



Annual Review 2015

*Leabharlann
Náisiúnta
na hÉireann*

National Library
of Ireland



NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND

Annual Review 2015

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About the NLI

The National Library of Ireland (NLI), located on Dublin's Kildare Street beside the Houses of the Oireachtas, was founded in 1877. Today, it includes the National Photographic Archive in Temple Bar and the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland. The Library collects and makes available the shared memory of the Irish nation at home and abroad, caring for more than 10 million books, newspapers, manuscripts, prints, drawings, ephemera, photographs and digital media.

From 14th century Gaelic manuscripts to 21st century websites, from the papers of Yeats and Joyce to the works of contemporary Irish writers, the NLI is the repository of Ireland's national written heritage. It is also the guardian of personal histories in the form of vast archives of letters, photographs and diaries, and family history sources such as the Roman Catholic parish registers.

Every year, the NLI welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors to carry out research in the collections, to explore ground-breaking exhibitions and programmes for families and lifelong learners and to discover their family history through the free advice service. Increasingly, its collections are being made available online to people worldwide, through the website and platforms such as registers.nli.ie. The NLI also has an award-winning presence on Twitter, Facebook and the Flickr Commons.

Further information about the NLI is available at www.nli.ie.



Chairman's Remarks

I am honoured and delighted to be the newly-appointed Chairman of the National Library of Ireland, and to be able to continue to serve one of the most recognised cultural institutions in the country.

There were many great achievements at the NLI in 2015, many of which are outlined in this Review. On a strategic level, there is one of particular significance, which represents one of the most substantive projects in the Library's history.

Wednesday 8 July 2015 was a landmark day for the Library, and indeed Irish genealogy, when An Taoiseach Enda Kenny and the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Heather Humphreys, officiated at the launch of the digitised Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI. This unique web-repository of records is considered to be the single most important source of information on Irish family history prior to the 1901 Census. The digitisation of these records is firmly rooted in the NLI's commitment to openness and accessibility, and is underpinned by the NLI's digital infrastructure and expertise. With the launch of registers.nli.ie, people everywhere now have access to records covering 1,086 parishes throughout the island of Ireland. From its launch in July to the end of December 2015, the website attracted almost 330,000 unique users and over five and a half million page views.

The dedicated and hard-working staff of the National Library are at the heart of everything we do. They were key to the delivery of all of the achievements outlined in this Review, despite our well-documented reduced resources. The Board and I will continue to work towards the restoration of pre-economic crisis funding levels to enable the National Library to realise its broadest and most ambitious mandate to the Irish people.

The Government announcement of the capital investment plan for the Library was a significant milestone of 2015, and one which was most welcomed by the Board. This funding will enable the Library to progress its plans to preserve and develop its historic role as an institution for learning, culture, and research and as an intellectual and social meeting place where people of all backgrounds can work together on common projects or can pursue their own individual interests and lifelong learning.

In order to achieve this, the Library will place people at the heart of our planning and open up the buildings to ensure that they are welcoming, accessible and safe for all. The Library will combine the best of the past, especially the iconic Reading Room, which has so many historic and literary associations, with the best of the present, all with the aim of providing an excellent cultural experience.

We are extremely grateful to all of the donors who have graciously donated important material to the Library in 2015. The importance of philanthropic and financial support, alongside our core State funding, cannot be overstated in the enhancements and contributions they make to our programme.

In 2015, this included generous support from Joseph Hassett for the annual Yeats lecture, and funding from the British Embassy in Ireland for several aspects of our work on the Irish experience of World War One, including two exhibitions and a free public seminar on Gallipoli.

Finally, on behalf of the Board and myself, I would like to sincerely thank the Director, Dr Sandra Collins, and her staff for their continued hard work and commitment, and I look forward to working together to strengthen the Library's capability to deliver services in Ireland, and across the world with online access. I would also like to sincerely thank the Minister and her staff in the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs for their continued support and interest in the Library. Together with my Board colleagues, I look forward to working with the Library to develop its place at the heart of Ireland's culture, learning and society and to ensure that we can continue to deliver on our ambitious programme over the next year, and into the future.



