

## Power of the Networks, Power to the Networks



Photo: © EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award 2012

**The Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, Athens, Greece**

At the beginning of June, representatives of heritage organisations and heritage networks from all over Europe came together in Lisbon for this year's European Heritage Congress organised by Europa Nostra. The Congress served as an inspiring platform for debating, networking, campaigning to save endangered heritage and celebrating best heritage achievements across Europe.

“**The Lisbon experience once again demonstrated the significant added value of a European network ‘in action’: pooling (re)sources and energies, peer learning, disseminating best practices and sharing concerns on endangered heritage.**”

Furthermore, providing policy input to the EU Institutions and encouraging them to pursue the path of promoting the benefits of our ‘Creative Europe’, not only for our economy but also for our society and our living environment.

The location of this Ceremony gave an additional symbolic dimension to this gathering: the World Heritage Site of the Jeronimos Monastery is where the Lisbon Treaty was signed in 2007. This coincidence gave us a welcome opportunity to recall the importance of the new article 3.3 introduced by the Lisbon

Treaty: “[The Union] shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe’s cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced.” This was done by Europa Nostra’s President, Maestro Plácido Domingo, but also by José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, in his video message broadcasted at the ceremony. A most encouraging signal for all cultural heritage and museum operators in Europe!

Fully convinced of the essential role played by European networks for the safeguard of Europe’s cultural heritage (immovable and movable, tangible and intangible), Europa Nostra took the initiative to encourage all existing networks to rally behind one single goal: the full implementation of the article 3.3 of the Lisbon Treaty and the gradual development of a comprehensive and all-embracing EU strategy towards cultural heritage. This led to the launch of the ‘European Heritage Alliance 3.3’ in June 2011 in Amsterdam. While recognising the specific role played by each network and its specific spread of representation (museums, civil society organisations, private owners of historic buildings, historic cities and regions, heritage educators, landowners, urban planners, history teachers, etc), we all felt the need to create an informal European sectoral platform for cultural heritage. A platform serving as an expert ‘interlocutor’ for the EU Institutions when it comes to formulating and implementing EU policies and programmes that have an

impact – direct or indirect – on cultural heritage. By combining the power of each individual network, we wish to enlarge the impact and the influence of the vast variety of cultural heritage operators in Europe.

By acting together, we wish to demonstrate the need to fully deploy the power of the networks as well as give more power to them. They have the capacity for quick, efficient and cost-effective mobilisation for action. Furthermore, they have the capacity for the widest possible dissemination of knowledge, experience and concerns across borders and throughout Europe.

For all these reasons, Europa Nostra, NEMO and all other members of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3, expect from the future ‘Creative Europe’ programme to fully recognise the added value of European networks and to provide due (financial) support to their consolidation and further development.

“**With relatively small grants, the EU can indeed continue to leverage the future performance and delivery of cultural (heritage) networks.**”

An excellent return on investment is guaranteed!

By | **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailovic**

# NEMO

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**NEMO** – The Network of European Museum Organisations is an independent network representing the European museum community. For more information about NEMO, visit: [www.ne-mo.org](http://www.ne-mo.org)

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# Creative Museums

## NEMO responds to European Commission's Proposal for 'Creative Europe'

NEMO welcomes the European Union Commission's proposal on the new framework programme for culture 'Creative Europe', to begin in 2014.

It is a strong statement for culture in challenging economic times and, as the title says, the framework focuses on creativity, a key aspect of culture.

The EU sees good sense in promoting creativity. Within its 2020 strategy the EU wants to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe. And all policies should contribute to this. Ever since the Commission published the Green Paper on Creative Industries under the title, "Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries", it's become clear that much good is expected from creativeness and the creative industries.

However, NEMO wants to ensure museums are central to the focus of future culture policy, despite the fact that museums are not explicitly mentioned once in the EU communication from the Commission about 'Creative Europe'.

This is surprising, considering that museums as part of cultural heritage constitute one of the largest and more widespread cultural industries in Europe; museums have long proved their role as catalysts for urban regeneration and local economic development (e.g. Bilbao, Liverpool) and museums are one of the main reasons for choosing Europe as a destination for tourism and the settlement of multinationals. Those are fundamental arguments behind decisions for massive investment in museums in emerging powers like China and Abu Dhabi.

