

LIVERPOOL IRISH FESTIVAL

Bringing Liverpool and Ireland closer
together using arts and culture.

FESTIVAL REVIEW 2019



Liverpool
City Council



Government of Ireland
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht



Arts Council
ENGLAND

TG4

Liverpool Irish Festival

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FESTIVAL REVIEW 2019

Produced December 2019

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Liverpool Irish Festival is a member of *COoL*; a diverse collective of key arts organisations in Liverpool, championing the arts; changing perceptions; creating possibilities.

Armagh Rhymer head,
taken at the Family Cella,
#LIF2019



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*Liverpool Comhaltas
perform
at the
Family Ceili,
#LIF2019*



OVERVIEW

Liverpool Irish Festival's 2019 theme "unique stories, creatively told", developed from previous themes, including "migration", "what does it mean to be Irish?" and "conviviality". It created significant story-sharing interactions and displays and a cohesive programme that promoted strong written and performance work. We continued embedding our three programme trails – *In:Visible Women*, Nook and Cranny spaces and Family Days- developing deeper connections with diverse communities; pursuing intriguing creative practices and opening gateways to Irish culture.

To develop this Festival Review we generated 359 survey responses (compared to 490 in 2018 and 342 in 2017). This lower return reflects fewer events and a smaller volunteer cohort. #LIF2019 audiences found #LIF2019 "fun", "entertaining" and containing "joy"; a slight shift from previous years when we were "fun", "interesting" and good" (2018); "fun", "interesting" and "informative" (2017 and 2016).

LIF reduced our venue number to 20 from 30 as part of scaling down the programme size, responding to feedback that there were too many options, it was difficult to plot a course through and that people struggled with 'festival fatigue' and programme clashes. We reduced the number of external events that we promoted (i.e., weekly seisiúns, Samhain celebrations, etc) that would happen without our direct influence. Thus, everything for #LIF2019 was theme-linked, with LIF taking the lead in programming, quality and delivery. The mix of venues could probably be described as more family friendly, with more work taking place in national cultural venues (i.e., *In:Visible Women* at *Tate Liverpool*) rather than a reliance on using upstairs rooms for theatre shows. This trade-off is not necessarily a benefit in audience or ticket buying terms.

In 2018 we stated a desire to improve public realm, high-profile work. *In:Visible Women* at *Tate Exchange*, securing the *Palm House* for an artistic residency (partnership between *Derry City and Strabane District Council* and *Art Arcadia*) and working with *Ireland's Call* and *Rebels and Friends* did this, with varying degrees of success. Whilst reputationally these gained LIF ground, we struggled with paying audiences. This may have been a consequence of the week difference in half term or the *Liverpool Philharmonic's* Christy Moore preview night; ventured

as a potential cause for poor ticket sales, as people were already spent on a high value ticket before the festival began. This is difficult to prove as we cannot account for what withdrawing support for the Christy Moore event might mean or whether the cross selling boosted attendance elsewhere.

A desire to improve our public realm legacy persists, so we are developing significant projects around the *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail*. This aim is for five projects over five years, which will help the festival's profile, city influence and inter/national reputational value and is already receiving attention from potential international partners, such as the *Strokestown National Famine Museum and Trail*.

#GlobalGreening in 2019 was our most successful St Patrick's project to date, with 21,728 visits (conservative) extrapolated from city data. *Liverpool City Council* recommissioned us in summer for *River Festival* and can report head-counted visits of 5,350. Whilst we marched for *Liverpool Pride* this year (under a collected Irish services banner), we are not claiming figures here. Vince Power withdrew the *Liverpool Feis* in 2019 (citing a failure of audience to buy tickets).

2019 brought significant struggles with community politics and funding. Time devoted to work on galvanising a community around a Wellington Rooms (former Liverpool Irish Centre) project and easing divisions in the Irish community was misspent. Ultimately, LIF mitigated its risks and took away considerable learning about working in toxic environments.

Failed *National Lottery Reaching Communities*, *Elevate* and *Arts Council England* funding bids have added pressure to a high capacity year, in which we lost bids amounting to a total of £143k. In contrast, a slight increase in Irish Government support, a new commission from them for 2020 and multi-year funding from *Liverpool City Council* has provided some security for core funds, showing that we are desired and respected.

Funding rejections, technical issues and a new distributor delayed #LIF2019 print, although online sales began in late summer and the majority of the programme was up and selling by the second week of September (two weeks earlier than usual).

In 2020 all fundraising will begin at the start of the calendar year, immediately after evaluation is complete, ensuring greater time for programme preparation and print delivery. 2019 reminded us how important distribution is and we will improve functions in 2020.

In 2019 we piloted selling space in an expanded newspaper, following our 2018 learning. We believe the newspaper to have been a significant success for the following reasons

- it paid for itself (income: £2,575 cost: £2,063)
- it extended storytelling via 15+ commissions, in-depth articles and event cross-sells
- continues legacy for the festival; only centre spread and cover header dates it
- it spoke to local and international audiences.

Whilst unhampered by a large-scale city event (i.e. The Giants) in 2019, Liverpool's October calendar has become increasingly competitive and though we collaborate where possible, it is worth noting

- *LEAP* takes place just before us
- *Black History Month* is growing and takes place throughout October
- In *Liverpool Biennial* years we compete with their closing month(s)
- *DaDaFest* takes place after us
- Halloween events are creeping in to the calendar and many commercial venues are running 'cultural activities' diluting event messaging across the city
- football has an effect
- we do not understand the implication of being on during or out of half-term.

#LIF2019 saw us push our social channels with discourse and event information. This worked best when the venue/artist aligned their promotion, with each benefitting from the other's audiences. This was notable with the likes of Maz O'Connor who worked hard on their social media and gained a lot of online interest, often translating in to ticket sales. Support was noticeably poor from some large-scale theatres and big cultural organisations, i.e., *Rebels and Friends* at the *Liverpool Playhouse* affecting sales.

Gaining a strong volunteer team get harder each year. Those we have are exceedingly strong, but with few of them, they tend to commit to high volume shifts over 10 days. Those who do not tend to be

weaker feedback gatherers and less engaged, tending to prioritise other things. 2019's key cohort consisted of five individuals to whom we are indebted for their commitment, data collecting skill and tenacity. A *Liverpool City Stars* meeting in Jan/Feb 2020 will consider *LIF* co-opting their team.

We worked with 143 artists, creatives and contributors; showing work from many more (i.e., *Liverpool Comhaltas* and *Melody Makers*). We developed 68 exhibition days (88 in 2018; 93.3 in 2017; 81 in 2016) and developed 21 commissions; on a turnover of £78,228 (1 Jan-26 Nov 2019).

Peer feedback shows our reputation continues to rise for our curated programme, work with specific community groups, quality of output, partnership and contribution to cultural excellence (see Testimonials).

We believe we are unique in our field and remain the only arts and culture led Irish festival in the world. Our specificity remains our USP. Liverpool's unique connection to Irish communities and our determination to address Irishness, diasporic peoples and Irish culture as a spectrum of ideas and abilities draws people in sharing creative culture beyond the Liverpool, Liverpool Irish and Irish of the city. The location harnesses the stories, but the generosity of sharing it takes it far beyond the city perimeters.

As stated last year, our focus on specific stories rather than broad Irish culture is dynamic and relevant, engaging individuals in the artistry of Irish culture, using both popular and niche work. These interactions and meetings between makers and consumers, co-creators and story-sharers, means people experience the festival in deeply enriching ways. Thus, we believe we have something exportable and meaningful, which can develop exchanges that truly 'bring Liverpool and Ireland closer together using arts and culture'.

We'd like to thank our artists, partners and sponsors; collaborators, volunteers and organisations; venues, friends and every visitor and audience member for helping to make #LIF2019 the success we believe it to be. Thank you and join us next year -15-25 Oct 2020- for #LIF2020, celebrating "exchange".

Emma Smith – Director
Liverpool Irish Festival



2019 HEADLINE ACHIEVEMENTS

- **78,640** visits in four years! *#LIF2019* attracted 36,260 visits to 48 events+4 exhibits, up from *#LIF2018* (24,232 visits to 75 events +4 exhibits). *#LIF2019* showcased 143 artists, speakers and other creatives, compared to 197 in 2018. In 2017 we received 9,336 visitors (representing 6% growth) to 69 events+3 exhibits. 2016 saw 8,812 visitors to 53 events+4 exhibits, with 107 creatives.
- *#LIF2019* had a press reach of 23m
- **94% quality rating.** 94% of visitors rated *#LIF2019* as 4 or 5 out of 5. The overall festival rating remained stable at 4.6
- **95% of visitors are quite or very likely to recommend LIF**
- **75% local residential postcode attendances.** *#LIF2018* received visits from 32:40 Liverpool postcodes (+inter/national visits). Three years of records show we have had visits from over 30 of Liverpool's 40 residential postcodes
- **Partners are key.** We worked with 61 partners for *#LIF2019*, compared to 59 partners in 2018; up from 55 in 2017 and 30 in 2016, including venues, sponsors and funders.

FUNDING NEWS

In 2019, the *Liverpool Irish Festival* received funding from

- *Arts Council England* (£15k, static)
- the Irish Government *Emigrant Support Programme* (£11.5k up £0.5k on 2018)
- *Liverpool City Council's Culture and Arts Investment Programme (CAIP)*, £19k, static but given on a 5% decreasing scale year-on-year for a further 3 years)
- *Tourism Ireland* (£2.5k, static)
- *TG4* (£2.2k, static, but reporting as £0.3k lower because we did not account for EUR/GBP transfer in previous year)
- a joint application to *ACE* with *COoL*, drew us a further £0.8k
- creating public funding total of £51k.

We earned £51k in public finance in 2019 compared to £57k in 2018 and £63.5 in 2017. This decrease in public funding is not through a lack of effort. We applied for £53k in *Arts Council England* project funding and a further £80k (£40k per year for 2 years) from *Elevate*, another *Arts Council* fund to develop diversity programme and capacity. Both of these failed, though we believe we understand a lot more about this process now and ways in which we have to speak with *Arts Council*

Funding continued

- We raised £6,000 in commissioning money from City Council for our *River Festival* work and £2,575 in print space sales, against our newspaper
- We succeeded with multiple-year funding from *Liverpool City Council* under the *Cultural and Arts Investment Programme* and have improved *Emigrant Support Programme* funds, which has not yet moved to multi-year. The *Irish Embassy* have commissioned *LIF* to produce a contribution to the St Brigid's Day national programme, but this money will count towards 2020 programme and so is not registered here
- We continue to develop healthy and reciprocal relationships with other funders, including *TG4* (via programme) and *Tourism Ireland* (via *#GlobalGreening* and our *Family Day*)
- A comprehensive funding review forms part of the revision of *LIF's Business Plan* (available on request).

DIRECTOR STATISTICS

The Director participated, lead or engaged in 255 individual meetings (276 in 2018; 188 in 2017) and...

- sent 5993 emails (22 per day); down from 6,427 emails in 2018 (25 per day)
- delivered monthly Board reports; strategic documents; brand guidance; website updates; newsletters and social media updates; website content and festival collateral including: 1 x save the date card, 1 x 28 page brochure (including 1 essay), 1 x 36 page newspaper (including advertisements and 17 essays); 1 x new survey/feedback forms; 4 x posters; 1 x16 page In:Visible Women brochure; 2 x activity sheets + 2 x interpretation panels
- delivered 48 events/52 sessions plus 4 exhibits, generating 68 exhibition days (75 events/80 sessions, 4 exhibits and 88.8 exhibition days in 2018).

CULTIVATING AND INSPIRING AUDIENCES

Recommendation and quality ratings

Liverpool Irish Festival scores incredibly positively with audiences. We use a basic 1-5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent scoring system to ask about people's festival experience and the chance that they would recommend us. We translate that system as follows:

Experience	Poor	>	>	>	Excellent
Star count	1	2	3	4	5
Recommendation likelihood	Very unlikely/wouldn't	Quite unlikely	Might/ might not	Quite likely	Very likely/will

We believe that '4' and '5' mean good and excellent respectively.

Attendance/recommendation	2016 %	2017 %	2018 %	2019 %
Attended before?	49.67	56.35	49	42.77
Will attend again?	93.56	95.3	98.9	97.55
Recommend the festival? 4*+	96.29	96.6	96.2	95.11
Quality? 4*+	94	96.6	95.13	93.96

Re-attendance

Each year we see 40%+ people saying they have been to a *LIF* event before and well over 90% (sometimes very nearly 99%) stating they would attend another event as part of *Liverpool Irish Festival*

in future. We hit a high of 98.9% in 2018, which has lowered a little in 2019 to 97.55%. Where we see people answering "no" to this question it is usually from overseas visitors who clearly see the opportunity as limited.

Our recommendation rates and rate for quality are staggeringly high, reaching over 95% annually (sustained in 2019). Slight variations can come from the mix in venues, weather or external influences, but with such minimal variation we are confident that audience attending the Festival are

- experiencing a welcoming and good quality event
- which was in line with or above their expectations
- they want to come back
- making and hearing positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

This is a significant achievement. Whilst we may never get above this*, to remain in this score zone (within a couple of percent each year) is and would be sensational.

* User error is an area where overall figures can be let down. It is clear –occasionally- that people who have had a brilliant time (recognised in their other comments) have not understood the score line and have indicated '1'. Whilst it is possible this happens at the other scale end, where people having a terrible time indicate '5', it is unlikely someone having trouble would complete feedback. Thus, we may benefit from general feedback bias, based on happy people wanting to offer support, but this is difficult to control or account for. When inputting data we are as binary as possible, processing what we find. We let the percentages do the rest, interpreting them as ably as we are capable.

In 2019 71% gave the Festival a '5' for quality.