H. Paul Shovlin
Chairman, NLI



Director's Foreword

2015 was a busy and memorable year for the National Library of Ireland.

The national collections are the foundations and the very bedrock of the National Library. The collections are permanent and accessible by all, and they record the memory of Ireland and allow us to share the story of Ireland with the world. As the world becomes increasingly digital we strive to capture new forms of digital memory.

Since 2007 the Library has undertaken web archiving to preserve the Irish online record - a sample of our digital memory - for future generations. In 2015, we harvested and preserved more than 220 websites, including amongst others, websites and tweets related to the marriage equality referendum campaigns. We continue this work with our web-archiving partner, the Internet Memory Foundation, to ensure important Irish online material is collected and preserved for all. All our archived websites are openly accessible through our online catalogue.

The National Library's diverse collections include unique landed estate papers, political papers, Gaelic manuscripts, photographs and maps, and modern Irish theatre and drama materials. In December 2015, they were enriched when we purchased a unique masterpiece of Irish theatre, the first draft of Sean O'Casey's 'Juno and the Paycock'. This was made possible through special funding allocated by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Heather Humphreys, combined with matched funding from the National Library of Ireland Trust. This partnership approach enabled us to bring the O'Casey manuscript home to Ireland.

Our mandate as the National Library means that reaching out beyond our physical buildings is an important goal for us. Throughout the year our exhibitions travelled to 13 locations around the country, and our extensive and high-quality collection of online content is openly accessible across the world. In partnership with Poetry Ireland, we held the Poetry Aloud annual poetry speaking competition for the ninth year running, engaging with post-primary schools right across the island of Ireland. In 2015 we welcomed a record number of entries - over 1,800 - and to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the poet's birth, the prescribed poems were selected from WB Yeats' extensive canon.

An exciting development in October 2015 was the announcement of our major international exhibition to celebrate the life and work of Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney. Due to open in 2017, this exhibition will draw on the writer's extensive literary archive, kindly donated by Seamus Heaney to the National Library in 2011. This will be the premier exhibition in the new Cultural and Heritage Centre within Bank of Ireland's College Green complex, bringing visitors from across the world to Ireland.

The National Library received the most welcome news in the announcement by Minister Humphreys of a major capital investment plan for our main building in November 2015. We are very grateful to the Minister and her Department, and the OPW for their commitment and support on this important issue. It will be transformative for our collection care and public services, and really allow us to re-imagine the National Library through our physical spaces.

I would like to extend my most sincere gratitude to our Board and our staff for their unwavering commitment to the National Library throughout 2015. I want to deeply thank also our many donors, sponsors and partners, whose generosity greatly enriches the National Library in so many ways.

After a year in my new post, I remain both proud and humbled by the many different ways that people across the world connect with the National Library: the evocative personal stories, the scholarly and research discoveries, or the sheer pleasure of finding a piece of Irish heritage that connects you with home. I look forward to more busy years ahead.



Dr Sandra Collins
Director, NLI



Resources

Budget

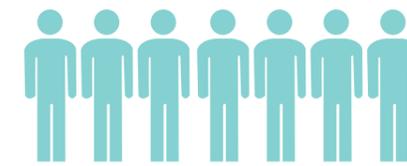
The NLI's 2015 allocation from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for pay, current and capital expenses was €7.075 million in 2015, an increase of 11.6% over 2014. €600,000 of this increase was budget restoration, with the remainder allocated to cover an additional calendar pay week in 2015.

Staff

The staff headcount in the NLI at the end of 2015 was 95, and the full-time equivalent was 88.49 (allowing for part time arrangements). Included in the headcount figure for 2015 were 9 temporary posts:

