



Draft strategy for the development of the Irish Language Arts

September 2009

English Version Follows



Straitéis na nEalaíon Gaeilge

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Reamhrá

Leagtar amach sa cháipéis seo frámaíocht straitéiseach trí bliana le haghaidh fhorbairt na n-ealaíon Gaeilge fud fad na hÉireann. Is é POBAL a chur an straitéis seo le chéile chun na healaíona comhaimseartha agus dúchasacha Gaeilge a fhorbairt. Tá sé aontaithe go forleathan go bhfuil láidreachtaí ag na healaíona Gaeilge ach go bhfuil cothú práinneach de dhíth ar chuid de na foirmeacha ealaíona Gaeilge lena gcaomhnú mar chultúr beo beathach. Díríonn an taighde seo ar ghnéithe na n-ealaíon Gaeilge a bhfuil forbairt láithreach agus práinneach de dhíth orthu agus ar an dóigh is fearr le cinntiú go mbeidh an forbairt riachtanach seo cuí agus éifeachtach.

Tá gá le straitéis a fhorbairt do na healaíon Gaeilge. Tá na deacrachtaí atá ag ealaíontóirí atá ag déanamh iarrachta slí bheatha a bhaint amach fríd na healaíon aitheanta go ginearálta, ach tá cás na n-ealaíontóirí atá ag obair agus ag feidhmiú trí mhean teanga mionlach speisialta agus neamhchinnte. Chomh maith leis seo, tá sé aitheanta ag an Chomhairle Ealaíon go bhfuil gá ann le tógáil agus cothú na hEalaíona Gaeilge:

“The state of development of the Irish Language Arts is precarious and in need of intervention.” (The Arts of Irish and Ulster Scots, Audit and Needs Analysis, October 2003)

“There are three engines driving the (Arts) Council's ambitions regarding the arts in Irish. The first is our own assessment of the historical poverty of those arts in our society, in terms of their visibility and the low level of funding.” (Roisin McDonough, Chief Executive of the Arts Council NI, speaking at POBAL's general meeting in response to Arts Council's Audit and Needs Analysis on The Arts of Irish and Ulster Scots)

Chomh maith leis seo, tá dualgais reachtaíochta ar na húdaráis áitiúla agus ar chomhlachtaí reachtúla teangacha mionlacha a chothú agus a chur chun cinn mar gheall ar **An Chairt Eorpach do Theangacha Réigiúnda nó Mionlaigh** (páirt iii) agus ar **Comhaontú Aoine an Chéasta**.



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Cuspóirí na straitéise agus tosaíochtaí an taighde seo:

Is iad cuspóirí na straitéise seo:

- **Maoiniú agus tacaíocht:** Na bearnaí atá ann faoi láthair i soláthar tacaíochta d'ealaíontóirí ag feidhmiú fríd an Ghaeilge a aimsiú.
- **Tógáil ar lucht féachana:** Modhanna le tógáil ar lucht féachana agus lucht éisteachta do na healaíona Gaeilge. Dlúthbhaint le cúrsaí margaíochta agus cur chun cinn na n-ealaíona Gaeilge.
- **Íomhá na Gaeilge:** Ag aimsiú tosaíochtaí réadúla maidir leis na healaíon Gaeilge le go dtig le POBAL straitéis fadréimhseach a chuirfeadh na healaíona chun cinn agus a thógfadh stádas na n-ealaíon Gaeilge. Dlúthbhaint leis an earnáil Ghaeilge a fhorbairt agus stádas na n-ealaíona Gaeilge a ardú.
- **Scileanna agus oiliúint:** Ag aimsiú na príomhsholáthraithe (in earnáil na Gaeilge agus in earnáil an Bhéarla mar aon) agus na grúpaí a bhfuil baint acu leis na healaíona Gaeilge a chur chun cinn. Measúnú a dhéanamh ar na féidearthachtaí do chomhoibriú ábharthacht idir na grúpaí seo agus comhpháirtíocht a chruthú faoi stiúir agus riar POBAL
- **Straitéis a dhréachtú do POBAL a chuimsíonn ghníomhachtaí agus costais phraiticiúla chomhaontaithe leis na n-ealaíon Gaeilge a chur chun cinn.**

Modheolaíocht

D'fhiosraigh an taighde seo an bealach is fearr leis na healaíona Gaeilge a chur chun tosaigh. Cuireadh tús leis an taighde seo mar gheall ar bhlianta de chomhoibriú idir An Chomhairle Ealaíon TÉ agus POBAL agus ar an ghá sainaitheanta go soiléir atá le aimsithe le forbairt straitéise a chuirfeadh na healaíon Gaeilge chun cinn i dtuaisceart na hÉireann agus ar leibhéal náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta.



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Tuigeadh ó cuireadh tús leis an taighde seo gur gá le cur síos a dhéanamh ar cad is ciall leis 'na healaíona Gaeilge'. Baintear úsáid as an chur síos ar na healaíona Gaeilge ar aontaigh pobal na Gaeilge leis i bpróiseas comhairliúcháin POBAL (2004) mar fhreagair ar thuairisc An Chomhairle Ealaíona ar ealaíona na Gaeilge agus Albainis Uladh.

“Is é atá sna hEalaíona Gaeilge foirmeacha ar bith ealaín á gcleachtadh trí mheán na Gaeilge. Féadann siad a bheith i bhfoirm thraidisiúnta nó chomhaimseartha, foirmiúil nó neamhfhoirmiúil.”

Tharraing an taighde seo ar chur chuige difriúil ar na healaíona Gaeilge. Bhí ceist acmhainne (daonna agus maoiniú) ag croí-lár an taighde, chomh maith le ceisteanna eile praiticiúla. Mar thúsphointe don taighde, thóg an taighde ar eolas atá bailithe roimhe. Bhí an taighde ag tarraingt ar thaighde atá déanta ar na healaíona Gaeilge ag POBAL do Chomhairle Ealaíon TÉ cheana féin.

Bailíodh eolas don straitéis seo ó thorthaí taighde neamhspleácha agus ó phróiseas comhairliúcháin forleathan a rinneadh i 2009. Chomh maith leis seo, bhí agallaimh déanta le healaíontóirí, eagraíochtaí ealaíona agus príomhsholáthraithe eile. Mar gheall ar nach bhfuil an Ghaeilge smachtaithe le teorainn ar bith, bailíodh eolas don taighde seo ar bhonn uile – Éireannach. Chuidigh taighde uile-Éireannach le samplaí dea-chleachtais a aimsiú agus foghlaim ó thaithí ealaíontóirí agus grúpaí bainte leis na healaíona Gaeilge ar fud na tíre. Chomh maith leis seo, bhí ceisteanna sa taighde dírithe ar na healaíona Gaeilge ag leibhéal idirnáisiúnta.

Reáchtáladh 6 chruinniú poiblí – Béal Feirste, Baile an Chaistil, An Carn, Gaoth Dobhair, an t-Iúr agus Baile Átha Cliath. Bhí poiblíocht chuimsitheach déanta ar na cruinnithe seo sna meáin cumarsáide. Rinneadh agallaimh raidió ar Raidió Uladh agus ar Raidió na Gaeltachta. Bhí poiblíocht déanta sna nuachtáin ó thuaidh agus ó dheas idir fhógraíocht agus eagarfhocail. Cuireadh ina measc, fógraí san Irish News, Andersontown News & North Belfast News, Coleraine Chronicle & Guardian, Derry Post agus The Donegal News. Bhí na cruinnithe fógartha i nuachtlitreacha na gcomhairlí áitiúla ó thuaidh agus ó dheas, chomh maith le nuachtlitreacha ghrúpaí Gaeilge agus ghrúpaí pobail.

Seo iad na príomhphointí a pléadh:



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- Na deacrachtaí atá ag na healaíontóirí atá ag feidhmiú trí mheán na Gaeilge agus deacrachtaí atá ag na daoine atá ag obair leis na healaíontóirí seo.
- Cad é an bhealach chun tosaigh? Moltaí a chur in ord tosaíochtaí. Tháinig na moltaí ón cheistiúchán ar cuireadh le chéile don taighde.
- Cad iad na rudaí praiticiúla is féidir a dhéanamh? Moltaí a chur in ord tosaíochtaí.
- Cén dóigh is féidir stádas/íomhá na n-ealaíona Gaeilge a ardú? Moltaí a chur in ord tosaíochtaí.

Bhí agallaimh déanta le réimse faisnéiseoirí cuí – oifigigh Ghaeilge sna Comhairlí Áitiúla, oibrithe na n-ionad ealaíona Gaeilge agus daoine agus grúpaí cuí eile le heolas bunaithe ar thaithí s'acu san earnáil seo.

Chomh maith leis na cruinnithe poiblí, bhí ceistneoir ginearálta curtha thart ar an phobal ag fiosrú barúlacha s'acu ar na príomhcheisteanna agus na tosaíochtaí luaite. Tagann na moltaí a luaitear sa cheistneoir seo ó phróiseas comhairliúcháin POBAL a d'éascaigh Trevor Ó Clochartaigh ar na healaíona Gaeilge in 2004/5. Le linn an phróiseas comhairliúcháin seo chuir pobal na Gaeilge agus grúpaí eile bainte leis an Ghaeilge agus na healaíona sainmholtaí chun tosaigh agus baintear úsáid as na ceisteanna seo sa cheistiúchán. Pléadh na sainmholtaí seo ag na cruinnithe poiblí agus nuair a cuireadh daoine faoi agallaimh faoin straitéis. Iarradh orthu na sainmholtaí a chur in ord tosaíochtaí. Bhí muid in ann teacht mar sin ar na tosaíochtaí is tábhachtaí agus in ann straitéise do na healaíona Gaeilge a chur le chéile.

Tá cóip den cheistiúchán seo iniata leis an straitéis seo.

Daoine agus grúpaí a raibh an ceistiúchán dírithe orthu:

- Ealaíontóirí atá ag feidhmiú trí mheán na Gaeilge (proifisiúnta agus páirt-aimseartha)



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- Pobal na Gaeilge
- Grúpaí Pobail nasctha leis an Ghaeilge
- Féilte
- Oideoirí & Scoileanna
- Ionaid Ealaíona Gaeilge
- Grúpaí Gaeilge
- Comhairlí Áitiúla – oifigigh Ghaeilge agus oifigigh Ealaíon
- Key arts providers – ACNI, An Chomhairle Ealaíon

Scaipeadh thart fá 250 ceistiúchán chuig daoine aonarach agus eagraíochtaí. Scaip an Chomhairle Ealaíon an ceistiúchán i measc ballraíochta 'Aosdána' chomh maith ar son POBAL. Tháinig 107 ceistiúcháin líonta ar ais faoin sprioc ama. Is ionann sin agus 42.8% de na ceistiúcháin. Bhí eolas, barúlacha, aighneachtaí agus moltaí bailithe ó na grúpaí uilig agus taifead déanta den eolas seo. Baineadh úsáid as an eolas seo le straitéis a dhréachtú le chur chun cinn na healaíona Gaeilge a fhorbairt.

4. Anailís ar torthaí

Sa cheistiúchán, leagfar amach na tosaíochtaí faoi 4 cheanteideal:

- **Forbairtí Ginearálta**
- **Forbairtí Dráma**
- **Forbairtí Litríochta**
- **Forbairtí Ceoil agus Amhránaíochta**

Bhí spás fágtha do moltaí eile.

1. Forbairtí Ginearálta

1. Méadú ar chomhordú comhlachtaí maoinithe agus struchtúir taca agus méadú a dtuisceana de na healaíona Gaeilge agus de riachtanais na hearnála.		
1	60/107	56%
2	21/107	19.6%
3	16/107	14.9%
4	4/107	3.7%
5	1/107	0.93%
AB	3/107	2.8%

1 + 2	75.6%
3	14.9%
4 + 5	4.63%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
60/107	56%

2. Teagmháil agus comhordú le comhlachtaí oiliúna agus soláthraithe chúrsaí ealaíon faoi chláir oiliúna ealaíon Gaeilge in éagsúlacht disciplíní, achar teicniúil srl.		
1	58/107	54.2%
2	21/107	19.63%
3	13/107	12.1%
4	5/107	4.67%
5	6/107	5.61%
AB	4/107	3.73%

1 + 2	73.83%
3	12.1%



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4 + 5	10.28%
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Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
58/107	54.2%

3. Forbairt chláir ealaíon d'earnáil an Ghaeloideachais, Thuaidh agus Theas agus sa Ghaeltacht.		
1	70/107	65.4%
2	12/107	11.2%
3	13/107	12.1%
4	4/107	3.73%
5	4/107	3.73%
AB	4/107	3.73%

1 + 2	76.6
3	12.1%
4 + 5	7.46%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
70/107	65.4%

4. Ardú próifíl na nEalaíon Gaeilge go náisiúnta agus go hidirnáisiúnta.		
1	68/107	63.5%
2	15/107	14.02%
3	11/107	10.3%
4	8/107	7.48%
5	4/107	3.73%
Ab	1/107	0.93%



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1 + 2	77.52%
3	10.3%
4 + 5	11.21%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
68/107	63.5%

5.Stocaireacht ar fhéilte atá ann, bunaithe, leis na healaíona Gaeilge a chuimsiú ina gcuid clár.		
1	57/107	53.3%
2	28/107	26.17%%
3	16/107	14.95%
4	4/107	3.73%
5	2/107	1.87%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	79.47%
3	14.95%
4 + 5	5.6%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
57/107	53.3%

6.Forbairt straitéise leis na hEalaíona Gaeilge a chur chun cinn trí chóras oideachasúil mheán an Bhéarla ar bhun-, mheán-



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thriú leibhéal mar chuid den churaclam agus comhlántach leis.		
1	60/107	56%
2	18/107	16.82%
3	21/107	19.6%
4	6/107	5.61%
5	2/107	1.87%
Ab	0	0

1 +2	72.82
3	19.6%
4+ 5	7.48%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
60/107	56%

7. Cuir in iúl, le do thoil, in ord tábhachta céime, tábhacht pháirt na nEalaíon Gaeilge in ardú feasachta den Ghaeilge.		
1	60/107	56%
2	25/107	23.4%
3	8/107	7.5%
4	4/107	3.73%
5	3/107	2.8%
Ab	4/107	3.73%

1 +2	79.4%
3	7.5%
4 + 5	6.53%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
60/107	56%

2. Forbairt Dráma Gaeilge

1. Fiosrú cén cuidiú praiticiúla a thiocfadh a thabhairt do chompántais bhunaithe dráma le hiad a éascú i soláthar a dtáirgthe do lucht éisteachta is leithne.		
1	40/107	37.4%
2	31/107	28.97%
3	25/107	23.36%
4	8/107	7.47%
5	2/107	1.87%
Ab	1/107	0.93%

1 + 2	66.37%
3	23.36%
4 + 5	9.34%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
40/107	37.4%