“**Measuring cultural heritage only by its direct economic impact is a shortcoming.**”

It is much more than a means of economic growth: It contributes to society in terms of education, wellbeing, communities and inspiration. All things society can't do without if it wants to be creative, innovative and attractive. NEMO encourages the Commission to take these factors into consideration when designing the new programme.

One of the strong points of the current Culture programme is the support for European networks. It recognises the networks' contribution to European cooperation and the exchange of knowledge and experience. NEMO is a good example. The framework of the new programme puts an end to the modest funding of operational costs of networks. It seems the Commission has lost touch with the good work of networks and the support they provide for the European Union in the context of policy making and dialogue with civil society. Most of the networks work without sufficient financial support; cutting the funding for operational costs will lead to de-professionalisation of their work.

The Commission is to be congratulated on bringing forward a major new programme and underlining the importance of culture. But it should be remembered that it is the dedication and energy of people and networks all over Europe that drives culture on and, while economic impact is a key benefit of museums and cultural heritage, to suggest that it is the only benefit diminishes us all.

# A Letter from the NEMO Chairman

The pressure on the European Union is growing by the day, up to historical levels. The big questions of our time are bigger than ever. Can we keep the Eurozone intact? Will some member states default? Will it be a monetary bazooka or Eurobonds? And do we go for budget balance or growth stimulation?

Wondering what the European Union is about, the famous words of Bill Clinton come to mind, "It's the economy, stupid". Truer than ever for Europe, one could question that if the economy is so dominant, where does that leave Europe today? What makes the economy so European? Or else, what makes us European?

Well, we share some common ground. Take a look in any of the over 20,000 museums in any corner of the continent and you will relate to what you see and observe how history and art are universally European. It's in the old stories that we share, in the patterns of the fabrics produced, in the sculptures

and pictures that reflect our way of looking at ourselves. Despite the folklore of the small differences, we can't deny we are European, like it or not.

And as our history is common, so is our destiny. As part of an ever faster globalising world, in Europe we stand for equal challenges: to create growth and wealth for all, and that they are based on our democratic principles and last for generations. That takes a lot of sacrifices these days. I must say that I'm very impressed by the impact of the crisis on some of our members. The huge budgets cuts, lack of job security, uncertainty of income, rising taxes, it can all be too much to bear. But I'm also impressed by the way they cope with it.

How do these challenges affect museums? At the next NEMO meeting, November 2-4 in Dublin, we'll work to get a clear answer to that. The future of museums is topic of researches being done in the Netherlands, the UK and as part of the LEM project, which will all be shared. And we'll discuss what our roles



Photo © Fred Ernst

will be as umbrella organisations in our countries in order to prepare museums for the future. Come to Dublin and join us for this study into our future.

By I Siebe Weide

## NEMO Statement on the PSI (Public Sector Information) Directive

The Directive on the re-use of public sector information (Directive 2003/98/EC) is a legally binding document that sets out conditions for the re-use of public sector information in European Member States. The proposal of amendments of the directive from December 2011 includes some paragraphs that are crucial to museums, archives and libraries.

NEMO states that including archives, libraries and museums in this directive is an unwanted infraction on the already problematic economic situation of museums. Furthermore NEMO strongly supports the Europeana project, and museums across the continent have made images of their collection available. As soon as licensing issues are resolved, museums look forward to contributing even more to this project. Should any party wish to use the information in the Europeana database, NEMO feels secure to say that this request can easily be resolved within the Europeana context or in direct correspondence between the parties involved.

Museums see it as their mission to ensure that a broad public can enjoy their collection, physically and digitally. NEMO is willing to engage in discussions on how to ensure further use of the information collected by archives, libraries and museums, but feels that the present directive, forcing museums to give the information to third parties (even when charging over and above marginal costs) is not a step towards a sustainable approach.

Read the full statement at [www.ne-mo.org](http://www.ne-mo.org) > Activities & News > News & Statements

# Ageing Creatively in Ireland

The 2011 Irish Census revealed interesting statistics in the context of European Year of Active Ageing, illustrating that, while 12 percent of the population is 65 and over (4.6 million population), 34 percent is aged 24 and under. Ireland has a high birth rate, having developed the fastest growth rate in the European Union between 1996 and 2006, with over 365,000 children born between 2006 and 2011. Active ageing is a 'work in progress' in Ireland.

Ageing creatively and active retirement is important to Irish society because people are living longer and seeking to maximise every aspect of their life in older age. There is great interest in adult education, keep-fit classes and courses in arts and crafts.