- Three graduate students employed on one year contracts working on Research, Library and Archival projects. The NLI's annual studentship programme has been in place for 17 years. The Research Studentship offers opportunities for advanced graduate students of Irish history to further develop their research skills and knowledge of original sources. The Library and Archives Studentships each offer a graduate wishing to pursue a professional career as a librarian or archivist a unique opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of key aspects of library and archival work including cataloguing, conservation and digitisation.
- A conservation intern on a one year contract. Since 2007, this internship programme, jointly funded by the Heritage Council, hosts recent graduates of specialized paper and/or book conservation courses. The scheme supports the professional development of young conservators and the programme has enabled the preservation and conservation of hundreds of unique library items.
- Three education assistants on two year contracts. The education assistants support the work of the Outreach department in reaching out across the nation, producing and interpreting nationally significant exhibitions, and bringing new audiences to the National Library. These roles significantly enhance the value of the State's existing investment in the National Library's collections and services in reaching out to citizens and visitors.
- Two software developers on 3 year contracts. These posts enabled the NLI to advance all aspects of its digital programme in 2015, including the development of the award winning Catholic Parish Registers website. The posts also made possible the extensive development work on the digital repository to accommodate the 23,000 digitised items relating to the 1916 centenary.

2015 at a glance



OVER **248,000**
VISITS IN 2015



62,061
RESEARCH
VISITS

MORE THAN **220**
WEBSITES HARVESTED
AND PRESERVED



12,887
BOOKS CATALOGUED

OVER **37,000**



FOLLOWERS



21.1
MILLION
INTERACTIONS ACROSS
NLI'S ONLINE PROFILES

(NLI WEBSITE, FLICKR COMMONS
AND REGISTERS.NLI.IE)

15,859 PEOPLE
ATTENDED **280**
TOURS, TALKS, WORKSHOPS
& PERFORMANCES



WITH MORE THAN
150,000
VISITS



EXHIBITIONS
TRAVELLED TO



Overview of Key Areas of Work 2015

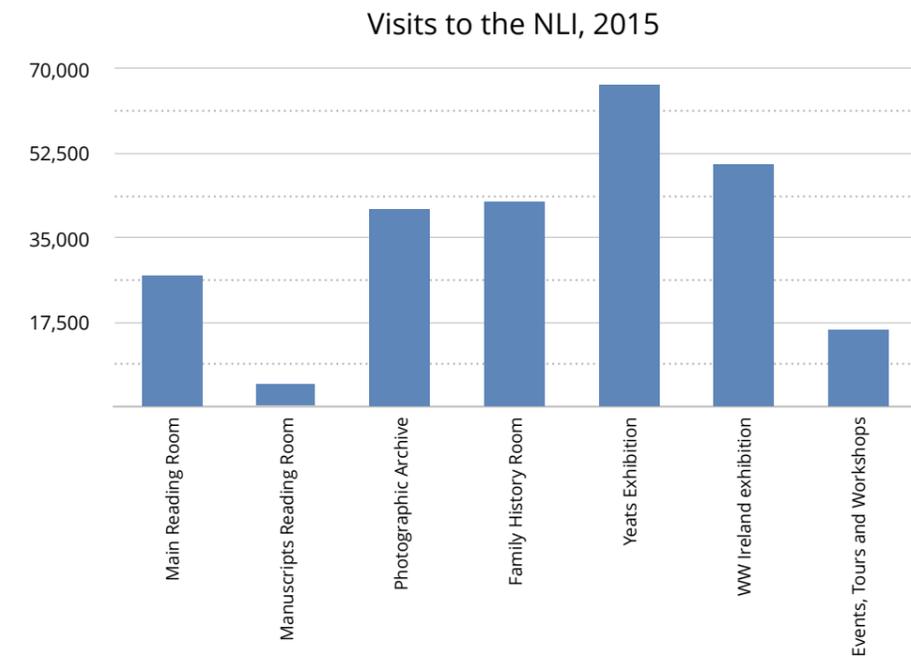
Visitor Numbers

Visitors to the NLI - Physical Sites and Events / Activities

There were 248,836 visits to the NLI recorded during 2015. Of these, 62,061 were research visits to the NLI's main Reading Room, Special Collections Reading Rooms or Family History Room.

The NLI's Yeats exhibition was the most frequently visited part of the National Library, with 66,808 visits, a six per cent increase on 2014 figures. This was followed by the World War Ireland exhibition (50,379 visits) and the Family History Service (42,702 visits).

The table below summarises numbers of visits to different sites and activities within the NLI for 2015.