Gradam Ceoil
TG4
with host
Jo Pue
Richards



ANNUAL ENGAGEMENT AND MONITORING

OUT-OF-FESTIVAL EVENTS AND ANNUAL GROWTH

Atop the festival, *Liverpool Irish Festival* also makes contributions to or runs events across the cultural calendar, including

- *#GlobalGreening* (formerly *#GreeningTheCity*) for St Patrick's Day
- *Derry City and Strabane District Council's* Young People's Festival: *Rewire*
- *Liverpool's River Festival*
- *Liverpool Pride* march
- *Quirky Cabaret: Celtic Crossings* festival fundraiser.

These events and collaborations signposted the festival and build audience engagements, adding 27,299 participations to our annual total.

These events are hugely important in reaching new audiences, whilst building reputation for actively supporting other creative forms, partnership, communities and knowledge sectors. They demonstrate we are multi-disciplined, committed collaborators, with an aim to deepen our relations with partners; activating new creative opportunities that allow us to work with more artists and generate new content for our online platforms and physical audiences. It means we have year round representation rather than once a year only and demonstrates our resonance with various groups, organisations and missions.

These events do not solely build audience they split risk. Bad weather, transport strikes, significant city or sporting events can significantly dent audience and ticket figures. Relying on one opportunity in the calendar year leaves us vulnerable to the impact of such issues. Spreading activity –as well as organising the Festival- allows us to find new audiences, provide opportunity and increase engagement. Learning this in previous years means a significant increase in active audiences across the years.

Total audiences for the year were 17.7% up on planned activities and proposed numbers (4% up last year), whilst Festival figures were 46% above planned predictions (19% up in 2018). We put this down to conservative estimates and the high numbers of engagements at *Tate Liverpool* and *Museum of Liverpool*.

High yielding events continue to be the Family Day, footfall for *In:Visible Women*, *#GlobalGreening* and *River Festival*. In 2018 we saw a staggering 160% rise in visitor figures due to this event spread and stated this could not be repeated again. However, steady growth is pleasing and in 2019 we can see an increase of 50%, which we see as remarkably positive.

#GlobalGreening is the most significant addition to the programme, yielding 21,728 visits. This is an extremely conservative figure based on a 2% population extrapolation multiplied by the number of locations taking part. By maintaining our connection with *Tourism Ireland*, supporting these venues in their endeavour and connecting them with a global programme, we believe such figures are sustainable year-on-year and truly help to celebrate and denote Irish influence and impact on the city.

Sell out events included: *TG4 Gradam Ceoil* (£17/£15 conc x 197), *Rory O'Hanlon* (free x 50), *Celtic Animation Film Festival* £7.70/£5.70 x 50, inc. comps) and *The Spirit of the Reels* (free to an invited audience). Theatre proved to be the hardest sell in 2019 and some believe this may be because of the high value ticket price of the 'festival preview', organised and held by *Liverpool Philharmonic*, of Christy Moore (£37.50-£48.50 + 8% booking fees), which also sold out. Theatre sales in Liverpool are under a city consultation, as sales appear to be a citywide issue.

Having grown *#LIF2018* to feature almost 80 events, we chose to reduce the number of events in response to feedback that the programme created too many clashes and was more than some could digest.



However, multiple artists working within single events mean there two-thirds the creative participants and more partners. Full-time work across the year aids this, by creating better relationships and providing opportunity for fundraising, but -as outlined above- suffering three major rejections ate time and resources and delivered little. These rejections pushed back the programme confirmation; print was delayed, which - teamed with distribution issues- meant that this year's brochure print landed later than hoped. All online sales were up on time and this clearly benefitted the sales.

That we can draw 9,158 people in October (vs 8,289 and 5,356 in 2018 and 2017, respectively) is an achievement of which we can be proud. That we underpin the success of the festival with activities across the year builds on previous learning and crystallises the importance of partnership work and collaboration.

PARTICIPANTS AND AUDIENCES

Participants and visitors*	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Events	Exhibits	Events	Exhibits	Events	Exhibits	Events	Exhibits
Expected	3608	975	6495	1030	19625	760	28790	2180
Achieved	5569	3243	7252	1253	23309	923	32841	3419.4
Visitor total		8812		8505		24232		36260
% (actual vs expected)		192.28		113.02		118.87		117.08

* Figures derived from audience counters, ticket counts or extrapolations from automated door counts.

Audience attendances	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	No.	Aud.	No.	Aud.	No.	Aud.	No.	Aud.
W, P, E, O or X?								
Workshops (W)	5	1046	17	436	13	566	17	301
Performance (P)	14	2124	31	5088	34	2829	12	863
Event (E)	27	2052	16	2459	18	1675	12	4523
Other (O)	7	347	1	100	10	18239	7	27154
Exhibitions (X)	4	3243	3	1253	4	923	4	3419.4
Total	57	8812	68	9336	79	24232	52	36260

Arts Council England defines audience engagement in these categories to help determine depth of engagement versus passive exposure. *LIP*'s workshops and 'other' (including walking tours, etc) demonstrate a high rate of committed engagement as opposed to passive engagement, such gallery counts where it is difficult to understand someone's understanding/engagement from their presence. The 2018 spike is worth noting, which includes 'active' audiences for the *Three Festival Tall ships Regatta/River Festival* and 'passive' audiences for *#GreeningTheCity/ #GlobalGreening*.

LIVE PROGRAMME BUILD

W, P, E, O or X?	2016				2017				2018				2019			
	No of each	% of live programme	Visitors/ participants	% total audience	No of each	% of live programme	Visitors/ participants	% total audience	No of each	% of live programme	Visitors/ participants	% total audience	No of each	% of live programme	Visitors/ participants	% total audience
Workshops (céilí, classes, family day, lecture)	5	9	1046	19	17	26	436	5	13	17	566	2	17	35	301	1
Performances (music, theatre, etc)	14	26	2124	38	31	48	5088	63	34	45	2829	12	12	25	863	3
Events (talks, music seisiúns)	27	51	2052	37	16	25	2459	30	18	24	1675	7	12	25	4523	14
Other (River Festival, #GlobalGreening, tours)	7	13	347	6	1	2	100	1	10	13	18239	78	7	15	27154	83
Total	53	100	5569	100	65	100	8083	100	75	100	23309	100	48	100	32841	100

NB The table above considers live programme only. Exhibition audience are not included in this model.

EXHIBITION FIGURES

During #LIF2019 we held four independent exhibitions:

- Rory Shearer: *In the Window* at *Bluecoat Display Centre*
- Casey Orr's *Saturday Girl* as part of *Tate Exchange**
- *Materials Library* at the *Everyman Theatre Street Café and Bistro Bar*
- *Watch Me Grow: A trip here, a trip there* at *Sefton Park Palm House* (art residency)

*Although not billed strictly as an exhibition (due to *Tate Exchange* policy), Casey Orr's *Saturday Girl* at *Tate Liverpool* as part of *In:Visible Women* was a set of artworks, placed in a gallery for 2 weeks, with wall mounted work, an art book and presentation screens. 13,283 people entered the doors directly opposite this space and Tate have provided this figure as the count for our residency. However, in line with our *Bluecoat Display Centre* figure, we are taking a conservative estimate of 15%, totalling 1,992 visits in the belief that this is not simply a passive audience, but one that engaged with our work.

Total exhibition attendees in 2019 are 3,419 compared to 923 in 2018 (growing audience by over 270%) and 1200 in 2017. Exhibition figures are an extrapolation of building figures and/or official counts. We have used a 15% rate for *Bluecoat Display Centre*, based on the necessity to pass the window display to access the till. However, this does not account for the street rate and those who look in to the display from outside, which is a feature of this form of display, hence the title 'In the Window'. Thus, we believe 15% of shop visits is a conservative estimate for those stopping to enjoy the textures, form and glazing of Rory's ergonomic forms. We took a 50% visitor rate for the *Palm House*, due to the circuitous route most people make and observations that most people stopped to look at some of the work if not the whole exhibition.

TICKET PRICING AND AVERAGES

Average ticket price*	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total number of events	53	69	75	48
Number of paid events	27	34	43	19
% of events programme	50.9	49.3	57.3	39.6
Number of free events	26	35	32	29
% of events programme	49.1	50.7	42.7	60.4
Average ticket price (F/C median totals, divided by number paid events)	£ 16.72	£ 7.35	£ 8.30	£ 9.96
No. of tickets issued at paid events (including comps)	2714	1550	3784	*1158
Income if average ticket price was redeemed (gross income indicator, not accounting figure)	£45,378.08	£11,392.50	£31,407.20	£14,207.90
Average across all events (including free events)	£ 3.17	£ 9.39	£ 9.04	£ 4.82

* Based on the average ticket price, this being the median value between full and concession price, multiplied by the number of purchases made. Does not account for complimentary tickets or free events.

Of #LIF2019's 48 events (52 sessions; not including exhibits), 19 were run as paid events, with 29 free. The estimated potential income for every ticket assigned to an actual audience member, based on average prices, amounts to £14,207.90 across the portfolio. This is a gross income indicator, not an accounting figure.

Box office splits this year were varied; ranging from 0-77.5%. The heaviest risk taken was with *Rebels and Friends* and this did not pay off fiscally, though artistically there was every reason to believe it would be a success. We saw better returns from *Visible Women* and the *TG4 Gradam Ceoil* nights.

We worked with *Ticket Quarter* once again this year, this time for an agreed fixed fee of £1,000 to secure as much of our ticketing as possible, allegedly providing access to over 300k+ ticket buyers through their mailing mechanisms. We asked for promotional support in this area, but have no evidence that mailings were undertaken. Ongoing discussions about feasibility of use, difficulty in reporting and day-to-day benefits continue.



Visible Women

Rebels and Friends is a reminder that we need to improve sales, get print out early and start trailing shows from which we need to make a profit early. The earlier the better to allow for promotion, repositioning and approaching new/alternate markets, where appropriate.

Looking at the year on year figures, you can see that ticket buying is dropping; a note consistent with peer feedback. With so much free content in the city, many people occupy their time and energy here rather than in paid events. We must get activities such as these listed with a couple of paydays ahead to help people spread the cost. It is important for us to remember that our free events are an important part of our public function and do much to help us engage deeply with communities and audiences, fulfilling stakeholder/funder missions and maintaining our egalitarianism, charity status and barrierless access.

AVERAGE AGE

Age – audience		2016		2017		2018		2019	
Category	Av	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Under 16	8	7	1.20	11	3.05	Did not collect data		5	1.57
16-19	17.5	10	1.72	25	6.93			20	6.29
20-24	22	46	7.92	95	26.32			30	9.43
25-44	34.5	119	20.48	52	14.40			70	22.01
45-54	49.5	86	14.80	75	20.78			51	16.04
55-64	59.5	172	29.60	90	24.93			44	13.84
65+ (Life expectancy 81*)	73	139	23.92	5	1.39			54	16.98
Prefer not to say/PNTS/Left blank	36.5	2	0.34	8	2.22			44	13.84
Completions		581	100	361	100	0	0	318	100
% answering question		95.87		100.00		-		88.58	
Total form fillers		606		361				359	
Average age of visitor		51.7		39.2		-		44.5	

* The Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries and Risk Factors Study, 2013 (GBD 2013)

Significant changes to data regulations in 2018 and an overhaul of our survey produced distinct advantages in some areas and not in others. Erroneously, age was erased from the survey thus, there is no age data for 2018. What the average shows us is that we have moved the average visitor age, reflecting attempts to attract younger people to our work. In 2019 this rises slightly, but we are beginning to appreciate how difficult it is to collect data from younger people.

Having measured the average age tallied from the specific ages provided, rather than the average representation in the categories (as above) our average age rises just slightly to 45. Anecdotally, we have realised this year that if we measured equal representation from across the age categories presented here (i.e., 14.29% in each category), the average age of a visitor would be 37.7. This means we fall on the older, rather than younger, side of an 'average' audience.

THE CREATIVE CASE

The Creative Case is an important initiative driven by *Arts Council England* to redress diversity by creating deeper inclusion and fewer barriers in ACE funded work. ACE state *The Creative Case* is not 'equal opportunities repackaged', but must fundamentally change how diversity is considered, embedding diversity within organisational philosophy, conduct and content.

With a responsibility to alter monitoring to comply with GDPR, and funder needs to account for disability and diversity, there is much to do for a small organisation. It is not always possible to get artists, audiences and performers to complete such rigorous checks. However, we must work harder to build this in to future contracts and service level agreements, in spite of limited capacity and resources. Critically, if awarded *National Portfolio Organisation* status, we will have to demonstrate models that support this target.

Inclusion goes beyond wheelchair access. It extends to believing our audiences are safe from judgement and supported whilst they engage in our activities. In 2019 we developed an inclusion statement and have used this, where we felt it was necessary, to underpin our expectations so that, were anything to fall short of this, we had leverage to demand change or provide us with an evidence base for not returning.

The Creative Case is not solely about audiences, but performers, artists, Boards and staff/contractors. Access to aspiration, working in areas of deprivation (and wealth) and class considerations are important factors built through our work. Ideally, these concepts dovetail with existing strategies rather than creating mission drift, ostensibly because –as an organisation- we are at the forefront of considering intersectionality and all that this must address. That said, to keep this in check will be important. *LIF*'s work with single and dual-heritage groups as well as specific audiences and key city partners, such as *Writing on the Wall*, *Pagoda Arts* and *Liverpool Pride* will benefit this.

LIF must employ *The Creative Case* to fairly represent its needs and specificity. 2019 proved we must ensure that when we say 'Irish', it is not solely interpreted as 'white'. *LIF* must continue to stress that 'Irish' is a protected characteristic within the Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) framework and why, as there continues to be considerable blindness towards its status as 'othering' (more here: <http://www.otheringandbelonging.org/the-problem-of-othering/>).

