

# Belfast Roadmap

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# About HUB-IN

## Mission

Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship for the Transformation of Historic Urban Areas (HUB-IN) aims to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in Historic Urban Areas (HUA), while preserving their unique social and cultural identity and the environment. The project adopts innovation and entrepreneurship as the main drivers of urban regeneration in HUAs and it is fully aligned with the International agendas for Cultural Sustainable Development (UNESCO) and Cultural Heritage Strategy (Council of Europe). In the first stage of HUB-IN, a network of Hubs of innovation and entrepreneurship will be developed in the HUAs of eight city partners (Lisbon, Slovenska Bistrica, Brasov, Nicosia, Genova, Grand Angoulême, Belfast, Utrecht) and in the second stage, the resulting methods and tools will be scaled up to a global network of HUAs in follower cities and the HUB-IN Alliance. The Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship will test, demonstrate and pilot activities of co-creation and co-design in three main clusters with the potential to deliver sustainable transformation of HUAs: 1) Culture and Creative industries, 2) New Lifestyles and 3) Resilient and Human Connected Places.

## Vision

HUB-IN expects to contribute to reverse trends of abandonment and neglect of historic heritage in a systemic way through the creation of networks of Hubs where innovation will be the main driver. The project will also have a direct impact on the creation of new sustainable opportunities for local traditional businesses and for the development of new creative skills and jobs.

## The Consortium behind HUB-IN





# FOREWORD

## HUB-IN Belfast - Maritime Mile

Belfast is a city poised for an exciting future with strategies and investments aligning to enhance and enrich heritage and culture, improve quality of life, create employment and stimulate business growth. The timing of the Horizon 2020 HUB-IN project could therefore not be better to both inform and benefit from the opportunities which these present.

The Belfast HUB-IN is located at the city's iconic Maritime Mile, a vibrant, accessible heritage destination which offers exciting opportunities for current and future generations. While the Maritime Mile already hosts major attractions such as Titanic Belfast and the SSE Arena, large sections of the waterfront area are still empty development sites. To reach its full potential, the area is undergoing a process of urban transformation and has recently become part of the city's new Innovation District which will provide a further catalytic step change for transformation.

It is important however that transformation continues to be heritage-led, promoting regeneration through innovation and entrepreneurship, while preserving the unique cultural, social and environmental identities and values of the area. This approach to transformation underpins our ambition to turn the city's waterfront into a people centric, revitalised, vibrant destination, home to a range of innovative and creative entrepreneurs, where the community thrives. The HUB-IN project will help to achieve this and as one of eight HUB-IN locations across Europe, it will provide rich opportunities for collaboration across traditional heritage sectors and new creative industry incumbents.

Throughout the last 12 months we have engaged with local stakeholders and citizens to find out what is important about the Maritime Mile and what the HUB-IN project should prioritise. Feedback reaffirmed people's deep appreciation of heritage, however it also highlighted a lack of things to do, especially in the evenings. Other challenges include the connectivity to, from and along the Maritime Mile; the displacement of older communities; the risk of trading local character for shiny, new developments, our tourism sector not fully recovering post COVID or maybe worse, fully recovering and forgetting key lessons learnt during the pandemic.

In November 2021, our HUB-IN stakeholder workshop brought local businesses, tourism and heritage owners/operators, creative industries, education, neighborhood communities together. Collectively they highlighted the importance of the digital and creative industries sector and added value that could be achieved by bringing the unique perspective of creatives to the preservation and enhancement of the Maritime Mile through innovation.

Six key themes were identified to steer the focus of the HUB-IN project: Digital Technology, Music and Arts, Local People & Families, Heritage, Talent & Education, Space & connectivity, Environment & Sustainability.

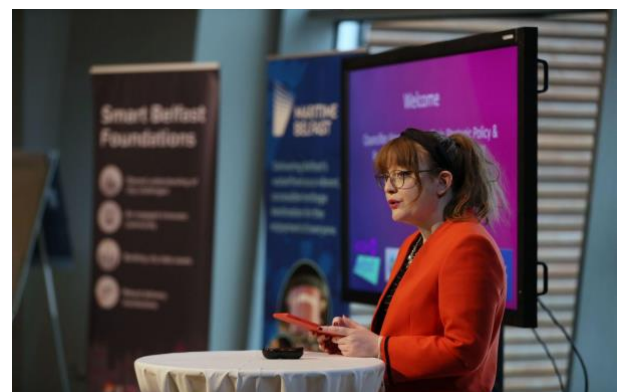
Through further engagement, these have now been consolidated into four missions:

1. Digitising the Maritime Mile
2. New ways to Explore the Maritime Mile
3. A New Maritime Mile Economy
4. A Maritime Mile for Belfastians



Through a process of co-design core values were also developed to underpin the delivery of our missions. These values will ensure the Belfast HUB-IN at the Maritime Mile will be:

- Inclusive, accessible, connected to local communities
- Sustainable
- Innovative, open, outward looking, culturally, economically and creatively energetic
- Future Proofed, connecting the past to the future
- An environment for collaboration and new partnerships across its inhabitants



## Collaboration

The HUB-IN pilot will be driven forward by Belfast City Council and Maritime Belfast Trust and we will use this opportunity to build on existing relationships and widen our local engagement with creative industries, education providers, digital and technology sectors. Through the existing Maritime Mile Destination Forum, we already have a strong network of local stakeholders and a track record of working together across landowners, developers, local businesses, tourism, heritage and cultural sectors. Underpinning all collaboration will be the need to engage local citizens and neighbourhood communities.



## Delivery

The four missions will be delivered through innovative challenge calls, stimulating new partnerships to address current issues and problems. We will work with local partners to develop our challenge process, as the process will be as important as the successful projects.

Successful prototypes connecting and animating the Maritime Mile will be tested as part of the Belfast Maritime Festival 2023 and Belfast's Year of Culture 2024

Monitoring, evaluation and review will follow to ensure we learn what has worked well and not so well, sharing our experiences with our HUB-IN partners.

Sustainable funding and business models will be applied to the prototypes to ensure that the HUB-IN legacy continues beyond 2025. The opportunity to embed support for the challenge process as a pre-requisite for new companies locating on the Maritime Mile will also be explored, a Heritage Lab, continually exploring, innovating ways to tell our Maritime Story.

Ultimately, through the Belfast HUB-IN, the Maritime Mile will be a place:

- Where creatives bring their unique perspectives to support the preservation and enhancement of the Maritime Mile through innovation.
- Where value is given to the intangible heritage of the area, making it a source of inspiration and increase community participation and skills.
- Where the concept of a shared space continues to be supported and promoted for the people of Belfast and not only a tourist destination.

Quotes from some of the stakeholders interviewed or integrated in this process:

**Councillor Áine Groogan, Chair, Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, Belfast City Council, November 2021**

*"The HUB-IN project provides an opportunity to explore how we can harness innovation to overlay new ideas and concepts over old to further enrich the Maritime Mile for the benefit of those who live in, study, work or visit our city".*

**Gerry Hughes, Trustee, Maritime Belfast Trust (Co-Design Workshop November 2021)**

*HUB-IN will support Maritime Belfast Trust in our journey to transform Belfast's waterfront into a vibrant, innovative waterfront destination. A waterfront with stories and character – past, present and future – which retains its heritage identity, is locally embraced and internationally acclaimed'*

**Shane Quinn, Belfast Buildings Trust**

*"The process of involving local creatives in what happens on the Maritime Mile is really important, that they are embedded in the whole process, it's about that notion that creativity is what feeds innovation"*

**Jimmy Lavery, Engagement Manager, National Lottery Heritage**

*"There is huge potential for modern perspectives, ideas, different ways of doing things, updated ways of doing things. The old ways of learning and hearing about history and delivering history and heritage, we want to see new ways of doing things and I think the creatives and innovators here can do that."*

**Clare Guinness, Innovation District Director, Innovation city Belfast**

*"Delighted to discuss how heritage and innovation mix in the creation and development of the Maritime Mile in terms of connectivity, sustainability encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship and collaboration in the city to make it a better place to be"*

**Terry McKeown, Sailortown Regeneration**

*"It's about how our community can feel ownership of the area and want to come down and engage with the area. Its teasing all the ideas out and creatives can be useful in bringing those ideas together"*



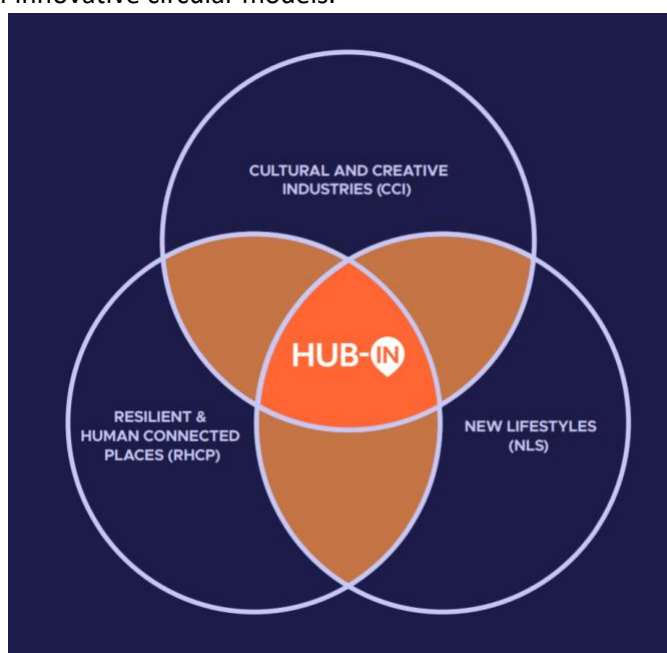
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# Intro: what makes a HUB-IN place

**HUB-IN Places<sup>1</sup>** | A physical or virtual hub of innovation, where cultural wealth and heritage provide a unique competitive advantage – a key resource for enhancing the sustainable regeneration of historic urban areas. HUB-IN Places are distinguished by their local action and their global interconnection. They are local hotspots of creativity, community empowerment and entrepreneurship, bringing together local stakeholders, academia, industry, and local governments. HUB-IN Places are hubs of innovation recognised by their project integrated portfolio approach that blends three HUB-IN clusters of innovation. They are places to co-design, test and develop new solutions, ideas, and creative businesses in a real urban environment. HUB-IN Places are also globally interconnected in a network that favours sharing knowledge, open innovation processes and the development of innovative circular models.

**HUB-IN clusters<sup>2</sup>** | The HUB-IN Framework concept adopts a strategic cluster approach to the regeneration of Historic Urban Areas (HUA) through innovation and entrepreneurship. HUB-IN clusters of innovation are economic, social and ecological hotspots of innovation at the neighbourhood<sup>14</sup> scale for the heritage and cultural led regeneration of HUAs. HUB-IN identifies three main common clusters of innovation that should not be seen as silos of activities, but rather intertwining activities across the three clusters complementing and contributing to the development of HUB-IN Places.



