



## SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

### Project Case Study: Making the Future

#### THEME:

Building Positive Relations:  
Regional Level Projects

#### FUNDING (ERDF+MATCH):

€1,829,814.67

#### MATCH FUNDERS:

Executive Office Northern  
Ireland and the Department  
of Rural and Community  
Development, Ireland

#### LEAD PARTNER:

Nerve Centre

#### PROJECT PARTNERS:

National Museums North-  
ern Ireland, Public Record  
Office of Northern Ireland  
and Linen Hall Library

#### PROJECT CONTACT:

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org

Start Date: 01/07/17

End Date: 31/10/2021

 [https://  
www.makingthefuture  
.eu/](https://www.makingthefuture.eu/)

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**Making the Future is a significant cross-border cultural heritage programme that uses exhibitions, community engagement and events to examine key elements of our shared past. It aims to empower people to use museum collections and archives to explore the past and create a powerful vision for future change.**

To date, the project has engaged over 1,700 people, from different communities and cultural & religious backgrounds, in sustained and meaningful programmes; providing them with the opportunity to get involved, to have their voices heard, to tell stories relevant to their lives, and to be creative and to gain new skills.

*“Making the Future is an ambitious and exciting project that has shown the benefits of cultural and heritage organisations working together to explore some of the key issues affecting society. The achievements and outputs from the project are evidence of the keen interest and desire from communities, across the region, to engage with the past, to explore collections and archives and to have their voices heard.”*

Niall Kerr, Making the Future Project Manager



In February 2020, the project launched an exciting new CultureLab exhibition in the Ulster Museum. CultureLab includes the famous differences blackboard from the hit TV series Derry Girls and an accompanying interactive religious stereotype calculator. This can be viewed by visiting:

[www.culturelab.makingthefuture.eu](http://www.culturelab.makingthefuture.eu)

#### Key Project Outputs (as of January 2021):

- Three new exhibitions which have travelled to 14 locations with audiences of over 90,000 people, with a new exhibition to launch early 2021.
- Five new digital exhibitions launched, with 50,000 views.
- 70 events, including talks, film screenings and digital workshops and 79 community engagement programmes, with over 1,700 participants.
- Over 20 new resources developed including community developed tours, digital walking tours, animations, graphic novels and websites.



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Faced with the challenges of COVID-19, the Making the Future team quickly implemented a new digital approach to its delivery. The result was a wider geographical spread of participants taking part from across the region in a safe and creative online space. Many participants commented that the project had helped them through a particularly lonely and difficult time.

*“Overall, it has been an exceptional programme that came at the right time to reduce the stress and isolation of lockdown. It has helped me see things from a different perspective and was a source of calm.”*

Participants view of the project during COVID-19



Postcards from the Edge, an on-line community engagement programme, where participants explored the Linen Hall Library's postcard collection before taking part in a series of historical and creative workshops. Participants created their own postcards reflecting on life during lockdown while drawing comparisons to the impact of life during the troubles.

#### Key Attitudinal Outputs:

- 70% of participants are now able to see issues from the past from a different perspective and feel less prejudiced as a result of taking part in the project.
- 80% had developed new creative skills and developed their communication and team working skills by taking part in the programme.
- Participants have recorded an average 10% increase in their understanding of Irish/Northern Irish history and 20% increase in self confidence and self esteem.