Why is Irishness othering? Let's be clear – it shouldn't be. Violence towards, isolation of and bullying happens against Irish people, to subjugate and make them 'other'. This is a form of racism.

In the case of the Irish in Britain, specifically England, people are isolated for many reasons. Over centuries individuals and groups have left the island of Ireland with motives ranging from safety to free economics. Famine, political hardship, lack of acceptance for faith, sexuality, actions against God/society, abuse and combinations of the above mean it often vulnerable people that travel. Host cities and those therein can view economic migrancy as threatening, leading to isolation and difficulty. Arriving in large groups has meant Irish migrants have become the 'whipping population' for other (previously) vulnerable groups who pass on the position of the bullied to the bullies as a way of ending their own isolation ('No blacks, no dogs, no Irish'). Common issues that Irish people can -and do- face, include common tropes and assumptions that they are

- poor and hungry (famine; unable to earn at home; determined to have a working class/rural accent by those who know no better)
- uneducated, illiterate and slow minded and/or 'great craic'; alcoholics and drug users ('Paddy and Mick go into a bar...')
- white
- Catholic/Protestant/Christian
- terrorists (IRA or other)
- criminals (transportation)
- violent
- abusers or abused.

White-on-white racism (not that all Irish people are white) often goes unchecked and so English-on-Irish (or Irish-on-English though rarely 'British-on-Irish') has continued hiding in plain sight. This kind of racism has not received the rejection and review that other 'white racism' has rightly received, such as that of white-on-Black or white-on-Asian racism, returning us the to 'No blacks, no dogs, no Irish' example.

Why do these things matter? Because prejudgement is not self-determined. It limits everyone's choices and access in the long-term and predetermines individual success or ability in spite of best efforts, being neither merit nor potential based and considers nothing of a person's lived-experience, skills, tolerances or attributes.

Where must we consider *The Creative Case*? *The Creative Case* is a matter of interest in all we do – it will be taken in to account when selecting contractors, Board members, artists and audiences. As a bare minimum, it must track national averages and reflect our links with Ireland and Britain. It would be peculiar for *LIF* to attract 50% Black audiences, when Liverpool's Black population is 2.8 % (2011 census) and Ireland's is 1.4%, but by the very nature of our work, we should attract individuals from across the diversity spectrum. To have a high white-Irish count reflects *LIF*'s representation of -and mission to celebrate- Irish arts and culture; if we miss the groups most closely aligned with this work we must to consider this.

Monitoring *The Creative Case* in our artists, performers and creatives is notoriously difficult. In this year's review, we have given our best estimates based on conversations, interviews and knowledge of artists, but screening all performers is not possible via their directors, choreographers, etc. as often this is not undertaken there (i.e., dance schools with children, volunteer orchestras, workshop participant groups, etc).



NOTES ON DATA COLLECTION AND ENTRY AND ISSUES WITH ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY DATA

Future considerations include technology and how it aides or alienates audience cohorts. We know from speaking with people and the surveys over the years that many still prefer the printed brochure to anything online. The highest volume calls received in 2019 was to do with where brochures were located or how to navigate the website in their absence.

Unsuccessful digital surveys in previous years deprioritised use, but we acknowledge that this limits our data collection to short paper surveys, completed in snatched moments at the end of events. Whilst useful, this can be difficult to interpret, limited and time consuming. A way to improve this would be to take control of all ticketing, but the use of multiple venues (and systems) means this is not possible for us, presently.

Year-on-year (YOY) figures for ethnicity and nationality have raised issues for monitoring. In 2017, feedback forms asked people to specify 'Ethnicity and nationality' in a freeform manner, resulting in wide variations and incompletions, such as "white", "black", "Scouse", "UK" – all part answers. In 2018 we asked for 'Ethnicity' and asked people to provide their 'City and country of birth' (in a bid to determine nationality in the office), leading to some inconsistency with YOY monitoring. To account for that change, we coded answers to create the count, thus "white" would be recorded to 'White – any other backgrounds', while "British white" was coded as 'White – British' to standardise responses. In 2019, we tried this approach again, altering the questions to: 'Your city and country of birth (nationality)' and 'Your ethnicity/ethnicities'. This has led to some interesting findings (presented in table form below: 'Place of birth vs resident now'), but also led to us missing 'Post code' from the form, an error to be corrected for all future surveys.

When asked about 'ethnicity', many write "British" rather than "White British" or "Asian British", along with many other freeform answers such as "Scouse", "European" and "why does it matter?". Such answers were input as fairly as possible, using the criteria used for the last three years and shown in the table.

Where hyphens were entered we have attributed them to 'Prefer not to say'. Where an aspect of ethnicity has been offered, we have tried to fairly attribute this, too, i.e., "Scouse" may not mean 'white', but should mean they were significantly born or primarily raised in Britain and therefore their entry is attributed as 'Unknown ethnicity – British'.

An interesting point to note is that between #LIF2017 and #LIF2018 British and Irish ethnicity decreased by 11% showing we have broadened our audience, though much of this may be made up with 'White – any other backgrounds'.

'White British', 'White Irish', 'Anglo-Irish', 'British', 'Irish' and 'white other' audiences generate just over 66% of our audience, compared with 71% (2018) and 83% in 2016. We have seen fluctuations in our international audience and with freedom of choice, more people identifying as 'Anglo-Irish' rather than one or the other, suggesting that 2016's figures only helped to tell part of the story by defining 'British' and 'Irish'. Increased numbers ignore the question entirely (22%) and others do not fully appreciate the question, leaving answers such as 'white', which makes it difficult to ascribe ethnicity, hence the use of 'white other'. We have attributed these as fairly as we can, but within the realm of GDPR this is difficult.

'Anglo-Irish' is a heavily politicised term and can infer class system issues. Whilst mindful of this, we can do little about entries while providing freeform questions. To incorporate a full selection structure would overcomplicate the survey and alienate people not wholly reflected by one category. As identity politics rise and generations merge, flexibility in terms will need consideration (think "black Irish"/Black and Irish, which are not the same).

We understand from 2019 funder feedback that our high-percentage Irish 'white artist and audience' is not instantly understood within the BAME framework. Although we addressed this as flawed given our understanding of white-on-white racism, and Irishness as othering, it has been a sobering, hard-fought and ugly piece of learning. It has meant much wasted work on applications that have failed - not because they are in themselves faulty or worthless- but because the agencies involved do not consider the term 'Irish' on a par with other ethnic labels. That we must be more "emphatic" on this is a learning point for LIF to overcome this.

In part, it instructed our essay on Brexit for #LIF2019. It underpinned conversations held with audiences at the dual-heritage day, planned before this learning. We must place LIF in the centre of cultural dialogue that supports all groups in getting their specificity recognised effectively within the BAME framework. Supporting positive dialogue related to gender, sexuality and intersectional concerns will be key.

PLACE OF BIRTH VS RESIDENT NOW

Your city and country of birth			2019		
Location	Nº	%	Location	Nº	%
Local	160	44.57	Liverpool	114	31.75
National	124	34.54	LCR*	26	7.24
International	64	17.83	Manchester	13	3.62
Not known	11	3.06	ROI	37	10.31
	359	100	NI	12	3.34

* LCR = Liverpool City Region

City and country of residence now					
Location	Nº	%	Location	Nº	%
Local	252	70.19	Liverpool	184	51.3
National	69	19.22	LCR*	40	11.1
International	9	2.51	Manchester	12	3.3
Not known	29	8.08	ROI	8	2.2
	359	100	NI	8	2.2

In 2018 and 2019 (table, left) audiences were asked where they were born and where they reside now, to consider where people move to Liverpool from and if we attract audiences from areas of Ireland. 465 of 490 in 2018 answered, giving us the following: Of the 15 people who gave an Irish residence in 2018, three lived in Co. Clare; three in Dublin (despite eight being born there). Eight Liverpool residents had been born in Northern Ireland (three in Belfast) and 32 in the Republic (three from Cavan, four from Cork and 12 from Dublin). Of seven Northern Irish residents, four came from Derry and Strabane. 266 identified as living in Liverpool (not Merseyside), though 109 reported they were born in the city; with a further 10 from London; 8 from Northern Ireland and 35 from ROI.

ETHNICITY DATA - AUDIENCE	2016 responses		2017 responses		2018 responses		2019 responses	
		%		%		%		%
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.71
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3	0.55	0	0.00	11	2.86	0	0.00
Asian or Asian British - or other Asian background, not otherwise listed here	1	0.18	6	1.66	1	0.26	2	0.71
Black or Black British - African	2	0.37	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.71
Black or Black British - Caribbean	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Black or Black British - other	0	0.00	2	0.55	1	0.26	2	0.71
Chinese	4	0.74	0	0.00	1	0.26	1	0.36
Mixed - white and Asian	2	0.37	1	0.28	0	0.00	1	0.36
Mixed - white and Black African	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.26	2	0.71
Mixed - any other mixed backgrounds	5	0.92	0	0.00	3	0.78	4	1.42
White - British	364	67.28	70	19.34	103	26.75	76	27.05
White - Irish*	137	25.32	26	7.18	15	3.90	13	4.63
White - Anglo-Irish*	0	0.00	1	0.28	1	0.26	5	1.78
White - any other white backgrounds	5	0.92	9	2.49	75	19.48	50	17.79
Unknown ethnicity - Irish*	0	0.00	74	20.44	72	18.70	37	13.17
Unknown ethnicity - British	0	0.00	104	28.73	77	20.00	51	18.15
Unknown ethnicity - Anglo-Irish*	0	0.00	15	4.14	3	0.78	6	2.14
International mixed ethnicities	0	0.00	16	4.42	2	0.52	1	0.36
I would prefer not to say	0	0.00	24	6.63	8	2.08	5	1.78
Other	18	3.33	0	0.00	11	2.86	21	7.47
Not known/did not answer	0	0.00	14	3.87	0	0.00	78	27.76
Completions	541	100	362	100	385	100	281	127.76
Total feedback forms collected	609		362		490		359	
% answering question	88.83		97.13		78.57		79.06	
*All Irish referencing groups	137	25.32	116	32.04	91	23.64	61	21.71
*All Irish referencing groups %	25.32		32.04		23.64		21.71	
Combined 'White British', 'White Irish', 'Anglo-Irish', 'British', 'Irish' and 'white other'	506	83.09	299	82.60	346	70.61	238	66.30
Other mixed ethnicities	17	19.14	25	25.74	20	25.45	38	10.58

ETHNICITY DATA - ARTISTS		2016 responses		2017 responses		2018 responses		2019 responses	
			%		%		%		%
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Asian or Asian British - Indian		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Asian or Asian British - or other Asian background, not otherwise listed here		0	0.00	1	0.79	1	0.51	1	0.70
Black or Black British - African		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Black or Black British - Caribbean		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Black or Black British - other		0	0.00	0	0.00	4	2.04	1	0.70
Chinese		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	1.40
Mixed - white and Asian		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Mixed - white and Black African		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Mixed - any other mixed backgrounds		1	0.76	1	0.79	1	0.51	0	0.00
White - British		49	37.12	55	43.31	73	37.24	46	32.17
White - Irish*		79	59.85	63	49.61	108	55.10	64	44.76
White - Anglo-Irish*		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	17	11.89
White - any other white backgrounds		3	2.27	7	5.51	3	1.53	0	0.00
Unknown ethnicity - Irish*		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Unknown ethnicity - British		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Unknown ethnicity - Anglo-Irish*		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
International mixed ethnicities		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	7	4.90
I would prefer not to say		0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Other		0	0.00	0	0.00	4	2.04	0	0.00
Not known/did not answer		0	0.00	0	0.00	2	1.02	5	3.50
Completions		132	100	127	100	196	100	143	100
Total feedback forms collected		132		127		196		143	
% answering question		100.00		100.00		100.00		100.00	
*All Irish referencing groups		79	59.85	63	49.61	108	55.10	81	56.64
*All Irish referencing groups %		59.85		49.61		55.10		56.64	
Combined 'White British', 'White Irish', 'Anglo-Irish', 'British', 'Irish' and 'white other'		131	99.24	125	98.43	184	93.88	127	88.81
Other mixed ethnicities		1	1.00	2	2.00	6	6.00	11	7.69

In both tables, it is clear we work with a majority white group (89% of artists; 66% of audiences). In the context of this group being 57% (artist)/17% (audience) Irish, and the makeup of diversity on the island of Ireland and in Liverpool, this is not surprising, but does account for a high proportion of BAME audiences. It is important to draw attention to this under *The Creative Case* as we have found some can overlook Irish nationality/Irishness as a protected characteristic within the BAME framework. These groups are different to 'white British artists and audiences' in Liverpool, showing we are talking to and working with people in marginalised groups.

Working with or attracting white people is not done at the isolation and rejection of other marginalised groups, but references Ireland's and its diaspora's cultural cohesion. Over 7% of our artists and 10% of our audiences come from mixed ethnicity backgrounds and our dual-heritage work demonstrates an intention to work with more and other ethnicities and groups. The start of work around the Liverpool Irish Famine will open up discussion with a number of groups, internationally, too and will give us access to diaspora audiences.

Dancing at the launch
of *The Spirit of the Reels*,
#LIF2019

GENDER: AUDIENCES AND ARTISTS

As identified in 2017, we continue to try harder –in view of an increasingly intersectional world- to understand the differences and diversity within gender and sexuality groups, using our paper feedback. 'Prefer not to say's' feature, but it is clear that using freeform answers allows us to learn about our audience. Despite the development of the gender and sexuality language, many confuse gender and sexuality and for some, neither is a not a topic for discussion or open reference. The politicisation of these terms has made analysis more difficult, but there is much to learn.