**It's important therefore, that cultural institutions like museums are to the forefront in helping older people to enjoy life and realise their potential.**

Seventy-five percent of Irish people aged 65 and over report being self-sufficient in their daily life and express contentment at their stage in life. They have fair health, live in towns and cities (Ireland is an increasingly urban and suburban society) and visit museums for entertainment as much as education.

As a result, museums throughout Ireland are inventive in creating programmes that engage older people using talks, guided tours, and 'friends of the museum' events, such as those at the National Museum of Ireland, Crawford Art Gallery, Royal Hibernian Academy, Hunt Museum, National Print Museum, Butler Gallery, National Library of Ireland, Highlanes Gallery, Waterford Museum of Treasures, Chester Beatty Library and Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane. The Irish Museum of Modern Art is notable in organising exhibitions, workshops, discussions groups and studio visits for people in later life.

The National Gallery of Ireland is an example of a museum with a positive



**Celebrating Active Retirement Day dancing in the Gallery's Irish rooms**

Photo © Marc O'Sullivan and the National Gallery of Ireland

approach welcoming older people to avail of free admission. "Ageing Creatively" is the title of a programme that the Gallery provides for people who want fresh challenges. It encourages self-directed learning, which is ideal for the active retired because it respects the person's interests, their pace of learning and can use the museum and its collections as the heart of their learning experience. Thus, while the Gallery provides public lectures, interactive tours and art appreciation classes, it finds practical events particularly popular.



**A Study from La Rose du Ciel, Cassis**

The Gallery organises 'Drawing Studies' classes for which participants purchase a season ticket; bring their own equipment and study with professional artists in the galleries. The courses are successful because they give participants a sense of confidence and value in their work and they love the social interaction while drawing from the collections.

As a way of marking this later life creativity, the Gallery mounted the exhibition, "Drawing Studies: A Celebration", which later became a touring exhibition. It augmented this by holding a symposium exploring adult lifelong learning. An outcome of this process has seen the Gallery initiate a 'nationwide' Drawing Day (in its eighth year) involving museums and galleries in Ireland.

Older visitors wanting something more relaxing, can join 'Art for All Ages', a monthly programme that involves poetry readings, tours, creative writing and artist's workshops. The new colourful 'Art Packs', containing lively information sheets, practical activities and arty word searches, are popular because older people, who want easy options, can have fun using them either on their own or with friends in the galleries. The reason these services are successful is because older visitors want to visit museums for enjoyment and also to participate in activities that make them feel connected to the works of art.

Like most Irish museums, the National Gallery celebrates the yearly Bealtaine Festival in May, held under the auspices of the national agency, 'Age and Opportunity', marking creativity in older age. From this you can see that ageing creatively has great potential in Irish museums.

By | Marie Bourke

# European Heritage Alliance 3.3: Strengthening the European Heritage Lobby in Europe

The European Heritage Alliance 3.3, an informal European sectoral platform composed of 27 European or international networks and organisations active in the wider field of cultural heritage, was launched in June 2011 on the occasion of the European Heritage Congress 2011 organised by Europa Nostra in Amsterdam.

On this occasion, Europe's major heritage networks agreed to work more closely together to promote the untapped potential of Europe's heritage, cultural and natural, immovable and movable. The 27 Alliance founding members, which include NEMO, bring together Europe's civil society organisations, historic cities and villages, museums, heritage professionals and volunteers, (private) owners of collections of artefacts, historic buildings and cultural landscapes, educators, town planners, etc.

The European Heritage Alliance 3.3 thus represents a very large constituency composed of tens of millions of Europe's citizens. Europa Nostra, the Voice of Cultural Heritage in Europe, acts as facilitator of the Alliance. The name of this newly created Alliance refers to the article 3.3. of the consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union which stipulates that "[The Union] shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced."

“**The Alliance members therefore intend to advocate together the necessity to develop a future EU strategy for cultural and natural heritage, in compliance with article 3.3.**”

Europe's cultural and natural heritage has a huge value for Europe's economy, society and environment. Cultural heritage brings a significant – and often underrated – contribution to growth and job creation. The sector represents an important part of the cultural and creative industries, which



Liubavas Manor Watermill Museum, Liubavas, Vilnius, Lithuania

provide jobs for 8,5 million people in the EU and contribute 4,5 percent to Europe's GDP. Spending on conservation of cultural heritage by public and private bodies is worth an estimated 5 billion euros a year.

