



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme

2014-2020



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Building Successful Literary Tourism Experiences for Visitors

Workshop content

- What is Spot-lit?
- Understanding of Literary Tourism and Cultural Tourism and how it can benefit your business
- Understanding your local and regional context
- Assessing the literary tourism potential in your region
- Aligning your business with the tourism and hospitality sector
- Working together for success



Spot-lit is an NPA funded project which aims to grow the literary tourism sector in the NPA region, by enhancing capacity in the literary tourism sector and supporting small and medium-sized organisations and businesses to grow, collaborate and better engage audiences together.

The project will run until September 2021. Core elements include:

- Development of a shared narrative for literary tourism in the NPA
- Shared learning opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) engaging with the programme (10 in each partner region)
- Delivery of new and innovative approaches to literary tourism development
- An SME engagement programme delivered across all partner areas to assist development of their local literary tourism potential
- Destination development approaches for literary tourism in partner regions



What is spot-lit?



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Project partners include:

- Irish Central & Border Area Network (ICBAN), Northern Ireland (Lead Partner)
- Arts Over Borders (AOB), Northern Ireland
- Lapland University of Applied Sciences (Lapland UAS), Iceland
- Kajaani University of Applied Sciences (KAMK), Finland
- Regional Council of Kainuu (RCK), Finland
- Western Development Commission (WDC), Ireland
- Wigtown Festival Company (WFC), Scotland



Associate Partners

- UNESCO City of Literature, Reykjavik, Iceland
- UNESCO City of Literature, Edinburgh, Scotland

spot-lit. partners

What is Cultural Tourism?

Cultural Tourism encompasses a wide spectrum of cultural and heritage experiences that generally involve events, festivals, artistic performances, cultural activities, museums, galleries, sporting events and so on.

It also refers to the historical, traditional and contemporary aspects of our indigenous culture, our built and natural landscape and heritage, our people and our places, and our cultural and creative identities.

It is not confined to urban areas; all can benefit from efforts to cultivate and develop cultural and creative experiences for their visitors.





What is Literary Tourism?

Literary tourism is a niche in the wider cultural tourism field. It connects people with literature primarily through literary places and landscapes:

- As depicted in novels and fictional works
- Of inspiration to authors
- Associated with an author's life
- Which blend real and imagined worlds linked to written works
- Which are locations for films based on books
- Which celebrate literature through a cluster of literary-related activities, experiences, and events (created, promoted and developed to attract visitors)
- Which are authentic and provide engaging and immersive experiences
- Which through their connectivity with literature, have transformed the reader into a tourist

Ireland is home to a rich history of literature and literary icons.

It is recognised worldwide as a nation of writers, poets and playwrights with three Nobel Laureates for Literature in George Bernard Shaw, Samuel Beckett and W.B. Yeats.

Literary tourism is a core element of Ireland's cultural tourism offer incorporating literary places, festivals, immersive experiences, attractions, landmarks, tours and trails, summer schools and educational programmes.

Literary places in the West, associated with writers and poets offer the visitor a wealth of literary tourism experiences from dedicated literary festivals to sites associated with literary works or the lives of writers, playwrights and poets.

Connectivity of Literary Tourism to place is an important feature with explicit connections between:

W.B. Yeats - Sligo

Pádraig Ó Conaire - Galway

Douglas Hyde - Roscommon

John McGahern - Leitrim

New approaches to literary tourism incorporating contemporary players in Irish literature are evident in such events as the Cúirt Festival of Literature, W.B. Yeats and Douglas Hyde Summer Schools and multi-disciplinary arts programmes and festivals.

Regional agencies and educational players support the SME sector towards the development and delivery of literary tourism products and services.

e.g. Sligo Institute of Tourism's new educational programmes incorporating literary tourism development.

Local and regional context

National and International Context

The development of literary tourism is supported at National and International level via the following Government Departments, agencies and organisations:

Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

- Creative Ireland Programme
- Culture Ireland

National Cultural Institutions

- National Library of Ireland
- Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI)

Agencies

- Arts Council of Ireland
- Poetry Ireland
- Irish Writer's Centre

Department of Tourism & Sport

- Tourism Ireland
- Fáilte Ireland



Clár Éire Ildánach
*Creative Ireland
Programme*
2017–2022



What will understanding literary tourism do for my business?