Our audience figures suggest we continue to increase female engagement, which could be accounted for by our *In:Visible Women* programme, but may equally indicate a feedback bias. Alternatively, it may mean that as intersectionality increases more men are choosing to reconsider their gender stance. The tables below shows our findings for audiences and artists.

AUDIENCE	2016 responses	%	2017 responses	%	2018 responses	%	2019 responses	%
(Cis) female	316	52.15	201	55.2	264	62.9	199	55.43
(Cis) male	259	42.74	154	42.3	145	34.5	114	31.75
Trans-female	1	0.17	0	0	1	0.24	0	0.00
Trans-male	0	0.00	0	0	1	0.24	0	0.00
Prefer not to say/Unknown	30	4.95	3	0.82	4	0.95	41	11.42
Illegible	0	0.00	3	0.82	5	1.19	0	0.00
Other (inc "both" and "no such thing")	0	0.00	3	0.82	0	0	0	0.00
Non-binary description given	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	5	1.39
Completions	606	100	364	100	420	100	359	100

ARTISTS	2016 responses	%	2017 responses	%	2018 responses	%	2019 responses	%
(Cis) female	50	37.88	61	48.031	50	37.9	59	41.26
(Cis) male	82	62.12	66	51.969	82	62.1	83	58.04
Trans-female	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Trans-male	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Prefer not to say	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	1	0.70
Illegible	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Other (inc "both" and "no such thing")	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Non-binary description given	0	0.00	0	100	0	100	0	0.00
Completions	132	100	127	100	132	100	143	100

Slight increases in non-cisgendered/non-binary audiences are minimal and therefore difficult to learn from. It is also difficult to track against national statistics as nothing has come through in census about this, yet. The 2021 census will help to address this.

In 2018 and 2019, an individual raised their concern about the survey question titled 'Gender', disputing that what we meant was 'biological' and therefore should actually be 'Sex'. The Festival rejects this, based on a desire to understand what people are self-identifying as at the point of their visit (primarily for funder benefaction, not Festival business), not the start-point of their lives. We will continue to use the term 'Gender' as a positive reinforcement of our inclusion, as opposed to a narrow political view of the gender spectrum.



Greg Quiery
leads a
heritage tour

Linked with the concern above about funders and national agencies not recognising Irishness as being a protected characteristic within the BAME framework, we are mindful that co-working with partners across the year will likely develop intersectional diversity in audiences, including events such as *Black History Month*, *River Festival* and, we hope, *Liverpool Pride*. Guided by an appropriateness within our mission of creating greater inclusion and links between Liverpool and Ireland using arts and culture, work must not and will not be tokenistic to improve statistics by involving non-binary genders, sexualities or ethnic groups.

Reaching non-cisgendered communities -in line with a mission to include diaspora audiences and those who are sometimes isolated from their Irish or Britishness by their difference- has long been a preserve of the Festival. Reflecting on our white paper work with Paul Dowling (Chicago, 2016-17) regarding contributions to the revised [Irish Diaspora Policy](#), we do now see two entries for LGBTQI+ communities within it and hope we had a small part in this development. That we continue to have low non-binary figures is not in itself evidence for radical change, but possibly an argument for doing something artistically credible to support these groups within our communities, as long-term advocates of *The Creative Case* and a commitment to working with diaspora.

SEXUALITY

To set some context for aspects of our monitoring as you read on, the *Office of National Statistics (ONS)* believe that c.1.7% of England's population self-identify as LGBT today, though other sources –such as [The Kinsey Report](#)- believe this may be as high as 10%.

Sexuality monitoring became part of our feedback forms in 2018, giving audiences the chance to self-determine/express their sexuality, without standard tick box solutions. Just 58% of respondents provided an answer. After standardising responses, we returned a figure of 70% as heterosexual, with 10% opting for a non-binary identified, such as "gay", "pan" or "bisexual". 12% spoiled their answer, though only 1.72% used 'prefer not to say (PNTS)'.

In 2019, the largest variance is in those opting to provide PNTS/spoiled answers, which rose from 19.23% to 46.52%. Non-binary audiences dropped, but with so few returns it is difficult to ascertain the pattern, though our female programme focus –rather than specific LGBTQI+- may have some part.

Understanding our audience and artists in this way enables us to evidence who we are missing and the concerns of our audience. It is clear some people do not understand why we collect this data and they make a joke of it. A cohort of people do not understand 'sexuality' as distinct from 'gender' (c.5%), suggesting greater context may enable more precise answers.

Audience sexuality	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%
Bisexual					10	3.45	8	2.23
Confused					1	0.34	0	0.00
Provided gender not sexuality					15	5.17	18	5.01
Heterosexual/straight/H					205	70.69	170	47.35
Lesbian					5	1.72	2	0.56
Pan or 'other'					1	0.34	6	1.67
Prefer not to say/PNTS/-					5	1.72	15	4.18
Illegible/?/ N/A/Joke or other comment					36	12.41	14	3.90
Gay					12	4.14	6	1.67
Not known/left no reply							120	33.43
Totals					290	100	359	100.00
Non-binary identifier total					29	10.00	22	6.13
PNTS/marked with intent to suppress answer or incorrect response (i.e., Female) or left no reply					56	19.31	167	46.52
Heterosexual					205	70.69	170	47.35
Totals					290	100	359	100.00

Artist and contributor sexuality	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%
Bisexual	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.70
Confused	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Provided gender not sexuality	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Heterosexual/straight/H	54	94.74	73	90.12	157	95.73	88	61.54
Lesbian	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
LGBT - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender - offered on forms 2016-18	3	5.26	8	9.88	7	4.27		
Pan or 'other'	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Prefer not to say/PNTS/-	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Illegible/?/ N/A/Joke or other comment	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Gay	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	2.10
Not known/left no reply	75	131.58	46	56.79	33	20.12	51	35.66
Totals	57	100	81	100	164	100	143	100.00
Non-binary identifier total	0	0	8	9.88	7	4.27	4	2.80
PNTS/marked with intent to suppress answer or incorrect response (i.e., Female) or left no reply	75	131.58	46	56.79	33	20.12	51	35.66
Heterosexual	54	94.74	73	90.12	157	95.73	88	61.54
Totals	129	226.3158	127	156.7901	197	120.122	143	100.00

PAYMENT OF ARTISTS

Artist , creative and non-artist pay agreements	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes, by LIF	10	7.6	22	17.5	92	46.7	57	39.9
Yes, but by a partner							13	9.1
Yes, via a box office split/profit arrangement							6	4.2
No: support in kind							30	21.0
No, not at all	122	92.4	104	82.5	105	53.3	37	25.9
Totals	132	100	126	100	197	100	143	100

Paying artists happens in multiple ways. In 2019 we tracked this differently to take account of this. As a commissioner *LIF* can pay artists directly, arrange for payment via partnership (by someone else) or agree tickets sale earnings, or splits thereof. As we work closely with partners in various roles, sometimes people receive in-kind payments for their time, via our promotional activities and platform in exchange for their time. This is favoured when working in close partnership, such as with *Irish*

Community Care providing a speaker for the dual-heritage day because it fully aligns with mutual work on *Black History Month*. In this instance, there were no payments, but each partner received in-kind benefits.

Occasionally no payment is due because *LIF* and the individual trade favours. We try to keep this to a minimum, but people can and do volunteer their performance (or time) in support of the Festival. If this benefits the community, or individual, we may proceed assuming all parties are agreeable. What is evident is that YOY we are working hard to pay artists and creatives for their work.

Of 140+ people we worked with directly (Board members, artists, performers, writers, partners, contributors, advisors, volunteers) 112 had creative functions. Of those 112

- 56* were paid by the Festival
- 37 without direct payment of any kind (mainly volunteers and Board members)
- 30 acted in-kind
- 6 accepted/traded on box office arrangements in full or part shares
- 13 people's fees were arranged under a partner.

* The 57th person paid by *LIF* was our PR and Comms consult. This role registers as a marketing function within the context of *Arts Council England* funding and core funds in relation to *Emigrant Support Programme* funds.

AUDIENCE POSTCODE ANALYSIS

Postcode analysis indicates market penetration, audience hotspots and travel time. Annual postcode data has shown us where our audiences travel from and where work has affected audience, demonstrating where we should improve marketing. It can show trends in visitor reach, though -as often as not- it can create anomalies if standardised testing cannot be completed; i.e., running an event in L18 and collecting feedback there strongly improves your chance of getting feedback from L18. Not doing the same in L38 means you will not get data from here and L38 people attending the Family Day may be missed due to the scale of the event.

In 2016 we secured feedback from someone in every residential area Liverpool and almost every single post code (of 40). In 2018, this reduced to 32:40 up from 30:40 in 2017, but even this demonstrates we draw audiences from 75-80% of Liverpool.

Sadly, a refresh of the survey in 2019 missed 'post code' as a discrete question, though we did ask what city people resided in. Of the 359 surveys completed 266 were completed on the 2019 format, and the remaining cohort replies are not enough to substantiate extrapolation. This means we can only extrapolate figures for 2019, done using the averages of the previous 3 years of data and the known local attendance figure for the #LIF2019.



Rory Shearer's
ceramics, presented at
Bluecoat Display Centre

Postcode analysis			2016			2017			2018			2019		
A=Attendee response no. C=Visits extrapolated against attendee response			339		5461	223		6017	249		1403	0		1860
Location	Authority		A	%	C	A	%	C	A	%	C	A	%	C
L1 City Centre	Liverpool		13	3.8	209	13	5.83	351	6	2.41	338		4.02	749
L2 City Centre	Liverpool		1	0.3	16	0	0.00	0	3	1.20	169		0.50	93
L3 City Centre, Everton, Vauxhall	Liverpool		14	4.1	226	10	4.48	270	13	5.22	733		4.61	858
L4 Anfield, Kirkdale, Walton	Liverpool		8	2.4	129	2	0.90	54	4	1.61	225		1.62	302
L5 Anfield, Everton, Kirkdale, Vauxhall	Liverpool		5	1.5	81	3	1.35	81	0	0.00	0		0.94	175
L6 Anfield, City Centre, Everton, Fairfield, Kensington, Tuebrook	Liverpool		8	2.4	129	5	2.24	135	4	1.61	225		2.07	385
L7 City Centre, Edge Hill, Fairfield, Kensington	Liverpool		18	5.3	290	4	1.79	108	7	2.81	394		3.30	615
L8 City Centre, Dingle, Toxteth	Liverpool		32	9.4	515	21	9.42	567	20	8.03	1127		8.96	1667
L9 Aintree, Fazakerley, Orrell Park, Walton	Liverpool, Sefton		3	0.9	48	4	1.79	108	7	2.81	394		1.83	340
L10 Aintree Village, Fazakerley	Sefton, Liverpool, Knowsley		2	0.6	32	1	0.45	27	0	0.00	0		0.35	64
L11 Clubmoor, Croxteth, Gillmoss, Norris Green	Liverpool		7	2.1	113	2	0.90	54	1	0.40	56		1.12	209
L12 Croxteth Park, West Derby	Liverpool		10	2.9	161	9	4.04	243	12	4.82	676		3.94	732
L13 Clubmoor, Old Swan, Stoneycroft, Tuebrook	Liverpool		20	5.9	322	9	4.04	243	10	4.02	564		4.65	865
L14 Broadgreen, Dovecot, Knotty Ash, Page Moss	Liverpool, Knowsley		4	1.2	64	4	1.79	108	4	1.61	225		1.53	284
L15 Wavertree	Liverpool		19	5.6	306	16	7.17	432	16	6.43	902		6.40	1191
L16 Broadgreen, Bowring Park, Childwall	Liverpool, Knowsley		8	2.4	129	3	1.35	81	12	4.82	676		2.84	529
L17 Algburth, St Michael's Hamlet, Sefton Park	Liverpool		45	13.3	725	47	21.0	126	36	14.4	2029		16.2	3026
L18 Allerton, Mossley Hill	Liverpool		30	8.8	483	15	6.73	405	29	11.6	1634		9.07	1688
L19 Garston, Grassendale, Algburth,	Liverpool		9	2.7	145	10	4.48	270	5	2.01	282		3.05	567
L20 Bootle, Orrell Park and Kirkdale	Liverpool, Sefton		3	0.9	48	2	0.90	54	3	1.20	169		1.00	185
L21 Ford, Litherland, Seaforth	Sefton, Liverpool		5	1.5	81	1	0.45	27	1	0.40	56		0.77	144
L22 Waterloo	Sefton		4	1.2	64	6	2.69	162	7	2.81	394		2.23	414
L23 Blundellsands, Brighton-le-Sands, Crosby, Little Crosby, Thornton	Sefton		11	3.2	177	4	1.79	108	9	3.61	507		2.88	537
L24 Hale, Speke	Halton, Liverpool		2	0.6	32	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0		0.20	37
L25 Belle Vale, Gateacre, Hunts Cross, Woolton, Halewood	Liverpool, Knowsley		9	2.7	145	11	4.93	297	7	2.81	394		3.47	645
L26 Halewood	Liverpool, Knowsley		2	0.6	32	4	1.79	108	2	0.80	113		1.06	198
L27 Netherley	Liverpool		3	0.9	48	1	0.45	27	0	0.00	0		0.44	83
L28 Stockbridge Village	Liverpool, Knowsley		1	0.3	16	0	0.00	0	1	0.40	56		0.23	43
L29 Lunt, Sefton Village	Sefton		0	0.0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0		0.00	0
L30 Bootle, Netherton	Sefton		5	1.5	81	3	1.35	81	10	4.02	564		2.28	424
L31 Maghull, Lydiate, Melling, Waddicar	Sefton		4	1.2	64	1	0.45	27	4	1.61	225		1.08	201
L32 Kirkby	Knowsley		0	0.0	0	0	0.00	0	2	0.80	113		0.27	50
L33 Kirkby	Knowsley		4	1.2	64	0	0.00	0	1	0.40	56		0.53	98
L34 Prescott, Knowsley Village	Knowsley		3	0.9	48	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0		0.29	55
L35 Prescott, Whiston, Rainhill	Knowsley, St Helens		3	0.9	48	5	2.24	135	4	1.61	225		1.58	294
L36 Huyton, Roby, Tarbock	Knowsley		4	1.2	64	0	0.00	0	2	0.80	113		0.66	123
L37 Formby, Little Altcar, Great Altcar	Sefton, West Lancashire		5	1.5	81	0	0.00	0	3	1.20	169		0.89	166
L38 Ince Blundell, Hightown	Sefton, West Lancashire		2	0.6	32	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0		0.20	37
L39 Ormskirk, Aughton	West Lancashire		11	3.2	177	5	2.24	135	4	1.61	225		2.36	440
L40 Burscough, Mawdesley, Scarisbrick, Rufford, Holmeswood	West Lancashire, Chorley		2	0.6	32	2	0.90	54	0	0.00	0		0.50	92
Totals			339	100	5461	223	100	6017	249	100	1403	0	100	1860



Fun at the
Liverpool Irish Centre

What is clear is that undertaking work in South Liverpool locations improved attendance from this location and in the city centre. Toxteth is well represented, whilst Bootle audiences improved in 2018 – most likely because of the *It's the Travelling Life* work we undertook. The *Liverpool Irish Centre* draws significant audiences from L12 and L13, which is useful to be aware of, but certain areas show repeat non-attendance. These are mainly in north Liverpool, which we should try to approach with distribution and/or events in future years.