<b>Culture and Creative Industries (CCI)</b>	Cultural heritage is at the centre of innovation and creativity, to nurture socio-economic development.	Innovative products and services   Adaptive reuse of traditional skills   Cultural and creative tourism
<b>New Lifestyles (NLS)</b>	Innovative sustainable living patterns, inclusivity, and diversity, are the main ingredients to improve well-being.	Consuming & prosuming   Living   Mobility   Health & well-being
<b>Resilient &amp; Human Connected Places (RHCP)</b>	Sustainable and regenerative use of resources, community cohesion, digital and human connectivity, are key to improve ecological and social resilience of historic places.	Environmental balance   Empowering communities   Liveable and human connected places

<sup>1</sup> HUB-IN Framework: The Ingredients of a HUB-IN Place - available at: <https://hubin-project.eu/library/the-ingredients-of-a-hub-in-place-hub-in-framework/>

<sup>2</sup> HUB-IN Clusters of Innovation – HUB-IN Framework – available at: <https://hubin-project.eu/library/hub-in-clusters-of-innovation-hub-in-framework/>

# Roadmap in a nutshell







# HUB-IN *Belfast* Roadmap

## Vision

**The Belfast HUB-IN is where creatives bring their unique perspectives to support the preservation and enhancement of the Maritime Mile through innovation.**

It gives value to the intangible heritage of the area, making it a source of inspiration and increases community participation and skills. The Maritime Mile is a shared space for the people of Belfast and not only a tourist destination.

### The Maritime Mile

is a vibrant, accessible, heritage destination for current and future generations to enjoy.

## Values



**Inclusive, accessible, connected to local communities**



**Innovative, open, outward looking, culturally, economically and creatively energetic**



**Creates an environment for collaboration and new partnerships across its inhabitants**



**Future proofed, connecting the past to the future**



**Sustainable**

These values are well connected and linked with the original Maritime Mile themes and values developed by Maritime Belfast Trust, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the missions and portfolio of key actions identified via the HUB-IN project.







# Main Mission

To turn the city's waterfront into a people centric, revitalised, vibrant destination, home to a range of innovative and creative entrepreneurs, where the community thrives.

## Mission 1

### Stimulating innovation and creativity on the Maritime Mile

- Set up and run a challenge call targeted to local creatives and innovators
- Set up a steering group to oversee the development of a challenge-led process, promote open innovation challenge calls and evaluate submissions
- Seek opportunities for alignment to leverage other resources, funding and engagement platforms (e.g. Year of Culture 2024)

## Mission 2

### New Ways to Explore the Maritime Mile

- Set up a central platform to communicate what's on the Mile and highlight storytelling
- Storytelling via creative digital experiences to enhance the experience of the area for visitors and local communities
- Set up an open accessible shared hub for people to access and contribute information on historic environment
- Make a public discovery trail along the Maritime Mile
- Change the look and feel of the area and provide a focal point to drive new footfall by animating the Buildings and the River
- Collaborate on the digitisation and gamification of the Maritime Mile

## Mission 3

### A New Maritime Mile Economy

- Identify potential outdoor locations to showcase live music, theatre and entertainment
- Scope an After-Hours strategy enhancing night economy along the Maritime Mile
- Align Maritime Mile development and opportunities with the local skills agenda and initiatives
- Identify potential locations (e.g. vessels, existing premises, common land and water) opportunities for micro businesses for risk taking pilots, trialling different concepts (arts, food and beverage, music)
- Organise regular events to animate the Mile
- Create networking opportunities and a directory to stimulate collective learning and sharing
- Promote sustainability on the Maritime Mile with local stakeholders and businesses

## Mission 4

### A Maritime Mile for Belfastians

- Develop a community engagement plan with new and innovative ways of engaging communities on the Mile
- Create ownership and engagement in the public realm by strengthening existing structures to include community representation
- Create opportunities for community education & skills development via the Challenge Call and other HUB-IN initiatives
- Develop social inclusion charter for the Maritime Mile to ensure a space and stories for all

# Part 1 – Setting the context of the Belfast HUB-IN

Belfast is a city poised for an exciting future with strategies and investments aligning to enhance and enrich heritage and culture, improve quality of life, create employment and stimulate business growth. The Belfast HUB-IN, located at the city's iconic Maritime Mile will have the opportunity to inform, shape and benefit from the current strategic landscape.

This section presents the context in which the Belfast Hub-In will operate. It provides an overview of key policies and strategies, as well as significant projects and actions already underway that align with relevant Hub-In programme innovation clusters as outlined above.

## 1.1- An introduction to Belfast

Located on the banks of the River Lagan, Belfast is Northern Ireland's capital and largest city with 343,542 inhabitants. By the early 19th century Belfast was a major port, playing an important role in the Industrial Revolution as a major centre of Irish linen production, tobacco-processing, ropemaking and possessing what was once the world's largest shipyard. After the Second World War Belfast's status as a global industrial centre started to decline and the city experienced many years of economic, political and social uncertainty.

Today however Belfast is a city of renewed ambition and optimism with a passion for progress. It has the second fastest growing knowledge economy in the UK and has become a world-leading hub of discovery in digital technology, with 44% of new jobs in the city in the tech sector and 80% of businesses locating in the city choosing to re-invest there.

Belfast has a young and highly educated population with one third under 21 years old. This youthful population helps to supply the demand for talent from global companies locating in the region, as well as supporting fast-growing indigenous businesses. Third level educational establishments including Ulster University, Queen's University Belfast and Belfast Metropolitan College work hard to ensure that students qualify with the skills the city and its businesses need to support their ambitions and those outlined in the city's strategy the Belfast Agenda.

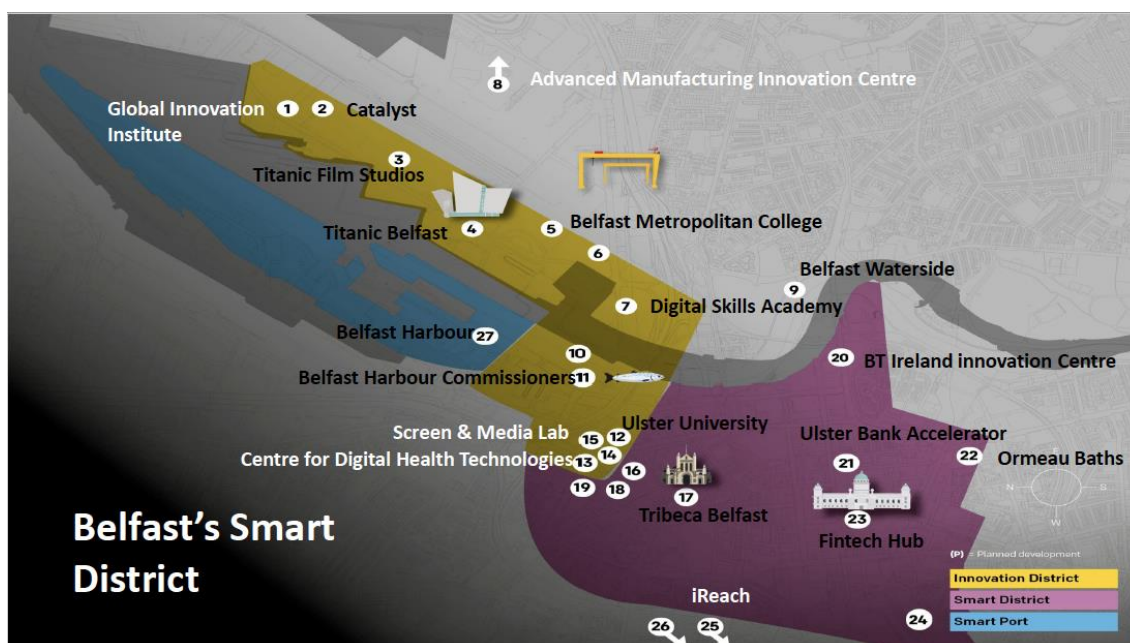
The signing of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) in recent times is one of the city's most significant achievements. Over the next decade the BRCD will provide transformative co-investment of £1 billion to deliver over 20 highly ambitious projects, create up to 20,000 new and better jobs and help to make the region a global investment destination. The Deal will strengthen the Belfast region's support for growth sectors such as life and health sciences, digital and creative industries and advanced manufacturing. It will also support next generation digital capabilities and boost tourism by creating world-class visitor experiences and enable regeneration.

The BRCD also underpins the Northern Ireland Department for the Economy's 10 X vision which champions a decade of innovation with targeted support for sectors that can become global leaders within the next 10 years. Investments such as the £72 million in Studio Ulster will create opportunities for Belfast to enhance its reputation as a global focal point for the digital and creative industries sector, building on the legacy of productions such as the Game of Thrones (series was filmed in Belfast, creating over 800 new jobs and giving extra visibility to the city), bringing in new talent, stimulating the creation of an open and collaborative culture, connecting the city at the international level and driving physical and economic regeneration.



To maximise the impact of this momentous £1 billion BRCD investment Belfast City Council has come together with five of the city's key institutions - Belfast Harbour, Catalyst, Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University and Invest Northern Ireland. Together they have launched Innovation City Belfast (ICB) and aim to create:

- An **Innovation District** – building on the city's strengths in financial, green and health technology, the Innovation District hopes to attract high quality investment and provide an environment where the latest research from Belfast's universities can be translated into businesses to support the growth of Belfast's innovative SMEs
- A **Smart district** – which will be further developed in the city centre where new technologies can be developed, tested and deployed in 'real world settings' to help the city address post-Covid recovery challenges including climate change, urban mobility, the future of the high street and healthy urban living
- A **Smart Port** – with investments in 5G connectivity and digital technologies the Smart Port will support Belfast Harbour's aims to become the world's best regional port and a key economic hub for green growth. It will be located in the largest harbour area in the UK which covers 2000 acres and hosts around 760 industries of different sectors, such as technology companies (Microsoft and IBM among them) and companies working in the film and cultural sector.



## 1.2 - Existing strategies

Belfast City Council has set a number of priorities, such as creating jobs and investment, making life better for all residents, creating a competitive and sustainable city and connecting people to opportunities. These are detailed in the **Belfast Agenda** and elaborated further in the city's **Resilience Strategy** which highlights the importance of future proofing the city and transitioning to an inclusive, zero-emissions and climate resilient economy within a generation.

As reflected in the strategies mentioned below, Belfast is balancing city development and innovation with culture, and heritage.

## Belfast agenda

### Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

The Belfast Agenda sets a new vision for Belfast.