Who is the literary tourist?

- The literary tourist is a person who has a specific interest in literature (enthusiast / motivated tourist) and seeks to visit places associated with authors, poets, playwrights etc. and/or places that are connected to their writing – e.g. the setting for a novel etc.
- They tend to be people who research their destination before travel and who are interested in experiencing an immersive and authentic experiences during their visit.
- They enjoy contemporary literature, getting up close to authors via literary festivals, events, symposia etc.
- They will remain longer in a destination and have a higher discretionary spend.

Assessing your Literary Tourism potential

- What are you trying to achieve?
- What do you have in place already to build upon?
- Who will benefit from your work?
- Who needs to be involved to make it happen?
- How will you fund your idea?
- What will success look like?



Worksheet 1

Assessing your literary tourism potential

What are you trying to achieve? What is your idea?	
What do you have in place already to build upon?	
Who is your core customer – who will benefit from your idea/concept?	
Who are your competitors?	
Who needs to be involved to make it a reality?	
What does success look like??	

*'Literary tourists are often attracted
to a destination by a blend of real
and imagined worlds.'*

*For some, the books or the poetry
have inspired and transformed the
reader into a tourist.'*

Mary McGuckin - Literary Tourism and Heats' Legacy



Literary Places

Developing Literary Places

Consider how your literary tourism concept connects with your location....

- Will it be delivered via a trail or tour, through a series of events, a festival, a learning programme, summer school or symposium?
- Will it engage local communities so they can be your ambassadors for visitors?
- Is it connected to inspirational landscapes, to particular writings, to specific authors?
- Can you provide all that a visitor needs when they come to your location? If not- how can you overcome this?
- Can you attract a visitor as part of a broader tourism destination or brand?
- How will you maintain authenticity of the literary context – within a literary tourism interpretation of the destination?



Exercise		Auditing Your Local Area					
This exercise will help you to identify your existing literary / cultural tourism offer, enabling you to assess how your business concept can add value to your location							
	Yes	No	Development potential	Customer profile	Seasonality	Where	Partners
Literary Places							
Literary People							
Cultural Heritage							
Cultural Infrastructure							
Festival(s)							
Natural Heritage							
Current tourism product							



Developing Partnerships

Get connected - know what's going on in your region: Stay in touch with your local enterprise office, tourism office, local government department for culture, local development agency etc, know their agenda and align your business accordingly

Be creative - invite your networks to an event / exhibition, showcase to help them better understand what you are trying to achieve

Keep yourself market savvy - Sign up for ezines and connect online with groups and organisations who share your vision.

