



Learning Limerick

Together for a brighter future

Newsletter

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Lifelong Learning Festival 2022

Chairperson's Reflection

As proud members of UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) and the Irish Network of Learning Cities (INLC), we are delighted to be holding our 12th annual Lifelong Learning Festival in May this year. As a Learning City-Region we want to encourage and promote lifelong learning to all our citizens across all age groups and sectors throughout the region.

Our communities have demonstrated tremendous resilience in continuing to engage in learning and in our virtual festivals over the last two years. We are looking forward to returning to in-person events this year and having a hybrid festival, including both face-to-face and online events. It is this networking and connecting that is key. Indeed, the festival has been very successful in connecting with learners and learning providers right across the region.

Many festival events are held in local communities. In many cases, it is these learning events hosted in local neighbourhoods and familiar surroundings that can offer learners the opportunity to take that vital first step back into education and learning. Whether you are learning to develop skills or to grow your career, the festival celebrates lifelong learning and can have a real impact on both your professional and personal development.



Eimear Brophy

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and Chair of Learning Limerick



The 12th annual Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival launches on Friday 6th May 2022 with a Press Event for the Learning Limerick Steering Group and Festival Organising Committee; taking place in the Kilmallock Library, Co. Limerick. This year's theme is 'Learn Something New in 2022,' with a smorgasbord of events encompassing everything from Art, Cookery, Early Childhood Development, Guided Tours, Panel Discussions, Language Taster Sessions, Wellness Clinics and Career Guidance to mention but a few, with many more taking place during the Festival Week of Monday 23rd to Sunday 29th May.

Having held the last two festivals in a virtual environment, we are excited and delighted to see the return of in-person events this year, where learners can meet and mingle with like-minded people and shake off the cobwebs of the last two years. There never has been a better time to meet up with neighbours, friends and colleagues once again and learn a new skill or hobby in the process. For those of you who would prefer online access, owing to the success of the previous two festivals, many events this year will be hybrid events catering to both a live and an online audience.



This year's Flagship UNESCO Learning City Event will take place on Thursday 26th of May in the University of Limerick City Campus, Sarsfield Street, Limerick. As we celebrate our fifth year of being an UNESCO Learning City awardee, we will mark the occasion with visiting speakers from the Irish Network of Learning Cities along with contributions from our international Learning City partners.

So, whether you might like to discover more about the Origins of Chocolate, or are you are curious about the Benefits of Introducing Books to Babies, or perhaps an Interactive Woodturning Session is more your cup of tea, Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival 2022 has got you covered. Visit our website and social media for Event listings and updates. What are you waiting for? Are you ready to take on the learning challenge and **'Learn Something New in 2022?'**



Some of the Members of the Festival Organising Committee

Strategic Planning Session

On 9th November 2021, the Learning Limerick Steering Group held its first in-person meeting since early 2020; and we were delighted for this session to be focused on strategic planning facilitated by Sinéad Doody at the South Court Hotel. Some of the key strategic priorities identified were the need to prioritise with our local target groups and growing our Learning Ambassadors initiative; and the importance of ongoing promotion; including online social media promotion, newsletters and working with our media partners on a year-round basis.



Steering Group Planning Session

Learning Limerick Networking Events



As part of the preparations for this year's festival, the Learning Limerick Organising Committee hosted two networking events over recent months. An online webinar took place on the 9th December 2021 and featured a presentation from Patrick Fitzgerald of the LCEN on how to maximise audience interactivity while hosting online events.

The Castletroy Park Hotel played host to a coffee morning on the 3rd March 2022. This was our first face to face event and the excitement and enthusiasm was evident in the room, especially during the groupwork session where the return to in-person events was high on everyone's agenda along with finding out what events other groups were planning for this year's festival.

Claire Flynn, Mental Health Ireland, spoke about the importance of our Well-being and Resilience for Lifelong Learning, along with Helen Brown, Graduate and Professional Studies, University of Limerick, who delivered a highly informative presentation on the ease of use and relatively low cost of running hybrid/online events. It was great to meet and greet in-person again and afford guests the opportunity to connect, collaborate and converse over coffee and cakes



Spotlight on Community Partner – Launch of Limerick Community Education Network (LCEN) Strategic Plan



Istabraq Hall, Limerick City Hall played host to the launch of the Limerick Community Education Network's (LCEN) Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 on the 9th March 2022. Representing 15 organisations and 3000 adults across the city, the LCEN works tirelessly in supporting and promoting community adult education, all the while staying true to their ethos of 'education for the community within the community.' Taking place outside of the formal education sector, community education aims to 'enhance learning, foster empowerment, and contribute to civic society.' The strategic plan was developed following a comprehensive consultation process with members; facilitated by PAUL Partnership.