Month-by-Month Visitor Numbers

The busiest month for visits to the NLI in 2015 was September, when we had 26,610 visits to our premises. This was followed by August (25,762) and July (25,752). The quietest month was December, when there were 13,044 visits to the NLI.





Researchers at work with the NLI collections, as part of the Bird Song Project.

Online Visitors

We have invested significantly in attracting users and followers to our online profiles. The NLI website is www.nli.ie, plus four key social media profiles:

1. Flickr Commons: www.flickr.com/photos/nlireland/
2. Facebook: www.facebook.com/NationalLibraryofIreland
3. Twitter: www.twitter.com/nlireland
4. Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/nlieventarchive>

In July 2015, the NLI also launched 'Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI' at registers.nli.ie, which attracted over 5.5 million page views between the launch and the end of the year. There were 1.27 million visits to nli.ie, and 14.29 million views of the NLI's profile on Flickr Commons.

At the end of 2015, the NLI had 16,415 Facebook followers and 20,630 followers on Twitter. Both profiles showed an increase in followers of more than 30% on 2014.

Website and Social Media Visitors / Followers, 2015	
	2015
nli.ie	1,270,529
registers.nli.ie	5,553,736*
Flickr Commons Views	14,296,735
Facebook Followers	16,415
Twitter Followers	20,630
Vimeo	5,265

*registers.nli.ie launched in July 2015.

Here are the three most popular posts on Facebook and Twitter, including reach and engagement details:

Top Facebook Posts

National Library of Ireland
8 July 2015 · 48

The National Library of Ireland's web-repository of parish records dating from the 1740s to the 1980s is now live! It provides unlimited access to all members of the public to records covering 1,066 parishes across the island of Ireland.

Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI

This website contains images from the NLI's collection of Catholic parish register microfilms. The registers contain records of baptisms and marriages from the majority of Catholic parishes in Ireland and Northern Ireland up to 1980.

Reach 32,015 | Likes 908 | Shares 418

National Library of Ireland
29 April 2015 · 48

The NLI will make its collection of Catholic parish register microfilms freely available online on a dedicated website on 8 July 2015. Full details are available here: <http://www.nli.ie/nli/latest-news.aspx>

Reach 30,864 | Likes 701 | Shares 281

National Library of Ireland
2 November 2015 · 48

All Souls' Day, 1916. Memorial handbill for those executed or who were killed during Easter Week 1916.

Reach 18,296 | Likes 550 | Shares 128

Top Tweets

Nat Library Ireland
@NLIreland

Happy Birthday to Mr Joyce and his novel Ulysses, who both came into the world on 2 February (1882 and 1922).

Impressions 49,513 | Favourites 160 | Retweets 270

Nat Library Ireland
@NLIreland

Make sure to look up if you're attending the parish registers launch today #ancestorsonline

Impressions 29,032 | Favourites 21 | Retweets 25

Nat Library Ireland
@NLIreland

Michael Collins leaving Earlsfort Terrace, where the Second Dáil ratified the Anglo-Irish Treaty on this day in 1922.

Impressions 18,273 | Favourites 79 | Retweets 96

Collecting

Books, Newspapers and Periodicals

The National Library's printed collections are an invaluable resource accessible to everyone.

The Library is entitled to a copy of every book published in Ireland, under what is known as legal deposit. During 2015, the NLI claimed 2,751 publications from Irish publishers under legal deposit, and received 1,852, 1,007 books relating to Ireland were purchased, and 242 donations were received.



NLI Director Dr Sandra Collins and Minister Heather Humphreys pictured in the NLI book stacks.

12,887 new and antiquarian books were catalogued during the year. These included books from the WB Yeats Library – the poet's own book collection – and the Holloway collection.

Every issue of 246 current newspaper titles, including all national and provincial papers, were collected. This amounted to 9,702 individual newspapers in total. 3,876 periodicals were also collected.

Special Collections: Manuscripts, Prints and Drawings, Ephemera and Photographs

The National Library's special collections are unique and central to telling the story of Ireland.

There were 163 accessions to the Special Collections (Manuscripts, Prints and Drawings, Ephemera and Photographs) during 2015. There were 52 donations of material to the manuscripts collections in 2015, and 38 purchases. There were 22 donations of prints and drawings, and 22 ephemera donations and 9 purchases. There were 9 purchases and 11 donations to the photographic collections.