2019's data shows we receive 50%+ audiences from Liverpool (down from 58% in 2018 and 65% in 2017). Liverpool, the Liverpool City Region and Manchester account for 65% of total audiences across the year. International travel appears to be down (2.51%), growing the national audience, but we continue to suspect this is a feedback issue rather than a reality as the audience make-up feels much more international than the 1.64% identified here.

The following table shows the national and international visitor locations and YOY changes.

National and international visitor residency information + YOY changes

All responses	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%
Bath or Bristol	4	0.73	0	0.00	2	0.47	1	0.31
Belfast and NI	5	0.91	2	0.58	8	1.88	9	2.77
Birmingham and Leicester	1	0.18	0	0.00	1	0.23	12	3.69
Blackburn, Bolton and Chorley	1	0.18	3	0.87	2	0.47	3	0.92
Blackpool	2	0.37	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Bradford, Halifax, Leeds, Sheffield and York	2	0.37	5	1.45	9	2.11	4	1.23
Chester and Wirral (inc Wallasey, Ellesmere, etc)	99	18.10	56	16.18	86	20.19	31	9.54
Coventry and Derby	1	0.18	2	0.58	2	0.47	0	0.00
Crewe	3	0.55	1	0.29	1	0.23	0	0.00
Dublin and ROI	2	0.37	5	1.45	0	0.00	8	2.46
Durham, Darlington and Hartlepoole	0	0.00	2	0.58	1	0.23	1	0.31
Edinburgh, Glasgow and Scotland	3	0.55	1	0.29	0	0.00	5	1.54
Gloucester, Badsey and Oxford	1	0.18	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.62
Guildford and/or Woking	1	0.18	2	0.58	0	0.00	0	0.00
Inverness	2	0.37	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Ipswich	0	0.00	1	0.29	0	0.00	0	0.00
Jersey	0	0.00	1	0.29	0	0.00	0	0.00
Lancaster, Kendall, Ulveston and Barrow-in-Furness	1	0.18	0	0.00	2	0.47	4	1.23
Liverpool	339	61.97	223	64.45	249	58.45	189	58.15
Llandudno, Powys, Llandridod, Prestatyn and Cardiff	10	1.83	3	0.87	4	0.94	4	1.23
London (all), Kent and Bucks	14	2.56	10	2.89	14	3.29	12	3.69
Manchester	5	0.91	5	1.45	9	2.11	13	4.00
Northampton and Kettering	1	0.18	2	0.58	5	1.17	1	0.31
Norwich	1	0.18	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Nottingham	2	0.37	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Oldham, Burnley and Rochdale	1	0.18	1	0.29	1	0.23	2	0.62
Other international/Queensland Australia	1	0.18	11	3.18	7	1.64	1	0.31
Paisley	1	0.18	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Plymouth and Lindford	1	0.18	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.62
Portsmouth and Southampton	1	0.18	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.62
Preston and Skemersdale	9	1.65	3	0.87	10	2.35	1	0.31
Shrewsbury and Shropshire	1	0.18	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.31
Southend-on-Sea, Clacton and Essex	1	0.18	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.62
Stockport	2	0.37	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Stoke-on-Trent	1	0.18	0	0.00	1	0.23	0	0.00
Torquay and Melbourne	2	0.37	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.31
Warrington, St Helens, Widnes, Ormskirk	17	3.11	6	1.73	11	2.58	11	3.38
Wigan	9	1.65	1	0.29	1	0.23	3	0.92
Totals	547	100	346	100	426	100	325	100
Illegible/no answer left							34	9.47
Completions							359	

TRAVEL AND OUT OF TOWN STAYS

#LIF2019 total audience extrapolations					
Location	No.	%	Location	No.	%
Local	25453	70.19	Liverpool	18585	51.3
National	6969	19.22	LCR*	4040	11.1
International	909	2.51	Manchester	1212	3.3
Not known	2929	8.08	ROI	808	2.2
	36260	100	NI	808	2.2

In 2017, 65% of visitors stated that their main reason for travel was the Festival event they attended, down from 83% in 2016.

We have not measured this attribute since then due to prioritised survey questions, but as a notional value provides interesting outputs.

Using 2016 and 2017's median of 74% ($83-65=18 / 2=9$. $83-9=74\%$) we could argue that of 36,260 total visits 26,832 were made specifically for *LIF* events. This is compelling when considering our impact on tourism.

Calculating out of town visits as 6,969 (national) + 909 (international; see table above), and using the standard city visit multiplier of 0.4%, generates 3,151 overnight stays. Using the [Liverpool Hotels Update 2016](#) rate of £70.03 per night, *LIF* may have encouraged a hotel income of £220,679 (£89,190 in 2018).

When we achieve *NPO* status, such information will need closer monitoring to account for our carbon-footprint, which forms a staple part of the contract with *Arts Council* when working at this level.

PR FACTS FIGURES AND TRENDS

All the figures presented in this section report figures from the day following the festival in 2018 to the closing day of *#LIF2019*.

DISTRIBUTION AND PRINT

Despite borrowing the strong distribution plan of previous years, *#LIF2019's* distribution campaign was highly flawed, due to the use of a new company, which failed us. Selected for its claimed ability to drop unusual sized print (such as our newspapers) to hotels, public transport hubs and shops, rather than regular cultural drops, the company did none of these things on time or well.

Having used our research and evidence to increase the numbers of distribution drops being made to Manchester, Birkenhead, Wirral and the North West region, the distributors ignored all instructions and dropped late (10days + after receipt of print) and badly. Despite asking for complete lists of when and where collateral landed, none came.

The new distributors were secured by our designers; standard practice for three years. The new company was sought when our original distributors flagged they may have issues with securing space for *LIF's* newspapers and believed there would be significant additional costs. The change cost us dearly. This lack of clarity and professionalism kept the print –running slightly late due to funding and data issues- from hitting venues until the first week in October. Brochures went out -in some cases- *with* the newspaper, which should have followed up brochure details, extending its run rather than sitting side-by-side.

The company did not inform us about the delay; we realised when audience members and partners chased collateral that we knew should have arrived. Their lack of consultation gave us little opportunity for redress. *LIF* stated it would not pay the sub-contractor; stating the designer would need to take this hit if the company did not acquiesce. We used some of these funds to buy advertising for specific events, securing social media adverts and leaflet hits, but we know this delay affected tickets sales, website hits, general traffic and audience engagement. The cost of the economic impact is unknown, as we do not know the measures to use.

We have identified that timing was and is critical. Undertaking one distribution drop-off is the most affordable by far. However, staggering a campaign peaks interest and means print remains on shelves in the lead to the festival. This was one reason why we developed the brochure, newspaper and poster combination.

Discussions are already underway for a significant change to distribution in 2020 and we are confident, funding permitting, we can resolve all the issues faced this year.

On the plus side, all collateral received positive reviews. The newspaper has a positive shelf life-containing 15+ written commissions. We dropped 7k brochures (28pps) and 14k newspapers (32pps). In the latter we managed to sell almost £3k of information space, covering its print price. In future, we will align all digital messaging in print with the social media channels and website, to extend and serialise stories and get audiences engaging in multiple channels.

Ideally, to support design flow, print and delivery work, lead programme must be complete as early in the calendar year as possible. Online sales will go live in early summer and all other ticketed shows before the August bank holiday to give people a number of pay packets to stagger their ticket buying across.

An initial brochure drop needs to land a minimum of 6 weeks before the festival and certainly no later than 4 weeks before, with the newspaper going out 2 weeks to 10 days in advance of the first event. Venues will stagger their shelf displays to prolong exposure there and *LIF* should ensure they have a good stock for use at events in case copies dry up.

SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH SUMMARY

Channels/ Time	Aug 2016	Dec 2016	YOY >	Dec 2017	YOY >	Dec 2018	YOY >	Nov- 19	YOY >	Growth since record s began %	Av growth PA (sign ups)
Facebook	3777	4007	6.09	4332	8.11	4598	6.14	4899	6.55	29.71	224.4
Twitter	3470	3656	5.36	3871	5.88	4035	4.24	4280	6.07	23.34	162
Instagram	132	185	40.15	266	43.78	397	49.25	605	52.39	358.33	94.6
Website (not monitored until Dec)	7000	7642	9.17	12114	58.52	17449	44.04	16389	-6.07	134.13	1877.8
Mailchimp	1727	1650	-4.46	1681	1.88	1588	-5.53	1952	22.92	13.03	45
Total social media reach	16106	17140	14.08	22264	29.89	28067	26.06	28125	0.21	139.63	2403.8

NB This table accounts for followers and subscribers.

Facebook

Facebook	2016	Reported in 2017	2017 (Using 2018 metrics for 2017)	2018	YOY variance %	2019	YOY variance %
Likes	4018		4331	4598	106.2	4899	106.55
Followers	NR		265	4549	1716.6	5139	112.97
Minutes of video views	NR		1200	7742	645.2	5942	76.75
Promoted posts	NR		1	2	200.0	4	200.00

NR = Not recorded or reported.

LIF's Facebook reach was down to 43,182k in Oct 2019 from 51,296 in 2018, 41,971 in 2017 and 46,025 in 2016. This combines *Facebook* and *Instagram's* organic reach of 24,787 + 7800 respectively and a paid-for reach of 10,625 (unable to disaggregate). We believe this reach is down because of the lack of print prompts in the run up to the Festival. Key sources for links to this page include *Facebook* links, *Google* and *LIF's* website.

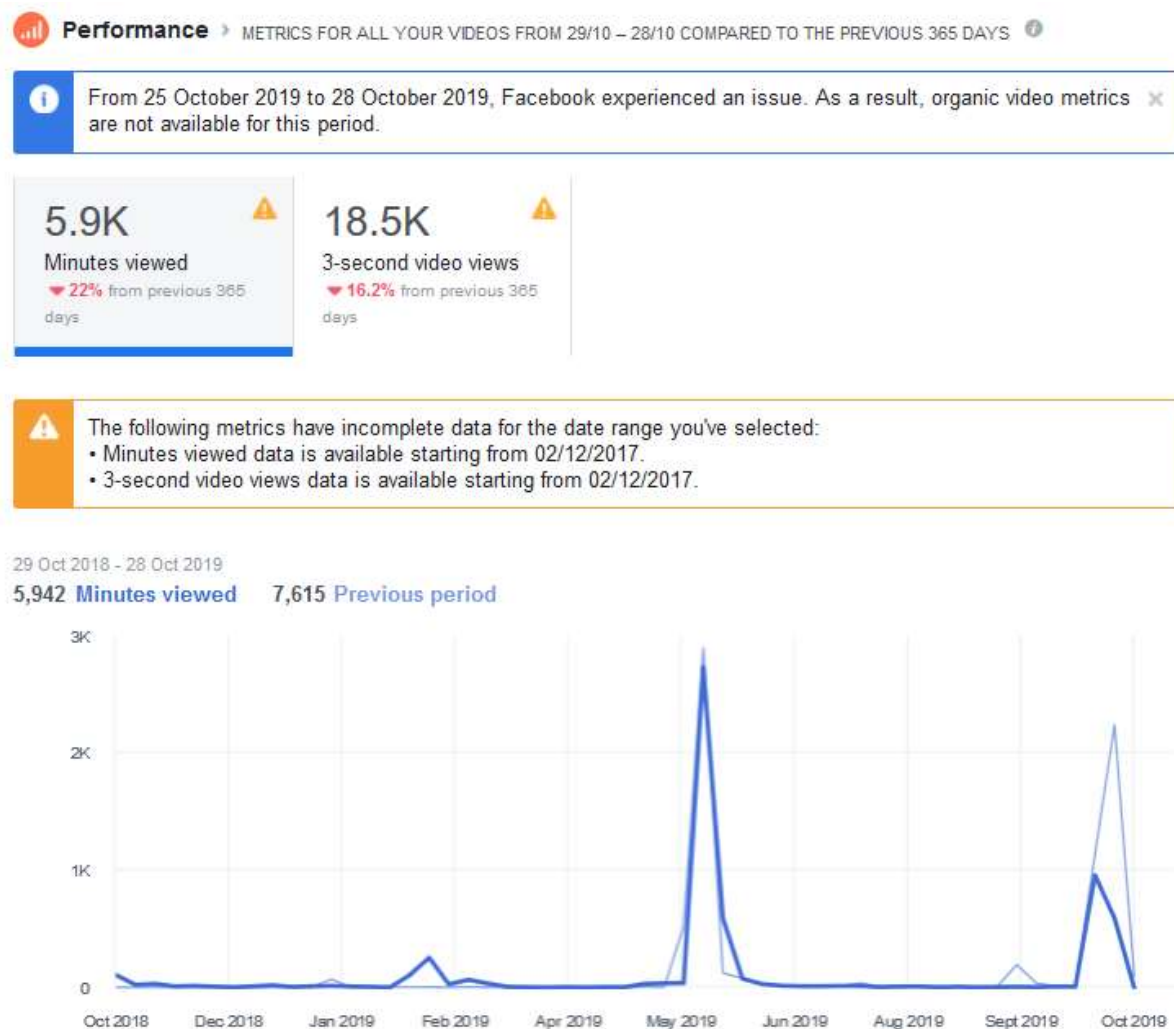
Rich content performs best and videos are often well liked and interacted with. Top performing videos in *#LIF2019* included *Melody Makers* at the *River Festival*, the trailers for *Rebels and Friends* and *Ireland's Call*, each with a combined watch time of 40 hours (2406 mins).



