to explore creative ways to reduce CO2 emissions and to build a healthier, happier and cleaner Limerick for all. We will also support artists, arts practitioners and creative workers to explore the topic of climate action, raise awareness and develop new ideas and solutions.

Strategic Priority 5: Cultural & Creative Economy
Supporting innovation, attracting investment and encouraging participation across the cultural and creative industries.

Limerick is an innovative and ambitious place with a growing population of young, creative minds. Innovation can be found in all corners of the City and County, and the wider cultural and creative industries make a valuable contribution to the local economy. New technologies, such as virtual and augmented reality also have the potential to enhance Limerick’s cultural offering, improve connectivity, enhance quality of life and contribute to the growth of creative communities.

Aim 10: To support the growth and development of Limerick’s Film, Screen and Digital Technology sectors

Limerick’s film and screen sector is strong, with Troy Film Studios being the largest film studio complex in Ireland. Organisations and initiatives such as Fresh Film, Innovate Limerick (including Film in Limerick), Emerging Limerick Filmmakers, Future Film Makers and Limerick’s Film Festivals also provide valuable platforms, opportunities and resources for young, independent filmmakers and grassroots projects.

Working in partnership, we will help promote, support and facilitate the growth and development of Limerick’s film and screen sector. In partnership with Fresh Film, we will continue to support educational activities for children and young people, through *Cruinniú na nÓg*.

Animation, coding and the computer games industry are also exciting developments, and there are an increasing number of educational opportunities, career pathways and incubation hubs being created in Limerick to support these areas.

Working collaboratively, our ambition is to harness technology to enhance Limerick’s cultural offering. With our vision of making culture and creativity accessible to all, we will also examine the ‘digital divide’ and review potential opportunities to address this issue.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, digital technology provided new ways for people to connect, and we will continue to support innovative ideas which use technologies such as virtual and augmented reality to connect people, communities and places.

Aim 11: To encourage broader participation across the wider culture and creative industries

According to UNESCO’s Framework for Cultural Statistics, the “Cultural Economy” encompasses all forms of artistic and cultural production, as well as areas including craft, design, fashion, graphic design, printing and architecture. Our aim is to increase participation across these disciplines, thereby stimulating the cultural and creative economy in Limerick.

The cultural and creative industries have seen significant growth in recent years, and community-focused participation in disciplines such as craft and design has been shown to offer social, community, mental health and wellbeing benefits, as well as contributing to the local economy in a sustainable way. Acknowledging these benefits, we will help to encourage increased participation across all cultural domains. Spaces such as the Fab Lab provide access to equipment, space and expertise for a variety of different makers at various stages in their careers, and this facility is a valuable asset to Limerick.

The sharing of knowledge and ideas is an important component of sustainable growth, and we are keen to explore the teaching and application of STEAM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) for children and young people.

Creative social enterprise is another area of interest, and further collaborations with entities such as Innovate Limerick and the Local Enterprise Office will help in the provision of appropriate cross-sectoral initiatives which support innovation and foster greater engagement with culture and creativity.

6

Implementation by the Limerick City and County Council Culture and Creativity Team

Limerick City and County Council has a Culture and Creativity Team in place to guide and oversee implementation of this Strategy.

The Culture and Creativity Teams are the cornerstone of *Creative Communities* across all 31 local authorities in Ireland. These teams bring together a significant range and level of expertise and, in many cases, include professionals from architecture, archives, the arts, climate action, community, enterprise and environmental development, heritage, information and communication technologies, Irish language, libraries, spatial planning, tourism and more. This depth of technical expertise affords each local authority a level of insight, resources and delivery experience, which few other public or private sector organisations can match.

