



Roscommon County Council Decade of Centenaries Artist Commission 2023 *Douglas Hyde (1860-1949) – Cultural Influencer*

Roscommon County Council invites artists to respond to the theme ‘*Douglas Hyde, Cultural Influencer*’ working with local and national sources including the materials at the Douglas Hyde Centre in Portahard, Frenchpark, Co Roscommon. The 2023 commission seeks proposals from artists across all art forms. A diversity of responses will be considered in the form of performances, exhibitions, conversations and writings responding to Hyde’s cultural impact and achievements over the period 1912 – 1923 and how they shaped a modern Ireland.

A final work(s) should be produced and at least one aspect showcased at an event at the Douglas Hyde Centre on Culture Night, Friday 22 September 2023. This will be a high profile event for Culture Night and as part of the Roscommon Commemorations programme, engaging with local communities during the research and creation of the piece.

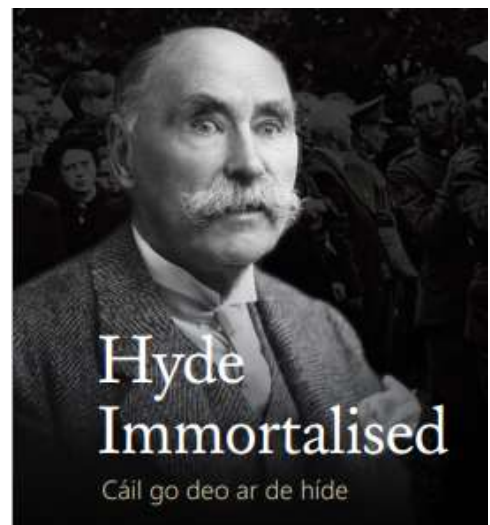
The Culture Night–Decade of Centenaries Commission **to the value of €20,000** is supported by the Community Strand of the Decade of Centenaries Programme as part of Roscommon Arts Office/Arts Council of Ireland Culture Night Programme.

This commission marks the fourth, and final, in a series of artistic commissions inviting artists to reflect on Roscommon’s role in the struggle for independence. The interpretation of local historical events by our artists and creative practitioners provides a platform to encourage reflection and the consideration of issues, both past and present, which may be challenging, difficult and sometimes deeply personal.

Deadline for submissions: 4pm Monday 8th May 2023

Douglas Hyde, Dubhghlas de hÍde, was born on 17 January 1860 in Co Roscommon and died at ‘Little Ratra’ in the Phoenix Park near Áras an Uachtaráin on 12th July 1949. Hyde was the founding President of the Gaelic League (1893-1915), first Professor of Modern Irish in University College Dublin (1909-1932) and became first President of an independent Irish State (1938-1945) under the 1937 Constitution, by agreement between all the political parties. Hyde has been described as a cultural influencer whose upbringing in County Roscommon helped form him into the cultural nationalist who played a pivotal role in creating a modern Ireland.

Hyde was a man of many parts – a folklorist, a poet, a playwright, a literary historian, a university professor, a leader of the Gaelic revival, an antiquarian, a pioneer of the Irish literary revival, an Irish free state senator and Ireland’s first President. **Above all else, he was a Roscommon man, and it was his upbringing in County Roscommon that helped shape the very essence of how he saw himself, other people, the world and the future.**



Ref: **Roscommon History & Society**. Geography Publications. Essay by Máire Nic An Bhaird and Liam Mac Mathúna ‘Early diary insights into Roscommon’s impact on Douglas Hyde, Ireland’s first President’.



APPLICATION PROCESS

Roscommon County Council Arts Office invites professional artists to submit applications for consideration for this commission. Applicants must have been born or currently live in County Roscommon. One document must be submitted, labelled with the name of the artist or artist team, with the following details:

- Project proposal (max 3-page) outlining the artist statement, ideas and concepts for the project, budget and timeline;
- A current CV (max 2-page, or one for each member of the team, if applicable);
- Artists must provide details of any sub-contractors whom they propose to engage to create the work;
- Low res images of three recent, relevant projects (up to a max of 2 images per project) including a written description of the materials, size, title.
- Video work must be abridged to max 3-minutes duration, and links and passwords to be included in the document.
- Applications will be assessed using the following **criteria** which should be used as headings in your submission:
 - **Previous experience** of creating and delivering a similar commission **(20/100)**
 - **Quality of concept** for a new and imaginative work which reflects the intention of the Roscommon commission and the Decade of Centenaries themes & objectives (see appendix 1) relevant to Roscommon **(30/100)**
 - **High artistic merit** and work which is exceptional, progressive, imaginative, engaging and relevant to 2023 **(20/100)**
 - **Budget detail** - value for money. Clearly achievable within the available budget and timeline **(30/100)**

BUDGET €20,000:

The total inclusive budget of €20,000 should include artist fees, any other professional service fees, research fees, materials, print and fabrication, insurance, transportation, travel, accommodation and VAT. If more than one artist is involved, the lead artist must be identified in the application, to whom payment will issue.

