



## UCLG 2023 ANNUAL RETREAT & CAMPUS

### SPEECH OF COUNCILLOR CAT O'DRISCOLL

Dublin City Council Councillor  
Board of Directors Dublin City Council Culture Company  
Chairperson, Arts & Culture Special Purpose Committee of DCC

This is my first UCLG event and I've felt very welcome. It's been inspiring to see the shared belief that local government can facilitate the change needed to enhance the planet and its people. We look forward to hosting another rich debate in Dublin next November with the UCLG Culture Summit.

I'm a Dublin City Councillor who has chaired the City's Arts, Culture, Leisure & Recreation Strategic Policy Committee for the last three years and board member of the [Dublin City Council Culture Company](#).

As you heard from Richard Shakespeare on Tuesday Dublin has made progress in approaching culture strategically.

The Dublin City Council Culture Company (Or as we call it THE Culture Company) was incorporated in 2018. Its purpose is to collaborate with people, communities, cultural organisations, businesses, and the City Council to embed cultural experiences and increase cultural participation throughout Dublin, for locals and visitors.

It does this through placemaking programmes, by operating municipal cultural buildings and in data and insight projects.

It organises itself as  
a Listening team,  
a Sharing team,  
a Making team,  
a Doing team  
and a Going team  
and its work is based on accessibility, well-being and evidencing of outcomes.



The Culture Company has developed an infrastructure that puts people at the centre of its work. The approach is to:

**Listen** — to learn about what’s important to the people of Dublin.

**Respond** — to programme responsively based on what is learnt.

And then to keep listening & responding — to make sure the work stays relevant. They are testing and delivering new methods, models and approaches to culture and society.

We thank you for recognising this in awarding Dublin City’s cultural engagement last October and we continue to be ambitious in this space.

The Pact for the Future emphasizes the ‘Power of We’ and puts culture and creativity at the core of human development along with peace and quality of life. This aligns wonderfully with the goals of Dublin City Council and the Culture Company. Our City Development Plan, a statutory 5 year plan for the city adopted in December requires large scale developments to provide at a minimum 5% of space for community, arts and culture and the plan promotes a co-design approach for these facilities. We are looking to make this happen by partnering with developers and urban planners, finding a shared language and creating a toolkit to ensure an understanding of the nuts and bolts of the spaces needed for creativity and culture to happen in the city. We have reviewed our community and neighbourhood arts grants — which showed a geographic imbalance — and saw results with targeted support and guidance. We are drafting our next Cultural Strategy with cultural rights at its core, it will be ready in time to share at the summit.



The Dublin Summit should be great timing to talk about the value of culture and it's being included definitively in the SDGs. I've never met someone who doesn't care about culture, it can be different for each of us and we feel it's important but it's not always valued in the spaces where decisions are made. For many of us culture was the first thing closed when the pandemic began and was the last thing to reopen. Alongside these important discussions we'll invite you to enjoy everything Dublin culture has to offer. I look forward seeing you again next November. Go raibh maith agat, thank you very much.

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