

DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL CULTURE COMPANY



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
6. CULTURE, EQUALITY, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
8. CULTURE, INFORMATION, AND KNOWLEDGE
9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

SOCIAL, INCLUSION, PARTICIPATION, BOTTOM-UP, CREATIVITY,
COMMUNITY, KNOWLEDGE, INSTITUTIONAL, SUPPORT, COOPERATION,
NETWORK, ACCESS, DEVELOPMENT, MAPPING, TECHNOLOGY,
GOVERNANCE, CULTURE, ARTS, HISTORY, MEMORY, WELL-BEING

1. Context

Dublin is the capital of Ireland. Since the 1990s, it has undergone population growth, both in number and ethnic diversity, has faced economic challenges and has modernised.

Since 2012, following the global economic crisis, unemployment levels in Dublin city have decreased due to Ireland's dramatic recovery and growth. However, 43% of households remain at risk of poverty, 8% within the consistent poverty rate. This is further compounded by increasing rent prices and levels of homelessness.

Dublin's culture remains its people, their stories and experiences.

2. Dublin and culture

In 2016, Dublin City Council created Dublin's Culture Connects (and later established the Dublin City Council Culture Company to trial ideas and programmes and deliver the commitments in the Cultural Strategy for cultural participation. Building on this work, Dublin City Council established the Culture Company in 2018 to implement actions within its Cultural Strategy, inform future policy and planning and develop citizen-led cultural projects, while engaging with people and communities through conversation and culture. Its programmes reflect the belief that when people feel connected to their communities, they feel safer and stronger, and are healthier. Thus, it aims to increase cultural participation and practice throughout the city's neighbourhoods, and deliver and operate some of the municipal cultural infrastructures.

THE CULTURE COMPANY AIMS TO INCREASE CULTURAL PARTICIPATION AND PRACTICE THROUGHOUT THE CITY'S NEIGHBOURHOODS AND DELIVER AND OPERATE SOME OF THE MUNICIPAL CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

The Culture Company is an active experiment in the Agenda 21 for culture and UN 2030 Agenda/SDGs, focusing on the relationship between citizenship, culture and sustainable development.

There is a clear interconnection between cultural rights, heritage, diversity and creativity and Culture in the SDGs in all the Culture Company's activities. However, it is specifically evident through the Culture Audit & Map.

3. Project goals and implementation

3.1. Main and specific objectives

We listen to people to learn about and respond to what matters to them. We apply these learnings throughout our projects, whether that is through an intelligence project, cultural and heritage infrastructure or a place-making project, each responds to needs identified through these consultations.

That aim is consolidated in the 5-year company strategic goals of Engage, Experiment, Learn, Share and Embed.



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3.2. Project development

Main actions developed

Some of the ways our goals translate into actions through our programmes are:

Engage

In order to develop Richmond Barrack's potential for cultural use, we identified the needs and wishes of the community with a consultation. Now it is becoming a cultural hub for community use, co-locating a library, creative workshops and cultural activities, along with a programme of 'trying out' sessions in all forms of culture.

Experiment

The National Neighbourhood builds cultural projects with communities, connecting artists, groups and villages with libraries, museums and creative places.

Learn

With The National Neighbourhood, when projects end we remain available for consultation and support. Many groups go on to engage with other programmes and partners for onward local development of cultural engagement and including Capacity Building Programme which we develop in response to continuous requests as practical training programme to empower community organisations to confidently develop their own festivals and activities.

With The Creative Residency we nurtures new partnerships between an artist and an institution of education in law, or a business or some sport clubs. through support and peer learning in the research and creation of a new artworks, new relationships, encouraging people to learn by trying, creating opportunities in new contexts..

