

## **Press Release**

*31<sup>st</sup> July 2020*

### **Heritage Council welcomes stimulus to support heritage sector**

The Heritage Council has welcomed this week's announcement by the Minister for State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, that an €8.5 million investment will be made available for heritage, as part of the Government's overall €5-billion stimulus package.

According to CEO of the Heritage Council, Virginia Teehan: "The decision to earmark a specific budget line to support the heritage sector is an acknowledgement of the role which heritage plays in our economy, in society and for us all personally. I have said it many times over the past months, heritage has been an escape; a source of learning and discovery; and an anchor for our wellbeing over the Covid-19 crisis, particularly during the lockdown days.

"During lockdown, the Heritage Council undertook a survey to establish the impacts of the crisis on the heritage sector. From visitor sites to heritage skills practitioners, the impacts were immediate and grave. The Heritage Council shared the results of this survey with our parent Department, and we are pleased that the €8.5 million package recognises the value that heritage plays.

"The Heritage Council is especially pleased that €900,000 has been identified for our administration to heritage businesses and organisations. Over the coming weeks, we will be designing a grants structure that is accessible and sustainable, and under which these funds will be disbursed. I will be remaining in close contact with Minister Noonan and his officials on the design of this scheme," added Ms Teehan.

Chairman of the Heritage Council, Michael Parsons added: "Heritage does not just happen. It needs to be cared for, nurtured and developed. That goes for all aspects of our cultural heritage: natural, built or intangible, such as language and traditional crafts. This funding stimulus will help heritage to continue to 'happen', and serve our population well as we enter into peak staycation period."

**ENDS.**

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