	Donations	Purchases
Manuscripts	52	38
Prints and Drawings	22	-
Ephemera	22	9
Photographs	11	9

Digital Collections

To offer a broad representation of Irish life, it is crucial that the NLI's physical collections are complemented by digital collections. These digital collections are an invaluable resource for future research and complement the NLI's collections of manuscripts and printed books, newspapers and ephemera.

The National Library has been active in web archiving since 2007, and has been carrying out selective and thematic web archiving since 2011. Nearly 230 websites were preserved during 2015 on topics including the Marriage Equality Referendum (see highlights), the 150th Anniversary of the birth of WB Yeats, the Decade of Commemorations, Budget 2016, Festivals, Tourism and Health, Welfare and Housing.

Collecting and Cataloguing Highlights

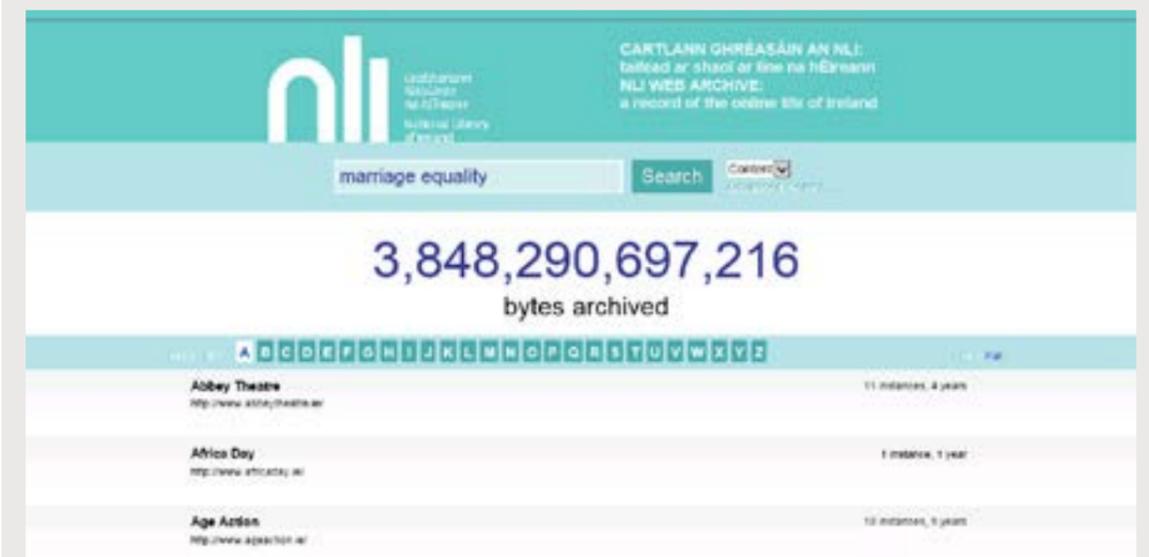
Particular highlights included the acquisition of an early draft of Sean O'Casey's 'Juno and the Paycock', the Christopher Robson Photographic Collection, and the collecting of websites connected with the Marriage Equality Referendum.

Other collecting highlights included the acquisition of a Yeats Manuscript notebook, the Christopher Murray Papers (a remarkable archive, mainly relating to modern Irish theatre), the MacDermot of Coolavin Papers and the M.J. Molloy papers.

Over many decades, the Yeats family have been extraordinarily generous in donating material to the National Library. The cataloguing of WB Yeats' own library, comprising 2,525 books, was completed in 2015.

Other cataloguing highlights included the commencement of cataloguing of the Liam O'Leary Archive, a joint project with the Irish Film Archive. Additional key material from the Sheehy Skeffington, Roger Casement and Alice Stopford Green collections relating to the Decade of Commemorations was also catalogued.

Preserving the Online Record: 2015 Marriage Equality Referendum



Referendum campaigns and elections are often seminal moments in history. With so much information now shared online, web archiving is critical in ensuring permanent records of these moments are kept, as relevant websites can quite literally disappear in the aftermath of a vote.