By 2035 Belfast will be a city:

- Where everyone benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy
- That is safe, fair and inclusive for all
- That is vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable
- Where everyone experiences good health and wellbeing
- Where everyone fulfils their potential

To help achieve this there are ambitions to:

- Grow the population by an additional 66,000 people
- Provide over 30,000 new homes
- Ensure access to 46,000 additional jobs
- Reduce the life expectancy gap between the richest and poorest neighbourhoods by 50%
- Allow every person that leaves school to fulfil their potential

### Urban innovation framework

The city's Urban Innovation Framework sets out eight key foundations to enable the city to maximise its potential to accelerate digital innovation in urban services, creating opportunities for skills, entrepreneurship, business growth, improved service delivery and improved quality of life for citizens.

Due to be launched in September 2022, the Urban Innovation Framework is a refresh of the Smart Belfast framework launched in 2017. The updated framework sets out specific plans for the Belfast 'Smart District' (outlined above), a supportive testbed environment where innovators from across industry, academia and the public sector can work together to develop and pilot innovative solutions to address Belfast's major urban and economic challenges.

### A bolder vision for belfast: reimagining the centre

The Bolder Vision is an ambitious blueprint to explore a shared approach to creating a more attractive, accessible, safe and vibrant city. Developed jointly by Belfast City Council, Department for Communities and Department for Infrastructure, the vision is built on the principles of:

- Promoting wellbeing for all
- Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport
- Creating lively, safe and green streets
- Removing barriers to movement between the city centre and surrounding communities

Embracing the River Lagan and Waterfront is highlighted as a key priority for the city, presenting potential opportunities for the Belfast Hub-In.



## A city imagining - cultural strategy to 2030

### Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

In Belfast culture is everything, from the way people live their lives to how they see their place in the world and express themselves. What is important is having the 'freedom to imagine'. And so 'A City Imagining' is Belfast's cultural strategy to 2030 which promotes 4 main themes:

**A city belonging:** focuses on supporting active citizenship and participation in cultural life.

**A city challenging:** focuses on diversity through use of public and cultural spaces.

**A city creating:** focuses on supporting innovation and creativity across the cultural sectors.

**A city exploring:** focuses on Belfast's relationship to the rest of the world both inward and outward including support for cultural tourism.

Key strategic priorities include a new approach to events and festivals in the city, producing an "International Year of Culture" in 2024 and delivering a world class Belfast Destination Hub which will provide a unique world class visitor attraction in the city centre, creating a focal point that allows people to connect with the city and one another through stories, screen and social spaces.

Music is also a key feature of Belfast's culture and in November 2021 Belfast became a UNESCO city of music. It will seek to maximise the opportunities this presents to further enhance the city's growing culture and creative scene.

## Sustainability policy and sustainable tourism

### New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

Sustainable tourism is important for the future of the city and Belfast City Council and Visit Belfast (Official tourist information service for Belfast and Northern Ireland) have partnered to develop a policy and agree a number of key actions to take this forward:

- Reduce the environmental impact of our business and look for better, greener and more sustainable ways of working
- Procure goods and services more sustainably
- Promote sustainable choices and experiences and positively influence the actions of visitors
- Work with B2B clients (event organisers, tour operators and cruise lines) to make sustainable business easy
- Generate and manage year-round visitors to Belfast in a way which is sensitive to the environment and communities
- Promote Belfast as an accessible, inclusive and sustainable destination for all

The city has joined Green Tourism, an organisation providing advice on greener ways for businesses and organisations to operate, thus committing to sustainability practices in promoting tourism and local business. A Sustainability Team has been set up and an Action Plan is being drafted.

### New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

Belfast's Resilience Strategy has been informed by and is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and aims to support Belfast to transition to an inclusive, zero-emissions and climate resilient economy within a generation.

One of the major risks highlighted in the strategy is the potential of flooding in the city from different sources (sea, rivers and rain water), unable to drain away quickly into the combined storm and sewerage network. It is inevitable that climate change will continue to cause sea levels to rise. It is anticipated this will increase the number of properties at risk of tidal flooding in the city to over 3,400 (2,640 Residential and 770 Commercial) by 2065 and over 7,900 (6,050 Residential and 1,860 Commercial) by 2115. An [interactive map](#) by Climate Central, based on IPCC's reports, shows that **the Maritime Mile – and most of Belfast's coast – is in the danger zone from as early as 2030.**

## Part 2 – The Maritime Mile in Belfast

### 2.1 - Belfast's waterfront area

As a coastal city, Belfast's city centre is no more than a 15–20-minute walk from the waterfront however for decades the city (and citizens) turned its back on the river. This was a consequence of its largely industrial use and also the Troubles, where much of the focus was managing the urban populations across the city – North, South, East and West. The river, like the peace walls became another barrier.

In more recent years, Belfast's waterfront area has started to undergo extensive regeneration, kickstarted with the establishment of Lagan Development Corporation in 1989, a regeneration company set up to develop the city's waterfront. Achievements included the development of the Lagan Weir, Custom House Square, SSE Arena and the ICC/Waterfront Hall. Lagan Development wound up in 2007 and its responsibilities passed to the Department for Communities. Since then development on the waterfront has been driven mainly by the private sector alongside a number of key heritage, education and tourism projects supported by public funding. This includes one of Northern Ireland's largest visitor attraction, Titanic Belfast, and its largest further education college, Belfast Metropolitan College.

This regeneration and development is set to continue over the next 20-30 years, as Belfast expects a further £1.5 billion to be invested in the area (in addition to the BCRD investment). This mostly private sector investment will focus on offices, residential, leisure and tourism alongside aspirations to build on the city's flourishing creative and knowledge economy sectors to support an inclusive innovation economy.

Belfast's historical waterfront area reflects the history and future of Belfast: previously an industrial epicentre, it now includes one of the largest brownfield waterfront regeneration sites in Europe. It provides Belfast with many opportunities:

- To grow its population through new residential developments
- To increase economic prosperity through new office accommodation
- To develop a unique and authentic leisure and recreation destination for locals and visitors that showcases 400 years of history, including the birthplace of RMS Titanic.

It is a storehouse of Belfast's heritage and a place where all kinds of people can come together.

## 2.2 - Maritime Mile

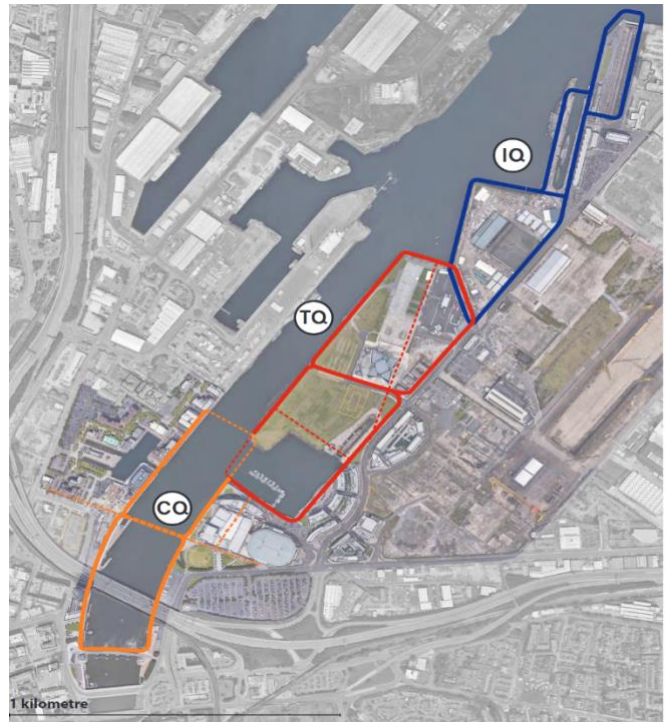
Much of the city's waterfront area falls under private ownership (detailed in Section 5). The complex nature of multiple landowners means that there is no one authority or body who is leading on the development of the city's waterfront and it's sense of place within the wider city context.

In 2018, Maritime Belfast Trust in partnership with Titanic Quarter, Belfast Harbour and Odyssey Trust commissioned a study to look at the concept of the Maritime Mile.

This was the first step to joining up the waterfront as an overall maritime experience – creating a sense of place whilst celebrating the strengths of the component parts – City Quays (CQ), Titanic Quarter (TQ) and Innovation Quay (IQ).

The Maritime Mile is an historic urban area comprising scheduled heritage sites and docks. It represents one navigational mile of water but 10 km of accessible, active waterfront. A place for walking, cycling and wellbeing. All reports can be found [here](#).

A marketing and branding campaign was launched in 2019 and a list of 17 projects identified to develop and animate the Mile. Some of these projects have been delivered, some are in the pipeline awaiting funding and others have been superseded by private development. During the Covid-19 lockdowns the Maritime Mile had great appeal with local people and attracted around 1000 users per day – allowing local communities to rediscover their waterfront and its heritage.



## 2.3 - The Maritime Mile for locals, residents, students, workers

One of the key users of the Maritime Mile are local people: families, cyclists, walkers, residents, employees who work in the area and students who study there. Furthermore, the number of people who live in the area is set to grow. City centre living is a priority for Belfast City Council more generally and the Belfast Agenda sets a target of 66,000 to be living in the centre by 2035.

The demographic profile of Belfast will also change. According to projections from NISRA, Belfast will experience demographic changes in the next 25 years, with a bigger number of people over 65 living in the city, as well as an increase in households with just one or two occupants and a drop in the number of households with children.

Therefore, new types of office and residential accommodation are required. Maritime Belfast Trust data tells us that the number of apartments in the area will almost double by 2025.

Currently, residential housing includes new apartment blocks such as Arc and Obel, as well as older residential areas in Sailortown and Short Strand, neighbouring communities who lived on or near the waterfront for centuries, not always benefiting from the area's regeneration.

Thousands of students also use the area because the Belfast Met is on site and the new University campuses are within a 10-15-minute walk.

These are all current and future users of the Maritime Mile, a city Blueway offering recreation, leisure, entertainment and wellbeing.



## 2.4 - The Maritime Mile as a visitor attraction

The Maritime Mile is also a tourism destination. Visitor attractions such as Titanic Belfast and the SSE Arena, pre Covid-19 attracted over 2million visitors to the area annually. Titanic Belfast visitors were mainly international tourists, although the pandemic has reinforced the importance of the domestic and closer to home markets.

Other key attractions include HMS Caroline, a restored naval battleship and the SS Nomadic, a restored 112-year-old H&W ship, built to be the tender ship for RMS Titanic. The area currently has three hotels. At least one new hotel is in the pipeline and several new attractions, including the Titanic Whiskey Distillery, are due to open within the next year.