2. Ceapadh straitéise fadthréimhse don dráma Gaeilge agus anailís a dhéanamh ar riachtanais na hearnála.		
1	39/107	36.4%
2	35/107	32.7%
3	22/107	20.56%
4	5/107	4.67%
5	4/107	3.74%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	69.1
3	20.56%
4 + 5	8.41%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
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39/107	36.4%
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3. Teagmháil le soláthraithe tríú leibhéal agus spreagadh straitéise oiliúna do mhúinteoirí agus do theagascóirí sa chóras oideachasúil le hiad a oiliúint i scileanna dráma agus amharclainne.		
1	41/107	38.32%
2	31/107	28.97%
3	21/107	19.63%
4	9/107	8.41%
5	3/107	2.8%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	67.29
3	19.63%
4 +5	11.21%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
41/107	38.32%

4. Fiosrú dreasachtaí d'fhorbairt agus scríobh nuadhrámaí d'aoisigh agus do dhaoine óga.		
1	41/107	38.32%
2	35/107	32.7%
3	18/107	16.82%
4	9/107	8.41%
5	3/107	2.80%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	71.02%
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3	16.82%
4 + 5	11.21%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
41/107	38.32%

5. Fiosrú féidearthacht amharclann sráide Ghaeilge agus Amharclann Óige.		
1	48/107	44.9%
2	26/107	24.3%
3	22/107	20.56%
4	5/107	4.67%
5	4/107	3.73%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	69.2%
3	20.56%
4 + 5	8.4%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
48/107	44.9%

3. Forbairt Litríochta Gaeilge

1. Ceapadh clár litríochta Gaeilge do Ghaelscoileanna.		
1	66/107	61.9%
2	21/107	19.6%
3	13/107	12.1%



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4	4/107	3.74%
5	3/107	2.8%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	81.5%
3	12.1%
4 + 5	6.54%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
66/107	61.9%

2. Forbairt acmhainn shuíomh gréasáin le gach foirm scríbhneoireachta Gaeilge a spreagadh.		
1	54/107	50.46%
2	29/107	27.1%
3	12/107	11.2%
4	4/107	3.74%
5	6/107	5.61%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	77.56%
3	11.2%
4 + 5	9.35%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
54/107	50.46%



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3. Cur suas painéal eagarthóirí agus/nó scríbhneoirí bunaithe sna disciplíní éagsúla litríochta le dul i bpáirtíocht le scríbhneoirí úra agus éiritheacha atá ag forbairt a gceirde – scéim Bhord na Leabhar Gaeilge.

1	45/107	42.06%
2	33/107	30.84%
3	14/107	13.08%
4	9/107	8.41%
5	4/107	3.74%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	72.9%
3	13.08%
4 + 5	12.15%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht

45/107	42.06%
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4. Bunú scoileanna cónaithe scríbhneoirí agus Cúrsaí Scríbhneoireachta Cruthaitheacha, le monatóireacht do nuascríbhneoirí, mar chuid de chúrsaí Samhraidh Gaeltachta.

1	36/107	33.6%
2	31/107	28.9%
3	20/107	18.69%
4	14/107	13.08%
5	6/107	5.61%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	62.5%
3	18.69%
4 + 5	18.69%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht

36/107	33.6%
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5. Forbairt chlár léamha agus léirithe ábhar Gaeilge bunaithe sa churaclam do Ghaelscoileanna agus do scoileanna mheán an Bhéarla.		
1	55/107	51.4%
2	35/107	32.7%
3	10/107	9.34%
4	5/107	4.67%
5	2/107	1.87%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	84.1%
3	9.34%
4 + 5	6.54%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
55/107	51.4%

6. Forbairt chlár aistriúcháin agus cothú ceangail le foilsitheoirí i dteangacha eile réigiúnacha agus mionlach fá choinne ábhar litríochta a fhorbairt i gcomhar leo – Gaeilge (tuaisceart na hÉireann & Poblacht na hÉireann) & Gàidhlig (Albain), mar shampla.		
1	43/107	40.19%
2	28/107	26.17%
3	23/107	21.5%
4	6/107	5.61%
5	5/107	4.67%
Ab	2/107	1.87%



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1 + 2	66.36%
3	22.5%
4 + 5	10.28%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
43/107	40.19%

4. Forbairt Ceoil agus Amhránaíocht na Gaeilge

1. Bunú ciste taifeadta le 2-3 CD a thaifeadadh le hamhránaithe bunaithe cúigeacha. Ba chóir ceann acu a dhíriú ar lucht éisteachta scoile.

1	44/107	41.1%
2	29/107	27.1%
3	23/107	21.5%
4	7/107	6.54%
5	1/107	0.93%
Ab	3/107	2.8%

1 + 2	68.2%
3	21.5%
4 +5	7.43%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
44/107	41.1%

2. Oibriú i gcomhar leis na féilte bunaithe amhránaíochta ar sholáthar ceardlann agus máistir-ranganna in amhránaíocht Ghaeilge

1	43/107	40.2%
2	39/107	36.4%
3	19/107	17.75%
4	1/107	0.93%
5	4/107	3.7%
Ab	1/107	0.93%

1 + 2	76.6%
3	17.75%
4 + 5	4.63%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
43/107	40.2%

3. Bunú clár oiliúna, áit a roinneadh máistrí bunaithe a saineolas ar cheoltóirí óga cumasacha

1	56/107	52.3%
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2	32/107	29.9%
3	8/107	6.48%
4	4/107	3.74%
5	4/107	3.74%
Ab	3/107	2.8%

1 + 2	82.2%
3	6.48%
4 + 5	7.48%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
56/107	52.3%

4. Forbairt 'Roc-Scoile' seachtaine do dhaoine óga, agus an bhéim ar tháirgeadh ceoil chomhaimseartha a n-éistfeadh daoine óga leis – díriú ar scríobh amhrán, ar scileanna uirlise, meascán, tionscal an cheoil srl., chomh maith le cuidiú a chur ar fáil faoi bhunú bannaí ceoil agus eagrú agus láithriú ceolchoirmeacha.

1	57/107	53.3%
2	24/107	22.4%
3	10/107	9.34%
4	5/107	4.67%
5	6/107	5.6%
Ab	5/107	4.67%



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1 + 2	75.7%
3	9.34%
4 + 5	10.27%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
57/107	53.3%

5. Forbairt céime i gceol agus in amhránaíocht na Gaeilge i gcomhar le forais aitheanta oideachasúla.

1	50/107	46.7%
2	23/107	21.5%
3	15/107	14.02%
4	10/107	9.34%
5	9/107	8.41%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	69.2%
3	14.02%
4 + 5	17.75%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht
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50/107	46.7%
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6. Forbairt ceangail le heagrais cheoil thraidisiúnta in Albain, i gCeanada, in SAM srl.

1	40/107	37.4%
2	32/107	29.9%
3	18/107	16.82%
4	19/107	17.75%
5	6/107	5.61%
ab	1/107	0.93%

1 + 2	67.3%
3	16.82%
4 + 5	23.36%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht

40/107	37.4%
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7. Bunú líonra ionad camchuarite do cheoltóirí agus d'amhránaithe a bheadh ag eagrú thuras na hÉireann.

1	40/107	37.4%
2	34/107	31.8%



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3	21/107	19.6%
4	9/107	8.41%
5	3/107	2.8%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	69.2
3	19.6%
4 + 5	11.21%

Líon na ndaoine ag roghnú 1 mar thosaíocht	
40/107	37.4%



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Forbairt na Straitéise

Mhol breis agus 50% den lucht a líon isteach an ceistiúcháin na tosaíochtaí seo a leanas don straitéis.

Cuspóir 1: Maoiniú agus tacaíocht: Na bearnaí atá ann faoi láthair i soláthar tacaíochta d'ealaíontóirí atá ag feidhmiú trí mheán na Gaeilge a aimsiú.

- Méadú ar chomhordú comhlachtaí maoinithe agus struchtúir taca, agus méadú a dtuisceana ar na healaíona Gaeilge agus ar riachtanais na hearnála.

Cuspóir 2: Tógáil ar lucht féachana: Modhanna le tógáil ar lucht féachana agus lucht éisteachta do na healaíona Gaeilge. Dlúthbhaint le cúrsaí margaíochta agus cur chun cinn na healaíona Gaeilge.

- Forbairt straitéise leis na healaíona Gaeilge a chur chun cinn trí chóras oideachasúil mheán an Bhéarla ar bhun-, mheán- agus tríú leibhéal mar chuid den churaclam agus comhlántach leis.
- Ceapadh chlár litríochta Gaeilge do Ghaelscoileanna.
- Forbairt ar chlár de léimh agus de léirithe le hábhair Ghaeilge bunaithe sa churaclam do Ghaelscoileanna agus do scoileanna mheán an Bhéarla.

Cuspóir 3: Íomhá na Gaeilge: Aimsiú tosaíochtaí réadúla maidir leis na healaíona Gaeilge le go dtig le POBAL straitéis fad-tréimhse a chur ar bun a chuirfeadh na healaíona chun cinn agus a fheabhsódh stádas na healaíona Gaeilge. Dlúthbhaint leis an earnáil Ghaeilge a fhorbairt agus stádas na n-ealaíon Gaeilge a ardú.

- Ardú próifíl na n-ealaíon Gaeilge go náisiúnta agus go hidirnáisiúnta.
- Stocaireacht ar fhéilte réamhbhunaithe leis na healaíona Gaeilge a chuimsiú ina gcuid clár.
- Cur in iúl go láidir go bhfuil ról an-tábhachtach ag na n-ealaíona Gaeilge in ardú feasachta don Ghaeilge.



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Cuspóir 4: Scileanna agus oiliúint: Ag aimsiú na príomhsholáthraithe (in earnáil na Gaeilge agus earnáil an Bhéarla mar aon) agus na grúpaí atá baint acu leis na healaíona Gaeilge a chur chun cinn. Measúnú a dhéanamh ar na féidearthachtaí do chomhoibriú ábhartha idir na grúpaí seo agus comhpháirtíochta a chruthú faoi stiúir agus riar POBAL.

- Teagmháil agus comhordú le comhlachtaí oiliúna agus soláthraithe chúrsaí ealaíon faoi chlár oiliúna ealaíon Gaeilge in éagsúlacht disciplíní, achair theicniúla, srl.
- Forbairt ar chlár ealaíon d'earnáil an Ghaeloideachais, Thuaidh agus Theas agus sa Ghaeltacht.
- Forbairt ar acmhainn shuíomh gréasáin le gach foirm scríbhneoireachta Gaeilge a spreagadh.
- Bunú chlár oiliúna, áit a roinnfeadh máistrí réamhbhunaithe a saineolas le ceoltóirí óga cumasacha.
- Forbairt ar 'Roc-Scoile' seachtaine do dhaoine óga, agus an bhéim ar tháirgeadh cheoil chomhaimseartha a n-éistfeadh daoine óga leis – díriú ar scríobh amhrán, ar scileanna uirlise, meascthóireacht cheoil, an earnáil cheoil srl., chomh maith le cuidiú a chur ar fáil faoi bhunú bannaí agus faoin eagrú agus láithriú ceolchoirmeacha.

An Plean 3 bliana

Baineadh úsáid as na tosaíochtaí aontaithe fríd an phróiseas comhairliúcháin le straitéis i bhfoirm plean 3 bliana a chur le chéile leis na cuspóirí seo a bhaint amach:

Cuspóir 1: Maoiniú agus tacaíochta: Na bearnaí atá ann faoi láthair i soláthar tacaíochta d'ealaíontóirí atá ag feidhmiú trí mheán na Gaeilge a aimsiú.

Cuspóir 2: Tógáil ar lucht féachana : Modhanna le tógáil ar lucht féachana agus lucht éisteachta do na healaíona Gaeilge. Dlúthbhaint le cúrsaí margaíochta agus cur chun cinn na healaíona Gaeilge.



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Cuspóir 3: Íomha na Gaeilge: Ag aimsiú tosaíochta réadúla maidir leis na healaíona Gaeilge le go dtig le POBAL straitéis fad-tréimhse a chur ar bun a chuirfeadh na healaíona chun cinn agus a fheabhsódh stádas na n-ealaíon Gaeilge. Dlíthbhaint leis an earnáil Ghaeilge a fhorbairt agus stádas na n-ealaíon Gaeilge a ardú.

Cuspóir 4: Scileanna agus oiliúint: Ag aimsiú na príomhsholáthraithe (in earnáil na Gaeilge agus in earnáil an Bhéarla mar aon) agus na grúpaí a bhfuil baint acu leis na healaíona Gaeilge a chur chun cinn. Measúnú a dhéanamh ar na féidearthachtaí do chomhoibriú ábharthacht idir na grúpaí seo agus comhpháirtíocht a chruthú faoi stiúir agus riar POBAL

Ceapadh an plean 3 bliana le téama éagsúil in achan bliain:

Bliain 1 – Oideachas

Bliain 2 – Drámaíocht agus litríocht

Bliain 3 – Ceol agus Roc-scoil a fhorbairt

- Sa chéad bhliain, bheadh béim ar chúrsaí Oideachais le híomhá na healaíona Gaeilge a ardú i measc daoine óga. Tá dlúthbhaint leis seo agus forbairt ar lucht féachana do na healaíona Gaeilge.
- Sa dara bliain, bheadh béim ar chúrsaí litríochta agus drámaíochta. Tá POBAL den bharúil go bhfuil forbairt áirithe de dhíth ar an earnáil drámaíochta. Tá sé soiléir go bhfuil easpa taithí agus feasachta ag an phobal ar an earnáil dhrámaíochta. Tá gá le forbairt práinneach ar íomha an dráma Gaeilge le tógáil ar lucht féachana.
- Sa tríú bliain, bheadh béim ar fhorbairt ceoil agus forbairt na Roc-scoile. Tá dlúthbhaint leis seo agus forbairt scileanna agus oiliúna. Tá easpa daoine le scileanna cuí in earnáil na Gaeilge, le scileanna bainistíochta cultúrtha a sholáthar.

An Plean 3 bliana:

Bliain 1 – Oideachas & Eolas

1. Comhordú ar chlár ealaíona do na Gaelscoileanna (Cuspóir 2 & 3)

Comhdháil - Gaelscoileanna, ESA, DENI, An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Spríocanna le haontú idir na páirtithe leasmhara (stakeholders)

Ról comhordaithe ag POBAL

2 x Cruinnithe leantacha le spríocanna a chinntiú

2. Suíomh idirlín a fhorbairt (Cuspóir 2 & 3)

Imeachtaí bainte le na healaíona Gaeilge ar fud na tíre a fhógairt – baint le margaíocht idirnáisiúnta. Comhordú ar eolas.

