



**EUROPEAN CAPITAL
OF CULTURE**

Leeuwarden

European Capital of Culture 2018

Informal Post-Designation Meeting

Report by the Monitoring and Advisory Panel

Brussels

November 2014

Introduction

This report follows the meeting¹ in Brussels on 20 November 2014 between Leeuwarden, one of the two European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) in 2018, and the monitoring and advisory panel (the “panel”). It is the first meeting since the selection meeting in September 2013² and the formal designation of Leeuwarden as an ECOC in May 2014.

The report is addressed to the Leeuwarden Foundation (“Lwd2018”) who may decide on its distribution.

Attendance

The panel members:

Steve Green (chair) and Jordi Pardo, appointed by the European Parliament 2012-14

Anu Kivilo and Norbert Riedl, appointed by the Council of the EU 2013-15

Dr Ulrich Fuchs and Dr Suzana Žilič Fišer, appointed by the European Commission 2014-2016

Dr Elisabeth Vitouch, nominated by the Committee of the Regions 2013-2015

For Lwd2018:

Ton F.van Djik	CEO
John Bonnema	Business Director
Jelle Burggraff	International Relations
Oeds Westerhof	Programme manager

Also in attendance were observers from the European Commission (DG EAC) and the co-ECOC in 2018, Valletta.

Report from Lwd18

The Lwd18 Foundation submitted a short written report in advance of the meeting. The report outlined the activities of Lwd18 since their selection in 2013.

At the meeting Lwd18 made a presentation which included these points:

- The Supervisory Board of the Foundation has been established and the first members appointed. Its full membership will be completed by the end of 2014.

¹ The European Capitals of Culture are governed by Decision 1622/2006/EU of the European Parliament and Council. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32006D1622>

² http://ec.europa.eu/culture/tools/actions/documents/ecoc/2018/panel-report-netherlands_en.pdf

- The senior staffing is almost complete. The CEO and Business Director have been appointed. The Artistic Director has been recruited and will start full time work in the summer of 2015. In a change since the bidbook the CEO and Artistic Director are co-equals in a similar relationship as publisher/editor. The Artistic Director retains autonomy in artistic matters. The incoming Artistic Director is aware of the importance of the vision and projects in the bidbook.
- The LwD team has visited several ECOCs to gain knowledge, to save re-inventing the wheel. They have a good working relationship with Valletta and each has agreed to set aside €200,000 for joint projects to be developed from 2015.
- The budget from the public sector is almost secured, with no problems expected with the remaining regional funds. The team took 20 private sector companies to Riga to discuss with their counterparts the benefits of association with an ECOC.
- In the bidbook they planned to self-manage 50% of the projects. With a review of other ECOCs they have decided to outsource virtually all projects.
- They are working on the 41 projects outlined in the bidbook. All lead partners are completing detailed business plans with a deadline on March 2015. A review of the projects indicated an imbalance of partners from central and Eastern Europe. This is under review.
- One of the lessons learnt from their visits to ECOC is the importance of a clear focal point so that everyone knows that an ECOC is in progress. They will concentrate on the city centre of Leeuwarden.

Discussion

During the subsequent discussion the panel sought clarification on a number of issues and offered experience and advice. Topics included:

- The panel welcomed the progress made in this first year. The governance structure is almost complete and key stakeholders bought onside. The arms-length relationship with the mayor and city council appears firm. The visits to other ECOCs have been productive (a particular “best practice” being the visit by potential private sector partners to Riga).
- The senior staff recruitment is on schedule. It was appreciated by the panel that the centrality of the vision and projects in the bidbook was understood by the incoming Artistic Director.
- The panel noted the timetable for the business plans for bidbook projects. It is helpful that they will be completed and technically checked in time for a review by the Artistic Director in 2015. These projects normally form the core, but not totality, of the ECOC programme; it is expected that some may fall by the wayside and that others be developed in line with the concepts and objectives in the bidbook. There will be many small events and projects in 2018 beyond those in the bidbook. The panel advised that space should be kept open for late good projects (even up to the early days of the ECOC year itself). The panel noted and welcomed the importance

attached to the current under-representation of partners from eastern and central Europe. The European Dimension (in all three of its elements) needs to remain uppermost in the criteria for projects.

- **Recommendation 1:** the Artistic Director reviews the programme plans keeping the three elements of the European Dimension high on the criteria. Consideration should be given to projects during the year which have a “Why Go?” pull attraction.
- The panel discussed with LwD2018 the organisational implications of co-production and outsourcing. Most ECOCs end up with a balance between in house development (often linked to the major spectacles of opening, closing and often a mid-summer event and high profile projects) and outsourced. However with the latter approach although the administration can be outsourced accountability, quality and marketing remains with the ECOc management. Each such project needs an in-house manager who can control the event and its management.
 - **Recommendation 2:** the management review the requirements of in-house and outsourced projects and adjust organisational plans and budgets accordingly.
- The secondment of a staff member from the regional tourist organisation is a good move for experience and legacy.
 - **Recommendation 3:** as the marketing strategy develops it is important that the Artistic Director plays a leading role to ensure the cultural project of the ECOc is not lost within a broader city and regional tourism offer.
- The organisational costs appear low compared to recent ECOCs. This may be due to the previous point about outsourcing.
 - **Recommendation 4:** Whilst appreciative of the cost consciousness of the team the panel recommends a review over the next year of the staffing and organisational requirements.
- The panel noted that 30% of the income is forecast from the private sector (including foundations). This is considerably higher than that achieved by recent ECOCs and must remain a high risk part of the project.
 - **Recommendation 5:** The panel notes that LwD18 is keenly aware of the importance of this funding line and asks for a detailed report at the meeting in autumn 2015 with any implications for the programme.

- The panel noted the use of a company to collect and analysis the data for the monitoring and evaluation. Recent selection and monitoring panels have referred to the objectives set out in the Leeuwarden bidbook as “good practice”.
 - **Recommendation 6:** Lwd18 should ensure that all three elements of the European Dimension are included in the monitoring and evaluation processes and objectives; these are often omitted from the Impacts08 examples (the ECOC criteria have changed since 2008).
- The second year of an ECOC is often one in which public awareness and support for the ECOC declines and often adverse criticism emerges.
 - **Recommendation 7:** short term small scale events, in keeping with the ECOC vision and uniqueness, are supported as well as a high level of communication with stakeholders and the general public. A focus on the European Dimension can ensure that LwD18 supported events have a distinctiveness, including for example around Europe Day in May 2015.

Next Steps

In autumn 2015 the European Commission will invite LwD2018 for the first formal monitoring meeting. It will issue guidance on the content of the advance progress report; it will be more detailed than the report to this meeting and will include reference to the recommendations both in this report and those in the selection report. The main focus is likely to be on the plans for the programme and the panel looks forward to the initial views of the Artistic Director. The report from that meeting will be published on the European Commission’s website.

The panel thanks the LwD2018 delegation for their report and the open discussion. It congratulates them on a substantial achievement in their first year and looks forward to another successful year in the development of the ECOC.