## 2.5 - Existing initiatives on the Mile

- **The Maritime Festival**<sup>3</sup> attracts 100,000 visitors annually and approximately every five years is scaled up as a Tall Ships event, attracting 500,000 visitors. A strategic review has recommended it becomes bi-annual with the aspiration that it can then attract 500,000 bi-annually. The Belfast Maritime Festival celebrates the city's deep connection to the water. Since end 2020, it has a renewed ambition to set the stage for a city celebrating its past and contemporary maritime heritage; a festival based on partnerships across arts, cultural, technology, innovation and business sectors providing real opportunities for community participation and skills development. The festival celebrates Belfast's citizens and authenticity through placemaking initiatives, performances and art installations
- **Sound Yard**<sup>4</sup> is a new sound installation on the Maritime Mile. Made of lightweight metal tubes suspended from a timber structure, the installation is a constellation of hanging chimes that echo and evoke the noises that once emanated from the world-famous shipbuilders Harland & Wolff
- **Riverbox**<sup>5</sup> is an audio-visual installation inspired by the essential nature of the port as a space of comings and goings. Working from conversations with dock workers, local residents, sailors and individuals who have both recently arrived and left Belfast, artistic directors Brian Irvine and John McIllduff have crafted a work that is both a meditation on this ebb and flow and also participates in the emotional geography of the port, singing the Outbound; singing the Inbound
- **The Maritime Mile Treasure Trail**<sup>6</sup> was launched in the summer of 2020 and is an outdoor family experience that takes visitors from one end of the Maritime Mile to the other, with questions, clues, facts and challenges along the way on what they can see and what they have learnt as they explore
- **Maritime Mile website**<sup>7</sup> is used to engage locals and tourists in Maritime Mile activities, festivals, attractions or anything related to it
- **Maritime Belfast Story Plan** is a project which maps the tangible and intangible heritage along the Maritime Mile.

## 2.6 - Innovation District

As mentioned previously, a new development for the Maritime Mile is the designation of the area, within which the mile is located, as the city's Innovation District. The focus of the Innovation District, which stretches from Queen's Island to York Street is to attract new high-quality investment and provide an environment where the latest research from our universities can be rapidly translated into world class businesses. Cutting edge innovation and highly skilled workforce are fundamental to the success of the Innovation District, however the sense of place and unique setting of the Maritime Mile will also appeal to investors.

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<sup>3</sup> To find out more about the Maritime Festival: <https://www.maritimebelfast.com/destination-development/events-festivals-street-trading/>

<sup>4</sup> To find out more about the Sound Yard: <https://www.maritimebelfast.com/soundyard/>

<sup>5</sup> To find out more about the Riverbox: <https://www.maritimebelfast.com/riverbox/>

<sup>6</sup> To find out more about the Maritime Mile Treasure Trail: <https://maritime-mile.com/explore/treasure/>

<sup>7</sup> To visit the Maritime Mile website: <https://maritime-mile.com/>

## Part 3 – The Belfast HUB-IN – Vision, Values and Missions

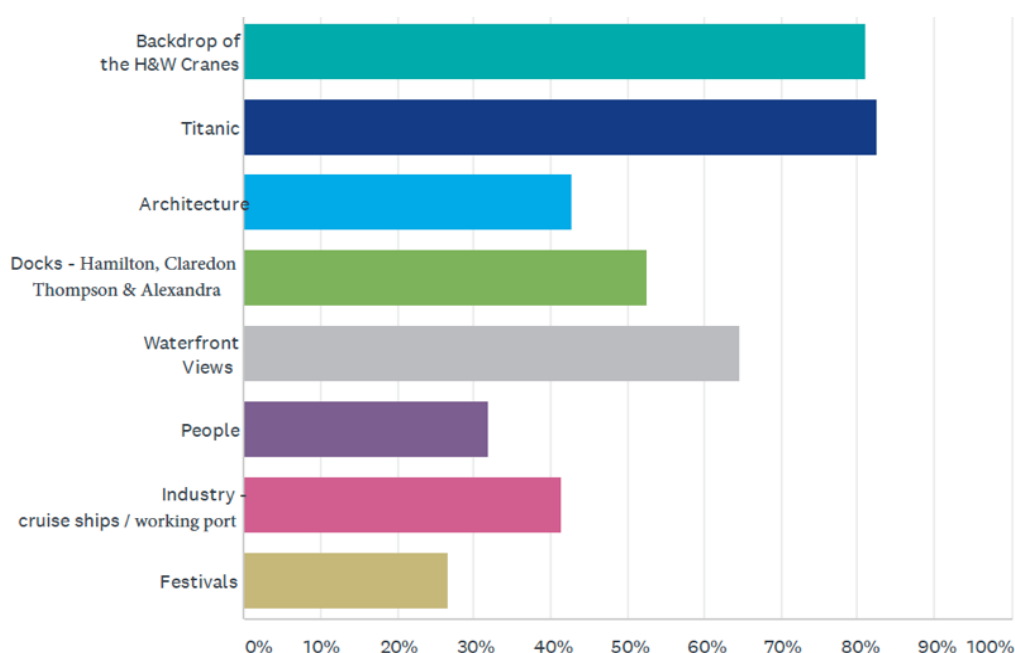
The Belfast HUB-IN is the entire Maritime Mile. As highlighted in the previous section, there is already significant work underway in positioning and developing the Maritime Mile as a heritage destination and therefore the HUB-IN can build on this.

The focus of the HUB-IN project is to explore how creative industries and cutting-edge technology companies attracted by the Innovation District can collaborate with existing businesses and communities on the Maritime Mile, improving this unique heritage destination for all users.

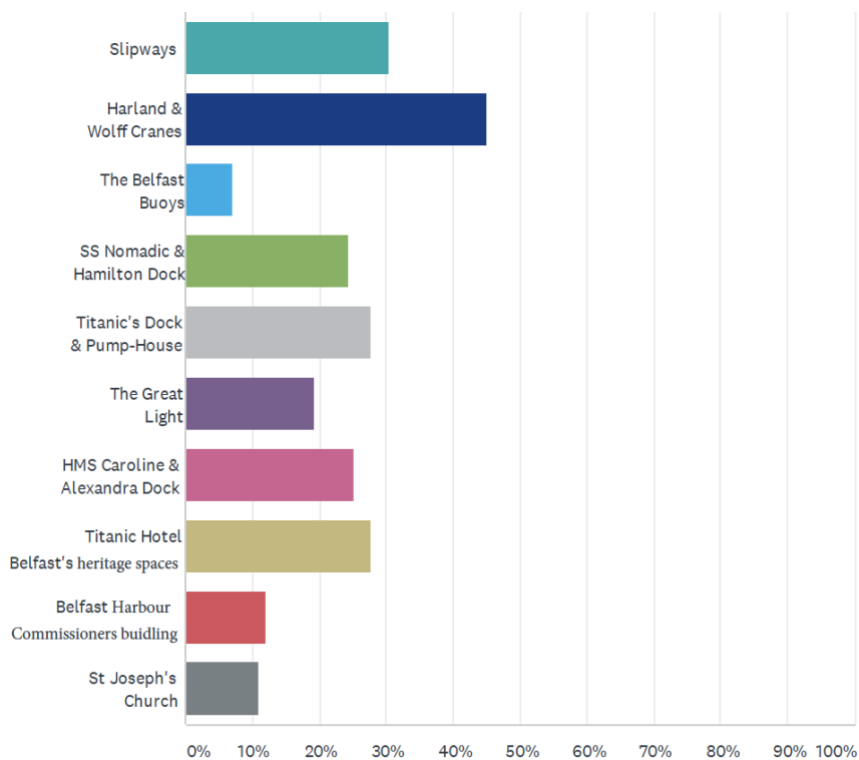
Over the last 18 months the Belfast HUB-IN has engaged with local people and stakeholders through surveys, questionnaires, one to one meetings and workshops to find out more on local attitudes to the Maritime Mile and identify its strengths, opportunities, threats and weaknesses.

### 3.1 - Perception of the Maritime Mile and wishes of visitors

In a survey conducted in April 2021, nearly 650 respondents highlighted the sights, sounds and architecture of the historic waterfront that resonates with them most. The heritage of the area was highlighted by a significant proportion of respondents, with the following sights that they most associate with the area:

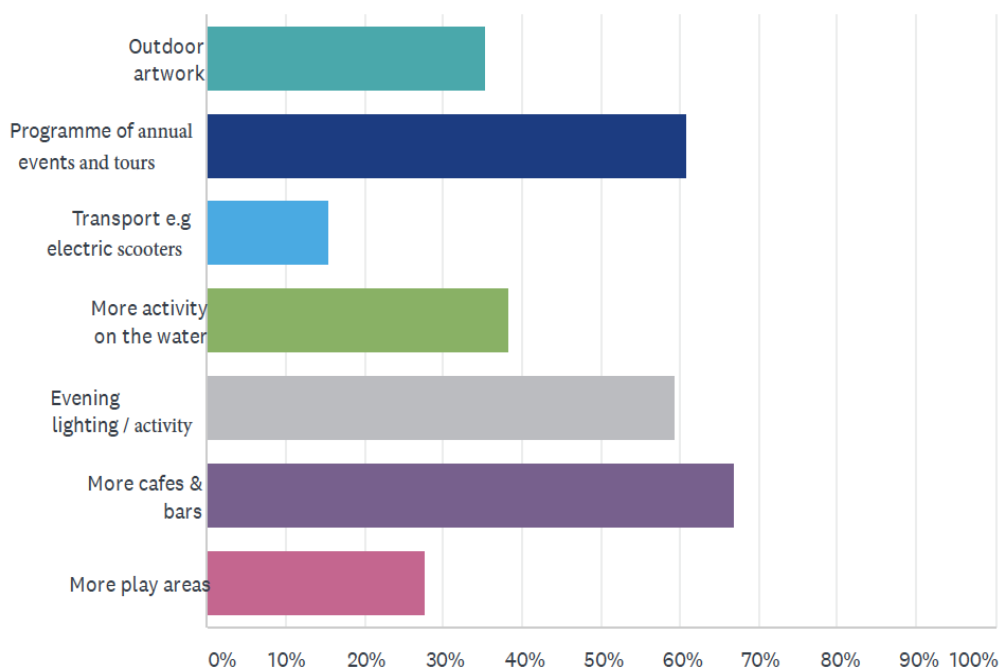


When specifically asked about architecture in the area Harland & Wolff Cranes were their favourite piece of heritage on the Maritime Mile.



Over half of respondents (55%) stated that water lapping was a sound they associate when spending time in the Maritime Mile, with 44% stating that the calmness of the area resonates with them.