Comhdháil – nascanna le comhlachtaí a chuireann eolas ar fáil - comhlachtaí ealaíona, comhlachtaí teicneolaíochta, Ealaín na Gaeltachta, Foras na Gaeilge.

Ról comhordaithe ag POBAL

1 x Cruinniú leantach

3. Comhordú ar eolas (Cuspóir 2 & 3)

Baint le forbairt an suíomh idirlín

Comhdháil – Forbairt ar ghréasán eolais. Comhairlí áitiúla – oifigigh Ghaeilge agus oifigigh ealaíona. Ag fiosrú físe d’fhorbairt na n-nealaíon Gaeilge i gceantar s’acu. Grúpaí Gaeilge, Ionaid ealaíona, An Chomhairle Ealaíona, Foras na Gaeilge, POBAL (ról comhordaithe).

2 x Cruinnithe leantacha

4. Comhdháil dhrámaíochta (Cuspóir 2 & 3 & 4)

Na comhlachtaí drámaíochta ar fud na hÉireann (proifisiúnta agus amaitéarach) a thabhairt le chéile le forbairt an earnáil drámaíochta a phlé. Plé straitéis margaíochta do dhrámaíocht Ghaeilge. Ról comhordaithe ag POBAL.

2 x Cruinnithe leantacha

Plean 3 bliana:

Bliain 2 – Drámaíocht & Litríocht

1. Clár ealaíona do na Gaelscoileanna – cruinnithe leantacha (Cuspóir 2 & 3)

Obair leanúnach ón chomhdháil anuraidh – ag cinntiú na spriocanna a bhí aontaithe. Cruinniú ar dhá thogra úra.

Togra úr – Clár litríochta do scoileanna Béarla ag díriú isteach ar riachtanais an chúrsa A-leibhéal Gaeilge. Ceardlanna le scríbhneoirí agus aisteoirí. Ealaíontóirí, scríbhneoirí, múinteoirí Gaeilge, ESA.

Cruinniú leantach (1).

Togra úr – Suíomh idirlín a fhorbairt mar áis scríbhneoireachta. Scríbhneoirí, múinteoirí, ESA, An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Cruinniú leantach (2).

2. Forbairt leanúnach ar an ghréasán eolais (Cuspóir 2 & 3)

Cruinnithe leanúnacha leis na grúpaí cúí leis na spriocanna aontaithe a chinntiú.

1 x Cruinniú le hoifigigh ealaíona na Comhairlí áitiúla le cúrsa bainistíochta cultúrtha a phlé.

1 x Cruinniú le grúpaí bainte le forbairt na suímh idirlín (nuashonrú).

**3. Forbairt leanúnach ar eolas a bhailiú ar an earnáil drámaíochta.
(Cuspóir 2,3 & 4)**

Baint leis an obair ar an ghréasán eolais.

2 x Cruinnithe leantacha le grúpaí cuí le spriocanna aontaithe a chinntiú.

4. Stocaireacht ar feilte in Éirinn (Cuspóir 1 & 2)

Plé le maoinitheoirí faoi sciar maoiniú a chur ar leath taobh do féilte leis na healaíona Gaeilge a chur san áireamh i gclár ealaíona s'acu.

Nasc le margaíocht idirnáisiúnta ar na healaíona Gaeilge.

POBAL, An Chomhairle Ealaíon, Foras na Gaeilge, na comhairlí áitiúla, maoinitheoirí cuí eile.

Teagmháil a bhunú le maoinitheoirí. Teagmháil rialta a choinneáil.

5. Comhdháil – Traenáil agus scileanna (Cuspóir 1 & 4)

Plé faoi easpa scileanna teicniúla agus easpa scileanna bainistíochta cultúrtha in earnáil na Gaeilge.

Grúpaí cuí – POBAL (Ról comhordaithe), Ollscoil na Banríon, Ollscoil Uladh, Falls Community Council, South Regional College, Belfast

Metropolitan College.

1 x Cruinniú leantach.

Plean 3 bliana:

Bliain 3 – Ceol agus Roc-scoil

1. Comhdháil – Traenáil agus scileanna (Cuspóir 1 & 4)

Plé faoi Roc-scoil a bhunú – deireadh seachtaine de dianchúrsa agus ceardlanna ar scileanna cuí teicneolaíochta agus ceoil.

Máistircheardlanna ceoil a eagrú.

Grúpaí cuí a thabhairt le chéile – ceoltóirí, teicneoirí fuaime agus ardáin.

2 x cruinnithe leantacha

2. Margaíocht idirnáisiúnta (Cuspóirí 2 & 3)

Caidreamh a thógáil le féilte idirnáisiúnta. Drámaíocht Ghaeilge a chur chun tosaigh.

3. Clár ealaíona do na Gaelscoileanna (Cuspóir 2 & 3)

Obair leanúnach ar na spriocanna aontaithe – faoi stiúir eagraíocht oideachasúil.

1x cruinniú leantach

4. Stocaireacht ar feilte in Éirinn (Cuspóir 1 & 2)



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Cruinnithe leanúnacha le maoinitheoirí faoi sciar maoiniú a chur ar fáil d'fhéilte leis na healaíona Gaeilge a chur san áireamh i gclár ealaíona s'acu.

Nasc le margaíocht idirnáisiúnta ar na healaíona Gaeilge.

POBAL, maoinitheoirí.

Teagmháil leanúnach.

Interviews and Building the International profile of the Irish Language Arts



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Interview with Pilib Ó Runaí, Chairperson of ‘An Droichead’ Arts Centre, July 2009

Sinéad: Description given of the research project. Thank you for agreeing to this interview. What are your experiences in operating as an Irish language Arts centre?

Pilib: Firstly, we believe that we are foremost an Irish language centre. We make use of the Arts to promote the Irish language. We use the arts to bring Irish speakers together on a social basis and of course, to create employment opportunities for Irish language speakers. We create employment for individuals in the centre itself and we create employment opportunities for Irish speaking artists.

Sinéad: What are the advantages of functioning as an Irish language Arts centre?

Pilib: The Irish language community in the South of the city are very loyal to the centre – we are well supported by the local community – we nearly have a guaranteed audience. There is a lot of support for the centre amongst the local community and it creates a great atmosphere. The local community feel a sense of ownership of ‘An Droichead’ and this is important in creating good will towards the centre. I doubt that the English language Arts centres can boast the loyal following.

Sinéad: What difficulties have you experienced?

Pilib: Funding most of the time! When are always chasing funding. I believe that funders look at long established organisations like ‘An Chultúrlann’ and don’t see the need for another Irish language Arts centre. We are not blaming ‘An Chultúrlann’ for securing funding but we don’t think that funders realise that we are serving another section of the population of the city. Funders must see us a separate and distinct centre serving the needs of a different section of the community. I don’t believe that English language Arts centres have to compete in the same manner for the same funding – it is a form of discrimination against the Irish language and its speakers. That’s our biggest problem.

Sinéad: Does anything else stand out – such as compiling an Art’s programme? Do you experience difficulties in identifying artists with fluent Irish?

Pilib: I don’t believe that we experience difficulty in identifying sufficient acts in Irish. There is a lot happening in the Irish language scene at the moment and of a very high standard also. I personally would like to see more events for fluent Irish speakers – create more opportunities for them to meet socially and use their Irish.



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Sinéad: As there is currently lots happening on the Irish language scene – do you think that there is a need for a strategy for the Irish language Arts?

Pilib: I think that it can only help the Irish language Arts if a strategy is developed to promote them. 'An Droichead' would support such a strategy.



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Interview with Áine Nic Gearailt, committee of 'An Chultúrlann, July 2009.

Sinéad: Description of the research project. What are the advantages of functioning as an Irish language Arts centre?

Áine: WE have an extremely dedicated and hard-working team who are very loyal to the organisation. They understand 'An Chulturlann' vision for the language and they are very loyal to all aspects of the language – this is a great advantage that most organisations do not possess in their work force.

Sinéad: What difficulties has the organisation experienced functioning as an Irish language Arts centre?

Áine: Funding and the lack of it is the biggest problem! Funding is required for everyday existence and funding is required to grow and develop. Professional artists are very expensive and realistically, an Chultúrlann's budget does not always attract them to the centre. We are always trying to strike a balance between our budget and the quality of events. In my opinion every high quality Irish language entertainment event should be staged at 'An Chultúrlann'. We do have difficulty in identifying a variety of high profile Irish language drama – Irish language drama companies seem to be especially in need of development.

Publicity is also another issue. Our marketing budget is inadequate to our needs and remember, we must advertise bilingually (more expensive). It can be difficult to promote ourselves. It is difficult to assess our audience – we may have excellent attendance at one event but poor attendance at another event. It's hard to find the reason for this sometimes. We need help in maintaining a relationship with our audiences. We need help with marketing but the resources do not seem to be there.

We sometimes find it hard to identify people with the appropriate skills and fluency in Irish to run an Irish language Arts centre. – but lack of skills is a problem in the Irish language sector generally. Dara Mac an Iomaire from 'An Taibhdhearc' wrote a good article about the lack of skilled individuals in the Irish language drama sector and in the Irish language sector generally. Funding and time is required to develop the required skills in young people – basically, time, funding and expertise are essential.

Sinéad: Do you think that there is a need for an Irish language Arts strategy?



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Áine: Yes, certainly! It would be wonderful if there was an official or an organisation with whom Irish language Arts groups could discuss their problems – in Irish! Someone who understand the Irish language sector and the sensitivities surrounding it. It would be a great asset to receive professional advice about the Irish language and the Arts. There is a need for greater co-operation between statutory organisations such The Arts Council NI, Arts organisations and Irish language groups.

There needs to be a balance between Irish language events and bilingual or trilingual events – they can all be used to attract people to the Irish language. I am thinking specifically of an excellent play that I saw in Irish, Welsh and English. The Arts can (and have been) used successfully to attract people to the language and in turn, the Irish language has been used to promote the Arts. ‘An Chultúrlann’ fully supports the development of an Irish language Arts strategy.



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Interview with Dr. Art Hughes, McCracken Cultural Society, Tuesday 1st September 2009

Sinéad: Description of the research project.

Art: I am the chairperson of the McCracken Cultural Society. 10 years ago, Máirtín Mac Cathmhaoil suggested the idea for founding a Cultural Society in the area. There was already an Irish-medium school and a few Irish-medium nurseries in the area and Martin believed that the time was right to fund a Cultural Society. I agreed with him and I have been the chairman now for 10 years.

Sinéad: What are the objectives of the organisation?

Art: As I already stated – it is primarily a cultural society. We have a cultural agenda. We exist to promote the Irish language and everything associated with the language. We founded the summer school to offer intensive Irish classes at every level but there is a big social aspect to the school as well. The day is structured to give Irish speakers the opportunity to meet socially and to use the language in a social setting. We believe that is an important aspect of learning the language.

Sinéad: Do you have a connection with the Arts at all?

Art: A strong connection! We believe that we have to promote all aspects of the language – this in turn means promoting the Arts such as music, song, art and sculpting. We strongly promote the Arts amongst children.

Eamonn McGuire, Danny Brown, Seirse O’ Dochartaigh, Tony Bell, Maeve Creggan and Natalie McCoy have all exhibited at the summer school. We use the Arts to promote the Irish language – the Irish language is weaved through the music and drama especially.

Sinéad: Do you encounter difficulties while working with the Irish language Arts?

Art: I don’t believe that I encounter difficulties but we have to be creative in our choices! The Arts are essential in enriching the experience of Irish speakers. We have to promote a broad range of interests while being as inclusive as possible.

Sinéad: Do you believe that there is a need for an Irish language Arts strategy?

Art: Yes, certainly. The Arts are central to the Irish culture and we in the McCracken Cultural Society look on an Irish Language Arts strategy as a step forward for the language. We support such a step – and support the concept of developing such a strategy.



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Interview with Carrie-Anne McAloonan – McCrudden, Aisling Ghéar's, Irish language drama theatre, manager , July 2009.

Sinéad: Description of the research. What are the advantages of working for an Irish language drama company?

Carrie- Anne: Aisling Ghéar was created by people who treasure the Irish language. People who work for Aisling Ghéar appreciate the unique inheritance that has been passed down to them. They are very loyal to the language and the company. People who work with Aisling Ghéar appreciate that they work in a unique context.

Sinéad: What are the difficulties working in a minority language – the Irish language?

Carrie-Anne: There are quite a few! Aisling Ghéar's biggest problem is their inability to compile data on their audiences. This could be achieved with an electronic box office. It would help to build profiles of the people who come to our productions – unfortunately they are very expensive. If we had one, it would be a useful way of identifying our audience and of building a relationship with our audience. This would be a major asset to Aisling Ghéar. As it stands, we have compiled our own 'borrowed' data base on potentially interested individuals and groups – but we don't feel that it is really satisfactory. Data capture is our biggest issue!

Another problem is that a lot of the venues that we perform in don't have a box office – our audiences have no option but to buy tickets of our website. We also have major problems working with the banks and currency in the Republic of Ireland. It is very difficult to work with actors in the Republic of Ireland due to wages, currency and bank charges on paying wages 'internationally'.

Another issue is funding – the uncertainty of funding makes it difficult to plan for the company. This is due to the uncertain future of some of the funding bodies such as Foras na Gaeilge. We need to look at other avenues of funding such European funding and European funding partners.

Sinéad: Do you feel that the international profile of the Irish language is of significance?

Carrie-Anne: Yes! It is very important to raise the profile of the Irish language internationally! We export and promote all our talent from Northern Ireland and Irish



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language drama should be at the forefront of this. Aisling Ghéar believes that a strategy to promote Irish language drama nationally and internationally is required urgently. Irish culture has always been marketable – why not Irish language drama? The Irish language is older than National Trust buildings and receives less income streams! The Irish language should be regarded as a national asset by groups such as the British Council.

Sinéad: Do you believe that there is an issue with the image of the Irish Language and Irish Language drama?

Carrie-Anne: Yes I believe that Irish language drama does have an image problem and needs work to address this. Aisling Ghéar is trying to perform in other venues besides the Cultúrlann – although we want to maintain our link with an Chultúrlann. We have performed in the Baby Grand venue recently and it has definitely opened us up to new audience. There is an issue with the standard of venues where Irish language drama is performed and the image of the language.

Sinéad: Do you have difficulty identifying new writers or new plays?

Carrie-Anne: No, not at all but we have major problems about selling new drama – people want to see the old favourites. New children's drama commissions are easier to market and sell. I believe that we need to strengthen Aisling Ghéar as an organisation first before we promote lots of new commissions but we don't really have problems identifying new writers.

We need to use bilingual plays to attract people to the Irish language and Irish language drama. For example 'Stones in his pocket' worked well bilingually. Bilingualism is useful where appropriate but we need to preserve the ethos of Aisling Ghéar as an Irish language theatre company – it's our unique selling point.

Sinéad: Do you believe that there is a need for a strategy for the Irish language Arts?