The event featured a number of guest speakers including Mayor of Limerick City and County Council, Councillor Daniel Butler and Triona Lynch, Further Education and Training Manager at the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, with both highlighting the vital role the LCEN undertakes in community education. Learner Karen Wallace shared her experiences about her own learning journey and her work as Chair of the Moyross Adult Education Group, with presentations being made to Helen Flanagan and Josephine Sheedy in acknowledgment of their years of hard work and dedication to the LCEN. We wish Helen and Josephine all the best in their future endeavours. Congratulations to Mary Hughes and Patrick Fitzgerald of LCEN for their stellar work in organising and hosting a very enjoyable and enlightening launch event.

The LCEN Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 is available on the LCEN website: www.lcen.ie

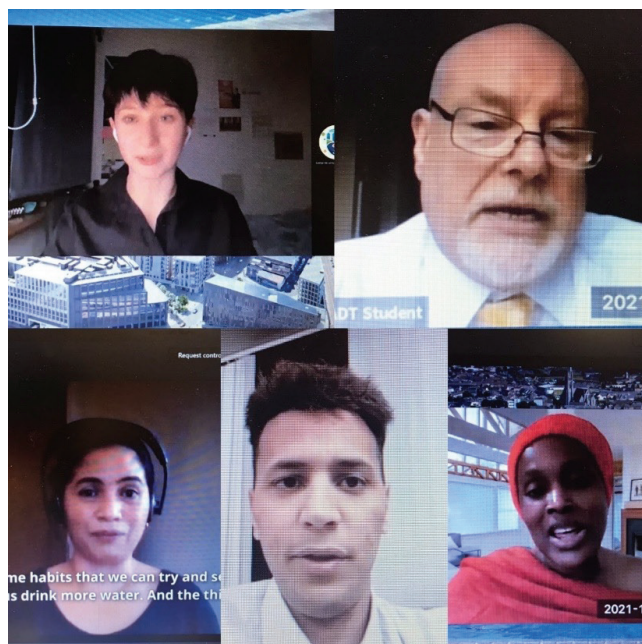
Learning Ambassadors Project Update

The Learning Ambassadors are Limerick people who are united by a common interest in promoting, developing and celebrating learning throughout Limerick and beyond. The role of the Learning Ambassadors was updated by the sub-group at a facilitated planning session held with facilitator Rozi Perez Goodbody (PAUL Partnership) in September 2021. The role includes the following –

- Introduce and promote learning and education as something enjoyable, beneficial and achievable for all.
- Promote the concept of community and lifelong learning and encourage participation in this area by showcasing their various learning pathways.
- Actively partake in learning and learning networks themselves in order to grow as a learner, inspire others and identify any gaps and issues which may require addressing.

In November 2021, Learning Ambassador Lylian Fotabong gave an input on her learning journey and reflections on lifelong learning at the international 'Conversations with Learners' webinar event facilitated by the Irish Network of Learning Cities as part of the Global Learning Festival.

Conversations with Learners event - featuring learners from the Irish Network



Following an election held by the Learning Ambassadors Sub-group, Chinazo John Nnaya was elected to the Learning Limerick Steering Group, to represent the Learning Ambassadors on the Steering Group and to bring the voice of the learner to our meetings. Congratulations to Chinazo.



Ambassadors Breda Butterfield, Tom Kearns, Patricia Sheehan and Chinazo Nnaya at the networking event held in March at the Castletroy Park Hotel.

Irish Network of Learning Cities Update



Irish Network Members at Derry Festival Launch

We wish our partners on the Irish Network of Learning Cities well for their respective Lifelong Learning Festivals 2022 and we are supporting these events. Our Chairperson Eimear Brophy gave a presentation and participated in panel discussions at the Cork and Derry festivals. Congratulations to our learning city partners on these wonderful events.

The key events and dates of interest are: –

- **Cork Lifelong Learning Festival 4th – 10th April 2022 & Cork Learning Cities Seminar in the Triskel Arts Centre, Cork; Thursday 7th April.**
- **Dublin Festival on 4th – 6th April 2022.**
- **Derry Festival Launch 12th April in the Guildhall, Derry.** (Derry Festival 25th – 29th April)
- The **signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of the five Mayors and Lord Mayors** of the Irish Network will take place in **Belfast City Hall** on 18th May 2022. This will further our agreement to commit each city to work together.
- **Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival** – Thursday 26th May – University of Limerick City Campus; the learning cities will participate in a panel discussion for this Learning Cities event.

Many thanks to all our partners in Learning Limerick:

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