The final piece must be made available to Roscommon County Council and funding partners for sharing on websites/social media thereafter and for archival purposes.

Applications should be emailed by **4pm Monday 8th May 2023** to artsofficer@roscommoncoco.ie, with the subject 'Decade of Centenaries Artist Commission 2023'.

**Supported by Roscommon County Council and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts,
Gaeltacht, Sports and Media under the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 initiative.**



APPENDIX I

<https://www.decadeofcentenaries.com>

1. Background

We have now reached the final year of the Decade of Centenaries (2012-2023). This is a complex and sensitive period in our history, as we mark the centenaries of events arising from the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty; the outbreak of the Civil War; and the foundation of the State.

The Government's objective is to promote an inclusive, respectful, authentic, measured and consultative approach to commemorations, which encourages a deeper understanding of the context of the time, recognising the differing perspectives on our shared history and seeking to strengthen peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland. The Government's approach is grounded in the principles laid down by the Expert Advisory Group on Centenary Commemorations in its Initial Statement (published in 2012), Second Statement (published in 2017), and its subsequent guidance (published in January 2019).

Link to the Expert Advisory Group's Initial Statement:

<https://www.decadeofcentenaries.com/wp-content/uploads/publications/Initial/Initial/index.html>

Link to the Second Statement of Principles (aka Second Phase Mission Statement):

<https://www.decadeofcentenaries.com/wp-content/uploads/publications/Mission2017-23/Mission2017-23/index.html>

Link to the Expert Advisory Group's Guidance for the Second Phase (2018-2023):

<https://www.decadeofcentenaries.com/wp-content/uploads/publications/Guidance2018/Guidance2018/index.html>

The final phase of the Decade of Centenaries began in 2021 and has a common set of broad themes and ideas that are nuanced each year to allow for specific centenaries to be remembered appropriately.

The Expert Advisory Group has identified these centenaries and associated themes as particularly significant over the final phase of the Decade (2021 – 2023):

- The Struggle for Independence, 1919 – 1921;
- The Civil War;
- The Foundation of the State;
- Partition and the Foundation of Northern Ireland;
- The experience of minorities and border communities in Ireland; and
- The admission of the Irish Free State into the League of Nations in September 1923.

2. Objectives of the Decade of Centenaries programme from 2021 – 2023

- To focus on themes of remembrance and reconciliation and on the commemoration of all of those who lost their lives during this period;
- To promote a deeper understanding of the significant historical events of this period, which recognises that the shared historical experiences of those years gave rise to very different narratives and memories;
- To encourage reflection about the multiple identities, traditions and perspectives that are part of the overall Irish historical experience;
- To respond with sensitivity to the local historical context, acknowledging that there was no uniform experience within counties or across the island of Ireland;
- To continue to promote a consultative and open approach to commemorations, which seeks to strengthen peace and reconciliation across the island of Ireland. A core element of reconciliation is acknowledgement of the legitimacy of all of the traditions on the island that draw their identity and collective memory from our shared history.



APPENDIX 2: PRESS RELEASE

Minister Catherine Martin T.D., on behalf of the Government, publishes Programme for the final year of the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 at the National Library of Ireland

On 23rd March 2023 Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin T.D., on behalf of the Government published the 2023 Decade of Centenaries Programme. This is the final year of the Programme, presenting a range of engaging and accessible initiatives and projects to commemorate important centenaries occurring this year. Minister Martin along with the Chair, Dr Maurice Manning and the Deputy Chair, Dr Martin Mansergh of the Expert Advisory Group on Centenary Commemorations visited the National Library of Ireland to mark the publication of the Programme for the year ahead and to acknowledge the vital role played by the National Cultural Institutions in the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2023 from the outset of the Programme.

2023 will bring the Decade of Centenaries Programme (2012-2023) to a close, with the centenary of the admission of the Irish Free State to the League of Nations in September. The centenaries of some of the greatest atrocities of the Civil War will also occur, as well as the ending of the conflict. Key cultural and societal milestones will be marked, including the awarding of the Nobel Prize in Literature to Yeats in 1923.