Carrie-Anne: Yes! The profile of Irish language drama needs promoted nationally and internationally. A strategy for the Irish language Arts in general is required to co-ordinate the development of the arts.



Draft strategy for the development of the Irish Language Arts

September 2009

Submission by Newry and Mourne Council on Irish language and the Arts, May 2009.

Newry and Mourne is a large district with the Irish language community scattered throughout its remit. The Irish language population is gradually increasing – 20.46% of the population indicated some knowledge of the Irish language according to the 2001 census.

The Irish speaking population do not consist of one community – they are dispersed throughout the English-speaking population. Many have indicated a distinct lack of interest in cultural and artistic events.

Obstacles

It is perceived that the high brow image of the Arts hinders their promotion within the community.

There is a need for a broad definition of the Irish language Arts – there is more to it than just drama, music, literature and poetry.

There is a lack of knowledge regarding opportunities for the development of the Arts.

Lack of skills in this community.

Lack of a recognised Art's centre to promote the Irish language Arts.

Sectarianism and politics does affect the development of the Irish language Arts.

Bilingualism and translations (English and Ulster Scotch) does present problems.

Quality of Artists

Lack of professional artists who are fluent in Irish.

Difficult for Artists to make a living through a minority language.

The way forward

Development Officer to implement an Irish language Arts strategy.

Information sharing, communication and marketing must be essential components of this strategy.

Partnerships and co-operation between existing groups is essential.



Draft strategy for the development of the Irish Language Arts

September 2009

Skill development and support structures required for musicians, poets, creative writers and critical reviewers are required.

Artist-in-residence schemes.

Support and training for publishers, magazines and newspapers.



Draft strategy for the development of the Irish Language Arts

September 2009

Interview with Ursula Ní Fhearáil, Dungannon District Council and Cookstown District Council, 20th August 2009.

Sinéad: Description of the research project. Please give a description of your job role please.

Ursula: I am an Irish language development officer and my job is divided between Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council and Cookstown County Council. I am based in Dun Gannon council offices for half of the week and I spend the rest based in an Arts Centre in Cookstown.

It's my job to develop the Irish language and to assure the longevity of the language in these areas. There are two aspects to my work – (internal work) I am responsible for organising Irish language classes for council workers to encourage them to learn the language and I'm also involved in community development – trying to raise awareness of the Irish language in the community.

I work with all the community groups who have a link with the Irish language – place names, local history, helping to organise Irish classes. I work with English language schools generating an interest in the Irish language.

I am involved with the Irish-medium schools in the areas – I give support to the Irish language youth club in Coalisland through organising a series of workshops in Irish for children. I help the youth club identify funding. Currently I am assisting them identify funding through 'Neighbourhood Renewal'.

A lot of my work is based on community work and the Irish language – especially in community building. I am also responsible for the updating of a website for Irish speakers that highlights events for Irish speakers in the area. I also produce a newsletter to distribute this information.

There is a lot of diversity in my work – everyone has a different approach to this work but I am working according to an 18month plan that my employers have verified. I am working to strengthen the Irish language in these areas.

Sinéad: You have a lot going on – do you believe that the arts are important in your work?

Ursula: I'll send you a copy of the newsletter to give you an idea of the ongoing work. I use the Arts in my work – especially to promote the language especially for children. I am thinking especially of 'The Fanzini Brothers' circus show that we had here recently for the children from Irish-medium education. They were excellent – but very expensive. But it is very important to let the school children see the Irish Language in use outside of the classroom and the Arts are very good at illustrating this.



Draft strategy for the development of the Irish Language Arts

September 2009

We use the Arts a lot in 'Seachtain na Gaeilge' especially to generate interest in the Irish language. It is important to use events (exhibitions, concerts etc.) to bring together the scattered Irish language community and to give them opportunities to use their Irish.

Sinéad: Do you encounter difficulties in relation to working with the Irish language Arts?

Ursula: Yes. I encounter problems finding and identifying entertainment or workshops in Irish. Often the Artists don't have the appropriate skills or language skills – the language skills certainly need developed. The Irish language community want high quality events and the Irish language. Usually when we identify an artist of renowned who speaks Irish they are often very expensive – more funding is required to attract them to rural venues!

Generally, there are problems with the Irish language and funding – we need to more funding to make the language sustainable, especially for the like of 'Seal spraoi' (Irish language youth club).

When organising event for Irish speakers there are two main objectives – high quality entertainment and the language aspect. It can be hard to reconcile the two!

Sinéad: Do you believe that there is a need for an Irish language Arts strategy?

Ursula: Yes certainly! There is an urgent need for co-ordination of current events and to promote co-operation between Irish speakers and organisations – a definite emphasis on co-ordination.

The Irish language community are a minority community and the co-ordination of events would be very useful in strengthening that community. There is a need to develop summer schemes for Irish – medium school pupils and a database of artists fluent in Irish.



Draft strategy for the development of the Irish Language Arts

September 2009

Interview with Déaglán Ó Doibhlin, Magherafelt District Council and Limavady Borough Council, 1st September 2009.

Sinéad: Description of the research project. Could you please give a description of your role in the councils?

Déaglán: I am an Irish language development officer – my job is divided between Magherafelt Borough Council and Limavady Borough Council. There are two aspects to my work – I have to raise the status of the Irish language within the councils. I try to encourage council workers to learn the Irish language through informal educational classes.

I also work with the community encouraging an interest in the Irish language. I use the local heritage and the Arts a lot to achieve this. I am also active in raising an awareness of the Irish language within the Protestant community.

As well as this, I am involved in drafting language policies for minority languages in respect of ‘The European Convention’.

Sinéad: You are involved with the Arts through your work?

Déaglán: yes certainly – I use the Arts to promote the Irish language, especially traditional Arts or Arts linked to heritage. People in the areas that I serve are especially interested in archaeology and local history. This can be used to promote the Irish language as the main traditionally spoken language of the areas. For example, we are promoting the local heritage of the area through the re-telling of the stories, songs and music of the last Irish harpers such as Bunting who originated in this area. People really enjoy the link between local history and heritage and the Irish Language. This inspires them to start learning the language. Currently, I am working on behalf of the councils in publishing work on folklore in Co. Derry.

As well as this, I am busy organising events that provide Irish speakers with an opportunity to socialise and use their Irish – and the Arts are very important in this regard. Different events are organised – dances, concerts, sean-nós singing, traditional music. We are even organising bilingual weaving and sculpting workshops to inspire English speakers to learn the language and learners to learn more – but the emphasis is always upon the Irish language in these events.

Although I’m involved in organising events – I prefer the Irish language community to organise their own events. I support them and I help them to identify sources of funding to organise the events that they would like.

Sinéad: Do you encounter difficulties in working with the Irish language Arts?



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Déaglán: Yes. There is a serious lack of knowledge regarding the Artists who are available who can deliver events in Irish – there is a serious need to share this kind of knowledge. There is a lack of funding to allow the employment of professionals to deliver workshops and entertainment. Nobody can exist without a wage – this creates stress and pressure. Professional people can't work just for the cause! There is not enough funding and the funding that is available is very restricting (Foras na Gaeilge)– even if you have an excellent idea, it may not meet the funders criteria. More flexibility is needed in regard to funding.

Sinéad: Is there a need for an Irish language Arts strategy?

Déaglán: There is an urgent need for a strategy to develop the Irish language Arts. There is a need for the gathering of accurate information on the Irish Language Arts and for this information to be shared amongst the Irish language community. The Irish language community needs this strengthening.

Sample of events:

Octoberfest'09 – Féile an Fhómhair'09

For further information on Irish language and bilingual events contact the Irish Language Officer at the Bridewell, Magherafelt

Thursday 1st October

From Bryson's, Magherafelt

Details to be confirmed

'Blas Ceoil' BBCNI live music recording featuring some of the country's finest musicians and the best of local talent

'Ceiliúradh an Dúchais - Celebrating the local' –bilingual event looking at the work of local poets and the importance of place in their work. With readings, discussion and song from Magherafelt's own Diarmaid Ó Doibhlin, Belfast poet Philip Cummings, and the renowned singer Nollaig Brolly from Dungiven. Hosted by Laurel Villa Townhouse.

Saturday 10th October

An Ráth Dubh

Moneyneena, Ballynascreen



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11am

Adm £3

Ceardlann Cleamaireachta

Mummers bilingual workshop and show with the **Armagh Rhymers**. Serious family centred fun at the Ráth Dubh Centre in Gleann Con Cadhain.

Saturday 17th October

An Carn

Maghera

10am-12.30 and 2pm-4pm

Adm £3

Ceardlann Lása Chluain Eois

Clones Lace workshop -a bilingual event with expert tutor Máire Treanor from Clones, Co Monaghan. Learn the traditional skill of crochet lace-making brought to Ireland from the Island of Burano, Venice, in the 19th Century.

Saturday 17th October

Market Yard

Magherafelt

10.30am-1pm and 2pm-3.30pm

Adm £3

Ceardlann Snoíodóireachta - Woodcarving Workshop

Bilingual format with master sculptor Séighean Ó Draoi. Try your hand at this ancient craft. Participants will create sculptures in low relief which they can then take home.

Saturday 17th October

Bridewell

Magherafelt



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Times to be confirmed

Adm £3

Ceardlann Sean-nóis - Sean-nós singing workshop and session

Featuring Ireland's foremost sean-nós singer Treasa Ní Cheannbháin from Carna in Connemara, a wonderful opportunity to learn the secrets of this ancient singing style.

Saturday 24th Sun 25th October

Walk details to be confirmed

'Féile na gCnoc' Irish language Hillwalking Weekend.

Local Irish speakers in Carntogher and Moneyneena host walkers from Belfast and Dublin with walks on Carntogher, Mullaghmore and Bohilbreaga mountains.

Sat 24th October

9.30pm

An Carn

Maghera

Club Ceoil na Daróige - Oakleaf Folk Club

Up and coming traditional singer Caoimhe Ní Chathail from Belfast, uileann piper Aodán Mac Seafraidh and concertina player Jo Bargewell from the Glens, and Belfast singer/guitarist Nioclas Mac Cathmhaoil play South Derry's innovative new folk event.

Fri 30th October

International Music Evening

6.30pm – 9.30pm

The Bridewell, Magherafelt



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Admission TBC

T: 028 79300544

A social and cultural event with a difference!

You are invited to attend this event to share music, song and dance from countries and cultures from around the world.



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Interview with Derry City Council, June 2009. Present: Pól Ó Frighil, Irish language officer, Brendan McMEnamin, Arts Officer and Sinéad Quinn, POBAL.

Sinéad: Description of the research project. What's your role in the council, Pól?

Pól: I am the Irish language officer for Derry City Council. It is my job to promote the Irish language internally in the council. I am also responsible for promoting the language within the community and in supporting the Irish language community organising events for the Irish language community. The number of Irish speakers is rising in the city – there are currently 3 Irish-medium schools and we are fortunate to have 'An Gaelarás' serving the needs of this growing community as well. I believe that the council has an important supporting role in the city.

Brendan: My role is to provide help and support for artists within the council remit. I am usually busy identifying new funding for artists and funding for new art's projects. I am pleased that POBAL are undertaking the role of gathering accurate information on the Irish language Arts but I believe that the Irish language community needs to be careful when drafting a strategy for the Irish language Arts. A strategy can do no harm than good if the correct objectives are not identified!

Sinéad: I agree Brendan and that is why I am asking for your help in distributing these questionnaires prepared by POBAL. The questionnaire is based on proposals put forward by the Irish language community through POBAL's extensive 2004 consultation process on the Irish language Arts. It is of the utmost importance that accurate information is gathered to draft an appropriate strategy to develop the Irish language Arts. Can I rely on your help with the questionnaire's distribution?

Pól: Yes certainly. I am happy to distribute the questionnaire. Have you contacted any other Irish language groups in the area?

Sinéad: I was and I received good feedback from groups such as Cnoc na Rós. I have not received any comeback from 'An Gaelarás' though.

Pól: I can contact 'An Gaelarás' about this work and ask them to fill in a questionnaire.

Sinéad: Thank you, Pól. I am very grateful for your help. Brendan, are you happy to distribute the questionnaire amongst artists and those with an interest in art's issues?



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Building the image of the Irish language arts on an international platform

One of the priorities of the Irish language arts sector is to break out into international recognition for the Irish language arts. This is a large task, and to achieve measurable impact, it is suggested that the following be taken into account in identifying potentially useful contacts. Initially, international links should be prioritised where there is / are:

- Large established communities of people of Irish origin (for example Canada, US, Australia)
- Identifiable impact from Irish cultural, linguistic and historical influence on the formation of a common culture and means of expression
- A level of understanding, awareness and interest in minoritised language arts

Canada fulfils all 3 of these factors, although the Irish influence and proactive work on language arts is most intensively understood in Quebec. Irish immigration to through Canada has often been through the St Lawrence river, making Quebec a recognised staging point for Irish immigrants. Some of the founding families of Quebec came from Irish stock, and many common 'Francophone' Quebec surnames originate in the Irish (one of Quebec's key historical figures, Tec Aubry was an Irishman whose 'Francophone' name is a corruption of Tadhg Ó Braonáin). Adding to this connection is the historical relationship between the Quebecois and Irish famine immigrants. Grosse Isle, an island in the St Lawrence river off the shore of Quebec city was used as a quarantine station for predominantly Irish immigrants during the late 1840s and 50s. Many thousands of Irish people died there from famine-related disease, leaving a significant population of Irish orphans, taken in by Francophone Quebecois families and raised speaking French, but retaining their Irish surnames. The Irish and Francophone communities have raised many memorial sites and have a keen interest in developing an understanding through the arts of the interactions of Francophones and the Irish in Quebec.

It is recognised that the relationship has not always been an easy one, exacerbated at time by rivalries in the French and Irish Catholic Church, over language issues and social and political influence. Montréal and Quebec city have large Irish populations, and on two of the oldest charitable associations in Montréal are the St Patrick's Society and the Protestant



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Benevolent Society, whose interactions and interpretations of Irish culture have attracted academic interest.

Recent developments in interest in the Irish –Francophone Quebecois link are shown through the growth in academic courses at Concordia university examining the Irish-Quebec interconnection, as well as increased funding for courses in the Irish language and a now yearly Irish-Francohone conference as part of the high prestige Acfas conference (which brings together over 10,000 researchers from all over the world). In 2009, Montreal's McCord Museum put together its first exhibition of the Irish in the city and there are plans to bring the exhibition to the Ulster museum.

The Quebec government has already worked in conjunction with some arts providers in the North and the rest of Ireland on embryonic arts projects, but to date, the emphasis has not included language issues. This, in combination with the other arts elements (musical, commemorative and historical) could form the basis of further exploration of collaborative projects.

