

Virtual Meeting of the Expert Advisory Group on Centenary Commemorations

Tuesday, 20th April 2021 at 1.15 pm

Minutes

Attendees:

Dr Maurice Manning (*Chair*)
Dr Martin Mansergh (*Deputy Chair*)
Professor Mary Daly
Mr Gabriel Doherty
Dr Anne Dolan
Professor Diarmaid Ferriter
Professor Patrick Geoghegan
Dr Mary Harris
Dr Leeann Lane
Comdt. Stephen MacEoin
Dr William Murphy
Professor Eunan O'Halpin
Dr Éamon Phoenix
Ms Sinéad Copeland *D/TCAGSM*
Ms Orlaith Lochrin *D/TCAGSM*

Apologies:

Dr Sandra Collins
Dr Sinéad McCoole
Mr Francis Devine
Mr Jerry Kelleher *D/Taoiseach*
Mr Conor Falvey *D/TCAGSM*

Guest Attendees:

Ms Louise Lowe
Mr Theo Dorgan

Key Points:

Louise Lowe, of ANU Productions, together with writer and poet, Theo Dorgan, gave a presentation to the Group concerning plans for a new theatrical two-day performance by ANU Productions to mark the centenary of the Treaty Debates – one of the most significant events in the Decade of Centenaries calendar for 2021.

The Group welcomed and endorsed the ‘*Staging the Treaty*’ proposals as a very innovative, ambitious, and imaginative initiative. Members are happy to offer any assistance or advice that might be helpful, particularly around identifying opportunities for making the performance publicly accessible to the greatest extent possible.

It was noted that the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media, Catherine Martin T.D. is also very supportive of the proposals and has approved funding to support the project.

An update was provided by Dr Mary Harris arising from the presentation to the Group by Elaine Martin and Patrick Nevin on 9th February. Options for a collaborative initiative with NUIG are under consideration and further updates will be provided to the Group as discussions progress.

The Department provided an update regarding proposals for a bursary scheme for historians and welcomed ideas and advice from the Group. It was agreed that a focus on more localised histories, local historians, and local research would be very helpful. Public accessibility will be a key consideration. Potential for an all-island approach, engagement with the Diaspora, and scope for the inclusion of comparative studies were among the ideas proposed for further consideration.

An update was given regarding the series of online public talks, hosted by Queen's University Belfast, to mark the centenary of Partition (*with the first talk subsequently held on 26th April 2021*). The series is supported by the UK and Irish governments, and by the Royal Irish Academy and the British Academy.

It was agreed that potential opportunities for engagement between the Expert Advisory Group on Centenary Commemorations and the Northern Ireland Centenary Historical Advisory Panel will be considered.

An update will be provided to the Group before the next meeting regarding the various cross-border initiatives being supported to explore the experiences of minority communities on both sides of the border following Partition.

Date of next meeting to be confirmed (*subsequently agreed for 29th June 2021*).

Ends.