“**Figures published by the OECD show that 40 percent of worldwide international tourism has a cultural dimension.**”

Cultural heritage is also a key resource for sustainable development and social cohesion.

As first concrete steps of their joint action during its constitutive meeting, the European Heritage Alliance 3.3 decided to endorse the 'we are more' campaign launched by Culture Action Europe in strategic partnership with the European Cultural Foundation. This campaign urges the EU Institutions to allocate adequate financial resources for culture – in particular through the future Culture Programme and Structural Funds – in the period 2014-2020. It also welcomed the initiative taken by the previous Belgian Presidency of the EU by organising the Conference 'Cultural Heritage: a resource for Europe. The benefits of interaction' on December 9, 2010 in Bruges.

During its second plenary meeting in April 2012, the Alliance members agreed on their first jointly produced document calling for the preparation of a comprehensive and comparative study – to be carried out at EU level and hopefully to be funded by the EU – with the aim to bring clear evidence of the multiple benefits which the cultural and natural heritage has for Europe: in terms of the EU's overall 2020 growth strategy but also in terms of the quality of life or the sense of identity and belonging for Europe's citizens. This study should aim to pave the way to a future EU 'Integrated Heritage Agenda' with an over-arching vision and a due incorporation of the heritage dimension in all relevant EU policies.

On this occasion, members of the Alliance also discussed the proposed 'Creative Europe' programme. While expressing their general support to the Commission, they shared the view that the final document should contain due reference to article 3.3. of the Lisbon Treaty, a stronger recognition of cultural heritage as a key resource of Europe's cultural and creative sectors and a firm commitment to supporting the important work of European networks active in the wider cultural field.

By | Louise van Rijckevorsel

Find the full list of members on the Alliance website: [www.europeanheritagealliance.eu](http://www.europeanheritagealliance.eu).



Photo © Ann Branch

# An Interview with Ann Branch

**Ann Branch grew up in London. She studied political science as an undergraduate and has a Master of Philosophy in European studies from Nuffield College, Oxford University. She has been working for the European Union since 1999. Since 2008 she has been in charge of the unit in the European Commission responsible for the European Union's Culture Programme, the European Capitals of Culture, a new initiative for a European Heritage Label, work on audience development in the arts, as well as four European Union culture prizes.**

**What will be the most innovative and positive aspects of the future EU programme Creative Europe, with regard to museums and cultural heritage?**

An important aspect is that we have developed a new framework programme that is fit for the future and takes account of the reality Europe's cultural and creative sectors are currently facing.

“

**Creative Europe's focus is on the real challenges Europe's cultural and creative sectors – including museums and cultural heritage – presently come up against: fragmentation of the European cultural space, the need to seize the cultural, social and economic opportunities created by the digital shift, the lack of**

**comparable data to determine how these sectors are progressing across Europe and a chronic shortage of access to finance.**

Creative Europe is aimed at supporting the sector to help ensure that Europe is the most culturally vibrant, diverse and successful continent possible. It will seek to safeguard and promote our cultural and linguistic diversity – a core value – and contribute to social inclusion, jobs and smart economic growth.

Some of the aspects worth highlighting are:

- It will be a highly visible one-stop-shop for applicants, combining three EU programmes (Culture, MEDIA and MEDIA Mundus) into one framework programme (with separate strands for Culture and MEDIA) and opening up the possibility of dealing with cross-sectoral issues in a third strand;
- The programme's objectives and priorities focus on the sectors' real needs, such as the need of support for the transnational circulation of cultural works, for capacity building and accelerated learning to speed up the sectors' adjustment to the digital shift and the sharing of know-how to develop new working methods – which are relevant to museums and cultural heritage;
- The priority that is being given to audience development. We know

there is some exemplary work already being carried out across Europe – including by museums and heritage organisations – but knowledge is patchy and fragmented. There is therefore a need to speed up progress by fostering exchange of practice and peer learning;

- The introduction of a guarantee facility for bank loans to SMEs in these sectors – which can be profit-making or non-profit-making organisations – as long as they are able to repay loans. This mechanism is innovative in the sense that it will open up new avenues to find finance for cultural and creative activities. At the same time it will help banks to build up their knowledge of the cultural and creative sectors and foster what we hope will be a permanent change of mentality with regard to lending to them. We expect that the total amount of 211 million euros the European Commission proposes for this instrument will leverage an amount of 1 billion euros in guarantees over a seven-year period. This facility could be of interest to the heritage and museum sectors, where there is a growing need to strengthen relations with capital markets. The facility could be used to temporarily bridge the financial gap in the funding of big international exhibitions or for loans for investments in digital platforms or audience development instruments;



- Simplification and user-friendliness are leading principles: our aim is to cut back red tape and administrative burden as far as possible.