When asked what they would like to see or do on the Maritime Mile that would encourage them to visit more often, respondents highlighted more cafes and bars, evening activities and programme of annual events and tours:

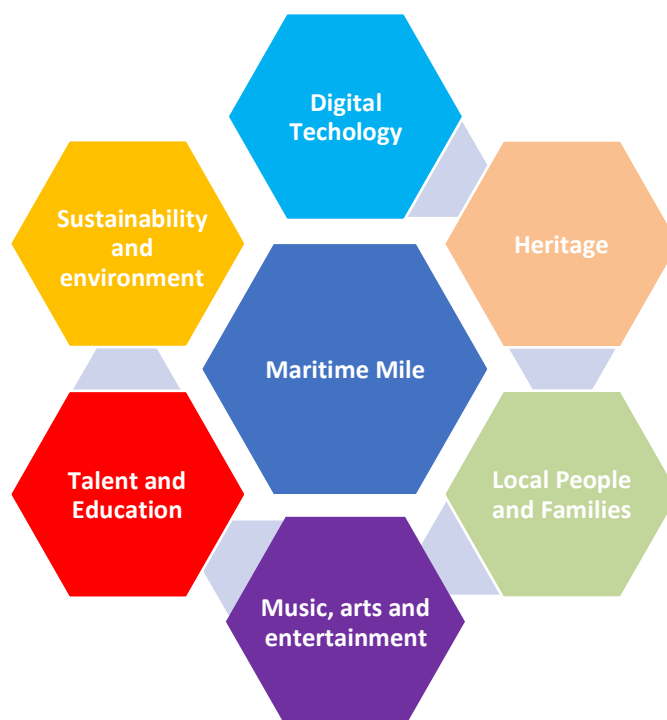


A further study was carried out at the Maritime Weekender event in September 2021. 222 face to face interviews were conducted. 93% of the interviewees strongly agreed/agreed that the Maritime Mile had its own cultural and historical identity.

In March 2022 Belfast HUB IN undertook further engagement with 42 community groups from across Belfast who enjoyed a day out at Titanic Belfast and SS Nomadic as part of Local Community Day. This engagement gathered a range of ideas and suggestions from citizens on what could be developed on the Maritime Mile.

### 3.2 - HUB-IN Co-Design Workshop

The question posed at the workshop was ‘how can creatives bring their unique perspectives to support the preservation and enhancement of the Maritime Mile through innovation’.





Whilst a vast number of actions were discussed within each group, they cannot all be deliverable via HUB-IN. However, there were a number of common points/recommendations across each of the themes. These included:

- Storytelling
- Engaging local people, young and old
- Opening Challenge funds
- Forming new partnerships
- Establishing Maritime Mile charters for inclusion and sustainability
- Testing and piloting new ideas

### 3.3 - Brief SWOT of the area

The Belfast HUB-IN has reviewed all the key strategies and studies that touch on the Maritime Mile, assessed public perceptions and analysed the workshop session. The key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Maritime Mile are as follows:

#### Strengths

- There is already a focus on culture, heritage and regeneration as part of the Belfast's Covid-19 recovery plan
- The Titanic and Maritime Mile brands are strong and successful
- The current visitor attraction offer is strong
- The heritage sites are scheduled and protected
- The Belfast Innovation District incorporates the Maritime Mile
- Active forums and networks already exist which involve key stakeholders
- Strong digital channels for engagement via social media and a website already exist for the Maritime Mile
- Existing innovation ecosystem supported by local strategies and frameworks
- Maritime Mile has already been launched and is actively being delivered over the last three years
- A number of initiatives and pilot projects have been delivered to date, with key learnings able to help inform next steps
- There are already several existing large scale and popular events and activities (e.g. the Maritime Festival)
- Belfast has a diverse and core skill base in creative technologies and Belfast SMEs already have experience and reputation in developing immersive technology, gaming, animation, film and digital twinning projects
- 5G network is developing in the area

#### Weaknesses

- Strategically the area often falls between 'city centre' policy and 'local neighbourhoods'
- Perception that the Maritime Mile is too far from city centre
- Some communities have lived on or near the waterfront for centuries while the area around them has regenerated, not always to their benefit
- Visitor attractions such as Titanic Belfast are perceived as too expensive for local families with limited income
- It is not (clearly) communicated what services are accessible for free (e.g. locals are not aware they can use Titanic Belfast's café and toilets without having a ticket to the experience)
- There is a lack of services (e.g. toilets, water fountains)

- Limited evening economy as there is little to do in the area, therefore employees leave after working hours and students are not connected to the area, tending to go to Cathedral Quarter or the City Centre
- Connectivity with neighbourhood communities
- Many tourists only visit Titanic Belfast and do not leave the building
- There are only occasional events, without having something on at all times
- Events lack long term planning; therefore, they are often left too last minute to engage partners
- Businesses work in silo, translating into missed opportunities for joined up thinking, collaboration, buying in to a site-wide vision or idea
- There are multiple landowners/decision makers
- Much of the physical built heritage has disappeared

## Opportunities

- Challenge/catalyst funding to pilot new ideas
- Harvest the skills and experience of the Creative Sector in Belfast for telling stories and preserving heritage through film, music, animation, gaming, interactive tourism products
- PRONI and NI Screen have access to a lot of content that can be used to help the creative sector tell the story and the heritage of the area
- Maritime Belfast Story Plan
- Activity users have increased and there is a real opportunity to link the Maritime Mile, the city's Blueway with its Greenways - linking the area with local neighbourhoods and city centre. This will require multi agency and policy support.
- Potential users are already in the area:
  - thousands of students and working population, representing a good opportunity to connect them to the area for instance via support from organisations such as Belfast Met, Sailortown, BCC youth Forum, as a way to engage young people
  - Tourists visiting Titanic Belfast who could be encouraged to spend longer time in the area and do more activities
- Free activities and events
- Attract local families to use the space by providing basic provisions (e.g. drinking fountains, bike repair facilities, sporting facilities, lockers and toilets)
- Build on increased footfall during COVID
- The river is a recreational asset
- Bring community and business vision together as there is a desire to weave peoples' stories into the physical and virtual space of the waterfront
- Build on the development of the Smart District and the Innovation District, where the ways of applying new technology can be challenges, new ideas can be brought and tested
- Digitising the Maritime Mile to support planning, development and new experiences
- Climate and sustainability agenda for Belfast and Harbour
- Support local universities to develop a pipeline of talent by facilitating the linkage between the business sector and education sector in the area (e.g. overview of business apprenticeships, training programmes, knowledge on the skill gaps currently and in the coming years)
  - Long term events and programming calendar
  - New Transport Plan for Harbour Area

## Threats

- Politically fragmented city
- Climate change and flooding
- Recovery of international tourism post COVID and Ukraine War
- Focus on innovation and new developments dilutes heritage/character of the area
- The “digitalization” of the Maritime Mile might lead to a digital space that becomes a dead space or an elitist space if not everyone has access to it and if it is not aligned with a scaling up strategy. Therefore, economic and social inequality linked with inequality of access to the digital space is an issue, some potential users such as children might also not have access to phone or data. This should be part of a broader digital strategy in Northern Ireland.
- Intellectual property
- Weather conditions
- Understand local people’s needs and engaging them in the area’s development
- Innovation District and Maritime Mile are not aligned and become competitive (branding, communications, stakeholder resources)

## 3.4 - Conclusion

Having undertaken the codesign process over the last year, the vision and values for the Belfast HUB-IN have now been identified.

## 3.5 - Vision, Values and Missions

### 3.1 - Vision

Maritime Belfast’s vision for the Maritime Mile is to develop a vibrant, accessible, heritage destination for current and future generations to enjoy.

The Belfast HUB-IN is where creatives bring their unique perspectives to support the preservation and enhancement of the Maritime Mile through innovation. It gives value to the intangible heritage of the area, making it a source of inspiration and increases community participation and skills. The Maritime Mile is a shared space for the people of Belfast and not only a tourist destination.

### 3.2 - Values

- The Maritime Mile is inclusive, accessible and connected to the local communities
- The Maritime Mile is sustainable
- The Maritime Mile is innovative, open, outward looking and culturally, economically and creatively energetic
- The Maritime Mile is future proofed, connecting the past to the future: Looking back to move forward
- The Maritime Mile creates an environment for collaboration and new partnerships across its inhabitants

These values are well connected and linked with the original Maritime Mile themes and values developed by Maritime Belfast Trust, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the missions and portfolio of key actions identified via the HUB-IN project in the following section.

### 3.3 - Missions

The goal is to develop a vibrant waterfront that boosts sustainable tourism and shapes new creative and digital sectors, in which citizens have a meaningful sense of ownership, agency and participation.

HUB-IN will support this objective by cementing the relationship between heritage and innovation, as well as helping bring back the lost heritage of the area via storytelling, interpretations and preservation. HUB-IN will also help the local creative industry sector to engage with citizens and digital SMEs, to create new experiences and new opportunities, to support businesses and investment.

HUB-IN is building on past and existing work, integrating with ongoing initiatives and reinforcing existing partnerships, as well as building new ones. To respond to these objectives, in the framework of HUB-IN, diverse engagement and co-design activities gathered citizens, local creatives and other stakeholders to bring their unique perspectives to support the preservation and sustainable enhancement of the Maritime Mile through innovation.

These are translated into a set of key actions and organised in four main missions aligned with the HUB-IN clusters.

#### **Mission 1 – Stimulating innovation and creativity on the Maritime Mile**

This mission is oriented towards setting up a challenge-led approach to co-opt the skills and expertise of the local creative sector and stimulate innovation by offering funding and a supportive environment to develop precommercial prototypes and showcase the art of the possible to demonstrate how heritage and cultural experiences can be enhanced when fused with digital and creative innovation.

Main HUB-IN Clusters targeted: **Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)**

#### **Mission 2 - New ways to explore the Maritime Mile**

This mission is oriented to drive new footfall to the Maritime Mile by enhancing the experience of the area for visitors and local communities and telling new and exciting stories relating to the Maritime Mile via the use of creative digital technologies. The aim is to change the look and feel of the area, creating diverse discovery trails, developing new interactive and immersive products and services using the latest technologies, thus being of interest to the local creative digital sector and help secure buy-in.

Main HUB-IN Clusters targeted: **Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)**

#### **Mission 3 - A new Maritime Mile economy**

This mission is oriented to enhance the local economy along the Maritime Mile. It will be implemented via a set of actions aimed at having a permanent programme on the Mile (e.g. events, live music, theatre and entertainment) and offering opportunities for micro businesses for risk taking pilots and trialling different concepts. Promoting sustainability on the Maritime Mile and creating networking opportunities to stimulate collective learning and sharing are core.

Main HUB-IN Clusters targeted: **Culture and Creative Industries (CCI) | New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)**

#### **Mission 4 - A Maritime Mile for Belfastians**

This mission is oriented towards making the Maritime Mile an attractive place for the local community and the other inhabitants of the city by creating a sense of ownership and engagement through sharing and learning, creating participative opportunities, promoting sustainable lifestyles, social inclusion and urban commons.