State partners, local authorities, the National Cultural Institutions, institutions of learning, custodians of records, media and broadcasting organisations, artists and creative communities will continue their leading role in developing and delivering programme elements that support respectful public engagement with these centenaries and broader themes. Historical accuracy, academic integrity and archival discovery are again key tenets of the commemorative programme for this final year.

The Programme is based on the guiding principles set out by the Expert Advisory Group (EAG) on Centenary Commemorations, and is informed by the views of the All-Party Consultation Group on Commemorations.

Marking the publication of the Programme, **Taoiseach Leo Varadkar T.D. said:**

“Over the past 10 years, as a people and a nation, we have endeavoured to move from memory and contested history – often still deeply personal and deeply-felt – to mature reflection and historical exploration of the events that have shaped our country. It has not always been easy or uncontested; but we have striven to better understand, and to acknowledge that we may share a common history, but not always a common memory or understanding of events and their consequences.

Thank you to the Expert Advisory Group on Centenary Commemorations for their guidance throughout this period, the All-Party Consultation Group on Commemorations for their input, and also the various stakeholders, with particular thanks to the local authorities partnering with their communities. Together they have worked to ensure a meaningful, sensitive and nuanced programme to engage the public in this complex period of history. Community led commemoration continues to be a cornerstone of the State’s approach to commemoration.”

Tánaiste Micheál Martin T.D. said: “I am pleased to have contributed to some of the key centenary events over the past two years and have been struck by the maturity of the debate, the breadth of the Programme, and the willingness of Irish people to embrace the stories of our past.

I would like to thank all who have contributed so thoughtfully and expertly to these series of events marking this period. This year we reflect on some challenging centenaries, but we are supported in this reflection by the work of our institutions of learning, historians and archivists, national cultural institutions, local authorities, artists, and creative communities. And this year includes the centenary of Ireland joining of the League of Nations, which was a significant and hugely positive step forward by the State into the international arena. Over the past 10 years, the impacts from engagement on centenaries have been immense – historically



authentic, citizen-focused,
imaginative initiatives, aimed at engaging diverse audiences of all ages and traditions.”

Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin T.D. said: “I would like to thank sincerely all of the stakeholders who have contributed so enthusiastically and thoughtfully throughout the Decade of Centenaries, and particularly those leading initiatives in this, our final year. Together, we have addressed the complexity of our history and the challenges linked to commemoration, and we will continue to do so this year as we navigate through this sensitive final phase, marking the emergence of an independent Irish State in the midst of a traumatic Civil War. While perspectives may have varied, we have engaged in respectful debate and discussion, supported by a wealth of scholarship and material from national and local archives, including newly digitised sources. Our artists have also immersed themselves, with new and established audiences, in exploring the historical events and themes under the Creative Imagination Strand of the Programme. This element is further supported in the 2023 Programme through [ART:2023](#), the Yeats Society Programme marking the **award of the Nobel Prize in Literature to WB Yeats** in 1923 and continued support for the **Markievicz Award** and the **Artist-in-Residence** scheme.”

Dr. Maurice Manning, Chair of the EAG, said: “The past Decade has been a rich one in Irish historiography. If we judge the Decade in terms of new research and publications, we saw the emergence of a gifted, innovative and courageous new generation of scholars, the great broadening of boundaries of topics hitherto ignored or avoided - the role of women, the treatment of minorities, difficult social and societal issues, arts and culture, to name but a few. Much of the work to date has been truly ground-breaking - and it will continue this year and beyond. My colleagues on the EAG, including the late and greatly missed Dr. Éamon Phoenix, were pleased to provide support and guidance in this important Government Initiative.”

Dr. Martin Mansergh, Deputy-Chair of the EAG said: “The Decade of Centenaries has not been about establishing an official State history or a new orthodoxy. It is freely acknowledged that there are many different narrative threads. The Decade has been about extending sympathies derived from a broader understanding, without requiring anyone to abandon their loyalties. There has been no attempt to hide or gloss over the costs of revolution, amidst the real achievements to be celebrated.”

Dr Audrey Whitty, Director of the National Library of Ireland, said: “The period 1912-1923 shaped Ireland forever. As Ireland’s memory keeper, the National Library of Ireland has played a vitally important role in initiating dialogue and engagement about our past and present. The powerful impact our collection continues to make, and the mobilisation of our national collection in a collaborative and inclusive manner to explore all histories of 100 years ago, serves to legitimise a range of narratives and voices often excluded. This imperative supports and demonstrates the strategic aims of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media that culture unites us, provides refuge, as well as space for us to contemplate the future we wish for our country and its relations with the world.”

The full programme is available in Irish and English [here](#)