**What was the main reason for merging the Culture and Media programmes? What do museums gain from this?**

The main reasons are that the sectors are facing the same problems and there is a need for a more coherent policy approach. Furthermore, the reality is that the traditional borders between sub-sectors are becoming more fluid, there are a lot of synergies and complementarities. So there was a need to rethink the architecture of our programmes in these areas to take account of how sectors are developing and to facilitate cross-fertilisation and knowledge transfer.

However the 'framework' nature of Creative Europe recognises that value chains in the sectors are not identical. That is why there will be three specific, autonomous strands: Culture, MEDIA and Cross-sectoral, each with their own budget indication, guidelines and separate application procedures.

The Culture strand will be fully open to the heritage and museum sectors. In addition, the Cross-sectoral strand will offer benefits in terms of support for data collection in order to capture sector developments and the possibility for the sector to benefit from the new guarantee facility for bank loans.

**How do you perceive the relation between culture and creativity? How is this relationship reflected within the new framework programme Creative Europe?**

There is a link between culture and creativity:



**Culture is a source of creativity, which is shaped by various factors (human, social, cultural, institutional).**

In 2008 we commissioned a study on the impact of culture on creativity and this study underlined the need to stimulate and encourage creativity and provide individuals, society, organisations and enterprises with incentives to build on culture for social and economic renewal.

In Creative Europe this is reflected in various ways, for example by empowering cultural players and helping them to work across national borders, to share knowledge and experience and to help develop new skills to rise to the challenges of today's world. It is also recognised in the priority which will be given to audience development, identifying that by involving people – including young people, the socially disadvantaged and underrepresented groups – and helping them to engage and participate more, culture plays an important role in developing and advancing creativity as well as fostering intercultural dialogue.

**By prioritising creativity, other aspects of culture seem not to be taken into account (e.g. agents for education, well-being, communities and inspiration, tourism). Why is that?**

I would argue that Creative Europe creates a broad springboard for the sector. It seeks to foster the best possible framework for the cultural and creative sectors to thrive in an international context in order to optimise the cultural, social and economic benefits they can bring.

**Creative Europe is addressing the challenge of the digital shift with its programme. Does this include funding opportunities for museums to digitise and make available their collections?**

We have to take account of the subsidiarity principle regarding the safeguarding of collections and digital conversion. Primarily this is a responsibility of Member States. Creative Europe will fund capacity building in this area to help the sector deal with the skills challenges presented by the digital shift, but it will not fund museums to digitise their

collections. There may, however, be possibilities under the future cohesion policy for countries to include the development and use of information technologies for the digitisation of cultural heritage in their national priorities through the thematic objective, "Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, information and communication technologies".

**How can museums make use of the newly developed financial guarantee instrument of Creative Europe?**

They will be able to apply for loans from banks taking part in the scheme. The bank will assess the risks and decide if it wishes to provide the loan under the scheme. You can find answers to questions on the scheme in a set of Frequently Asked Questions we have compiled.

*<http://ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe/documents/faq-financial-instrument.pdf>*

**How will the Commission guarantee that European networks will have the means to continue their professional work for Europe's integration and policy making?**

The Commission acknowledges the important role European networks play in sharing knowledge and best practices between their members. In Creative Europe, the Culture Strand foresees continued support for activities by European bodies comprising networks of operators from different countries.

By | Anna Bas Backer and Julia Pagel

**Further reading:**

**More information on the new EU programme for the cultural and creative sectors is available at:**  
[www.ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe/](http://www.ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe/)

# About: IRELAND

**Most Irish Museums, whether in the Republic or Northern Ireland, are either administered or managed by the state through various boards of trustees or governors or by local authorities. Those administered by the state would normally have a national remit while those managed by local authorities would tend to concentrate their activities on regional matters. Because Ireland is partitioned, museums and galleries are regulated under different national legislation. There is, however, a high degree of cooperation between cultural institutions on both sides of the border.**