Main HUB-IN Clusters targeted: **New Lifestyles (NLS) | Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)**



# Part 4 – Alliances, Partnerships and Portfolio of Actions

## 4.1 - A Partnership Approach

The HUB-IN is being delivered by a partnership between Belfast City Council and Maritime Belfast Trust. A steering group has been established comprising key departmental representatives across the Council – Smart City, Community Development, Economic Development, Culture/Arts/Heritage, Tourism/Events and representatives from Maritime Belfast Trust – Destination/Events and Product Development. This provides the main governance for the project during the development and delivery of the HUB-IN. On completion, legacy projects and structures will be adopted by Maritime Belfast Trust, the existing charity which leads on the development and delivery of the Maritime Mile.

## 4.2 - Stakeholders

There are multiple stakeholders on the Maritime Mile and a detailed [Stakeholder Plan](#) has been developed for the HUB-IN project. The diagram below prioritises the stakeholders based on level of interest and influence in the HUB-IN.

## 4.3 - HUB-IN Stakeholder Mapping



**Belfast City Council/Elected Representatives** is the local authority for the city. 60 elected councillors represent the people of Belfast, serving a population of 333,000. The Council is responsible for a range of powers and services, including land-use planning, community planning and enhanced economic, physical and social regeneration. The council is also responsible for the implementation and delivery of the Urban Innovation Framework and the development of a Smart District which will both inform and benefit from the lessons of the Hub In project. The 60 councillors represent the 10 areas of the council area. The Maritime Mile falls within Titanic and Castle areas.

**Maritime Belfast Trust** is a charity established to preserve and promote Belfast's maritime heritage. The Trust owns Titanic Belfast and SS Nomadic, which has provided a steady income stream to support the development and delivery of the Maritime Mile to date. It has also delivered major restoration projects including restoring the former H&W HQ building into a boutique hotel. Maritime Belfast is Belfast City Council's key delivery partner for a range of projects including Hub-In. The Maritime Belfast Trust has also established a Heritage Helper programme where volunteers act as ambassadors and greeters.

**Destination Forum** was established by the Maritime Belfast Trust in 2014. It contains representatives from the heritage sites, visitor attractions, venues, activity providers, community and education interests, and visitor services across the Maritime Mile, alongside the property owners and developers, the City Council and tourism authorities. Working collaboratively, the Forum develops and promotes an ever-increasing range of activities, initiatives and programmes to promote the destination's industrial maritime heritage credentials as well as the contemporary visitor offer. The Forum includes large scale operators such as Titanic Belfast Limited, AC Marriot, Premier Inn, National Museum of the Royal Navy and Odyssey Trust to smaller scale businesses including local tour companies.

## Digital and Innovation Sector (5)

- **Innovation City Belfast** is a city partnership of small and medium enterprises, researchers, corporations and start-ups, founded in 2021. It nurtures new ideas and helps to grow a business.
- **Catalyst** is an independent, not-for-profit organisation, enabling a connected community of like-minded innovators in an entrepreneurial eco-system that is the key driver of the knowledge economy in Northern Ireland. They attract new business start-ups to the area, interested in the Maritime Mile for its sense of place and uniqueness.
- **NI Screen** is the national screen agency for Northern Ireland committed to maximise the economic, cultural and educational value of the screen industries. Its core mission is to accelerate the development of a dynamic and sustainable screen industry and culture in Northern Ireland.
- **Future Screen NI** delivers expert technical skills, opportunities and growth across film and broadcast, animation, games and immersive technologies and industries in Northern Ireland. Future Screens NI comprises the two higher education institutions (Ulster University and QUB) and a number of key industrial partners central to the creative economy in the region, including NI Screen, BBC, Belfast City Council, Belfast Harbour, Causeway Enterprise Agency, Digital Catapult, Catalyst Inc., RTE, Games NI, Kainos, Invest NI, Techstart NI, Matrix and Tourism NI. The Partnership has, from this, developed a definition of, and a working model for, the creative industries in NI which is focused on participation, cultural and economic growth, and social and economic regeneration placing the Partnership as a leading developmental catalyst in this NI sector. Future Screens NI have established a mentoring programme Future Foundation, which aims to match experienced practitioners to artists and creative freelancers who request help and support. This will include mentoring in career and practice development, practical skills and advice on personal planning, identifying and applying for funding, and the acquisition of new practical and technical skills for working in post-COVID-19 environments.

## Neighbourhoods (8)

- **Sailortown Regeneration** owns St. Joseph's Church and Parochial House, situated in Belfast Docks and is part of a people-led regeneration of the area. This will primarily be for use by current and past residents of the Sailortown area and will provide a welcoming space for visitors and all those interested in our local culture and heritage.
- **EastSide Partnership** is a local charity leading the regeneration of East Belfast. Working alongside other community-based organisations, elected representatives, statutory agencies and local businesses, EastSide Partnership delivers a wide variety of projects with a clear mission to 'make East Belfast a better place' for residents, businesses and visitors.
- **Markets Development Association** – community development association for inner south Belfast area. Area includes the riverfront and also St George's market. The area has significant links to Belfast's maritime heritage and the Maritime Mile is a key leisure resource for local residents.
- **Waterfront Residents** - ARC, Peter Crowell, Obel Tower Apartments. These residents actually live on the Maritime Mile.

## Heritage Sector (11)

- **Historic Environment Division** are responsible for the listing and scheduling of heritage sites, including key sites of interest on the Maritime Mile.
- **Eastside Heritage Forum** is a local forum representing the heritage sector in East Belfast
- **Ulster Maritime** is a wider regional forum representing maritime heritage interests across Ulster – mainly boat makers.
- **Belfast Titanic Society** – there are Titanic societies across the world. The local Belfast chapter is very active and includes relatives who lost their lives on RMS Titanic. They research different topics on RMS Titanic and hold annual events on the anniversary of the sinking
- **SHIP** – a community heritage group dedicated to the heritage preservation of Sailortown.
- **QUB Heritage Hub** – led by Queen's University – an online resource to support the heritage sector.

**Funders** – key funders which are active in the area include Tourism NI, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Lottery Fund, Arts Council NI, Department for Communities and Innovate UK.

## Landowners

- **Belfast Harbour**, a Trust Port, which reinvests its profits into the successful operations of the Port and development of the land. Belfast City Council and Belfast Harbour have a good working relationship across a number of strategic areas.
- **Titanic Quarter Limited** is the commercial developer for Titanic Quarter, a significant part of the Maritime Mile. They have developed a long-term vision for the area, including the Titanic Quarter Master Plan, adopted in 2005. They have delivered residential schemes, leisure and office accommodation.
- **The Department for Communities** owns the Lagan Weir and surrounding land - another key part of the Maritime Mile. This area has been prioritised for commercial development.
- There are several other landowners, including Odyssey Trust and Catalyst Inc who have plans to further expand their developments. The Odyssey Trust own the SSE complex, whilst Catalyst Inc own an innovation centre for new start-ups and academic research.

**Universities and Further Education Colleges** - Belfast Metropolitan College, Queen's University and University of Ulster all have close links to the area. Belfast Met is based in Titanic Quarter and Queen's has a research centre in Titanic Quarter. University of Ulster has related to the city centre and the university campus is only a 10-minute walk from the Maritime Mile. All have an active role in creative industries, culture, arts and tourism.

**International and national cooperation:** Belfast is member of the Waterfront Cities Network and of All Ireland Smart City Forum

## 4.4 - Proposed Opportunities for Collaboration and Delivery of HUB-IN

The recommendations and suggestions below are proposed for consideration to support the successful delivery of the Belfast HUB-IN. These build on existing partnerships and alliances as follows:

### Review the Maritime Mile Destination Forum

As many key stakeholders are already engaged in the above-mentioned Maritime Mile Destination Forum, it makes sense to strengthen it ensuring that new sectors, specifically creative industries and innovation sector are incorporated. This may include establishing some working groups/sub-forums e.g.

- Maritime Mile Business Destination Forum: a platform to connect local business and local talent, focused on skills development (student pipeline), focused on a skills/education agenda.
- Maritime Mile Sustainability Board: to ensure sustainability is incorporated in all actions taking place on the Mile and put sustainability criteria at the core of the decision-making process and approval of any new development on the site.
- Thematic meetings open to all interested partners (e.g. Sustainability meeting), instead of splitting up the Forum in sub-groups or committees as sustainability should be included in all partners' work via a Policy Framework with Green Criteria developed for the area.

### Initiate an Innovation Challenge Fund

One of Belfast HUB-IN's key missions is to **stimulate innovation and creativity on the Maritime Mile (Mission 1)** by piloting a challenge-led approach to stimulate collaboration between the key stakeholder groups in particular, creative industries, neighbourhoods and local businesses.

This is both a mission and a delivery process and mechanism to support the development and implementation of several key actions included under the other three **missions that have been identified through the co-creation process and adopted during roadmap and prioritisation workshops.**

A steering group will be established to oversee the development of the challenge-led process, promote open innovation challenge calls and evaluate submissions. Members will bring expertise in creative industries, innovation, culture, heritage and arts, community engagement, business support and skills development. They will seek opportunities for alignment to leverage other resources and funding and build on the strengths of the existing innovation landscape and key investments.

### Expand the Heritage Helpers scheme

Enlarge the current Heritage Helpers volunteering scheme include more volunteers as people own the stories and can also act as ambassadors and greeters for the area. They should be further encouraged to have their say in what they would like to see along the Maritime Mile.

### Align local Private sector CSR Programmes

Encourage local businesses to get more involved through their CSR programmes e.g. volunteering initiatives would improve links with the employees of companies located on the Mile. Potential to formalise this with the Innovation District's portfolio to attract companies to the area i.e. greater sense of local community.



The HUB-IN project also provides Belfast the opportunity to work with seven other European cities to explore how innovation can help to develop our historical urban areas. This includes learning from the experiences of each city on the development and delivery of innovative funds, the development and application of co-creation and co-design approaches to innovation, working with smart city and local creatives and replicating the learning to other areas across our cities. This network of cities will also be strengthened through the use of the HUB-IN brand/logo as a mark of quality.

Through the HUB-IN Alliance programme the project hopes to attract an additional 20 cities that will develop their own Hubs of Innovation, aligning to the work already developed through the project. This provides an even greater opportunity to work in partnership with other cities, with a particular focus for Belfast on cities with waterfront areas. It will also give Belfast an opportunity to showcase the Maritime Mile and Innovation District as best practice.

### 4.5 - Portfolio of key actions

This part of the roadmap document includes the key actions identified during the co-creation process in Belfast. These set of key action represent the way the HUB-IN strategies and principles are translated into practices locally.

Each action is linked to the key HUB-IN Ingredients to which the action is more likely to contribute. As defined in the *HUB-IN Framework: The Ingredients of a HUB-IN Place*<sup>8</sup>, the ingredients represent the key factors and considerations that are required to enable innovative and entrepreneurial behavior to emerge and flourish in historic urban areas.