Quebec

Notes from the meeting with Conseil des arts et des lettres, Québec

Marie-Pierre Dolbec (development officer for regional and international affairs)

Denise Denis, music development officer

Janet Muller

This is a state organisation which looks after production and diffusion of the arts. The Quebec government created the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Conseil officially commenced its operations on April 1, 1994, following several months of structuring and organization and the appointment of the president and director general and the other 12 members of the Board of Directors.

Its mission it is to support throughout the province of Québec artistic and literary research



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and creation, experimentation, production and dissemination in the realms of the visual arts, the arts and crafts, literature, the performing arts, the multidisciplinary arts, the media arts, and architectural research. It also promotes artists, writers and arts organizations and their works in Québec, the rest of Canada and abroad.

The Conseil is managed by a Board of Directors made up of not more than 13 members, including the president, appointed by the government on the recommendation of the Minister of Culture, Communications and the Status of Women, (who is also responsible for language planning and legislation) following consultations with organizations that it deems to be representative of the arts and literary communities. Members are chosen for their interest in the arts and literature. The president is employed full time. The Board of Directors meets at least four times a year. Yvan Gauthier is the current President and Chief Executive Officer of the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. He has a 60 strong staff working in offices in Québec City and Montréal.

The Conseil gets funded from the Minister of Culture, Communications and the Status of Women. In 2007-2008, the Conseil had a budget of \$90 million, and awarded \$74.8 million in grants to Québec arts organizations and professional artists and writers; \$8.7 million were reserved for the Placements Culture program, \$6.9 million were allocated for the Conseil's operation and \$0.4 million financed the cost of juries and committees. In 2007-2008, the Conseil received 796 grant applications from arts organizations and 5133 grant applications from professional artists, writers or members of artists' and writers' groups. It awarded grants to 582 Québec arts organizations and 1419 grants to professional artists and writers.

The Conseil offers professional artists and writers grants intended to support research and creation, development grants, and grants to cover travel and working abroad. The Conseil offers arts organizations grants to support their operations or production, promotion and dissemination projects, tours, the organization of province-wide and international events as well as the reception of foreign performances.

Grant awards are made on the basis of an evaluation process centred essentially on peer assessment. Each year, over 300 artists, writers, cultural managers and specialists of the cultural community participate as members of advisory committees and juries, or as evaluators, in decision-making pertaining to the awarding of grants. Among other things, the Conseil ensures that representatives of the regions sit on the committees and juries. The Board of Directors makes the final decision on the awarding of grants.



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The Conseil also works to develop and exchange arts contact and projects internationally and has a programme of studio exchanges which encompass a number of cities including in Wales, Glasgow, Paris, Berlin, London etc. They have 15-20 international partners in this programme. Their object is to ensure that professional artists can work abroad and be integrated into communities. One of their exchange programmes will start anew in London In July 09.

They also work to promote and support international concerts and tours, and discussion followed on the possible useful links with traditional musicians from both Quebec and Ireland. Information was given on festival s and events including Spotlight Quebec and Celtic Connections.

Janet explained the work of POBAL, which the two officers said they had researched through the materials she had sent them and online. She explained that the organisation's emphasis was on language, and that she felt there would be particular relevance in looking at an international collaboration that might forge closer cultural links with Quebec, given the shared aspects of history between Ireland and Quebec and the deeply rooted historical, social and cultural experiences that link the two. In terms of POBAL's own work for the Irish language, she felt that there was a common thread of language promotion within a minority context which the Irish speaking community could bring to a shared programme of activity. One of the ways that this might usefully and easily be done could be through an exploration of Irish / Quebecois traditional music influences. She felt that collaboration could also take a number of forms, through musical exploration, through drama, through the visual arts, through multi-disciplinary taster arts exchanges that would lead to relevant historical and contemporary connections.

Marie-Pierre described some of the work carried out on a similar collaboration with Wales and Scotland until recently and she will send Janet contact details of relevant officers in London and elsewhere. The Conseil works with professional artists and likes to favour projects that have depth and are of some duration to allow for development. It has sent delegations to Denmark, Sweden and London and has contacts with the Arts Council in England.

Janet explained that as an umbrella group, in addition to developing project ideas for collaboration and co-ordination amongst a number of Irish language groups together, POBAL was keen to help its member organisations independently to develop and promote



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their own work in the arts, and to look at whether there were gaps that new groups or projects could fill. She was keen to bring back information about possible linkages that different member organisations (for instance, the professional Irish language drama group, Aisling Ghéar is among POBAL's membership, as are three Irish language cultural centres) could also make use of. Discussion followed on Quebec festivals including music and drama and it was agreed that Denise and Marie-Pierre would send on further details and contacts in respect of festivals generally and drama in particular. A list of organisations will also be sent.

Discussion continued on the role of the Accordion festival (La Grande Rencontre) and the Association Folklorique for traditional music. The Conseil places emphasis on work with professional, recognised artists and on high quality work. Discussion followed on some of the possibilities around high profile work. Janet gave a breakdown of some of the artists that POBAL had worked with on its four-year project, the Irish Language Arts Roadshow, including Máiréad ní Mhaonaigh and Ciaran Curran of internationally renowned Altan; poet and lecturer, Louis de Paor, classical and traditional guitarist, Steve Cooney, singer, author and song collector Pádraigín Uí Uallacháin, contemporary singer-songwriter, John Spillane; sean-nós singers Doimínic Mac Giolla Bhríde agus Lasairfhíona Ní Chonaola, singer and accordionists Séamus, Eoin and Breandán Ó Beaglaoich and Gàidhlig singer and musician from the western isles of Scotland, BBC Folk Awards winner, Julie Fowlis.

Marie-Pierre will contact members in London and send on contact details to Janet. They will also send on sectoral contact lists. In the meantime, Janet will further explore the possibility of developing some project ideas.

Brendan: I am happy to do so but I am sure that most artists in this area are not fluent in the Irish language but I support the work being undertaken.

Sinéad: Thank you for your time and support.



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A Strategy for the Irish Language Arts 2009-2012



Draft strategy for the development of the Irish Language Arts

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Research on the Irish Language Arts

- Introduction
- Priorities and objectives
- Methodology
- Analysis of results
- Development of the strategy
- 3 year plan
- Interviews –
 - 1.1 Committee of ‘An Droichead’
 - 1.2 Committee of ‘An Chultúrlann’
 - 1.3 Committee of the McCracken Cultural Society
 - 1.4 Aisling Ghéar, Irish Language Drama Company
 - 1.5 Newry & Mourne Council
 - 1.6 Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council
and Cookstown County Council
 - 1.7 Magherafelt County Council and Limavady
Borough Council
 - 1.8 Derry City Council
 - 1.9 Building the Irish language Arts on an
International Platform - Quebec



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- Questionnaire

Introduction

This document lays out a 3 year strategic framework for the development of the Irish Language Arts in the North of Ireland. POBAL have developed this strategy to promote the modern and traditional Irish language Arts. It is widely agreed that the Irish Language Arts have certain strengths, but it is also widely acknowledged that urgent development is required by certain disciplines within the Irish Language Arts to enable them to thrive as part of a vibrant and living culture. This research focuses on the disciplines within the Irish Language Arts that require urgent and immediate development and how to ensure that the required development is appropriate and effective.

There is a need to develop a strategy for the Irish Language Arts. The difficulties experienced by artists working through the Arts are generally acknowledged, but the situation of Artists working through the medium of a minority language is unique and precarious. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has iterated the need for the nurturing of the Irish Language Arts.

“The state of development of the Irish Language Arts is precarious and in need of intervention.” (The Arts of Irish and Ulster Scots, Audit and Needs Analysis, October 2003)

“There are three engines driving the (Arts) Council's ambitions regarding the arts in Irish. The first is our own assessment of the historical poverty of those arts in our society, in terms of their visibility and the low level of funding.” (Roisin McDonough, Chief Executive of the Arts Council NI, speaking at POBAL's general meeting in reponse to Arts Council's Audit and Needs Analysis on The Arts of Irish and Ulster Scots)

Under ‘The European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages’ there is also a legislative obligation placed upon local authorities and statutory bodies to develop and promote minority languages. (*European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages Part 3 and Good Friday Agreement.*)



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Priorities and objectives

The objectives of this strategy:

- **Funding and support:** To identify the gaps in support for artists working through the Irish Language.
- **Audience Development:** To focus on Audience Development in the Irish Language Arts. Identifying marketing opportunities in regards to the Irish language Arts.
- **Image:** To identify realistic proposals that allows the development of a long-term strategy to promote the Irish Language Arts and to enhance the status of the Irish language Arts amongst the general public, locally, nationally and internationally.
- **Skills and training:** To identify the key-providers within the promotion and deliverance of the Arts in general and the Irish Language Arts in particular. Assess the possibilities for co-operation and the development of partnerships between these providers under POBAL's administration and direction.
- To develop a strategy encompassing agreed practical actions and costs to develop and promote the Irish language Arts.

Methodology

This research looked at the most appropriate way to promote the Irish language Arts. This research has its origins in the years of successful co-operation between Arts Council of Northern Ireland and POBAL and in the clearly identified need for the development of a strategy to promote the Irish language Arts on a national and international level.

As a starting point for the research, it was deemed essential to identify what is meant by the 'Irish Language Arts'. For the purposes of this research, the description



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of the Irish Language Arts used is the description agreed upon by the Irish Language community through POBAL's 2004 consultation process in response to the Arts Council NI's report on the Arts of Irish and Ulster Scots:

“The Irish Language Arts are any art forms practised through the medium of the Irish Language. They can be in a contemporary or traditional form, formal or informal.”

This research draws on different approaches towards the Irish Language Arts. The question of resources (people and financial) is at the heart of this research as well as other practical considerations. The research began with assessing information that has already been gathered on this sector. This research initially looked at information previously gathered by POBAL and presented to the Arts Council NI.

Information was gathered for the strategy through the results of independent research and an extensive consultation process conducted in 2009. As well as this, interviews were conducted with artist, art's organisations and other key-providers. As the Irish Language is not contained by geographical borders, the research was conducted on an all-Ireland basis. All-Ireland research was conducted to identify good practise and to learn from the expertise of artists and other groups associated with the Irish language Arts throughout the country. The research also was involved with the Irish Language Arts and its promotion on an international level.

6 public meetings were conducted – Belfast, Ballycastle, Tirkane, Gweedore, Newry and Dublin. The meetings were widely publicised through the media North and South of the border. Radio interviews were conducted on Radio Ulster and Raidió na Gaeltachta. The meetings were also publicised through bilingual advertisements and editorials placed in newspapers throughout the country including the Irish News, The Andersontown News & North Belfast News, Coleraine Chronicle & The Guardian, Derry Post and The Donegal News. The meetings were also publicised in the newsletters of local Councils North and South of the border, as well as in the news letters of Irish Language groups and community groups.

These are the main points discussed at the public meetings:



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- The difficulties of artists working through the medium of Irish and also the difficulties of individuals/groups working with these artists.
- What is the way forward? Identify proposals for the development of a strategy. The proposals come from a questionnaire prepared for the purposes of this research.
- Identify practical actions that can be acted upon to develop the Irish language Arts.
- What is the most effective way to promote the image of the Irish Language Arts?

There was also a series of interviews conducted with key-providers in this sector – Irish Language Officers in Local Councils, workers in Irish Language Arts Centres and other appropriate individuals to record their experiences and collect information and opinions on the Irish language Arts.

As well as the public meetings, a questionnaire was distributed to gather information and to assess the response to the proposals featured in the questionnaire. The proposals aimed at the development of the Irish Language were identified by the Irish Language community through POBAL's 2004/5 consultation process facilitated by Trevor O'Clochartaigh. During this consultation process, specific proposals for the development of the Irish Language Arts were made by the Irish language community, artists and other groups involved with the art's sector and these proposals were used to compile the questionnaire. These specific proposals were discussed at the public meetings and with individuals who were interviewed. They were asked to rank the proposals in order of importance. POBAL then assessed the proposals deemed the most important according to the public and this helped develop a strategy for the development of the Irish language Arts.

A copy of this questionnaire is included in this research.

People and groups that the questionnaire was directed upon:



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- Artists working through the medium of Irish (professional and amateur)
- The Irish Language community
- Community groups linked with the Irish Language
- Festivals
- Educationalist & Schools
- Irish language groups
- Local Councils – Irish Language Officers and Arts Officers
- Key Arts providers – ACNI & An Chomhairle Ealaíon

Approximately 250 questionnaires were distributed to individuals and organisation. An Chomhairle Ealaíon also kindly distributed the questionnaire to their 'Aosdána' membership. 107 filled questionnaires were returned within the allocated time – this meant that 42.8% of questionnaires were returned. Information, submissions and opinions was recorded from all these various groups and this was used to draft a strategy for the development and promotion of the Irish Language Arts.

Analysis of results

In the questionnaire, the proposals were organised under 4 titles:

- General Developments
- Drama Developments
- Literature Developments
- Music and Song Developments

A space was also left blank to provide the opportunity to make other suggestions.

1. General Developments

<i>1. Increase co-ordination of funding bodies and support structures and increase their understanding of the Irish language arts and the needs of the sector</i>		
1	60/107	56%
2	21/107	19.6%
3	16/107	14.9%
4	4/107	3.7%
5	1/107	0.93%
AB	3/107	2.8%

1 + 2	75.6%
3	14.9%
4 + 5	4.63%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
60/107	56%



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2. *Liaise and co-ordinate with training bodies and arts course providers to provide Irish language arts training programme a variety of disciplines, technical areas etc .*

1	58/107	54.2%
2	21/107	19.63%
3	13/107	12.1%
4	5/107	4.67%%
5	6/107	5.61%
AB	4/107	3.73%%

1 + 2	73.83%
3	12.1%
4 + 5	10.28%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance

58/107	54.2%
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3. *Develop an arts programme for Irish-medium education sector, North and South and in the Gaeltacht.*

1	70/107	65.4%
2	12/107	11.2%
3	13/107	12.1%



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4	4/107	3.73%
5	4/107	3.73%
AB	4/107	3.73%

1 + 2	76.6
3	12.1%
4 + 5	7.46%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
70/107	65.4%

<i>4. Raise the profile of the Irish language arts nationally and internationally.</i>		
1	68/107	63.5%
2	15/107	14.02%
3	11/107	10.3%
4	8/107	7.48%
5	4/107	3.73%
Ab	1/107	0.93%

1 + 2	77.52%
3	10.3%



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4 + 5	11.21%
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% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
68/107	63.5%

<i>5.To lobby existing, established, festivals to include the Irish Language Arts in their programmes .</i>		
1	57/107	53.3%
2	28/107	26.17%%
3	16/107	14.95%
4	4/107	3.73%
5	2/107	1.87%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	79.47%
3	14.95%
4 + 5	5.6%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
57/107	53.3%



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6. Develop a strategy to promote the Irish language Arts through the English-medium educational system at primary, secondary and third levels as part of and complimentary to the curriculum.

