

Extra Investment for Creativity and Gaming with Teenagers

In an effort to involve more teenagers in creativity through the Cruinniú na nÓg day (a free day of creativity for children and young people), Creative Ireland at Wexford County Council has received extra investment from the Night Time Economy and the Shared Island funds. This has enabled a game-making collaboration between teenagers in Wexford and Belfast, and an interactive evening of gaming and creativity at Whites Hotel.

Last weekend (8th and 9th June) ten teenagers from Wexford and ten teenagers from Belfast worked together to develop five new video games from scratch. The young people were based at computers in Wexford Arts Centre and in The MAC in Belfast. They worked collaboratively, linking with their cross-border teammates through video conferencing technology. Led by experienced game developers and artists from Galway Gam Jam and Kippie, the young people explored programming, visual game design and game narratives, steering the design and creativity themselves.

The video games created by the Wexford-Belfast group will be available to play at *The Night Games*, a spectacular evening extravaganza for teenagers to be held at Whites Hotel, Wexford on 15th June. A huge screen will be set up in the ballroom to show the games, while a number of non-digital game stations will also be set up for play. The young people will have an opportunity to help land artist Mayumi Nakabayashi create a large artwork from natural materials, and have a go at plate spinning and juggling with Doulab circus performers. Music Generation's Yellow Bellows Choir will perform, and there will be a break-dancing segment with some young dancers.

Cathaoirleach of Wexford Cllr. John Fleming says: *'Opportunities for young people to be creative is a vital part of what is enjoyable about growing up in County Wexford. Developing creative thinking as a skill is of life-long benefit that spans careers,*

promotes positive mental health and influences social mobility. It's fantastic for Wexford County Council to get this investment for teenager-focused events, and provides real progression for our ever-evolving Cruinniú na nÓg celebrations'.

The Night Games will run from 7.30 – 10.30 pm at Whites Hotel on 15th June. As with all Cruinniú na nÓg events it is absolutely free, but booking is essential. Please book through gamenightcruinniu@gmail.com . The full programme for Cruinniú na nÓg Wexford 2024 can be found here:

<https://cruinniu.creativeireland.gov.ie/events/location/wexford/>



Teenagers in Wexford Arts Centre at the Wexford-Belfast Game Jam



Breakdancer Arnie Kovacs

Ends