Voters in the 2015 Marriage Equality Referendum were asked whether to add to the Constitution that "marriage may be contracted in accordance with law by two persons without distinction as to their sex." The proposal was supported by the Government as well as all major political parties. On 22 May 2015, Ireland became the first country to legalise same-sex marriage through a popular vote. The referendum was passed by 62%, with overall voter turnout of 61%. With a very strong online presence for the referendum campaigns, it was a natural step for the NLI to preserve and ensure permanent access to this record for future generations.

The NLI identified and selected 49 websites for preservation, capturing sites that represented the spectrum of information and debate. These included the innovative 'Get the Boat 2 Vote', political party sites and official referendum sites. Commentary, satire, news and analysis sites were also represented. The NLI contacted site owners directly to let them know of the Library's interest in archiving their website, and then worked with the web-archiving partner, the [Internet Memory Foundation](#), to archive a snapshot of the sites between 23 and 25 May 2015.

All the websites can now be accessed online in the [NLI Web Archive](#) and the NLI Website provides more information, including a list of every site in the [2015 Marriage Referendum Web Archive Collection](#).

An Irish Classic: First Draft of Sean O’Casey’s ‘Juno and the Paycock’

The NLI acquired the first draft of Sean O’Casey’s play ‘Juno and the Paycock’ at a Sotheby’s auction in December 2015. The 62-page manuscript was acquired by a phone bid placed for the NLI in a rare books auction in Manhattan for the sum of €174,484.25 excluding VAT. The acquisition was made possible by special allocation funding from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) and the NLI Trust.

First produced in the Abbey in 1924, ‘Juno and the Paycock’ is considered one of the great plays of the twentieth century. The manuscript contains a handwritten draft of Acts I and II, fragments of Act III, listings of characters, notes and a synopsis of the play. The autographed manuscript is in a school notebook, with the title ‘Juno and the Peacock’ on the front cover, and differs substantially from the published version. The manuscript was owned by the late Robert S Pirie, an American lawyer and one of the world’s leading book collectors, who died in January 2015.

Archives relating to modern Irish theatre and drama are among the great treasures of the NLI’s collections. The acquisition of this manuscript has further enhanced the Library as a destination for O’Casey studies, joining rich holdings of literary papers, personal library, writing desk and other artefacts.



Landmark Day for Irish Genealogy: Launch of ‘Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI’

Wednesday 8 July 2015 was a landmark day for Irish genealogy. An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny and Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys, officially launched ‘Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI’, a new web-repository of parish records, at a special event in the Library.

The original Catholic parish registers date from the 1740s to the 1880s. They record baptisms, marriages and some deaths, and are considered to be the single most important source of information on Irish family history prior to the 1901 Census. The National Library microfilmed the parish records, mostly during the 1950s and 1960s, creating microfilm copies of more than 3,550 registers from the vast majority of Catholic parishes in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Until 2015, anyone interested in accessing these records had to visit the National Library in person.

With the launch of registers.nli.ie, people everywhere now have access to records covering 1,086 parishes from throughout the island of Ireland. The new web resource was a major investment in community, heritage and in diaspora engagement, allowing those based overseas to consult the records without any barriers. It was also a significant investment in the NLI’s digital reach, building on and extending our existing digital library infrastructure. The resource leverages many open-source technologies and was designed to be fully responsive, working across mobile, tablet and desktop devices.

The appeal of the site was clear from the usage data during the year. From its launch in July to the end of December 2015, the website attracted almost 330,000 unique users and over five and a half million page views. It was viewed by users from 172 countries, with the highest numbers of users coming from Ireland, US, UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Spain, France, Germany and the Netherlands.



Ciara Kerrigan, project manager of the digitisation of parish registers, shows the new web-repository to An Taoiseach Enda Kenny and Minister Heather Humphreys.

Exhibitions

Six exhibitions were staged or hosted by the NLI over the course of 2015, on Kildare Street and in Temple Bar.

1. Yeats: The Life and Work of William Butler Yeats

The National Library’s award-winning exhibition on WB Yeats has been welcoming visitors since 2006. Showcasing the NLI’s holdings - the most extensive collection of WB Yeats papers, manuscripts, volumes and memorabilia in the world - this multimedia exhibition also charts the life of the great Nobel Laureate.