LIP's Facebook audience is 56% female vs 42% male and largely from Liverpool (1,583 of total). Cohorts decreasing in number in Dublin, London, Belfast, Manchester, Cork, Birkenhead, Derry, Wallasey and Newry which rank as the top 10 cities in our fan list.

Facebook is our best channel best for filtering stories and news to audiences, rather than contacting professionals or press.

Sadly, a data failure with Facebook shows we are missing data from within the Festival period, when we know views spike upwards. Evidence for this is below.



Twitter

Twitter	2016	Reported in 2017	PR campaign 2017	PR campaign 2018	YOY variance	2019	YOY variance
Followers	3660		3871	4035	104.24	4280	106.07
Mentions	68		404	660	163.37	569	86.21
Profile visits	1396		4133	5023	121.53	5367	106.85
Tweet impressions	63800		1467758	170500	11.62	302364	177.34

NR = Not recorded or reported.

2019: 4280 followers; following 1644; total tweets 3378; likes 1,551

2018: 4035 followers; following 1498; total tweets 3080; likes 959

We have found *Twitter* good for engaging with press and artists (a professional network), but less positive for audience interactions compared with *Facebook*. For *Twitter* content must be fast-paced, easy to digest and eye-catching. It needs using pragmatically for headlines, with links to the website. Opinion formers often add to this feed, if not attendees. Our impression rate is the highest growing of our monitors.

Instagram

LIF are still relatively new to *Instagram* and have not quite found our channel voice. That said, we significantly grew our audience this year from 397 in 2018 to 605 (65% growth). Additionally, our *Instagram* audience seem keen to like posts with 728 likes from just 39 posts meaning an interaction of 18+ people per post. Comments are less, with just eight received from 39. Picture response rather than commentary seems easy to receive, but what value this brings (i.e., conversion to sales) we do not know.

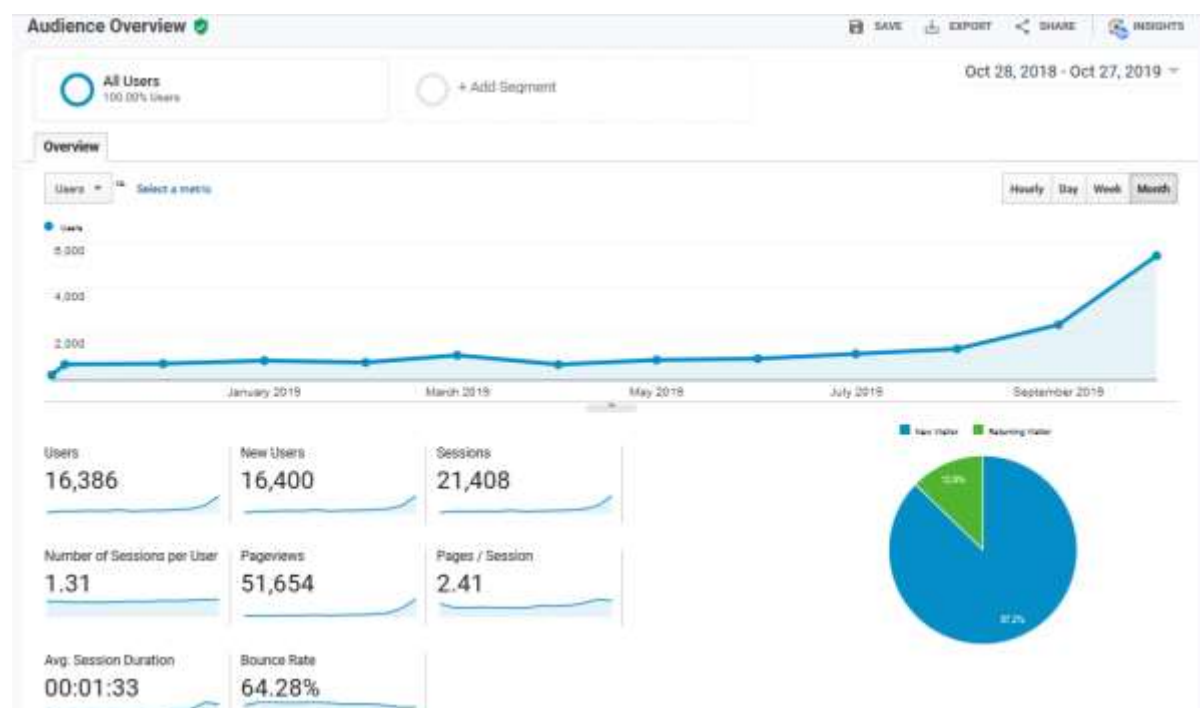
Website

Website	2016	Reported in 2017	2017 (Using 2018 metrics)	2018	YOY variance %	2019	YOY variance %
Users	NR	7642	12114	17449	144.0	16513	94.64
New users	NR	NR	12027	17293	143.8	16530	95.59
Sessions	NR	11753	17667	23000	130.2	21579	93.82
No of sessions per user	NR	NR	1.46	1.32	90.4	1.31	99.24
Page views	NR	40426	53524	55401	103.5	52010	93.88
Pages per session	NR	3.44	3.03	2.41	79.5	2.41	100.00
Bounce rate	NR	51	56.1	62.97	112.2	62.31	98.95
Returning visitor rate	NR	NR	16.3	13.6	83.4	12.7	93.38

NR = Not recorded or reported.

LIF's website was reconstructed in Sept 2016, yielding extremely high engagement and a small drop off the year following. As time has progressed, web analytics have improved and many more things have become measurable.

For consistency, we base our web activity on the day following the preceding year's festival to the end date of the festival in the year we are reporting on, i.e., 29 Oct 2018-28 Oct 2019. This captures we use across an entire annual cycle.



Mailchimp

LIF's Mailchimp data appears clean, with a warm audience. Our average open rate is 27.19% (in 2019, Oct 30 2019-Oct 27 2019) compared with the industry standard of 23.34% and a further click rate of 4.15% vs the industry standard of 2.95%.

Fewer people sign up for newsletter today compared with 2016. We normally see a spike in subscriptions following large data inputting sessions (i.e., after *River Festival* and our annual festival), then a sharp drop-off of 'unsubscribers'. These people are normally those who obliged to provide an email when providing feedback. This ordinarily levels out to a slightly higher subscription audience than previously, but rarely significantly (i.e., within a couple of hundred). In 2019, we added a further 252 complete email addresses to the *Mailchimp* address book, but it is too early to say how many will stay..

Industry statistics, as supplied by *Mailchimp* (<https://mailchimp.com/resources/email-marketing-benchmarks/> accessed 25 Nov 2019).

Industry	Average Open Rate	Average Click Rate	Hard Bounce	Soft Bounce	Unsubscribe Rate
Arts and Artists	26.27%	2.95%	0.30%	0.51%	0.28%

This suggests we have a dedicated audience, seeking insider tips. Event announcements are always popular and certain story lines seem to have traction (e.g., the mailing "Your Quirky Cabaret invite – book now!" received an open rate of 36.7% and a click rate of 4.8%). We need to leverage this to our advantage. This channel may provide the best platform to sell affinity space (i.e., advertising) as we can show their individual success. We need to make this channel work harder with regards ticketing pre-sales and must refresh the template to ensure it is as responsive as possible.

To consistently beat the industry standard, as we do, suggests a warm audience, but there are specifics worth noting:

- In 2019 the highest open rate was achieved with our "St Patrick's and #GlobalGreening day" mailing on 15 March 2019, which achieved an open rate of 40.23%, considerably higher than the industry standard of 21.2%. The highest ever open rate was 67.03 % for our second ever mailing, "Your personal *Liverpool Irish Festival* invite" sent in September 2016.
- The highest click rate in 2019 was for our "*Liverpool Irish Festival* is back next month! Got your tickets?" mailing, issued on 26 September and gaining a 12.62% click rate, again higher than the industry average for our sector (2.95%). The highest ever click rate was 26.37% for our second ever mailing, "Your personal *Liverpool Irish Festival* invite" sent in September 2016.
- List engagement peaks in the run up to the festival, but averages out across the year, tracking slightly higher than standard.

From the last day of last year's festival to the last day of this year's *LIF* have sent 11 newsletters, compared with 13, 16 and 10 in 2018, 2017 and 2016 respectively.

PRESS ACHIEVED

Date	Headline	Publication	Value	Circulation	Url
16/07/2019	Bringing it all back home	News Letter (Belfast)	£ 4,017.63	13710	
31/07/2019	Legendary Liverpool actress, Eithne Browne hosts a Quirky Cabaret celebrating Celtic Crossings	The Guide Liverpool (Web)	£ 108.00	4021	https://www.theguideliverpool.com/legendary-liverpool-actress-eithne-browne-hosts-a-quirky-cabaret-celebrating-celtic-crossings/
12/08/2019	YOUR NEXT 7days	Liverpool Echo	£ 7,765.74	38474	
14/09/2019	Liverpool Irish Festival	Art in Liverpool (Web)	£ 47.00	2000	https://www.artinliverpool.com/liverpool-irish-festival-returns-with-10-days-of-music-theatre-performance-and-art/
14/09/2019	Liverpool Irish Festival is back in October	The Guide Liverpool (Web)	£ 108.00	35000	https://www.theguideliverpool.com/liverpool-irish-festival-is-back-in-october/
14/09/2019	Liverpool Irish Festival is back in October	From the Margins		10000	http://www.fromthemargins.co.uk/pages/news/2019_09_Liverpool_Irish_Festival.html
16/09/2019	Liverpool Irish Festival is back in October	The Irish World	£ 500.00	20000	http://www.theirishworld.com/liverpool-irish-festival-returns-tell-tales-liverpool-irish/
17/09/2019	Liverpool Irish Festival returns with 10-day cultural celebration	Liverpool Echo (Web)	£23,421.00	872556	https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/whats-on/arts-culture-news/liverpool-irish-festival-returns-10-16924195
17/09/2019	Packed programme for Liverpool Irish Festival	Liverpool Echo	£ 9,396.90	38474	
20/09/2019	25 free things to do in October	Boundless (Web)	£ 35.00	1318	https://www.boundless.co.uk/be-inspired/lifestyle/25-free-things-to-do-in-october
22/09/2019	A city for all seasons	Lancashire Life	£ 7,427.97	19475	
23/09/2019	British Theatre Guide	British Theatre Guide (Web)	£ 166.00	6193	https://www.britishtheatreguide.info/news/festivals-at-the-double-for-li-11231
26/09/2019	Maz O'Connor interview	Irish World		20000	
28/09/2019	NORTH	Songlines	£ 248.54	25000	
30/09/2019	10 things to do in Liverpool this Autumn	Lancashire Life (Web)	£ 219.00	8172	https://www.lancashirelife.co.uk/out-about/events/10-things-to-do-in-liverpool-this-autumn-1-6292211
30/09/2019	10 things to do in Liverpool this Autumn	Cheshire Life (Web)	£ 117.00	4361	https://www.cheshirelife.co.uk/out-about/events/10-things-to-do-in-liverpool-this-autumn-1-6292211
1/10/2019	Liverpool Irish festival preview	Bido Lito!		100000	
1/10/2019	Best things to do in Liverpool in October	Independent Liverpool		30000	
4/10/2019	CityTalk Panel festival preview	Radio City Talk		300000	
5/10/2019	Liverpool Irish Festival launches	Arts City Liverpool		15000	https://www.artscityliverpool.com/single-post/2019/10/05/Liverpool-Irish-Festival-2019-looks-at-migration-and-changing-irish-culture
10/10/2019	Stories that must be told MY CITY	Liverpool Echo	£ 1,796.64	38474	
12/10/2019	Folklore: Hannah and Ben lead us to the 2019 Liverpool Irish Festival	Wrexham Leader (Web)	£ 190.00	18113	https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/17963512.folklore-hannah-ben-lead-us-2019-liverpool-irish-festival/
12/10/2019	Folklore by DCM	The Leader Wrexham	£ 1,147.06	8159	
13/10/2019	22 events you don't want to miss in Liverpool this autumn	Liverpool Echo (Web)	£23,421.00	872556	https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/22-events-you-dont-want-17063895
14/10/2019	Festival preview	Liverpool Live TV		50000	
14/10/2019	Emma Smith interview - festival preview	BBC Radio Merseyside - Jermaine Foster programme		300000	
17/10/2019	Festival preview	Granada Reports		850000	
17/10/2019	Mellowtone celebrates their fifteenth birthday with live music & exhibition	Art in Liverpool (Web)	£ 47.00	15000	https://www.artinliverpool.com/mellowtone-celebrates-their-fifteenth-birthday-with-live-music-exhibition/
17/10/2019	Jack Lukeman radio interview	Radio CityTalk		300000	