Share

14 Henrietta Street is a social history museum that tells the story of a Georgian building through the stories of its people. Your Tenement Memories is a project which collects living memories of tenement life in Dublin, which allows people who may not normally interact with museums to do so, and places them at the centre of the stories, and experiences at its core, creating a people-centred experience

Our leading the Cultural Audit and Map and making Culture Near You / has mapped the city's cultural infrastructure for the municipality. But we have also shared this live data publicly, letting people know what cultural spaces, places and people are in their neighbourhoods. Culture Near You is an online, daily updated map highlighting where culture happens, the people who make it happen and also features local stories to illuminate the city's neighbourhoods.

Embed

We develop projects to having a multiplier effect and a legacy for those involved. We integrate culture and cultural choice into everyday life.

Culture Club

Consultation feedback identified a feeling from many that the city's museums and cultural institutions were not for them. Culture Club a series of hosted talks and tours that introduces people to the cultural spaces of the city, allowing them to access them more easily and confidently. We provide a dedicated host, and each culture club is followed by tea, adding a strong social element.

Links into Dublin City Council

Increasing awareness of the impact of the Culture Company's process and depth of experience by participants has seen greater demands for partnerships both from council departments on projects in social and cultural entrepreneurship. The Council has recognised that open consultation benefits the development of projects so for example with a collaboration with the Public Art section, it subsequently establishing a strand for citizen commissioning into two urban regeneration programmes.

4. Impact

4.1. Direct impact

Impact on local government

- Dublin City Council is the only local authority in Ireland with a Culture Company where programmes and infrastructure are delivered through methodologies of cultural participation and cultural rights.
- The Council is adopting citizen lead consultation and co-creation to engage and empower local communities with great openness to finding new ways of working.
- Organisations and citizens are supported to have sustainable partnerships with the Council.
- The Cultural Audit and Map makes culture visible to all Council staff, to assist with decisions and planning across departments.
- Knowledge and data gathered confirm the importance of culture and influence Dublin City Council's next Cultural Strategy and City Development Plan.



Impact on culture and cultural actors

- We trust the outcomes of our open consultation process.
- We partner with cultural organisations, with education and business sectors not traditionally engaged in culture, to grow the city's cultural ecosystem.
- Participants have reported an increased sense of place, a transformative relationship to their local environment and energy to continue this momentum into other aspects of daily life.
- New community groups and individuals referred to our programmes through positive 'word-of-mouth', increased publicity and cultural curiosity.
- Cultural and heritage sector peers and local participants have joined advisory panels engaging with our process, giving feedback on new initiatives, programmes and policy measures.

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4.2. Evaluation

The Culture Company records its work and methods to evaluate and inform outcomes and build sustainability. We have implemented review mechanisms to evaluate all our programmes against objectives outlined in the Company Strategy (2019- 2024).

We have developed a framework that embeds evaluation into our processes, building it into the delivery of our programmes. These measures allow us to capture a range of data, qualitative and quantitative, from primary and secondary data sources. Data can be broken down by programmes and by people.

We extract learnings to incorporate into ongoing projects, continually measuring and realigning our approach.

4.3. Key factors

The Culture Company continually invites participants, partners, artists, and local authority teams to give their views on their experiences. There is no hierarchy in how the responses are treated or their intrinsic value to us.

The common assets are the people, skills and experience of The Culture Company in its collaborative methodology. We are 'open to others', actively listen and support learning and quality of experiences.

Also, in 2019, the Culture Company joined European project ACCESS, which will concentrate on how cities implement cultural strategies to ensure equality in cultural participation and cultural rights.

4.4. Continuity

Dublin City Council has provided a stable environment for the development of this work through the formation of the Culture Company. The company's objectives are written into its constitution.

Its governance structure further stabilises this. Its board, made up of independent experts, Council executives and elected members also have seats on the board which embeds it within the everyday workings of the municipality and it is supported by the Lord Mayor and Chief Executive offices.

The continuity of the work is further supported by an initial 3 year funding commitment and associated service level agreement.

5. Further information

Dublin was a candidate for the fourth "UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award" (November 2019 – May 2020). The jury for the award drew up its final report in June of 2020, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

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