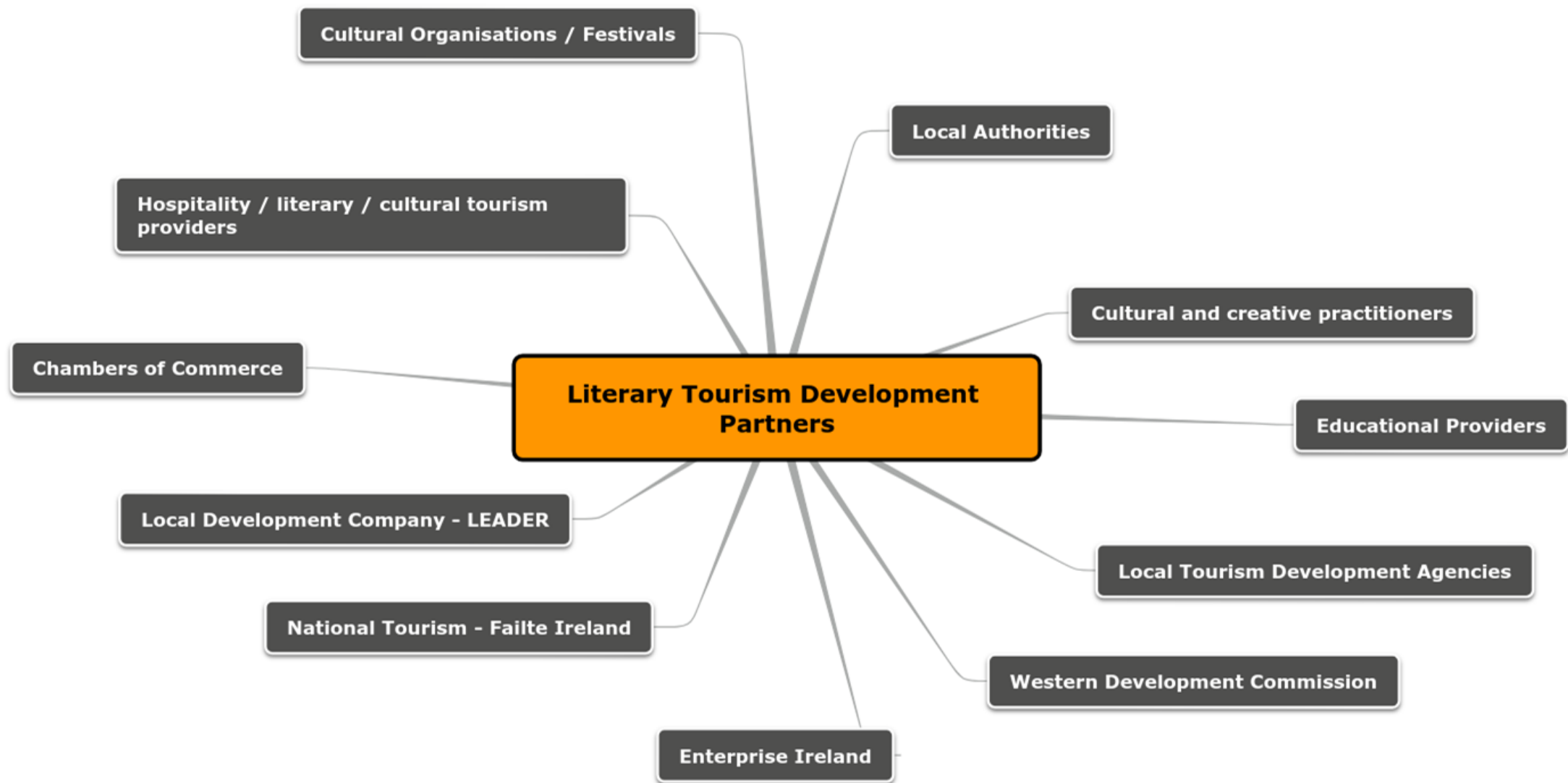
Use the NPA partnership and Spot-Lit. Programme

Develop local links and collaborations and build on them as appropriate.

- **Think across communities** – is there someone else thinking the same thing as you? Are there other literary tourism providers or tourism-related services that would enhance your business idea?
- Might you be able to **work together to make it happen** faster, better, more often, in multiple locations etc?
- **Learn from other people's mistakes** – build on learning from what has worked in your location in the past. What can you leverage for your success?
- **Devise innovative ideas**, programmes and events with partners to engage and inspire your audiences and to maximise engagement with new audiences. Digital technologies can be really useful in this regard.
- **Mix it up** – consider how what you are developing might work in different locations – in unusual places – make your literary location and 'sense of place' work for you.



Exercise	Working together to refine your idea
	This exercise is used to help you to explore with partners what will work best for development of your literary tourism assets in your location, and how together you can present a compelling offer for your community and visitors.
What is the significance of what you are developing to your community, your region?	
Who locally has the expertise or connections to deliver success?	
Who do you need to connect with beyond your local area?	
What specifically do you want from each individual, organisation?	
Who will take responsibility for making these connections?	
What message are you giving them to get their buy in to work with you?	
What is the timeline for completion of your development process?	



Building success

- Seek support when needed
- Make sure to get involved and be part of the planning process
- Don't reinvent the wheel - Learn from other's successes and failures
- Build your audiences
- Move with your market
- Measure your success



Questions



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