1	60/107	56%
2	18/107	16.82%
3	21/107	19.6%
4	6/107	5.61%
5	2/107	1.87%
Ab	0	0

1 +2	72.82
3	19.6%
4+ 5	7.48%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
60/107	56%

7. Please indicate in order of rank importance the role of the Irish language Arts in raising awareness of the Irish language

1	60/107	56%
2	25/107	23.4%
3	8/107	7.5%
4	4/107	3.73%



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5	3/107	2.8%
Ab	4/107	3.73%

1 +2	79.4%
3	7.5%
4 + 5	6.53%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
60/107	56%

2.Drama developments

<i>1. Investigate what practical assistance could be given to established drama companies to facilitate them delivering their output to a wider audience</i>		
1	40/107	37.4%
2	31/107	28.97%
3	25/107	23.36%
4	8/107	7.47%
5	2/107	1.87%
Ab	1/107	0.93%



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1 + 2	66.37%
3	23.36%
4 + 5	9.34%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
40/107	37.4%

<i>2. Devise a long-term strategy for Irish Language drama and to analyze the needs of the sector.</i>		
1	39/107	36.4%
2	35/107	32.7%
3	22/107	20.56%
4	5/107	4.67%
5	4/107	3.74%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	69.1
3	20.56%
4 + 5	8.41%

% identifying this proposal as



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ranking 1 in importance	
39/107	36.4%

<i>3. Liaise with Third level providers and encourage a training strategy for teachers and tutors within the educational system to train them in drama and theatre skills.</i>		
1	41/107	38.32%
2	31/107	28.97%
3	21/107	19.63%
4	9/107	8.41%
5	3/107	2.8%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	67.29
3	19.63%
4 +5	11.21%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
41/107	38.32%



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<i>4. Investigate incentives for the development and writing of new plays for adults and young people</i>		
1	41/107	38.32%
2	35/107	32.7%
3	18/107	16.82%
4	9/107	8.41%
5	3/107	2.80%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	71.02%
3	16.82%
4 + 5	11.21%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
41/107	38.32%

<i>5. Investigate the potential of Irish language street theatre and Youth Theatre.</i>		
1	48/107	44.9%
2	26/107	24.3%



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3	22/107	20.56%
4	5/107	4.67%
5	4/107	3.73%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	69.2%
3	20.56%
4 + 5	8.4%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance.	
48/107	44.9%

3.Literature Developments

<i>1. Devise an Irish language literature programme for IM schools</i>		
1	66/107	61.9%
2	21/107	19.6%
3	13/107	12.1%
4	4/107	3.74%
5	3/107	2.8%
Ab	0	0



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1 + 2	81.5%
3	12.1%
4 + 5	6.54%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
66/107	61.9%

<i>2. Develop a web site resource to encourage all forms of writing through Irish.</i>		
1	54/107	50.46%
2	29/107	27.1%
3	12/107	11.2%
4	4/107	3.74%
5	6/107	5.61%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	77.56%
3	11.2%
4 + 5	9.35%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
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54/107	50.46%
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3. To set up a panel of editors and/or established writers in the different literary disciplines and to partner new and emerging writers who are developing their craft – Bord na Leabhair Gaeilge scheme

1	45/107	42.06%
2	33/107	30.84%
3	14/107	13.08%
4	9/107	8.41%
5	4/107	3.74%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	72.9%
3	13.08%
4 + 5	12.15%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance

45/107	42.06%
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4. Establish residential writers' schools and Creative Writing Courses as part of Gaeltacht Summer Courses with mentoring for new writers.



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1	36/107	33.6%
2	31/107	28.9%
3	20/107	18.69%
4	14/107	13.08%
5	6/107	5.61%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	62.5%
3	18.69%
4 + 5	18.69%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
36/107	33.6%

<i>5. Develop a programme of readings and performances of curriculum-based Irish language materials for Irish medium and English-medium schools.</i>		
1	55/107	51.4%
2	35/107	32.7%
3	10/107	9.34%
4	5/107	4.67%



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5	2/107	1.87%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	84.1%
3	9.34%
4 + 5	6.54%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
55/107	51.4%

<i>6. To develop a translations programme and foster linkages with publishers in other regional and minority languages with a view to developing literary material in conjunction with them – Irish (Northern Ireland & Republic of Ireland) & Gadhlig (Scotland), for example.</i>		
1	43/107	40.19%
2	28/107	26.17%
3	23/107	21.5%
4	6/107	5.61%
5	5/107	4.67%
Ab	2/107	1.87%

1 + 2	66.36%
3	22.5%



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4 + 5	10.28%
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% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
43/107	40.19%

4. Music and Singing developments

1. To set up a recording fund to record 2-3 Cds with established regional singers. One of these should be targeted at schools audience.

1	44/107	41.1%
2	29/107	27.1%
3	23/107	21.5%
4	7/107	6.54%
5	1/107	0.93%
Ab	3/107	2.8%

1 + 2	68.2%
3	21.5%
4 +5	7.43%

% identifying this proposal as



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ranking 1 in importance	
44/107	41.1%

2. *To work with the established singing festivals on the provision of workshops and masterclasses in Irish Language singing.*

1	43/107	40.2%
2	39/107	36.4%
3	19/107	17.75%
4	1/107	0.93%
5	4/107	3.7%
Ab	1/107	0.93%

1 + 2	76.6%
3	17.75%
4 + 5	4.63%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
43/107	40.2%



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3. *To set up a training programme, where established masters share their expertise with talented young musicians.*

1	56/107	52.3%
2	32/107	29.9%
3	8/107	6.48%
4	4/107	3.74%
5	4/107	3.74%
Ab	3/107	2.8%

1 + 2	82.2%
3	6.48%
4 + 5	7.48%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
56/107	52.3%



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4. Develop a week-long 'Rock School' for young people, with the emphasis on producing contemporary music which young people listen to – focus on songwriting, on instrumental skills, mixing, the music industry etc., as well as providing assistance on how to set up bands and how to organise and present concerts.

1	57/107	53.3%
2	24/107	22.4%
3	10/107	9.34%
4	5/107	4.67%
5	6/107	5.6%
Ab	5/107	4.67%

1 + 2	75.7%
3	9.34%
4 + 5	10.27%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
57/107	53.3%

5. To develop a degree in music and in Gaelic Language singing in conjunction with recognised educational institutions

1	50/107	46.7%
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2	23/107	21.5%
3	15/107	14.02%
4	10/107	9.34%
5	9/107	8.41%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	69.2%
3	14.02%
4 + 5	17.75%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
50/107	46.7%

6 . To develop links with traditional music organisations in Scotland, Canada, U.S etc.		
1	40/107	37.4%
2	32/107	29.9%
3	18/107	16.82%
4	19/107	17.75%
5	6/107	5.61%



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ab	1/107	0.93%
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1 + 2	67.3%
3	16.82%
4 + 5	23.36%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
40/107	37.4%

7. To set up a network of touring venues for musicians and singers who would be organising a tour of Ireland.		
1	40/107	37.4%
2	34/107	31.8%
3	21/107	19.6%
4	9/107	8.41%
5	3/107	2.8%
Ab	0	0

1 + 2	69.2
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3	19.6%
4 + 5	11.21%

% identifying this proposal as ranking 1 in importance	
40/107	37.4%

Development of the strategy

More than 50% of the individuals who filled in the questionnaire recommended the following proposals for the strategy.

Objective 1: Funding and support: To identify the gaps in support for artists working through the Irish Language.

- *Increase co-ordination of funding bodies and support structures and increase their understanding of the Irish language arts and the needs of the sector.*

Objective 2: Audience Development: To focus on Audience Development in the Irish Language Arts. Identifying marketing opportunities in regards to the Irish language Arts.

- *Develop a strategy to promote the Irish language Arts through the English-medium educational system at primary, secondary and third levels as part of and complimentary to the curriculum.*
- *Devise an Irish language literature programme for IM schools*
- *Develop a programme of readings and performances of curriculum-based Irish language materials for Irish medium and English-medium schools.*



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Objective 3: Image: To identify realistic proposals that allows the development of a long-term strategy to promote the Irish Language Arts and to enhance the status of the Irish language Arts amongst the general public.

- *Raise the profile of the Irish language arts nationally and internationally.*
- *To lobby existing, established, festivals to include the Irish Language Arts in their programmes.*
- *The importance of the role of the Irish language Arts in raising awareness of the Irish language was strongly emphasised in this questionnaire.*

Objective 4: Skills and training: To identify the key-providers within the promotion and deliverance of the Irish Language Arts. Assess the possibilities for co-operation and the development of partnerships between these providers under POBAL's administration and direction.

- *Liaise and co-ordinate with training bodies and arts course providers to provide Irish language arts training programmes in a variety of disciplines, technical areas etc.*
- *Develop an arts programme for Irish-medium education sector, North and South and in the Gaeltacht.*
- *Develop a web site resource to encourage all forms of writing through Irish*
- *To set up a training programme, where established masters share their expertise with talented young musicians.*
- *Develop a week-long 'Rock School' for young people, with the emphasis on producing contemporary music which young people listen to – focus on songwriting, on instrumental skills, mixing, the music industry etc., as well as providing assistance on how to set up bands and how to organise and present concerts.*

The 3 year plan

The proposals that were strongly identified through the consultation process were used to formulate a 3 year plan to achieve the following objectives.



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Objective 1: Funding and support: To identify the gaps in support for artists working through the Irish Language.

Objective 2: Audience Development: To focus on Audience Development in the Irish Language Arts. Identifying marketing opportunities in regards to the Irish language Arts.

Objective 3: Image: To identify realistic proposals that allows the development of a long-term strategy to promote the Irish Language Arts and to enhance the status of the Irish language Arts amongst the general public.

Objective 4: Skills and training: To identify the key-providers within the promotion and deliverance of the Irish Language Arts. Assess the possibilities for co-operation and the development of partnerships between these providers under POBAL's administration and direction.

The 3 year plan was devised with a certain focus for every year:

Year 1 – Education

Year 2 – Drama and literature

Year 3 – Music and the development of a Rock-School

- The first year of the 3 year plan focuses upon education to raise the profile of the Irish Language Arts with young people. There is a strong link with education and in developing an audience for the Irish Language Arts.
- The second year of the plan places emphasis upon literature and drama. POBAL strongly believes that special development is required by the drama sector. It is clear that the public have little awareness of and experience with this sector of the Irish Language Arts. Irish Language drama has the least loyal following and the image of Irish Language drama requires urgent development.



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- The third year emphasises music and the development of the Rock School. There is a strong emphasis on training and skill development as there is a significant lack of individuals with the appropriate cultural management skills in the Irish Language sector.

3 Year Plan:

Year 1 – Education and Information
<p>1. Co-ordinate an Art’s programme for the Irish-medium schools (Objective 2 &3).</p> <p>Conference – Irish-medium sector, ESA, DENI, Art’s Council NI. Targets to be agreed upon by stakeholders. POBAL (co-ordinating role).</p> <p>2 x Follow-up meetings to monitor progress.</p>
<p>2. Development of a web site (Objectives 2 & 3).</p> <p>To advertise and promote the Irish Language Arts events – linked with marketing the Irish Language Arts internationally. Co-ordinate information.</p> <p>Conference – Links with companies that make information available such as Arts groups, IT companies, Ealaín na Gaeltachta, Foras na Gaeilge. POBAL (co-ordinating role).</p> <p>2 x follow-up meetings</p>
<p>3. Co-ordinating information – linked with development of website (Objectives 2 & 3)</p> <p>Conference - development of information network. Local Councils – Irish Language and Arts Officers. Developing a vision for the Irish language Arts in their area/remit. Irish Language groups, Arts Centres, Arts Council NI, Foras na Gaeilge, POBAL (co-ordinating role).</p> <p>2 x Follow-up meetings</p>

4. Drama Conference (Objective 2,3 & 4)

To bring together the Irish language Drama companies (professional and amateur) to discuss the development of the sector. Discuss a marketing strategy for Irish language drama. POBAL (co-ordinating role).

2 x follow-up meetings.

Year 2 – Drama & Literature

1. Co-ordinate an Art's programme for the Irish-medium schools (Objective 2 &3). Follow –up meetings.

2. Follow-up meeting from last year's conference – monitoring the progress of agreed targets. 2 new projects:

New project – Develop a literature programme for English language schools focusing on the needs of A-level course. Workshops with writers and actors. Artists, writers, Irish Language teachers, ESA. 1 x follow-up meeting (1).

New project – Develop a website as a writing resource. Writers, teachers, ESA, the Arts Council. 1 x follow –up meeting (2).

3. Continual development of the information network (Objective 2 & 3). Follow-up meetings to monitor progress of the agreed targets.

1 x Meeting with Arts Officers of Local Councils to discuss cultural management skills in the Irish language Arts sector.

1 x Meeting with groups associated with development of events web site (updating).

4. Continuous work on information gathering on Irish Language drama sector (Objective 2,3 & 4).

Links with work on development of information network.

5. Lobbying festivals in Ireland (Objective 1 &2).

Discuss with funders the possibility of securing funding for the Irish Language Arts to encourage festival organisers to feature this sector more prominently in their Arts' programmes. POBAL, the Arts Council NI, Foras na Gaeilge, Local Councils, other appropriate funding bodies.

Establish and maintain contact with funders.

6. Conference – Training and skill development (Objective 1 & 4).

Discuss the gaps in skill provision in the Irish language sector. POBAL (co-ordinating role), QUB, Falls Community Council, South Regional College, Belfast Metropolitan College.

1x Follow-up meetings

Year 3 – Music and Rock-school

1. Conference – Training and skill development (Objective 1 & 4).

Discuss the formation of a Rock-school – a weekend of intensive workshops on technical skills, performance skills and music masterclasses.

Appropriate groups involved in provision of workshops – musicians, sound technicians, stage technicians.

2 x follow-up meetings to organise events.

2. International marketing (Objective 2 & 3)

Develop relationship with international festivals to market the Irish language Arts. Focus on marketing drama.



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3. Develop of Art's programme for the Irish-medium schools (Objective 2 &3).

Continous work on agreed targets – under the direction of an educational institution.

1 x Follow –up meeting.

2 Lobbying festivals in Ireland (Objective 1 &2).

Maintain contact with funders regarding sectioning of funding for the promotion of the Irish Language Arts within Arts festivals.

Link with international marketing – POBAL, funders.

Maintain continuous contact.



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Interviews and Building the
International profile of the Irish Language Arts



Draft strategy for the development of the Irish Language Arts

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Interview with Pilib Ó Rúnaí, Chairperson of 'An Droichead' Arts Centre, July 2009

Sinéad: Description given of the research project. Thank you for agreeing to this interview. What are your experiences in operating as an Irish language Arts centre?