17/10/2019	John Connors Ireland's Call Interview	The Anfield Wrap		350000	
17/10/2019	Trailblazers' magical musical legacy	Liverpool Echo	£ 4,160.64	38474	
18/10/2019	Liverpool Irish festival preview	Metro		150000	
18/10/2019	Jack Lukeman interview	BBC Radio Merseyside - Jenny Lee Summers programme		300000	
18/10/2019	House Gospel Choir come to 24 Kitchen Street as Fickle Friends bring intimate tour to Phase One	Getintothis (Blog)	£ 201.00	7480	https://www.getintothis.co.uk/2019/10/house-gospel-choir-come-to-24-kitchen-street-as-fickle-friends-bring-intimate-tour-to-phase-one/
19/10/2019	Folklore: Busy weekend followed by two five-star gigs on Wednesday	Wrexham Leader (Web)	£ 190.00	18113	https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/17980007.folklore-busy-weekend-followed-two-five-star-gigs-wednesday/
20/10/2019	Events	Waitrose Weekend	£ 1.00	400000	
20/10/2019	Folklore by DCM	The Leader Wrexham	£ 604.24	8159	
22/10/2019	Liverpool Irish Festival launches	Liverpool Life		150000	http://jmu-journalism.org.uk/liverpool-irish-festival-kicks-off/
23/10/2019	Maz O'Connor interview	BBC Radio Merseyside - Jenny Lee Summers		300000	
23/10/2019	Women are the beating heart of Liverpool Irish Festival	The Irish Post		80000	https://www.irishpost.com/entertainment/irish-women-beating-heart-liverpool-irish-festival-172956
25/10/2019	Family Day preview interview	BBC Radio Merseyside - Jenny Lee Summers		300000	
26/10/2019	The Biggest Show in the Country - John Foster Drama Studio	North West End (Web)	£ 36.00	1335	http://northwestend.co.uk/index.php/professional-reviews/liverpool/4726-the-biggest-show-in-the-country-john-foster-drama-studio
28/10/2019	Agatha Christie's Witness for the Prosecution ? The Hope Street Theatre	North West End (Web)	£ 36.00	1335	http://northwestend.co.uk/index.php/homepage/news/4730-agatha-christie-s-witness-for-the-prosecution-the-hope-street-theatre
01/11/2019	Here comes 'The Biggest Show In The Country'	News Letter (Belfast)	£ 2,072.40	13710	
02/11/2019	Here comes the Biggest Show In The Country'	Derry Journal (Inishowen)	£ 1,026.41	14666	
08/11/2019	Here comes 'The Biggest Show In The Country'	Larne Times	£ 1,234.92	7615	
08/11/2019	Here comes 'The Biggest Show In The Country'	Lurgan Mail	£ 1,118.25	5522	
09/11/2019	Here comes 'The Biggest Show In The Country'	Ulster Star	£ 1,173.42	5668	
09/11/2019	Here comes 'The Biggest Show In The Country'	Portadown Times	£ 1,970.55	8741	
10/11/2019	Here comes 'The Biggest Show In The Country'	Mid-Ulster Mail	£ 679.25	3402	
16/11/2019	Derry artists scoop share of £67,000 NI Arts Council's ACES awards	Derry Journal (Inishowen)	£ 1,207.01	14666	
16/11/2019	Ireland's Call Review	The Irish Post		80000	
			£95,890.57	6274942	

Unexpurgated from PR and Social Media report, © Laura Marie Brown, 2019.

Feedback

- Brilliant festival - los going on. Great music!
- Nice music!
- Don't feel connected to festival only find good things before comming
- Amazing Show, thanks
- Enjoyed the show
- Fantastic performance
- It was deadly
- I really enjoyed this show
- John was brilliant
- Great show
- It was amazing
- Querath. the sadness of a young person and family and the way that a young person is affected and what could you do to change things to make a better life for our young people.
- The show was well presented but did not enjoy reference to drugs and swearing wad very well acted with feeling
- Join up with tourist people in Liverpool. Promote Irish Center
- Very good singing
- This is awesome and needs to be back next year
- A great performance
- A great performance
- 1st act was very informative, my dad is from Mayo
- I really enjoyed the programme. Nice to see the old programmes and to see what it was like in those old times
- We've been here all weekend and it's fantastic
- Thanks you for putting on the Irish Festival each year and making known to people the diversity of Irish culture
- Great Event
- Very good enjoying time diffrent music
- Lovely day out
- Fantastic day, lovely people
- Excellent event good atmosphere
- All Great
- Amazing atmospher, live bands, family friendly
- Come every year
- Absolutely fantastic
- There was something for everyone tonight
- Loved sister sister XX
- make your print larger
- Fantastic event. Great broad selectionof Irish themes
- Really enjoyed this evening at the Palm House
- This has been marvellous entertainment. Something for everyone!
- Very interesting and fun
- Thanks for a great festival. I went on the Scotty Road walk with Greg - Very interesting lots of new information. Enjoyed the play Constance and Eva at Playhouse. Coach trip with Greg. Very god.
- Turn the sound up
- Thank You
- It was a very interesting talk. I'm new to the topic of Irish history and it was very informative.
- It was truly inspiring to take part of the rise & fold session
- Very informative using and making doing for my 10 year old daughter
- Thanks for the fab experience
- The experience of making bread was fabulous - thank you
- I'm free and single Ha! ha!
- FAB!!
- Excellent value
- I'm having a lovely evening listening to the Legacy Liverpool Ceili Band and learning about their history
- Great festival, very enjoyable and a wide range of events
- What a brilliant night!
- Amazing
- first visit and very impressed
- LEAF - Great Venue
- Leaf - great venue
- You need to advertise the festival more. We only knew of the festival because Stephanie requested a vitrine(?) from Tate
- Beautiful performances with a diverse selection
- I loved the performance, it really inspired me to be a playwright
- I enjoyed the play
- Nothing really much on this year, a little disapointing
- I enjoyed the piece and feel inspired by it
- Insightful! Exhibit Saturday gil - subtle but revealing identities of cities in each photo of individuals
- We've enjoyed the family time making bread
- The bread-making workshop was fun and the discussion were engaging
- Thank you for the bread :-)
- Came to find out where my Grandfather came from in Ireland. Found out where at last: Everything went very well. Very well pleased
- The adoption(?) of past history and how it's portrayed is really good and engaging
- Trigger warnings



Fold and Rise

- This was fun but really not child friendly (as listed)
- good and well selected range of films
- Very enjoyable, excellent variety of work
- Other types of film festival are welcome
- Very enjoyable. Great diverse showing of films
- very enjoyable
- Well made. Pity about titles
- Great to be able to 'dip in' to the talks going on today. Fascinating
- Bringing in the mixed race Irish has made me more likely to attend the Lpool Irish Festival events
- Brilliant dancing. Good to see people having fun
- Excellent & authentic Irish jigs!
- Loved musicians wearing straw animal heads.
- Fiddle workshop excellent
- Enjoyed workshop. Packed a lot in 1 hr 30
- Keep promoting traditional Irish music!
- Clare Friel was MAGIC!
- More
- Enjoyed Brexit discussion (a sensible one!)
- I had a lovely tie. Love this era of Irish history and XXX was boss
- Always enjoy the Irish Festival
- Some excellent events every year
- Nice show
- Thank you for bringing KIMBER'S MAN. Enjoying the festival
- Very lively and vibrant. Great to see in the city
- Very good
- Come each year
- Come each year
- 1st half lots of individual players expected choral groups
- Good evening entertainment
- First tie of seeing an dhearing Gardam Ceoil TG4 and it was fantastic, very talented
- Reminds me of childhood. There was always fiddling int he back kitchen
- Great thanks
- Pleased it runs every year. Thank you!
- It's been a brilliant opportunity to showcase these outstanding musicians. Thank you!
- Thought provoking and thoroughly enjoyable!
- Very talented performance
- This was an incredible show. Extraordinarily emotional and so moving. Music, dancing, choreography- all fab, thank you.
- Wonderful thought-provoking persormance of Caillte
- Caillte was incredible
- Caillte was amazing
- A wonderful performance
- Loved the event - thank you
- Great festival Thank you for organising all these years.
- Loving the music
- At Visible women - wonderful event. Your marketing needs improvement - hire a grad and your stuff seen more.
- Visible women excellent
- Good line-up. Philharmonic music room is a bit too formal. E.g. bar shut at 7:59
- I have enjoyed the performance this evening
- I was amazed at the quality of the acts
- Very relevant and funny Very well done and put together. Great acting
- Loved the show. Great insight and very funny. Great
- Brilliant, funny, relevant
- Hilarious show by Wake The Beast, which was also thought-provoking
- A groovy first try out
- Very Irish - helped understand brits but confused others
- I enjoyed it very much. Some of the movement could be more synchronised.
- Good variety in the show
- John Foster Drama Studio was hard to find. Also, events are more expensive this year
- I saw Rebels and Friends and it was a bit obscure.
- You have all worked so hard. Well done. Miaith Sibh
- Great festival. Keeping the spirit of the Irish alive in Liverpool
- Ireland forever. Keep flying the flag.
- Missing the the talks at Liverpool Uni. Missing Cork shorts.
- Only found out about this play by word of mouth. Only saw priced program at the end of the festival.
- Think there is a good variation of Irish culture this year
- Great family day event
- Loved the Irish dancers
- Brilliant diverse festival that gets better every year
- Really good range of unique performances
- Fantastic event, very popular
- My nephew had an amazing time with the Irish festival. Absolutely fantastic.
- Loved the Armagh band at the Museum of Liverpool
- Dancing are amazing
- Excellent music from Comhaltas and dancing from Bolger Cunningham
- Most interesting show-casing some of the City's diversity
- Impressive and sad
- The show was fantastic

- Yes - it was brilliant
- Brilliant performance 'Biggest show in the country'
- The show was brilliant
- Really good. Get it.
- Fantastic show - very funny and relevant
- Amazing! Blew my balls off and was screaming throughout.
- Show was great
- I love you guys
- Wonderful refreshing show
- Other than incredible supportive and proud of our Irish roots
- That show - Jack Lukeman - was amazing
- This was FAB!
- Great to see the festival happening again.
- Enjoyed this evening's performance. Wish there was a bigger festival and more music and more bands reflecting Irish/Liverpool rich culture.
- Bread making was in a beautiful location over the water. Calming and a lovely way to meet new peoples.
- Really enjoyed it. Very friendly and fun experience
- Enjoyed the sourdough bread making
- It was lovely to just happen across the bread making / conversations as I entered the Tate. Perfect timing. I thank you for a lovely experience. Lots to think about.
- A very enjoyable and unpretentious festival for all ages
- Wrong venue for launch. Poorly attended
- Great diversity of events across the city
- Great craic. Lovely meeting. Cheers.
- Wish I had known the full programme beforehand and I would have come to Liverpool for a week!
- I have a coldsore
- Loved performing to an audience who really appreciated my songs. Emma is an excellent performer.
- It was enjoyable and everyone gave their 'all'. Thanks
- Delighted to support Irish Festival
- Festival opening - great up to now - let me know if you want any art bits!
- Love Irish culture and festival every year in Liverpool. Great range of culture.
- Amazing hospitality. Great music acts
- A bit of home. Relaxing, great music and atmosphere
- We all love the Liverpool Irish Festival
- That would be an ecumenical matter.
- It's a really nice festival
- Excellent and friendly welcome
- Great festival, great music, food and drink. Well organised!
- Keep up the good work
- I really enjoy the Irish Festival as it is a chance to socialise with people from other Irish backgrounds
- Congratulations! Fantastic Festival
- Enjoying some lovely tunes.
- The music is nice to listen to and it's nice to see other Irish people
- More Irish poetry / music. I enjoy the ????
- I'm a screenwriter who specialises in Anglo-Irish stories.

