

Shared Island Initiative



'SHARING SONGS - UNFORGETTABLE VOICES': A COMMUNITY ARTS COLLABORATION PROJECT



Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme



A project to connect dementia-inclusive choirs from both sides of our island, fostering cultural understanding and unity through song. This collaborative venture, titled '**Sharing Songs - Unforgettable Voices**', aims to be a testament to the transformative power of music and the unity it can foster.

Background

This project is a result of a Shared Island Initiative with Creative Ireland and a special partnership between the Forget Me Nots, a seniors community choir with a special welcome for people with dementia, their family and caregivers based in North Dublin and Community Arts Partnership, based in Belfast, an independent advocate for community arts, offering the widest possible range of assistance and opportunity to get creative and engage in community-based arts activity.

The Co-Ordinating Team



CAP - Conor Shields, Chief Executive, and Josh Schultz, Development Manager.



Forget Me Nots - Órla Horn, Founder & Chair, Norah C Walsh, Musical Director and composer and Fiona Tierney, Trustee.

Scope of the Project

The primary aim of '**Sharing Songs - Unforgettable Voices**' is to build a sense of unity, collaboration, and purpose through songs and singing, with a special shared appreciation of the joy

that music brings to people living with dementia. As a Quality Arts project, it will involve co-creating and performing two songs, written by Norah C Walsh and Duke Special, in collaboration with choir members and poets from both parts of the island.

The project is not just about song creation and performance. It also aims to strengthen relationships and foster a sense of shared community. To this end, online activities will be organised, including song sharing, open mic singing, poetry reading, storytelling and exploration of songs and singers. Strategic cross-border visits will also be scheduled to strengthen growing relationships and facilitate in-person choral practice.

A significant outcome of this project is the creation of a songbook to document and reflect the journey, ensuring that the voices of the choir members are heard, and fostering an understanding and appreciation of cultural and community identities and preferences through song.

Project Timeline

Over the next two years, the entire journey of the project will be documented through blog posts and videography, capturing key moments and milestones in the evolution of the new choir and charting its progress. The culmination of **'Sharing Songs - Unforgettable Voices'** will be a gala performance held in a venue in Belfast.

The team at CAP have been meeting with a range of potential choirs to identify the best fit for this project and details of this collaboration will be announced once finalised.

The Forget Me Nots performing at the Lord Mayor of Dublin's Christmas Party - December 2023



The Forget Me Nots performing at the Mike Denver show in The Helix, Dublin - February 2024