Pilib: Firstly, we believe that we are foremost an Irish language centre. We make use of the Arts to promote the Irish language. We use the arts to bring Irish speakers together on a social basis and of course, to create employment opportunities for Irish language speakers. We create employment for individuals in the centre itself and we create employment opportunities for Irish speaking artists.

Sinéad: What are the advantages of functioning as an Irish language Arts centre?

Pilib: The Irish language community in the South of the city are very loyal to the centre – we are well supported by the local community – we nearly have a guaranteed audience. There is a lot of support for the centre amongst the local community and it creates a great atmosphere. The local community feel a sense of ownership of 'An Droichead' and this is important in creating good will towards the centre. I doubt that the English language Arts centres can boast the loyal following.

Sinéad: What difficulties have you experienced?

Pilib: Funding most of the time! When are always chasing funding. I believe that funders look at long established organisations like 'An Chultúrlann' and don't see the need for another Irish language Arts centre. We are not blaming 'An Chultúrlann' for securing funding but we don't think that funders realise that we are serving another section of the population of the city. Funders must see us a separate and distinct centre serving the needs of a different section of the community. I don't believe that English language Arts centres have to compete in the same manner for the same funding – it is a form of discrimination against the Irish language and its speakers. That's our biggest problem.

Sinéad: Does anything else stand out – such as compiling an Art's programme? Do you experience difficulties in identifying artists with fluent Irish?

Pilib: I don't believe that we experience difficulty in identifying sufficient acts in Irish. There is a lot happening in the Irish language scene at the moment and of a very high standard also. I personally would like to see more events for fluent Irish speakers – create more opportunities for them to meet socially and use their Irish.



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Sinéad: As there is currently lots happening on the Irish language scene – do you think that there is a need for a strategy for the Irish language Arts?

Pilib: I think that it can only help the Irish language Arts if a strategy is developed to promote them. 'An Droichead' would support such a strategy.



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Interview with Áine Nic Gearailt, committee of 'An Chultúrlann, July 2009.

Sinéad: Description of the research project. What are the advantages of functioning as an Irish language Arts centre?

Áine: WE have an extremely dedicated and hard-working team who are very loyal to the organisation. They understand 'An Chultúrlann' vision for the language and they are very loyal to all aspects of the language – this is a great advantage that most organisations do not possess in their work force.

Sinéad: What difficulties has the organisation experienced functioning as an Irish language Arts centre?

Áine: Funding and the lack of it is the biggest problem! Funding is required for everyday existence and funding is required to grow and develop. Professional artists are very expensive and realistically, an Chultúrlann's budget does not always attract them to the centre. We are always trying to strike a balance between our budget and the quality of events. In my opinion every high quality Irish language entertainment event should be staged at 'An Chultúrlann'. We do have difficulty in identifying a variety of high profile Irish language drama – Irish language drama companies seem to be especially in need of development.

Publicity is also another issue. Our marketing budget is inadequate to our needs and remember, we must advertise bilingually (more expensive). It can be difficult to promote ourselves. It is difficult to assess our audience – we may have excellent attendance at one event but poor attendance at another event. It's hard to find the reason for this sometimes. We need help in maintaining a relationship with our audiences. We need help with marketing but the resources do not seem to be there.

We sometimes find it hard to identify people with the appropriate skills and fluency in Irish to run an Irish language Arts centre. – but lack of skills is a problem in the Irish language sector generally. Dara Mac an Iomaire from 'An Taibhdhearc' wrote a good article about the lack of skilled individuals in the Irish language drama sector and in the Irish language sector generally. Funding and time is required to develop the required skills in young people – basically, time, funding and expertise are essential.

Sinéad: Do you think that there is a need for an Irish language Arts strategy?



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Áine: Yes, certainly! It would be wonderful if there was an official or an organisation with whom Irish language Arts groups could discuss their problems – in Irish! Someone who understand the Irish language sector and the sensitivities surrounding it. It would be a great asset to receive professional advice about the Irish language and the Arts. There is a need for greater co-operation between statutory organisations such as The Arts Council NI, Arts organisations and Irish language groups.

There needs to be a balance between Irish language events and bilingual or trilingual events – they can all be used to attract people to the Irish language. I am thinking specifically of an excellent play that I saw in Irish, Welsh and English. The Arts can (and have been) used successfully to attract people to the language and in turn, the Irish language has been used to promote the Arts. 'An Chultúrlann' fully supports the development of an Irish language Arts strategy.



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Interview with Dr. Art Hughes, McCracken Cultural Society, Tuesday 1st September 2009

Sinéad: Description of the research project.

Art: I am the chairperson of the McCracken Cultural Society. 10 years ago, Máirtín Mac Cathmhaoil suggested the idea for founding a Cultural Society in the area. There was already an Irish-medium school and a few Irish-medium nurseries in the area and Martin believed that the time was right to fund a Cultural Society. I agreed with him and I have been the chairman now for 10 years.

Sinéad: What are the objectives of the organisation?

Art: As I already stated – it is primarily a cultural society. We have a cultural agenda. We exist to promote the Irish language and everything associated with the language. We founded the summer school to offer intensive Irish classes at every level but there is a big social aspect to the school as well. The day is structured to give Irish speakers the opportunity to meet socially and to use the language in a social setting. We believe that is an important aspect of learning the language.

Sinéad: Do you have a connection with the Arts at all?

Art: A strong connection! We believe that we have to promote all aspects of the language – this in turn means promoting the Arts such as music, song, art and sculpting. We strongly promote the Arts amongst children.

Eamonn McGuire, Danny Brown, Seirse Ó Dochartaigh, Tony Bell, Maeve Creggan and Natalie McCoy have all exhibited at the summer school. We use the Arts to promote the Irish language – the Irish language is weaved through the music and drama especially.

Sinéad: Do you encounter difficulties while working with the Irish language Arts?

Art: I don't believe that I encounter difficulties but we have to be creative in our choices! The Arts are essential in enriching the experience of Irish speakers. We have to promote a broad range of interests while being as inclusive as possible.

Sinéad: Do you believe that there is a need for an Irish language Arts strategy?

Art: Yes, certainly. The Arts are central to the Irish culture and we in the McCracken Cultural Society look on an Irish Language Arts strategy as a step forward for the language. We support such a step – and support the concept of developing such a strategy.



Draft strategy for the development of the Irish Language Arts

September 2009

Interview with Carrie-Anne McAloonan – McCrudden, Aisling Ghéar’s Irish language drama theatre manager, July 2009.

Sinéad: Description of the research. What are the advantages of working for an Irish language drama company?

Carrie- Anne: Aisling Ghéar was created by people who treasure the Irish language. People who work for Aisling Ghéar appreciate the unique inheritance that has been passed down to them. They are very loyal to the language and the company. People who work with Aisling Ghéar appreciate that they work in a unique context.

Sinéad: What are the difficulties working in a minority language – the Irish language?

Carrie-Anne: There are quite a few! Aisling Ghéar’s biggest problem is their inability to compile data on their audiences. This could be achieved with an electronic box office. It would help to build profiles of the people who come to our productions – unfortunately they are very expensive. If we had one, it would be a useful way of identifying our audience and of building a relationship with our audience. This would be a major asset to Aisling Ghéar. As it stands, we have compiled our own ‘borrowed’ data base on potentially interested individuals and groups – but we don’t feel that it is really satisfactory. Data capture is our biggest issue!

Another problem is that a lot of the venues that we perform in don’t have a box office – our audiences have no option but to buy tickets of our website. We also have major problems working with the banks and currency in the Republic of Ireland. It is very difficult to work with actors in the Republic of Ireland due to wages, currency and bank charges on paying wages ‘internationally’.

Another issue is funding – the uncertainty of funding makes it difficult to plan for the company. This is due to the uncertain future of some of the funding bodies such as Foras na Gaeilge. We need to look at other avenues of funding such European funding and European funding partners.

Sinéad: Do you feel that the international profile of the Irish language is of significance?

Carrie-Anne: Yes! It is very important to raise the profile of the Irish language internationally! We export and promote all our talent from Northern Ireland and Irish



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language drama should be at the forefront of this. Aisling Ghéar believes that a strategy to promote Irish language drama nationally and internationally is required urgently. Irish culture has always been marketable – why not Irish language drama? The Irish language is older than National Trust buildings and receives less income streams! The Irish language should be regarded as a national asset by groups such as the British Council.

Sinéad: Do you believe that there is an issue with the image of the Irish Language and Irish Language drama?

Carrie-Anne: Yes I believe that Irish language drama does have an image problem and needs work to address this. Aisling Ghéar is trying to perform in other venues besides the Cultúrlann – although we want to maintain our link with an Chultúrlann. We have performed in the Baby Grand venue recently and it has definitely opened us up to new audience. There is an issue with the standard of venues where Irish language drama is performed and the image of the language.

Sinéad: Do you have difficulty identifying new writers or new plays?

Carrie-Anne: No, not at all but we have major problems about selling new drama – people want to see the old favourites. New children's drama commissions are easier to market and sell. I believe that we need to strengthen Aisling Ghéar as an organisation first before we promote lots of new commissions but we don't really have problems identifying new writers.

We need to use bilingual plays to attract people to the Irish language and Irish language drama. For example 'Stones in his pocket' worked well bilingually. Bilingualism is useful where appropriate but we need to preserve the ethos of Aisling Ghéar as an Irish language theatre company – it's our unique selling point.

Sinéad: Do you believe that there is a need for a strategy for the Irish language Arts?

Carrie-Anne: Yes! The profile of Irish language drama needs promoted nationally and internationally. A strategy for the Irish language Arts in general is required to co-ordinate the development of the arts.



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Submission by Newry and Mourne Council on Irish language and the Arts, May 2009.

Newry and Mourne is a large district with the Irish language community scattered throughout its remit. The Irish language population is gradually increasing – 20.46% of the population indicated some knowledge of the Irish language according to the 2001 census.

The Irish speaking population do not consist of one community – they are dispersed throughout the English-speaking population. Many have indicated a distinct lack of interest in cultural and artistic events.

Obstacles

It is perceived that the high brow image of the Arts hinders their promotion within the community.

There is a need for a broad definition of the Irish language Arts – there is more to it than just drama, music, literature and poetry.

There is a lack of knowledge regarding opportunities for the development of the Arts.

Lack of skills in this community.

Lack of a recognised Art's centre to promote the Irish language Arts.

Sectarianism and politics does affect the development of the Irish language Arts.

Bilingualism and translations (English and Ulster Scots) does present problems.

Quality of Artists

Lack of professional artists who are fluent in Irish.

Difficult for Artists to make a living through a minority language.

The way forward

Development Officer to implement an Irish language Arts strategy.

Information sharing, communication and marketing must be essential components of this strategy.

Partnerships and co-operation between existing groups is essential.



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Skill development and support structures required for musicians, poets, creative writers and critical reviewers are required.

Artist-in-residence schemes.

Support and training for publishers, magazines and newspapers.



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Interview with Ursula Ní Fhearáil, Dungannon District Council and Cookstown District Council, 20th August 2009.

Sinéad: Description of the research project. Please give a description of your job role please.

Ursula: I am an Irish language development officer and my job is divided between Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council and Cookstown County Council. I am based in Dun Gannon council offices for half of the week and I spend the rest based in an Arts Centre in Cookstown.

It's my job to develop the Irish language and to assure the longevity of the language in these areas. There are two aspects to my work – (internal work) I am responsible for organising Irish language classes for council workers to encourage them to learn the language and I'm also involved in community development – trying to raise awareness of the Irish language in the community.

I work with all the community groups who have a link with the Irish language – place names, local history, helping to organise Irish classes. I work with English language schools generating an interest in the Irish language.

I am involved with the Irish-medium schools in the areas – I give support to the Irish language youth club in Coalisland through organising a series of workshops in Irish for children. I help the youth club identify funding. Currently I am assisting them identify funding through 'Neighbourhood Renewal'.

A lot of my work is based on community work and the Irish language – especially in community building. I am also responsible for the updating of a website for Irish speakers that highlights events for Irish speakers in the area. I also produce a newsletter to distribute this information.

There is a lot of diversity in my work – everyone has a different approach to this work but I am working according to an 18month plan that my employers have verified. I am working to strengthen the Irish language in these areas.

Sinéad: You have a lot going on – do you believe that the arts are important in your work?

Ursula: I'll send you a copy of the newsletter to give you an idea of the ongoing work. I use the Arts in my work – especially to promote the language especially for children. I am thinking especially of 'The Fanzini Brothers' circus show that we had here recently for the children from Irish-medium education. They were excellent – but very expensive. But it is very important to let the school children see the Irish Language in use outside of the classroom and the Arts are very good at illustrating this.



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We use the Arts a lot in 'Seachtain na Gaeilge' especially to generate interest in the Irish language. It is important to use events (exhibitions, concerts etc.) to bring together the scattered Irish language community and to give them opportunities to use their Irish.

Sinéad: Do you encounter difficulties in relation to working with the Irish language Arts?

Ursula: Yes. I encounter problems finding and identifying entertainment or workshops in Irish. Often the Artists don't have the appropriate skills or language skills – the language skills certainly need developed. The Irish language community want high quality events and the Irish language. Usually when we identify an artist of renowned who speaks Irish they are often very expensive – more funding is required to attract them to rural venues!

Generally, there are problems with the Irish language and funding – we need to more funding to make the language sustainable, especially for the like of 'Seal spraoi' (Irish language youth club).

When organising event for Irish speakers there are two main objectives – high quality entertainment and the language aspect. It can be hard to reconcile the two!

Sinéad: Do you believe that there is a need for an Irish language Arts strategy?

Ursula: Yes certainly! There is an urgent need for co-ordination of current events and to promote co-operation between Irish speakers and organisations – a definite emphasis on co-ordination.

The Irish language community are a minority community and the co-ordination of events would be very useful in strengthening that community. There is a need to develop summer schemes for Irish – medium school pupils and a database of artists fluent in Irish.



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Interview with Déaglán Ó Doibhlin, Magherafelt District Council and Limavady Borough Council, 1st September 2009.

Sinéad: Description of the research project. Could you please give a description of your role in the councils?

Deaglán: I am an Irish language development officer – my job is divided between Magherafelt Borough Council and Limavady Borough Council. There are two aspects to my work – I have to raise the status of the Irish language within the councils. I try to encourage council workers to learn the Irish language through informal educational classes.

I also work with the community encouraging an interest in the Irish language. I use the local heritage and the Arts a lot to achieve this. I am also active in raising an awareness of the Irish language within the Protestant community.

As well as this, I am involved in drafting language policies for minority languages in respect of ‘The European Convention’.

Sinéad: You are involved with the Arts through your work?

