



Learning Limerick

Together for a brighter future

2021

Monday **May 24** - Sunday **May 30**

Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival

love learning 

Announcing Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival 2021

The Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival, now in its eleventh year, will take place from **Monday 24th to Sunday 30th May 2021**. Building on the success of the first virtual festival in 2020, we are planning an exciting line up of FREE events for you to enjoy.

The Festival theme this year is **“New Futures, New Adventures in Learning”**. It will celebrate 11 years of the festival and Limerick as a UNESCO Learning City-Region. This year it will again include using live streamed and interactive webinar workshops and event activities. The festival provides a timely opportunity to reflect on the many innovative ways we have continued to engage in learning over the last year; while also exploring how learning continues to bring us on new adventures in the future. We have all expanded the ways in which we can access learning and we have met these new opportunities for learning with great enthusiasm.

The Festival is overseen by the Learning Limerick Steering Group, which is representative of all the main stakeholders involved in promoting learning across Limerick. Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival has something for everyone – wherever you live, whatever your age is and whatever your particular interests may be.

Newsletter

ISSUE MARCH 2021

Reflecting on Festival 2020



The Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival 2020 took place last year from Monday 28th September to Sunday 4th October and marked its 10th anniversary. For the first time, the Festival was run as a virtual festival. The Festival celebrated the resilience of our local communities; and also celebrated Limerick as a UNESCO Learning City-Region. With over 80 free online events, there was certainly something for everyone to choose from; including art, health and science, business and developing career options. The flagship event for the festival was 'Learning during Changing Business Times'; and included a discussion of how some of our local business sectors have responded to the challenges presented by Covid-19. Also during the week, the Irish Network of UNESCO Learning Cities hosted a collaborative Irish Learning Cities Day on 30th September 2020.

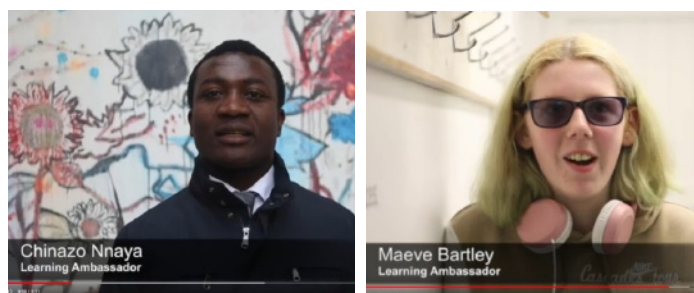
Overall, Limerick's Virtual 10th Anniversary Lifelong Learning Festival was seen as a success by participants, event organisers, and committee members during the Festival Evaluation process: -

- Being virtual made it easy and convenient for participants and accommodated a nationwide, as well as an international audience.
- It encouraged event organisers in particular, out of their comfort zone by moving events online and as such this in itself brought about learning.
- Both the Virtual Event training prior to the Festival and IT/technical support were seen as beneficial and it was suggested that this should be continued in future Festivals.

- A successful Digital Marketing Campaign was managed as part of LLL Festival 2020 and it was recommended that should be continued as part of an integrated development strategy for 2021.
- Participants requested more interactive events. Recommendations included a focus on both physical and online events in the future to appeal to a wide audience; and that online events should be made available post-festival so they can be viewed again, or by others.
- There was also interest for further targeted marketing for the individual events and to help drive engagement. It was suggested that this could be done by increasing resources in this area and working with event organisers to support and guide them.



Learning Ambassadors Programme



The Learning Ambassadors project commenced in 2019. The Ambassadors are Limerick people from all walks of life, united by a common interest in promoting, developing and celebrating learning, in all its forms, throughout Limerick City and County. They are welcoming and friendly and they are willing to share their experiences of formal and informal learning in their own communities, workplaces and neighbourhoods.

The Learning Ambassadors are important as they can help put a friendly face on organisations involved with learning and they can help break down all sorts of barriers to learning as they share inspiring learning stories from their own lives or the lives of people in their families and communities. In November/December 2019, the Learning Ambassadors participated in a Story Exchange training project with Narrative 4, which developed their skills to 'tell their story'. The Narrative 4 training model develops empathy through sharing your story with your partner and retelling your partner's story back to the group; in their voice. Following this training, the Ambassadors told their own stories of lifelong learning and why they are passionate about becoming a Learning Ambassador on video interviews. This series of interviews was formally launched with a virtual launch event with the Mayor in December 2020.