Work suggestions

- Irish on Pelican of London
- More power to your elbow
- More material about the troubles. Easter rising
- More Irish writing. More music in pubs
- Not well advertised
- Need to find a way to get more people to the Irish centre?? include in coach tours to city
- A lot of 'warm-up' & get people to interact before the singer started maybe
- Film
- Loved the laid-backness at the Royal Court - this play needs to get even more out of the theatre (trad)
- Damien Dempsey
- Damien Dempsey
- Put a small charge on
- I just hope you are able to carry out the work you are putting into the festival. Good luck to all of you. What I have seen you be OK
- More events to take place in Liverpool Irish Centre - daytime events - as I don't go out at night
- Some of the music venues sound clashed
- Better transport options to festival
- good as it is
- Just perfect
- more more
- Just keep going on
- A play called "The Stolen Child" about the Cavan fire 36 girls died. Industrial school - my mother was in it.
- Include Eleanor Mc Evoy. She's a great supporter of UK/Irish events.
- A list of the people - singers, entertainers
- Irish Dance (Flatley style)
- Irish art (paintings)



- Really enjoyed the use of upstairs rooms in pubs last year
- Loved the Ceili dance after the coach trip. Didn't expect that
- I would like to see more about Liverpool's BME communities, refugees and asylum seekers
- It would be so good to bring this to our communities in Liverpool also we should talk more about Irish culture
- More advertising
- It was boss
- I've Never been before but was I saw was fine
- More Irish related music
- too soon
- more options for the younger audience i.e. students
- muslim and arabic art
- more black rights art
- something comedic would interest me
- have interesting things and acts that people would go to
- about racism
- more women rights plays
- more work with more actors / activities
- Subtitles need moving. Not child friendly
- Some trigger warnings and better age ratings
- Maybe next time the volume would be lower
- Fix technical issues (subtitles, very loud audio)
- Less self-harm?
- Larger rooms to accommodate more people. 50 places are too small number.
- Less self-harm?
- Very powerful pieces that challenged the audience, was refreshing not to shy away from them.
- Only issues with the subtitles
- Dialogue on why the UK considers itself the seat of democracy while still illegally occupying the Northern territories in Ireland
- Events all year round and more involvement with Irish Gov
- More workshops
- More workshops 2) more content for playing Irish music/session
- Keep promoting traditional Irish music! Live + TRAD music!
- An online big 1 page 'at a glance' of all events.
- More workshops please
- More workshops, please
- More literary discussion
- Very city centre based. Be nice to see more events in the suburbs
- Carry on!
- More colour
- Needs more boats
- More info
- Maybe, all play together (written at 1/2) maybe they will
- Mix of group/individuals
- More widely advertised
- Can;t read this. Bad eyesight. 90 years old!!
- Artists names to be advertised and shown
- Pre-event details were not available but no matter! It's been brilliant.
- Caillte on tour.
- Spoken Word
- more female focused and supportive of LGBTQ+
- Book a big band such as Hothouse Flowers or similar
- No, I trust you to put good stuff on.
- more of this
- Music too loud at times but didn't take away from the show.
- The Troubles. Because this generation is so uneducated about it all.
- Needs clearer narrative in 2nd half
- struggles & conflict of Northern Irl & Southern Irl
- Readability of the online programme could be improved
- A bit more Irish language
- I haven't attended all of the festival so thus is hard to comment on. There seems to be so much quality on.
- Build up the programme.
- Bring back Cork shorts
- happening across Liverpool
- It was fab!
- more widely advertised
- It's such a shame the dancers were not allowed to do some 'hard shoe' dances.
- Please allow the dancers to use the hard shoe
- Maybe have a range of performances in different venues - including South Liverpool
- Female representatives in Irish 20C Art - AnTurGloire
- Issue with CD @ start - check before starting?
- Issue wit CD @ start - check before starting?
- more of this work
- ? Produce the Greatest Show on Earth
- More publicity for the festival
- Give them money
- No. It was all brilliant
- More music please
- A gallery online? Places you've visited so we can see the people and the places we're connected to through this.
- More Irish Literature events
- email programme of events to subscribers
- Lots of variety

- Maybe one evening (you probably do it already) combine with a little Irish dancing
- More Irish poetry
- Maybe some people may wish to see Irish dancing, rebel songs, jiving for elderly with Irish national anthem before end of event. When nothing on, i.e. event/ music / performances, a bit of Irish music in the background. Also, maybe bottles / pints of Smethwick's.
- Do it twice a year.
- Kelly's Heroes (Liverpool Irish band)
- More of the same.
- The music was very loud to people with slight ear problems like me.
- It's perfect as it is
- Music a bit quieter because it's a little bit loud but otherwise very good
- Seamus Heeney
- More trad music

Direct feedback

The Director received some written feedback; presented, unexpurgated, below:

Laura Colleran, *Ireland Reaching Out*:

Participating in the Liverpool Irish Festival gave us a deeper appreciation for the proud Irish heritage that exists in the North West of England and enabled us to engage with and assist many people of Irish descent looking to discover more about their place of origin. The legacy of the festival for IrelandXO is an uptake in website visitors from this part of the UK and most importantly, many new connections with local Irish communities.

Michelle Charters, *Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre*:

"thanks and well done You, you have achieved much success with this years festival and really looking forward to what you will offer for 2020 and how we build on the dual heritage information.

Congrats to you and all who support you and now have a long earned, well deserved rest.

Dave Ellwand:

I was very touched by the message from Gerri about the session at the Philharmonic Dining Rooms:

" Good Afternoon Dave, Thank you for organising last night. It was a lovely graceful evening - very much 'in tune' with Peggy's character and life's work in the Liverpool Irish Music Community. I love the way you, too, have of trusting music to enable and enoble people when it is shared in a spirit of generosity. We need more believers of your ilk in a world that lacks ' heart ! So thank you for the music - and the magic- that you help to happen. Kindest Regards Gerrie "

So I'm passing on my thanks for you making this happen, as the kindness and generosity came from your contribution, either on the night with music, stories and good company, or also from friends sending encouragement even if they couldn't come on the night. So please pass on our thanks too to Maire, John, Alan, Dave, Jane, Ann and anyone I missed. It WAS a special evening, with generosity of spirit that echoed Peggy's

Jenny Owens:

Really enjoyed this weekend Emma - thanks for all you do for the Irish community.

John Walsh, *Liverpool Comhaltas*:

So much work goes into putting on these events that often the only return is the negative points when people only want to see what their own focus - so let me give you a positive and pass on thanks to you and John Chandler and the committee for putting together a balanced and inclusive programme yet again for the Liverpool Irish Festival. The Irish community and Irish history make it such a complex mix to balance with so many factions wanting to be dominant as the most important aspect of Irish culture but you and the committee do it sensitively, professionally and inclusively .So ignore any negative comments as celebrate - you have done and excellent job. –

Ian Fisher:

I promised to fill in the feedback form for the L.I.F. but I forgot. So I just thought I would send some thoughts. It is always a good festival of course and I will always come up and attend it mainly for the sessions but also looking for other interesting stuff.

The Edinburgh session happens every week and in LIF week it was very good indeed. Likewise the OldBank session was good. However, the Peter Kavannahs session, which I like to think is the main one was a little disappointing. It was only attended by about 7 folk. Perhaps this should be advertised in the programme as a big session to encourage people. The pub was not as packed as usual and when it has been advertised as a session it is.

I attended the Philharmonic concert with the three young performers which was very enjoyable, but for me, I prefer a band. We Banjo Three I remember some years ago were excellent.

Also I believe Andy Irvine was performing at the Phil in Irish week but nobody looking at the programme knew because it wasn't advertised? This seems a major omission for such a well known major Irish performer. Anyway I appreciate the work you put in to the organisation but would encourage the advertising of sessions (ie PKs) if possible.

I shall be back next year.

Responding to feedback

Amidst the array of feedback, we believe the overwhelming response is positive.

Primarily people want more of the same, though there are some specific suggestions, such as more trad and specific feedback about certain events (such as subtitles and trigger warnings for the *Celtic Animation Film Festival*, which are appreciated and understood).

As happens frequently (and to every festival we speak to) more publicity in more places is requested. This is standard feedback and an expected condition of appraisal, though we recognise in 2019 –without distribution issues- this is a fair comment. That said, it means people welcome our information and want to see it as part of their everyday travel and leisure.

We have a smattering of calls for music, though nothing suggests it should become a music festival, demonstrating that our move to being 'arts and culture led' and multidisciplinary is transferring well and playing to our advantage, with people appreciating how the festival made them feel and acknowledging the diversity.

Suggestions will be incorporated in to our planning; consideration about size of print will be made in line with updated marketing priorities and specific event feedback will be given to the producers where the work is ongoing.

Caillte, choreographed
by Clara Kerr, performed
as part of
In:Visible Women
at Tate, for
Tate Exchange



FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

Based on feedback and findings, the recommendation of the 2019 Festival Review -to inform the business plan- is to execute the following five points:

1. Secure multi-year core funding for two roles; increased project support and a growth in overall capacity

The existing Festival 'team', skill set and delivery capability has hit maximum capacity in terms of hours deliverable, existing core skills and programme scale. Substantial work is needed to underpin LIF's out-of-festival work, which promotes the Festival, supports artists, sustains resilience and networks, fundraises and builds evidence development.

For one person to undertake this year-on-year presents professional, legal and moral quandaries (see 'Director description', page 8). Single-point-of-failure routes present risks and stresses the Festival cannot afford if/when they fail (<http://www.continuitycentral.com/feature1011.html>). LIF must strategically build funding (short and long term) and income streams, expertise and capacity to develop, sustain and futureproof itself. It must move towards...

- receiving stable investment for work on Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) inclusion, artistic development and cultural dialogue
- long-term security for its team, those who work with us and audiences
- increased income – types and amounts
- improved artist support and development
- capacity for fundraising and time for developing bids and evaluation frameworks
- greater national recognition for its artistic and cultural output to help leverage investment, most likely achieved through mid and high level public realm work (immediate programmes include the *Liverpool Famine Trail* and work on dual-heritage Irish communities in Liverpool)
- two permanent roles, graduating from contract to employee status across the plan.

2. Develop public realm work to promote the LIF brand

The ability to cross-sell work from a public space is palpable, as evidenced during *In:Visible Women* (Tate, 2019) and LIF's Family Day. It improves figures, provides long-term engagement tools and embeds ideas with visitors. The outcome sought is to leave a lasting impression that builds LIF's reputation. The work should be investable and of interest to multiple stakeholders.

Projects to follow -from the outset of the 2020 Business Plan- are the revitalisation of the *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail*, starting with a *National Lottery Heritage Fund* application, which has already passed an expression of interest stage. This should be viewed as a series of projects, rolled out over a staged period of between 3 and 5 years, in consultation with the *National Lottery Heritage Fund*. Initial thoughts are:

- Year 1- Prepare the ground for the physical and digital infrastructure needed to present a world-class trail, complete with geo-caching and GPS. Engage all sites, create site custodians and undertake full audit of existing trail to make recommendations for conservation and expansion of the existing work
- Year 2 (2021) – Undertake a revitalisation of 7 key *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail* sites, creating augmented reality (AR) films with 7 community groups tasked to develop the scripts, screen plays and films connected to the 7 sites. These films must be available from onsite locations via mobile devices and must have a digital home, accessible from international locations. Year 1 will also undertake any restorative work needed at these 7 sites for the original plaques made in 1997
- Year 3 (2022) – Working in partnership with the *Strokestown National Famine Trail* (Co. Roscommon, Ireland) generate a motif that connects the Irish Famine Trail in Liverpool to theirs and install these at all the sites identified. Add AR capability and content for all new sites. The interface for the two trails will be as seamless as possible and connections with *Ireland Reaching Out*, city records and transitory stories made
- Year 4 (2023 – 175 years since the start of the An Gorta Mór migrations) – The combined trails of Liverpool and Strokestown will partner with the *Boston Famine Memorial Trail* (Massachusetts, USA) to create pilgrimage walks and events marking 175 years of the famine migrations

- Year 5 – With three famine trails running, create a pass the light event between the three sites, around which we commemorate the stories and history we have unveiled in the past 3 years' worth of work. Create a combined publication and online treasury of the three trail's findings.

LIF must generate other (scalable) public realm opportunities. These could be event based (i.e., setting up the first Irish dual-heritage annual conference) or visual art led (i.e., we take on an Irish pavilion as part of the *Liverpool* or *Venice Biennial*).

3. Create and use a set of resonant lead events that promote the wider programme

Key connecting events help the press tackle a large programme, especially when tied to the theme. They help to sell a through-story, generating positive cross-sales and deep(er) media penetration. The theme 'unique stories' creatively told' caught people's attention, tapped in to a zeitgeist for story and was open enough for artists and audiences to identify with. Under this, *In:Visible Women* allowed us to invite conversation about stories and cross-sell events such as *Cailte*, *Go Lovely Rose*, *Hello Delia Murphy*, *Remembering Peggy*, *Visible Women*, *Rebels and Friends*, etc. The idea of the festival receiving stories as well as telling them was well liked by press and should be capitalised on within 'Exchange' in 2020.

LIF needs to understand its USP as a programmer. Large-scale commercial events are a risk with our current audience. Small, intimate and resonant events work best and gain deep engagement. Using these to cross-sell the wider programme is critical.

4. Sign off and broadcast programme from summer onwards

Teamed with Points 1 and 5 is getting key programme sign off in June/July. This is essential for addressing

- funding issues, budgets and deposits
- press statements
- print distribution
- additional marketing needs and social media presence in relation to any of the above
- making time for and spreading the weight of press interviews
- undertaking pre-sales and understanding ticket buying behaviours
- providing time for web-content work
- spreading the load of content uploads
- modifying distribution strategies if needed, in accordance with buying behaviours
- handling cultural calendar/global event clashes, if relevant
- and ensuring LIF's messages are disseminated and understood before press attention diverts to other activity/cultural news.

This timing effects all funding applications, the consideration of evaluation deadlines, long-term/big scale project development and funding and programme readiness for the bid writing process, so is critical to the cyclical development of the Festival.

5. Distribute programme early; ensure partner buy-in for online and in-print promotion

Points 4 and 5 dovetail, but show the two different functions of programme readiness and promotion.

By far the best attended/followed events are those where the partner supports the promotion of the event. Our PR and Comms outputs redouble when promoter support happens. It is critical to the success of events (particularly paid entry events) and needs to be formalised, where feasible, to build the capacity of the Festival to promote shared events. Consequently, it is essential to get print and messaging signed off in late summer and for LIF to push to partners to display, promote and sell.

These points span the development of an artistic core of events and exhibits through which we will enact the Business Plan and futureproof LIF's objectives. Arts and culture is the delivery mechanism by which we deliver LIF's mission and the means by which we will secure our future. By accomplishing these five objectives, cyclically, we will put the *Liverpool Irish Festival* on a strong footing for the future.



THANKS

We extend our thanks to all our partners and their staff; our venues, hosts and their teams; our volunteers and Board members; artists and collaborators. We thank our networks and supporters, sponsors and friends. In addition, those who came before today's team and the many that we have met during and since this year's festival – thank you.

Additional praise and thanks go to this year's funders.

FESTIVAL FUNDERS



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