



Press release: Tuesday, August 31st, 2021

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## **French and Irish Governments welcome capital development plan for the Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris**

*Joint Government plans for the centenary of the publication, in Paris, of James Joyce's Ulysses, as well as new fellowships created in memory of architect/designer Eileen Gray and author/illustrator Tomi Ungerer, also unveiled during the visit to Ireland by President Emmanuel Macron.*

The French and Irish Governments have welcomed the ongoing work between Ireland's Office of Public Works (OPW) and the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris, on a capital development plan to renovate Ireland's cultural flagship in Europe.

In a Joint Plan of Action, signed during President Emmanuel Macron's visit to Ireland, a new series of dynamic cultural collaborations between the CCI and its French and Irish partners will also be supported by both Governments.

*"We welcome the CCI's ambitious Strategic Plan for the next five years, as well as its ongoing work with Ireland's Office of Public Works on a capital development plan to renovate and further enhance this unique Irish cultural space in France," the two Governments announced in their Joint Plan of Action.*

The Fondation Irlandaise, the governing body of the CCI, said that the redevelopment of the 18<sup>th</sup> century landmark, coupled with the expansion of its cultural programmes, will serve to strengthen and deepen the ties between our two countries.

"The CCI is much more than a home in France for Irish artists and students, it is the historic point of intersection where French, Irish and European cultures meet," said Alain Hespel, Chair of the Fondation Irlandaise, which is composed of nominees of the Irish and French Governments.

"The Centre Culturel Irlandais is a profound expression of Franco-Irish relations and we look forward to working with both Governments, the OPW, our funders and, most critically, our artists and audiences, to realise our vision."

Dearbhail McDonald, Chair of the CCI's Strategy Committee, said that since its foundation almost 400 years ago in the historic Latin Quarter of Paris, the former *Collège des Irlandais* has cultivated and deepened the ties that bind Ireland and France in the cultural, spiritual, intellectual and political spheres.



“This once-in-a-generation Capital Development Plan, the design of which is being led by the OPW, will serve to protect this venerable institution. We are grateful to our Governments for their support of our vision.”

The following initiatives involving the CCI and its partners were also confirmed as part of the Franco-Irish Joint Plan of Action:

- *The joint celebration, in 2022, of the centenary of the publication of Ulysses in Paris as a pivotal moment in Irish, French and European modernism, including the support of the Centre Culturel Irlandais’ Joyce Season.*
- *A new programme of Eileen Gray Fellowships celebrating the legendary architect and designer: one for architects and the other for makers of craft and design, administered respectively by the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland and Design & Crafts Council Ireland, in partnership with the Centre Culturel Irlandais and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs*
- *The creation of a new Tomi Ungerer Fellowship to promote multi-disciplinary artistic exchanges, working with the Centre Culturel Irlandais and partners in France and Ireland. This initiative will support two artists from any artform with a socially engaged practice, one based in France or of French nationality and the other based in Ireland or of Irish nationality.*

The CCI’s Director, Nora Hickey M’Sichili said:

*This capital development plan represents a very exciting phase for the CCI as we approach our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022, a year in which we will mark the centenary of the publication of Ulysses in Paris, with a programme that will see the CCI working with a wide range of Irish, French and European partners for a five-month Joyce season.*

The CCI’s cultural programme is supported by grants from Culture Ireland and the Department of Foreign Affairs, ensuring Irish artists can reach worldwide audiences.

Please see [www.centreculturelirlandais.com](http://www.centreculturelirlandais.com) for information on the Centre and a link to its five-year strategic plan.

Link to the Franco-Irish Joint Plan of Action:

<https://www.dfa.ie/media/dfa/publications/JPOA--24-August-2021-English-Version.pdf>