Learning Neighbourhoods Project



The LCEN established four Learning Neighbourhoods for Limerick; these were launched in 2019 and include the Southside, City Centre, Northside and St. Mary's. Learning Neighbourhoods take the Learning City concept to the Neighbourhood level and includes everyone from the neighbourhood; businesses, groups and local people. Some examples of initiatives that have been taking place in the Learning Neighbourhoods since their launch

are a Music Café; a ‘Brag & Borrow’ event for sharing initiatives and an Open MIC event bringing young people and writers together. Our Learning Neighbourhoods have also demonstrated tremendous resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Groups worked on producing face masks, a virtual music café event and connecting with learners through daily phone calls, and using online methods of connecting, e.g. PADLET, Zoom, WhatsApp groups etc. A collaborative Webinar event was held with Limerick and Cork Learning Neighbourhoods during the Virtual Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival 2020; entitled ‘Learning Neighbourhood Reflections: Positive Local Actions during Challenging Times’. Examples of good practice were shared. At the Webinar there was general acknowledgment amongst the groups that maintaining Learning Neighbourhoods needs commitment. Following the successful pilot of this initiative over the last two years, the LCEN wish to see this initiative grow and develop further under Learning Limerick.



LIMERICK LEARNING
NEIGHBOURHOODS

UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Institute
for Lifelong Learning

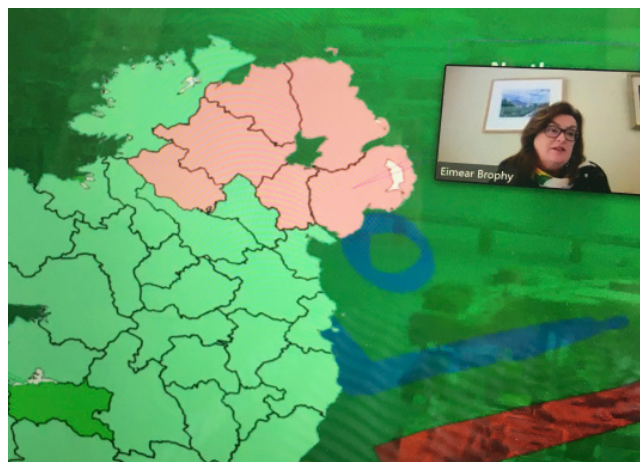
Winner of UNESCO
Learning City
Award 2017

The Learning Limerick Steering Group is a member of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) and received the UNESCO Learning City Award in 2017.

Limerick is also a member of the UNESCO Cluster on Entrepreneurship & Entrepreneurial Learning. Two Learning Cities (Torino, Italy and Chengdu, China)

coordinate this Entrepreneurship Cluster with the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning. As part of this work, we were asked by UNESCO to complete a Survey on Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Learning for Limerick. There were a number of key partners in Limerick involved in inputting into the responses to this survey; including the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Local Enterprise Office, the three HEIs in Limerick, Mid-West Regional Skills Forum, and the Limerick Local Development Companies. The UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning will be collating all cities' responses and presenting the thematic findings and best practice examples at a further date and at future international meetings of the Cluster.

Our Chairperson of Learning Limerick presented on Distance Education at an international webinar of the UNESCO Network in May 2020. Our Mayor of Limerick City and County, Councillor Michael Collins, also presented on Learning Limerick at the International Meeting of the Educational Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Cluster; hosted by Goyang (Korea) and UIL.



Irish Network of Learning Cities

The Irish Network of Learning Cities includes Limerick, Cork, Belfast, Derry and Dublin Learning Cities. All five learning cities collaborated in holding the Network's first 'Irish Learning Cities Day' on 30th September 2020, which was held during Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival week. Festival Coordinators from Limerick, Cork, Belfast, Derry and Dublin also hosted a joint webinar on our Learning Festivals as part of the first 'Global Festival of Learning' in September 2020.



Learning Limerick also contributed to a Case Study for Adult Learning and Health and Well-Being as part of research that was conducted by the Northern Ireland Impact Forum for Adult Learning, in partnership with Belfast Learning City. The Limerick Case Study focuses on the Learning Neighbourhoods initiative. Arising from this, Learning Limerick made a presentation at their Webinar in December 2020.



Learning Limerick

Together for a brighter future

PASCAL EcCoWell Community Recovery Programme



Learning Limerick contributed a case study on its work for the PASCAL Final Report on the EcCoWell Community Recovery Programme – 'CONNECTING UP IN A WORLD OF TURBULENT CHANGE' <http://lcn.pascalobservatory.org/pascalnow/blogentry/briefings/pascal-eccowell-community-recovery-program-final-report>. The report was published on the PASCAL Website in October 2020. There are various interesting themes in the contributions to the report which can be taken further. Limerick and Wyndham Learning Cities are planning to co-host a webinar for the EcCoWell 2 Network partners in collaboration with PASCAL later this year; working title 'Empathy Partnerships for Enhanced Recovery in Learning Cities and Communities'.

Many thanks to all our partners in Learning Limerick:

- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
- Limerick City and County Council
- PAUL Partnership
- University of Limerick
- Mary Immaculate College
- Limerick Institute of Technology
- West Limerick Resources
- Ballyhoura Development
- Limerick Childcare Committee
- Limerick Community Education Network
- National Learning Network
- Limerick Integration Working Group
- Limerick Mental Health Association
- Youth Work Limerick
- Mid West Regional Skills Forum
- Limerick Chamber Skillnet