The enablers, challenges, tools for implementation and other considerations for all the actions are classified per seven themes and are included in the ANNEX 2: Digital Technologies, Heritage, Local People and Families, Music and Arts, Talent and Education, Space and Connectivity, Sustainability and Environment. These are based on the Roadmap workshop carried out in November 2021 with cross sector representation. The initial measures identified at the workshop were ranked and prioritised based on an effort-impact matrix during an online multi-stakeholder workshop in April 2022; the results are included in ANNEX 2.

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<sup>8</sup> available at: <https://hubin-project.eu/library/the-ingredients-of-a-hub-in-place-hub-in-framework/>

## Mission 1 – Stimulating innovation and creativity on the Maritime Mile

Portfolio of key actions:

- A1.1: Set up and run a challenge call targeted to local creatives and innovators
- A1.2: Set up a steering group to oversee the development of a challenge-led process, promote open innovation challenge calls and evaluate submissions
- A1.3: Seek opportunities for alignment to leverage other resources, funding and engagement platforms (e.g. Year of Culture 2024)

### A1.1: Set up and run a challenge call targeted to local creatives and innovators

- Define the aims and objectives of the challenge call
- Prepare eligibility and selection criteria, application form
- Prepare testbed environment, promotion and launch of Challenge Calls
- Evaluate submissions
- Supervise implementation
- Assess, monitor and evaluate the replication potential of the Challenge Calls

Open challenge calls will have a transformative impact. By underpinning the strategic clusters of the HUB-IN programme they will:

- Maximise alignment and create added value within the innovation district– clarifying what the innovation district means for heritage and/or what heritage means for organisations and people in the innovation district
  - Enhance the Maritime Mile through the application of digital innovation. Reflecting the Innovation District designation, Maritime Mile will become an exemplar in ‘smart’ place-shaping
  - Preserve and enhance the Maritime Belfast Story through digital, immersive and creative industries
  - Connect people (neighbourhood communities, residents, workers, students and visitors) to place.
1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast City Council, Maritime Belfast Trust, Future Screen NI, Maritime Mile Destination Forum, Studio Ulster, Innovation City Belfast
  2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Support Organisations, Knowledge, Finance, Marketplace/Demand, Heritage
  3. **Expected impact:** Increased skills through product development, increased competitive profile

### A1.2: Set up a steering group to oversee the development of a challenge-led process, promote open innovation challenge calls and evaluate submissions

A steering group will be established to oversee the development of a challenge-led process, promote open innovation challenge calls and evaluate submissions. Members will bring expertise in creative industries, innovation, culture, heritage and arts, community engagement, business support and skills development.

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast City Council, Maritime Belfast Trust, Future Screen NI, Maritime Mile Destination Forum, Studio Ulster, Innovation City Belfast
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Leadership, Knowledge, Support Organisations
3. **Expected impact:** Increased skills through product development, increased competitive profile

### A1.3: Seek opportunities for alignment to leverage other resources and funding

Members of the Steering Group will seek opportunities for alignment to leverage other resources and funding and build on the strengths of the existing innovation landscape and key investments such Belfast Region City Deal.

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast City Council, Maritime Belfast Trust, Future Screen NI, Maritime Mile Destination Forum, Studio Ulster, Innovation City Belfast
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Knowledge, Support Organisations, Leadership, Finance
3. **Expected impact:** Increased skills through product development, increased competitive profile



## Mission 2 | New ways to explore the Maritime Mile

Portfolio of key actions:

- A2.1: Set up a central platform to communicate what's on the Mile and highlight storytelling
- A2.2: Storytelling via creative digital experiences to enhance the experience of the area for visitors and local communities
- A2.3: Set up an open accessible shared hub for people to access and contribute information on historic environment
- A2.4: Make a public discovery trail along the Maritime Mile
- A2.5: Change the look and feel of the area and provide a focal point to drive new footfall by animating the Buildings and the River
- A2.6: Collaborate on the digitisation and gamification of the Maritime Mile

### A2.1: Set up a central platform to communicate what's on the Mile and highlight storytelling

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast City Council, Proni, Maritime Belfast Trust
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Physical and Digital Infrastructure, Heritage, Knowledge, Market and Demand
3. **Expected impact:** Increased footfall, increased dwell time, increase local spend

### A2.2: Storytelling via creative digital experiences to enhance the experience of the area for visitors and local communities

Tell the heritage story (especially stories not heard before such as shipyard women's stories)

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Future Screen NI, NI Screen, Studio Ulster, Maritime Belfast Trust, Belfast City Council, Sailortown Regeneration, Eastside Partnership, Markets Development Association, Belfast Harbour
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Physical and Digital Infrastructure, Knowledge, Supporting Organisations, Finance
3. **Expected impact:** Increased footfall, increased dwell time, increase local spend

### A2.3: Set up an open accessible shared hub for people to access and contribute information on historic environment

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Maritime Belfast Trust, PRONI, Belfast City Council.
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Physical and Digital Infrastructure, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Leadership
3. **Expected impact:** Increased footfall, increased dwell time, increase local spend, enhancement of Belfast as a city

### A2.4: Make a public discovery trail along the Maritime Mile

The selected projects will be the result of the challenge call. They might include activities such as: Public Art Trail along Maritime Mile / Discovery trails using augmented reality / River Tours

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Maritime Belfast Trust, Belfast Met, Sailortown Regeneration, Eastside Partnership, Belfast City Council
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Physical and Digital infrastructure, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Marketplace/Demand, Finance
3. **Expected impact:** Increased footfall, increased dwell time, increased local spend, enhancement of Belfast as a city



### A2.5: Change the look and feel of the area and provide a focal point to drive new footfall by animating the Buildings and the River

The selected projects will be the result of the challenge call. They might include activities such as: digital lighting projects, projections, Son et Lumiere, participative opportunities (words, images), lighting installations on the water and on the bridges

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Studio Ulster, Catalyst, Digital Catapult, asset owners, Future Screens NI, Belfast Harbour, Titanic Belfast, Titanic Quarter, Maritime Belfast Trust, Odyssey Trust, Department for Communities
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Physical and Digital Infrastructure, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Leadership, Marketplace/Demand, Finance.
3. **Expected impact:** Increased footfall, increased dwell time, increased local spend, enhancement of Belfast as a city

### A2.6: Collaborate on the digitisation and gamification of the Maritime Mile

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Future Screen NI, NI Screen, Studio Ulster, Belfast City Council, Maritime Belfast Trust, Digital Catapult, Belfast Harbour, Maritime Mile Destination Forum
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Physical and Digital Infrastructure, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Marketplace/Demand, Finance
3. **Expected impact:** Increased skills through product development, increased footfall, increased dwell time, increased local spend, enhancement of Belfast as a city



## Mission 3 | A new Maritime Mile economy

Portfolio of key actions:

- A3.1: Identify potential outdoor locations to showcase live music, theatre and entertainment
- A3.2: Scope an After-Hours Strategy enhancing night economy along the Maritime Mile,
- A3.3: Align Maritime Mile development and opportunities with the local skills agenda and initiatives
- A3.4: Identify potential locations (e.g. vessels, existing premises, common land and water opportunities) for micro businesses for risk taking pilots, trialling different concepts (arts, food and beverage, music)
- A3.5: Organise regular events to animate the Mile
- A3.6: Create networking opportunities and a directory to stimulate collective learning and sharing
- 3.7: Promote sustainability on the Maritime Mile with local stakeholders and businesses

### A3.1: Identify potential outdoor locations to showcase live music, theatre and entertainment

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Maritime Belfast Trust, Belfast City Council, Belfast Harbour, Department for Communities, Maritime Mile Destination Forum,
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Physical and Digital Infrastructure, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Marketplace/Demand, Finance, Leadership
3. **Expected impact:** Increased footfall, increased dwell time, increased local spend, enhancement of Belfast as a city

### A3.2: Scope an After-Hours Strategy enhancing night economy along the Maritime Mile.

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Maritime Mile Destination Forum, Maritime Belfast Trust, Belfast City Council,
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Leadership
3. **Expected impact:** Increased local spend, increased footfall, increased dwell time

### A3.3: Align Maritime Mile development and opportunities with the local skills agenda and initiatives

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast Met, Belfast City Council, Innovation City Belfast, Digital Catapult
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Marketplace/Demand, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Leadership
3. **Expected impact:** Increased skills through product development, increased competitive profile

### A3.4: Identify potential locations (e.g. vessels, existing premises, common land and water opportunities) for micro businesses for risk taking pilots, trialling different concepts (arts, food and beverage, music)

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast City Council, Maritime Belfast Trust, Belfast Harbour, Titanic Quarter, Department for Communities, Maritime Mile Destination Forum
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Knowledge, Leadership, Marketplace/Demand, Support Organisations
3. **Expected impact:** Increased skills through product development, increased competitive profile, increased local spend, increased footfall, increased dwell time

### A3.5: Organise regular events to animate the Mile

The selected events will be the result of the challenge call. They might include activities such as:

- Regular events in buildings showcasing local talent alongside food and beverage and craft
- Music on the water – stage in the marina that hosts live music performances in the summer
- Pecha Kucha nights with mini demos of ‘new things’
- Develop the Maritime Mile Heritage Fashion show – in partnership with Belfast Met

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast City Council, Maritime Belfast Trust, Maritime Mile Destination Forum
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Finance, Marketplace/Demand, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Physical and Digital Infrastructure
3. **Expected impact:** increased local spend, increased footfall, increased dwell time, enhancement of Belfast as a city

### A3.6: Create networking opportunities and a directory to stimulate collective learning and sharing

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Maritime Belfast Trust, Belfast City Council, Belfast Met, Catalyst
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Finance, Marketplace/Demand, Support Organisations, Knowledge
3. **Expected impact:** Increased skills through product development, increased competitive profile,

### A3.7: Promote sustainability on the Maritime Mile with local stakeholders

The action will explore different opportunities such as setting up a Maritime Mile Sustainability Board and/or thematic working groups and meetings open to all interested partners with the aim to include sustainability in all partners' work via a Policy Framework with Green Criteria developed for the area.