To mark the 150th anniversary of WB Yeats’ birth in 2015, new readings by participants in the Poetry Aloud verse speaking competition were added to the “Verse and Vision” section of the exhibition. These were complemented by a new “Favourite Poem” wall, where all visitors can leave a record of their own favourite poem.



.....
In 2015, the exhibition attracted 66,808 visits, a six per cent increase from 2014.
.....

2. World War Ireland: Exploring the Irish Experience

‘World War Ireland’ opened at the NLI on 20th November 2014, supported by funding from the British Embassy in Ireland. The exhibition focuses on the unique aspects of the Irish WWI experience. With original artefacts, first hand personal accounts and eyewitness testimony, World War Ireland brings visitors dramatically inside the lives of those who experienced WWI.

A new module, ‘Desperate Times, Desperate Measures’, was added to the exhibition in 2015. This told of the story of 1915, a year in which extreme means were employed in an effort to break the stalemate and bring the war to an end. The focus was on two major events which impacted on Irish lives overseas and at home: the Gallipoli Campaign and the sinking of the Lusitania.



.....
There were over 50,000 visits to the exhibition during 2015.
.....

3. Midland - Lár Tíre: Cycling the MGWR from Past to Present

Midland - Lár Tíre was a bilingual (Irish and English) multimedia exhibition of photographs, audio clips, maps, video, notebooks and sculpture by artist Pamela de Brí. The exhibition documented the former Midland and Great Western Railway (MGWR) as Pamela found it between 2011 and 2013.



The exhibition was inspired by the National Library of Ireland's O'Dea Photographic Collection. The O'Dea Collection was photographed by James O'Dea, (1910-1992) a commercial traveler and amateur photographer, and in 1946 a founder member of the Irish Railway Record Society. The O'Dea Photographic Collection consists of 5,400 black and white photographs, documenting the railways of Ireland between 1937 and 1977. The entire O'Dea collection has now been digitised by the NLI and is now free to view at www.nli.ie.

.....
The exhibition ran at the NPA from 9 January to 24 May 2015, and was visited almost 17,000 times.
.....

4. DIT Graduate Photography 2015

Graduates of the BA in Photography in the School of Media at DIT held their end of year exhibition in the National Photographic Archive. Opened by photographer and artist Dragana Jurisic on Tuesday 2 June, the exhibition ran until 28 June.

.....
There were 3,640 visits to the exhibition during its run.
.....

5. Portraits of the Invisible: The Irish in World War I

In March 2012, the National Library of Ireland held the first of several Irish World War I Roadshows. Families were invited to have personal items connected to WWI catalogued and digitised, to tell their family stories about that war, and to have the digitised items added to the Europeana online archive (<http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu>). It was an opportunity to remember their family members, and to bring their story to the wider world.



Pictured at the launch of 'Portraits of the Invisible' on 22 July 2015 were Carole Budd Cullen, granddaughter of Charles Budd who is featured in the exhibition, and British Ambassador to Ireland, H.E. Dominick Chilcott.

This exhibition at the National Photographic Archive, a partnership with the British Embassy in Ireland, showcased the photographs collected during the roadshows. Images of soldiers and medics, nurses and stretcher bearers, drivers and cyclists, sailors and pilots, were accompanied by the stories their families have treasured for generations. Specially created audio recordings brought the words written by these participants in WWI in their letters, postcards and diaries to life.

.....
Portraits of the Invisible ran at the National Photographic Archive from July 2015 and attracted more than 20,000 visits.
.....

6. "Hope in the Great War", 1914 - 1918

In partnership with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the National Library hosted the Royal National Lifeboats Institution of Great Britain and Ireland's travelling exhibition "Hope in the Great War". The exhibition ran in the main hall of the NLI in May and June 2015.



Travelling Exhibitions

The NLI has a selection of exhibitions available in travelling format. These pull-up information banners are adaptations of former NLI exhibitions or themed explorations of material in our collections, ranging from the story of heraldry and the grants of arms, to Ireland's experience of WWI. A full list of travelling exhibitions currently offered is available on our website.