The National Museum of Ireland in Dublin is the national repository for collections of antiquities, decorative arts, historic and folk-life artefacts and natural history specimens, based on those originally collected by the Royal Dublin Society, the Royal Irish Academy, the Museum of Irish Industry and the Natural History Museum. The Dublin Society was founded in 1731 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1749 to promote



Photo © National Museum of Ireland

**National Museum of Ireland, Country Life**

improvements in “husbandry, manufactures and other useful arts and sciences”. The Royal Irish Academy, founded in 1785, promoted the study of “pure science, history, antiquities and literature”. The Museum of Economic Geology (later renamed the Museum of Irish Industry) was established by the Government in Dublin in 1845 with the aim of “improving Irish design and manufacture through the instruction of artisans”. The Natural History Museum opened to the public in 1857. Collections from these institutions were subsumed into the Dublin Science and Art Museum, created by an Act of Parliament of 1877. At the formation of the Irish Free State in 1922 this became the National Museum of Ireland. The National Gallery was opened in 1864 as a result of a campaign initiated following the Great Industrial Exhibition held in Dublin in 1853.

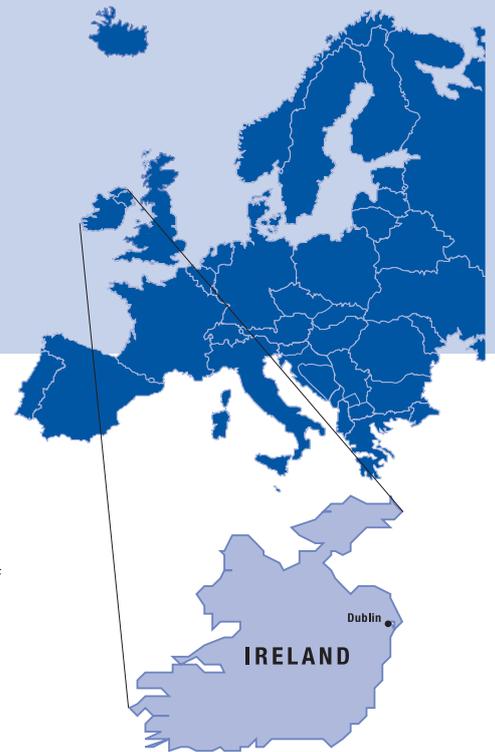
Recent developments saw the establishment of the Council of National Cultural Institutions of Ireland as a statutory body to facilitate the pooling together of talent, experience and vision of the Directors of the National Cultural

Institutions in furtherance of the national cultural interest and to make recommendations to the Minister for Arts. The council is made up of eleven constituent institutions.

The National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland were established in 1998 and merged four long established museums: the Ulster Museum, the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, the Ulster American Folk Park and Armagh County Museum. This was extended in 2001 to include W5, an interactive science discovery centre. As in the south, the Ulster Museum developed from smaller and diverse learned institutions and societies, culminating in the opening of the Belfast Art Gallery and Museum in 1890. It was renamed as the Ulster Museum in 1962 and formally designated as a national museum.

The number of local authority and specialist museums and galleries throughout the country has increased exponentially, particularly in the latter half of the twentieth century. Irish museums and galleries now reflect the unique diversity of the culture of the island. Interest in museums and galleries has also grown, driven by more time for leisure and an increasing curiosity about Ireland’s past. Arts and heritage, and by extension museums and galleries, are also regarded as a major driver of economic recovery in terms of tourism, employment and delivering an authentic experience to visitors.

As part of this development the Irish Museum Association, an all-Ireland body, was founded in 1977. The Association aspires to encourage the improvement of museums and galleries and museum practice, so that those working in and visiting museums will enjoy the maximum cultural, social and educational benefits. It also endeavours to enhance the value of museums to the community through leadership, advocacy and service. Central to the purpose of the Association



is an awareness and development of the role that can be played by museums and the museum profession within the community in collaboration with other professional bodies, central and local government. It encourages the involvement of the Irish museums community in its activities through its programme of events: guidance and advocacy; annual calendar of activities; training opportunities; publications; email service listing job options nationally and internationally; twice-yearly newsletter; regular surveys and evaluations; and networking, news and information.

By | Paul Doyle



## Ireland

**The island of Ireland is situated on the western most fringe of Europe. In 1922 the country was partitioned with the south becoming a parliamentary democratic republic while the north remained as part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Dublin is the capital of the Republic while Belfast is the principal city of Northern Ireland. The population of Ireland is approximately 6.4 million.**