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Maritime Belfast Trust, Maritime Mile Destination Forum
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Leadership, Finance, Marketplace/Demand
3. **Expected impact:** Enhancement of Belfast as a city



## Mission 4 | A Maritime Mile for Belfastians

### Portfolio of key actions – Mission 4

- A4.1: Develop a community engagement plan with new and innovative ways of engaging communities on the Mile
- A4.2: Create ownership and engagement in the public realm by strengthening existing structures to include community representation
- A4.3: Create opportunities for community education & skills development via the Challenge Call and other HUB-IN initiatives
- A4.4: Develop social inclusion charter for the Maritime Mile to ensure a space and stories for all

#### A4.1: Develop a community engagement plan with new and innovative ways of engaging communities on the Mile

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast City Council - Belfast Stories, Maritime Belfast Trust, Sailortown Regeneration, Eastside Partnership, Markets Development Association
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Support Organisations, Leadership, Physical and Digital infrastructure, Knowledge
3. **Expected impact:** increased local spend, increased footfall, increased dwell time, enhancement of Belfast as a city

#### A4.2: Create ownership and engagement in the public realm by strengthening existing structures to include community representation

- Forum for involvement/ Website to advertise how people can apply to use space and to promote events, competitions, contribution to public realm
  - Opportunities to highlight community work
1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Maritime Belfast Trust, Sailortown Regeneration, Eastside Partnership
  2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Physical and Digital infrastructure, Support Organisations, Leadership
  3. **Expected impact:** increased local spend, increased footfall, increased dwell time, enhancement of Belfast as a city

#### A4.3: Create opportunities for community education and skills development via the Challenge Call and other HUB-IN initiatives

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast City Council, Belfast Met, Future Screens NI, NI Screen, Digital Catapult
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Leadership, Finance
3. **Expected impact:** Increased competitive profile, increased skills through produce development

#### A4.4: Develop social inclusion charter for the Maritime Mile to ensure a space and stories for all

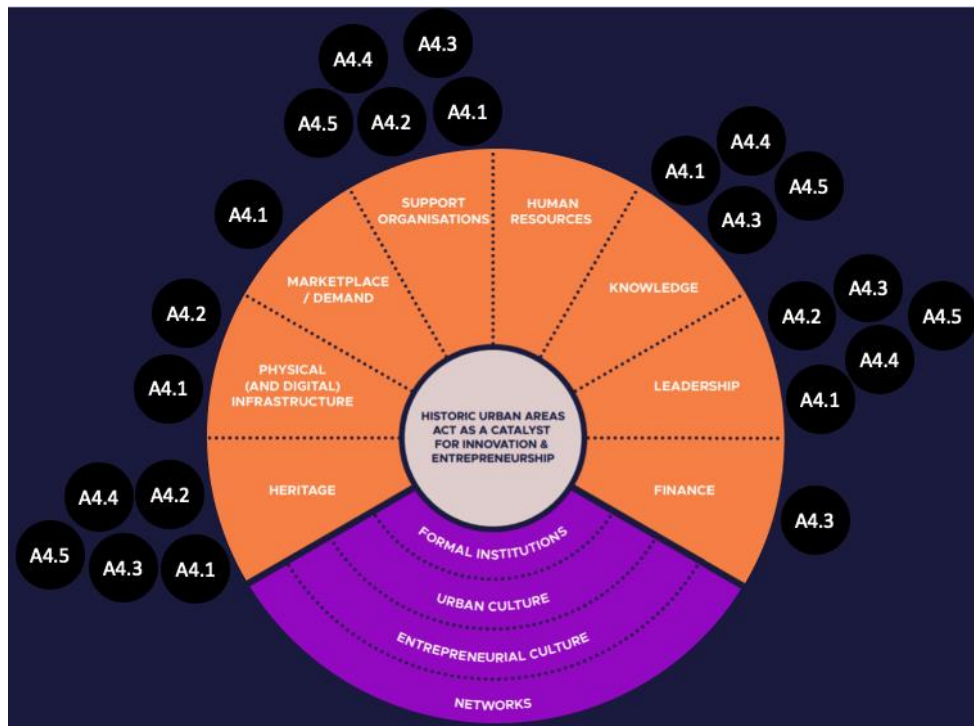
e.g. cost-effective venues and events, disabled creativity for social good

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Maritime Belfast Trust, Maritime Mile Destination Forum, Belfast City Council, Belfast Harbour
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Leadership
3. **Expected impact:** increased footfall, increased dwell time, increased local spend, enhancement of Belfast as a city



**A4.5: Develop a framework or charter to consider collective sharing and learning/cost savings/food waste/carbon/ sourcing local/employment**

1. **Potential Alliances, Partnerships:** Belfast City Council, Maritime Belfast Trust, Maritime Mile Destination Forum
2. **HUB-IN Ingredients addressed:** Heritage, Support Organisations, Knowledge, Leadership,
3. **Expected impact:** Increased competitive profile, increased skills through produce development



## Part 5 - Brand Identity

The Maritime Mile has recently developed a strong brand which has already become well established and recognised within the city and beyond. This brand will support the development of the Belfast HUB IN communication and engagement strategies. All activities detailed in the HUB-IN Action Plan will align with the identity that the current Maritime Mile wishes to convey and the new image for the place.

However, HUB-IN could support:

- The alignment, reinforcement and further enhancement of the Maritime Mile brand as Hub-In projects and pilots are delivered
- Reinforce the Maritime Mile brand attributes across a range of new stakeholders - in particular Innovation District stakeholders and creative industries, promoting greater understanding and creating buy in
- The link between the Maritime Mile brand and the new brand that is being developed for the Innovation District (a corporate brand), so that the two brands used for the same area don't operate in silos. Ideally the Maritime Mile can be a supporting brand for the new corporate brand as quality of life and experience of the Maritime Mile will be key to attract investors too: Look at Innovation City Belfast with the lenses of the Maritime Mile
- New ways to show synergies between Maritime Mile brand and Innovation District through communicating Hub-In challenge calls
- Reinforcing that the Maritime Mile, as one of the 8 pilot Hub-in areas is a unique proposition at European level
- The implementation and monitoring of the current Maritime Mile brand



The Maritime Mile Development and Animation Strategy<sup>9</sup> developed in 2019 defines the brand vision, brand identity and brand essence from the Maritime Mile. The brand is based on the concept of Cultural<sup>10</sup> Placemaking: based on the belief that culture is essential for unlocking the full potential of urban places, and that culture must be factored in at the very start of new urban planning processes.

### 5.1 - BRAND VISION

Maritime Mile is the capital's dynamic historic waterfront destination — harbouring entertainment, cutting edge technology, research & entrepreneurship, based upon a historic origin that represents bold ambition and big ideas.

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<sup>9</sup> For further information: <https://www.maritimebelfast.com/app/uploads/2019/08/Maritime-Mile-Book-1-Vision-Strategy.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> In this context, 'culture' is broadly defined, including the traditional arts sector – galleries, museums, theatres and artist-led and participatory projects, but also extends beyond those boundaries to look at the way culture can play a role in public realm design, wayfinding, play, health and wellbeing, employment, education, leisure, heritage, tourism and technology.

## 5.2 - Brand Identity

Maritime Mile is the place where the city began, where people dreamed big and led the world in maritime engineering. Today, people come to reflect upon that heritage and use it as inspiration to think big-bringing cutting edge innovations in science, research, media and technology back to the Mile. Belfast, a city once plagued by its past, is now primed to claim its status as a European capital with the Maritime Mile as its catalyst for this tidal change. The Mile will be a place where generations of dreamers come to make their mark through authentic design, activation and invention that celebrates Belfast's future as well as its maritime heritage.

## 5.3 - Brand essence

The Maritime Mile, a place where:

- Water meets Land
- Heritage meets Innovation
- Culture meets Commerce
- Industry meets the World

## 5.4 - Cultural Placemaking Themes & Principles<sup>11</sup>

The Cultural Placemaking Themes and Principles together form a framework to ensure a clear, compelling and inclusive narrative and character for the Maritime Mile.

The Themes are 'what' ideas are being explored. They are the unifying strategic objectives for the Maritime Mile and its stakeholders, giving focus to the target outcomes for all activity within the Mile.

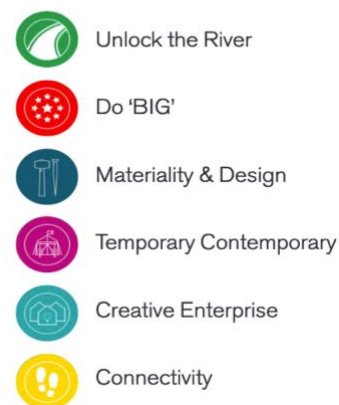
The Principles are the 'how' to do the Themes. They are the call to action, outlining how the Themes should be explored through architecture, landscape, infrastructure, retail and community, the arts and a range of other areas.

Using the Themes and Principles as guideposts when making decisions about new projects will ensure the Maritime Mile is a place with a clear 'cultural DNA' that is visible, interconnected and compelling. A place for discovery and new experiences, telling the story of Belfast and its harbour in exciting and thought-provoking ways. The Themes and Principles enable the stakeholders – as collaborators and as creators to engage with and appreciate the role of a creative and cultural approach to design and programming.

### Themes



### Principles



<sup>11</sup> Extracted from the [Maritime Mile Development and Animation Strategy](#)

Within the HUB-IN project it became clear that:

- The brand outreach should go from local to national and global and local focus is currently a priority
- The target audience is locals, entrepreneurs (innovation sector) and all interested stakeholders based on the Maritime Mile
- The ultimate goal would be to:
  - Generate sense of pride and belonging for locals
  - Stimulate synergies and connections between the tourism, heritage, digital, creative industry and art sectors
- The ideal outcome of the brand implementation would be:
  - Key destination for people of Belfast (enriching experiences)
  - Recognition of Maritime Belfast as an innovation hub and new opportunities for entrepreneurs

The brand should leverage upon the following networks: Maritime Mile Destination Forum and Innovation City Belfast.

Ideas and tools to investigate:

- Growing presence on social media
- Destination champions from the creative industries, technology and digital sectors
- High profile events and festivals to enhance
- High profile challenge call / process

To build upon:

- The Maritime Mile Toolkit<sup>12</sup> offers design guidance for those landowners, developers, designers and specifiers of elements that will furnish the Maritime Mile. It highlights the contextual inspiration, colour inspiration, street furniture, planting typologies and planters, play opportunities, hoarding and banners.
- The Maritime Mile Marketing and Engagement Plan<sup>13</sup>
- The Maritime Mile Development and Animation Strategy
- [www.maritime-mile.com](http://www.maritime-mile.com) and social media channels @maritimemile

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<sup>12</sup> For further information: <https://www.maritimebelfast.com/app/uploads/2020/11/Maritime-Mile-Book-3-Toolkit-reduced.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> For further information: <https://www.maritimebelfast.com/app/uploads/2020/11/Maritime-Mile-Marketing-Engagement-Plan-Final.pdf>

# ANNEXES

The following annexes can be consulted in a separate document:

**ANNEX 1** – Other relevant key initiatives and projects

**ANNEX 2** – Enablers, Challenges, Key Measures, Tools for Implementation and Other Considerations/Solutions classified per 7 themes. Results of the prioritisation of solutions based on an effort-impact matrix.

**ANNEX 3** – Results of the citizen survey carried out in April 2021 with over 600 responses on the sights, sense, taste, touch of the Maritime Mile

**ANNEX 4** – Results of the survey carried out in September 2021 at the Maritime Mile Weekender

**ANNEX 5** – The now picture of the Maritime Mile



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