Deaglán: yes certainly – I use the Arts to promote the Irish language, especially traditional Arts or Arts linked to heritage. People in the areas that I serve are especially interested in archaeology and local history. This can be used to promote the Irish language as the main traditionally spoken language of the areas. For example, we are promoting the local heritage of the area through the re-telling of the stories, songs and music of the last Irish harpers such as Bunting who originated in this area. People really enjoy the link between local history and heritage and the Irish Language. This inspires them to start learning the language. Currently, I am working on behalf of the councils in publishing work on folklore in Co. Derry.

As well as this, I am busy organising events that provide Irish speakers with an opportunity to socialise and use their Irish – and the Arts are very important in this regard. Different events are organised – dances, concerts, sean-nós singing, traditional music. We are even organising bilingual weaving and sculpting workshops to inspire English speakers to learn the language and learners to learn more – but the emphasis is always upon the Irish language in these events.

Although I’m involved in organising events – I prefer the Irish language community to organise their own events. I support them and I help them to identify sources of funding to organise the events that they would like.

Sinéad: Do you encounter difficulties in working with the Irish language Arts?



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Deaglán: Yes. There is a serious lack of knowledge regarding the Artists who are available who can deliver events in Irish – there is a serious need to share this kind of knowledge. There is a lack of funding to allow the employment of professionals to deliver workshops and entertainment. Nobody can exist without a wage – this creates stress and pressure. Professional people can't work just for the cause! There is not enough funding and the funding that is available is very restricting (Foras na Gaeilge)– even if you have an excellent idea, it may not meet the funders criteria. More flexibility is needed in regard to funding.

Sinéad: Is there a need for an Irish language Arts strategy?

Deaglán: There is an urgent need for a strategy to develop the Irish language Arts. There is a need for the gathering of accurate information on the Irish Language Arts and for this information to be shared amongst the Irish language community. The Irish language community needs this strengthening.

Sample of events:

Octoberfest'09 – Féile an Fhómhair'09

For further information on Irish language and bilingual events contact the Irish Language Officer at the Bridewell, Magherafelt

Thursday 1st October

From Bryson's, Magherafelt

Details to be confirmed

'Blas Ceoil' BBCNI live music recording featuring some of the country's finest musicians and the best of local talent

'Ceiliúradh an Dúchais - Celebrating the local' –bilingual event looking at the work of local poets and the importance of place in their work. With readings, discussion and song from Magherafelt's own Diarmaid Ó Doibhlin, Belfast poet Philip Cummings, and the renowned singer Nollaig Brolly from Dungiven. Hosted by Laurel Villa Townhouse.

Saturday 10th October

An Ráth Dubh

Moneyneena, Ballynascreen



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11am

Adm £3

Cear dlann Cleamaireachta

Mummers bilingual workshop and show with the **Armagh Rhymers**. Serious family centred fun at the Ráth Dubh Centre in Gleann Con Cadhain.

Saturday 17th October

An Carn

Maghera

10am-12.30 and 2pm-4pm

Adm £3

Cear dlann Lása Chluain Eois

Clones Lace workshop -a bilingual event with expert tutor Máire Treanor from Clones, Co Monaghan. Learn the traditional skill of crochet lace-making brought to Ireland from the Island of Burano, Venice, in the 19th Century.

Saturday 17th October

Market Yard

Magherafelt

10.30am-1pm and 2pm-3.30pm

Adm £3

Cear dlann Snoíodóireachta - Woodcarving Workshop

Bilingual format with master sculptor Séighean Ó Draoi. Try your hand at this ancient craft. Participants will create sculptures in low relief which they can then take home.

Saturday 17th October

Bridewell

Magherafelt



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Times to be confirmed

Adm £3

Ceardlann Sean-nóis - Sean-nós singing workshop and session

Featuring Ireland's foremost sean-nós singer Treasa Ní Cheannbháin from Carna in Connemara, a wonderful opportunity to learn the secrets of this ancient singing style.

Saturday 24th Sun 25th October

Walk details to be confirmed

'Féile na gCnoc' Irish language Hillwalking Weekend.

Local Irish speakers in Carntogher and Moneyneena host walkers from Belfast and Dublin with walks on Carntogher, Mullaghmore and Bohilbreaga mountains.

Sat 24th October

9.30pm

An Carn

Maghera

Club Ceoil na Daróige-Oakleaf Folk Club

Up and coming traditional singer Caoimhe Ní Chathail from Belfast, uileann piper Aodán Mac Seafraidh and concertina player Jo Bargewell from the Glens, and Belfast singer/guitarist Nioclas Mac Cathmhaoil play South Derry's innovative new folk event.

Fri 30th October

International Music Evening

6.30pm – 9.30pm

The Bridewell, Magherafelt



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Admission TBC

T: 028 79300544

A social and cultural event with a difference!

You are invited to attend this event to share music, song and dance from countries and cultures from around the world.



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Interview with Derry City Council, June 2009. Present: Pól Ó Frighil, Irish language officer, Brendan McMEnamin, Arts Officer and Sinéad Quinn, POBAL.

Sinéad: Description of the research project. What's your role in the council, Pól?

Pól: I am the Irish language officer for Derry City Council. It is my job to promote the Irish language internally in the council. I am also responsible for promoting the language within the community and in supporting the Irish language community organising events for the Irish language community. The number of Irish speakers is rising in the city – there are currently 3 Irish-medium schools and we are fortunate to have 'An Gaelarás' serving the needs of this growing community as well. I believe that the council has an important supporting role in the city.

Brendan: My role is to provide help and support for artists within the council remit. I am usually busy identifying new funding for artists and funding for new art's projects. I am pleased that POBAL are undertaking the role of gathering accurate information on the Irish language Arts but I believe that the Irish language community needs to be careful when drafting a strategy for the Irish language Arts. A strategy can do no harm than good if the correct objectives are not identified!

Sinéad: I agree Brendan and that is why I am asking for your help in distributing these questionnaires prepared by POBAL. The questionnaire is based on proposals put forward by the Irish language community through POBAL's extensive 2004 consultation process on the Irish language Arts. It is of the utmost importance that accurate information is gathered to draft an appropriate strategy to develop the Irish language Arts. Can I rely on your help with the questionnaire's distribution?

Pól: Yes certainly. I am happy to distribute the questionnaire. Have you contacted any other Irish language groups in the area?

Sinéad: I was and I received good feedback from groups such as Cnoc na Rós. I have not received any comeback from 'An Gaelarás' though.

Pól: I can contact 'An Gaelarás' about this work and ask them to fill in a questionnaire.

Sinéad: Thank you, Pól. I am very grateful for your help. Brendan, are you happy to distribute the questionnaire amongst artists and those with an interest in art's issues?



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Building the image of the Irish language arts on an international platform

One of the priorities of the Irish language arts sector is to break out into international recognition for the Irish language arts. This is a large task, and to achieve measurable impact, it is suggested that the following be taken into account in identifying potentially useful contacts. Initially, international links should be prioritised where there is / are:

- Large established communities of people of Irish origin (for example Canada, US, Australia)
- Identifiable impact from Irish cultural, linguistic and historical influence on the formation of a common culture and means of expression
- A level of understanding, awareness and interest in minoritised language arts

Canada fulfils all 3 of these factors, although the Irish influence and proactive work on language arts is most intensively understood in Quebec. Irish immigration to through Canada has often been through the St Lawrence river, making Quebec a recognised staging point for Irish immigrants. Some of the founding families of Quebec came from Irish stock, and many common 'Francophone' Quebec surnames originate in the Irish (one of Quebec's key historical figures, Tec Aubry was an Irishman whose 'Francophone' name is a corruption of Tadhg Ó Braonáin). Adding to this connection is the historical relationship between the Quebecois and Irish famine immigrants. Grosse Isle, an island in the St Lawrence river off the shore of Quebec city was used as a quarantine station for predominantly Irish immigrants during the late 1840s and 50s. Many thousands of Irish people died there from famine-related disease, leaving a significant population of Irish orphans, taken in by Francophone Quebecois families and raised speaking French, but retaining their Irish surnames. The Irish and Francophone communities have raised many memorial sites and have a keen interest in developing an understanding through the arts of the interactions of Francophones and the Irish in Quebec.

It is recognised that the relationship has not always been an easy one, exacerbated at time by rivalries in the French and Irish Catholic Church, over language issues and social and political influence. Montréal and Quebec city have large Irish populations, and on two of the oldest charitable associations in Montréal are the St Patrick's Society and the Protestant



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Benevolent Society, whose interactions and interpretations of Irish culture have attracted academic interest.

Recent developments in interest in the Irish –Francophone Quebecois link are shown through the growth in academic courses at Concordia university examining the Irish-Quebec interconnection, as well as increased funding for courses in the Irish language and a now yearly Irish-Francohone conference as part of the high prestige Acfas conference (which brings together over 10,000 researchers from all over the world). In 2009, Montreal's McCord Museum put together its first exhibition of the Irish in the city and there are plans to bring the exhibition to the Ulster museum.

The Quebec government has already worked in conjunction with some arts providers in the North and the rest of Ireland on embryonic arts projects, but to date, the emphasis has not included language issues. This, in combination with the other arts elements (musical, commemorative and historical) could form the basis of further exploration of collaborative projects.

Quebec

Notes from the meeting with Conseil des arts et des lettres, Québec

Marie-Pierre Dolbec (development officer for regional and international affairs)

Denise Denis, music development officer

Janet Muller

This is a state organisation which looks after production and diffusion of the arts. The Quebec government created the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Conseil officially commenced its operations on April 1, 1994, following several months of structuring and organization and the appointment of the president and director general and the other 12 members of the Board of Directors.

Its mission it is to support throughout the province of Québec artistic and literary research



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and creation, experimentation, production and dissemination in the realms of the visual arts, the arts and crafts, literature, the performing arts, the multidisciplinary arts, the media arts, and architectural research. It also promotes artists, writers and arts organizations and their works in Québec, the rest of Canada and abroad.

The Conseil is managed by a Board of Directors made up of not more than 13 members, including the president, appointed by the government on the recommendation of the Minister of Culture, Communications and the Status of Women, (who is also responsible for language planning and legislation) following consultations with organizations that it deems to be representative of the arts and literary communities. Members are chosen for their interest in the arts and literature. The president is employed full time. The Board of Directors meets at least four times a year. Yvan Gauthier is the current President and Chief Executive Officer of the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. He has a 60 strong staff working in offices in Québec City and Montréal.

The Conseil gets funded from the Minister of Culture, Communications and the Status of Women. In 2007-2008, the Conseil had a budget of \$90 million, and awarded \$74.8 million in grants to Québec arts organizations and professional artists and writers; \$8.7 million were reserved for the Placements Culture program, \$6.9 million were allocated for the Conseil's operation and \$0.4 million financed the cost of juries and committees. In 2007-2008, the Conseil received 796 grant applications from arts organizations and 5133 grant applications from professional artists, writers or members of artists' and writers' groups. It awarded grants to 582 Québec arts organizations and 1419 grants to professional artists and writers.

The Conseil offers professional artists and writers grants intended to support research and creation, development grants, and grants to cover travel and working abroad. The Conseil offers arts organizations grants to support their operations or production, promotion and dissemination projects, tours, the organization of province-wide and international events as well as the reception of foreign performances.

Grant awards are made on the basis of an evaluation process centred essentially on peer assessment. Each year, over 300 artists, writers, cultural managers and specialists of the cultural community participate as members of advisory committees and juries, or as evaluators, in decision-making pertaining to the awarding of grants. Among other things, the Conseil ensures that representatives of the regions sit on the committees and juries. The Board of Directors makes the final decision on the awarding of grants.



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The Conseil also works to develop and exchange arts contact and projects internationally and has a programme of studio exchanges which encompass a number of cities including in Wales, Glasgow, Paris, Berlin, London etc. They have 15-20 international partners in this programme. Their object is to ensure that professional artists can work abroad and be integrated into communities. One of their exchange programmes will start anew in London In July 09.

They also work to promote and support international concerts and tours, and discussion followed on the possible useful links with traditional musicians from both Quebec and Ireland. Information was given on festival s and events including Spotlight Quebec and Celtic Connections.

Janet explained the work of POBAL, which the two officers said they had researched through the materials she had sent them and online. She explained that the organisation's emphasis was on language, and that she felt there would be particular relevance in looking at an international collaboration that might forge closer cultural links with Quebec, given the shared aspects of history between Ireland and Quebec and the deeply rooted historical, social and cultural experiences that link the two. In terms of POBAL's own work for the Irish language, she felt that there was a common thread of language promotion within a minority context which the Irish speaking community could bring to a shared programme of activity. One of the ways that this might usefully and easily be done could be through an exploration of Irish / Quebecois traditional music influences. She felt that collaboration could also take a number of forms, through musical exploration, through drama, through the visual arts, through multi-disciplinary taster arts exchanges that would lead to relevant historical and contemporary connections.

Marie-Pierre described some of the work carried out on a similar collaboration with Wales and Scotland until recently and she will send Janet contact details of relevant officers in London and elsewhere. The Conseil works with professional artists and likes to favour projects that have depth and are of some duration to allow for development. It has sent delegations to Denmark, Sweden and London and has contacts with the Arts Council in England.

Janet explained that as an umbrella group, in addition to developing project ideas for collaboration and co-ordination amongst a number of Irish language groups together, POBAL was keen to help its member organisations independently to develop and promote



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their own work in the arts, and to look at whether there were gaps that new groups or projects could fill. She was keen to bring back information about possible linkages that different member organisations (for instance, the professional Irish language drama group, Aisling Ghéar is among POBAL's membership, as are three Irish language cultural centres) could also make use of. Discussion followed on Quebec festivals including music and drama and it was agreed that Denise and Marie-Pierre would send on further details and contacts in respect of festivals generally and drama in particular. A list of organisations will also be sent.

Discussion continued on the role of the Accordion festival (La Grande Rencontre) and the Association Folklorique for traditional music. The Conseil places emphasis on work with professional, recognised artists and on high quality work. Discussion followed on some of the possibilities around high profile work. Janet gave a breakdown of some of the artists that POBAL had worked with on its four-year project, the Irish Language Arts Roadshow, including Máiréad ní Mhaonaigh and Ciaran Curran of internationally renowned Altan; poet and lecturer, Louis de Paor, classical and traditional guitarist, Steve Cooney, singer, author and song collector Pádraigín Uí Uallacháin, contemporary singer-songwriter, John Spillane; sean-nós singers Doimínic Mac Giolla Bhríde agus Lasairfhíona Ní Chonaola, singer and accordainists Séamus, Eoin and Breandán Ó Beaglaoich and Gàidhlig singer and musician from the western isles of Scotland, BBC Folk Awards winner, Julie Fowlis.

Marie-Pierre will contact members in London and send on contact details to Janet. They will also send on sectoral contact lists. In the meantime, Janet will further explore the possibility of developing some project ideas.

Brendan: I am happy to do so but I am sure that most artists in this area are not fluent in the Irish language but I support the work being undertaken.

Sinéad: Thank you for your time and support.



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