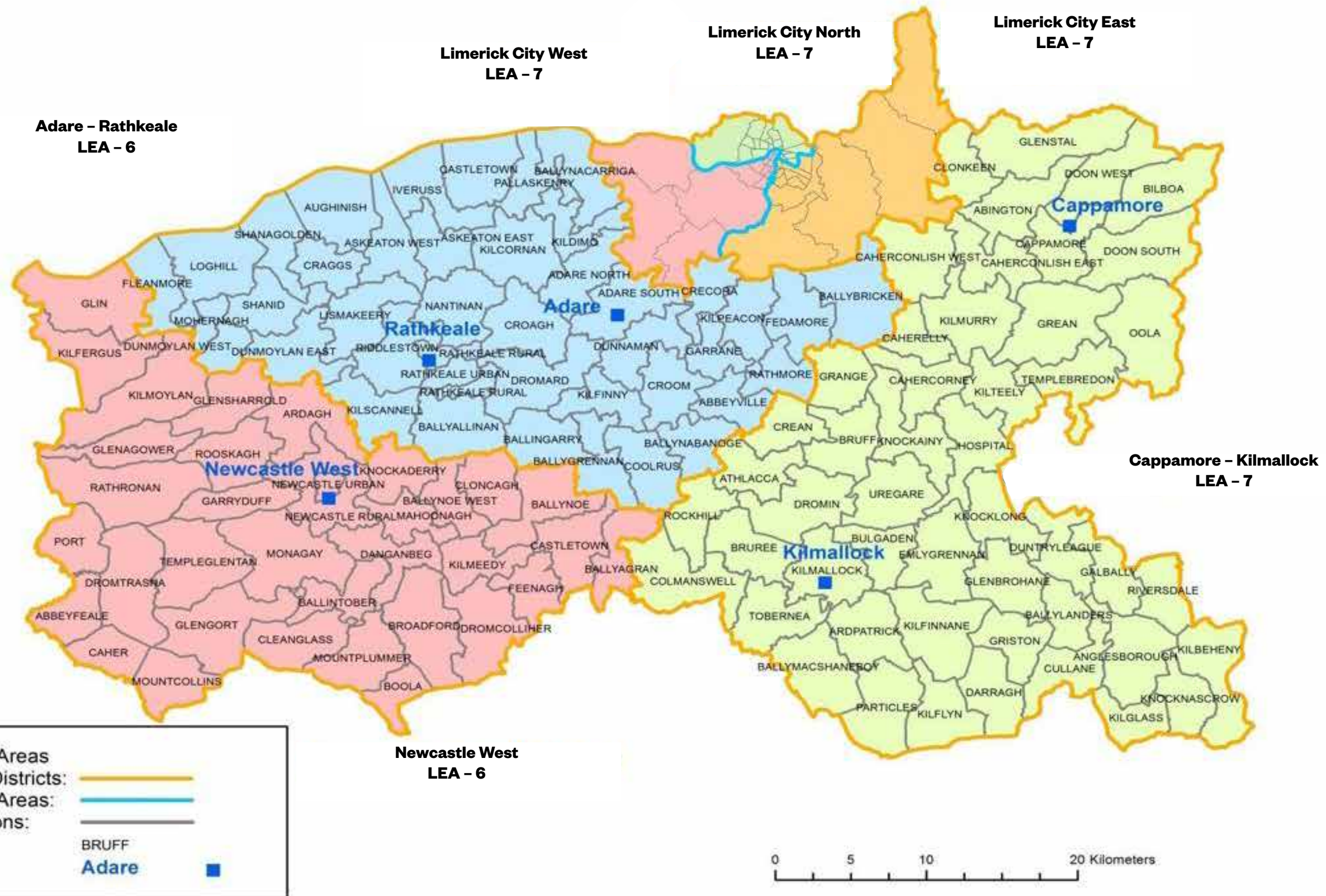
The role of this team is to:

- Provide a collective forum for the ambition of culture and creativity within the local authority;
- Focus on diversity and inclusivity and enable harder to reach communities to participate in cultural and creative activities;
- Build on existing in-house expertise and strategies across areas of wellbeing, social cohesion and economic development to leverage culture and creativity to deliver on targeted local authority agendas;
- Enable a shift in how the cultural and creative sector is valued within and across local authorities and ensure that culture and creativity is embedded across local authority plans, policies and project teams;
- Drive cross-collaborative actions that support change and positive outcomes locally, and potentially between local authorities at regional level; and
- Be innovative and take risks — try new projects and new ways of working.


The delivery of the Strategy is led by the Director of Services for Community, Tourism and Culture and the members of the Culture and Creativity Team for Limerick City and County Council include:


- Creative Ireland Coordinator, Arts Officer
- Senior Executive Officer — Tourism and Arts Office
- City & County Librarian Libraries, Gallery & Museum
- Director/Curator, Limerick City Gallery of Art
- Curator, Limerick Museum
- Environment Awareness Officer
- Administrative Officer — Age Friendly
- Health and Well-being
- Heritage Officer
- Executive Archaeologist
- Senior Architect, Urban Innovation
- Administrative Officer — Urban Innovation
- Head of Enterprise
- Regional Film Coordinator
- Executive Planner, Strategic and Forward Planning
- Administrative Officer — LEO
- Head of Information Systems
- Administrative Officer — Trade and Investment
- Trade and Investment
- City and County Archivist


Map of Limerick and Municipal Districts



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