In 2015, the exhibitions travelled to 13 locations around Ireland and internationally, from Killiney Grove Nursing Home to the Irish Embassy in Budapest. Other locations included sites such as Enniscorthy Castle, Kilkenny Castle, and Athlone Castle, together with schools and libraries. 2015 was also the first year in which the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology hosted an exhibition.



NLI Collections on Loan

The NLI lends collection items for temporary exhibitions in cultural institutions in Ireland and overseas. In 2015, material from the collections was loaned to five different exhibitions.

Prints, drawings and ephemera from the Library's Special Collections were loaned to: the National Museum of Ireland for their exhibition 'Clontarf 1014: Brian Boru and the Battle for Dublin'; the Hugh Lane Gallery for the exhibition 'Hugh Lane (1875-1915): Dublin's Legacy and Loss'; and to the National Gallery of Ireland for 'At a Glance: Portraits by John Butler Yeats'.

Material from the Christy Brown Collection in the Manuscripts Collection was loaned to the Little Museum of Dublin for their Christy Brown exhibition, and the colours of the Irish Brigade Regiments, formerly in the Chapel Royal in Dublin Castle, were loaned to Dublin Castle for the exhibition, 'Pinnacles, Pomp & Piety'. The film 'The Promise of Barty O'Brien' was loaned to the Irish Film Institute for screenings of films made in and about Laois.

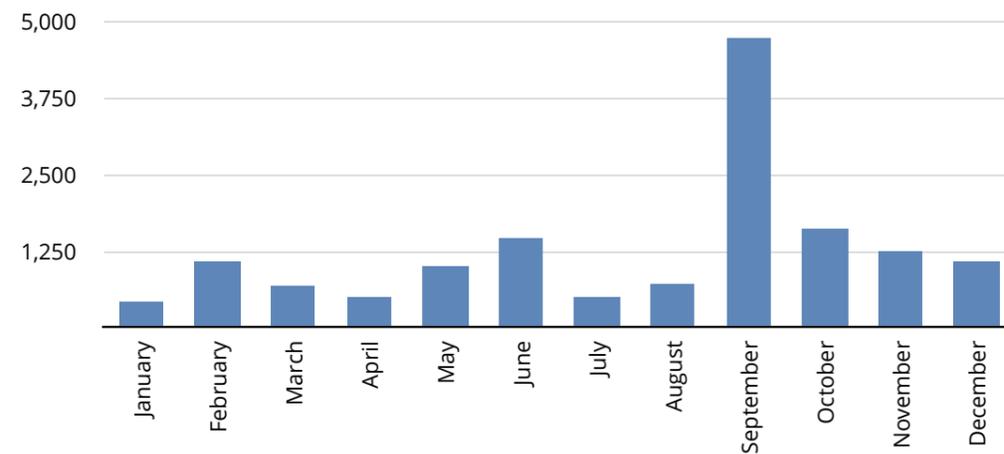
Events and Outreach

The NLI runs an extensive programme of events and learning opportunities on an ongoing basis, encompassing tours, workshops, lectures, genealogy events, performances and family-focused activities. There is a range of options for all ages, during the day, in the evenings and at weekends.

During 2015, 15,859 people attended events run by the NLI. This includes 4,000 people who visited on Culture Night in September, and all the participants in the regional heats of Poetry Aloud. Public tours, and school tours / workshops and third-level visits attracted another 4,219 participants.

The busiest month for events was September, when 4,706 people attended NLI events. This was followed by October (1,599) and June (1,464).

Month-by-month attendance stats, 2015



Event Highlights

Some of the event highlights from 2015 were as follows:

Joint Oireachtas Committee and Public Accounts Committee Visit

A number of members of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht and of the Public Accounts Committee visited the National Library on Wednesday 25 February, to explore the NLI's range of services and the challenges of overseeing extensive and diverse collections. The group viewed areas throughout the NLI's building, including the newspaper collections, and were given a behind the scenes introduction to the Library's collection of political ephemera.



Exploring the newspaper collections during the visit.

Bird Song Project and Concerts

Commissioned by Age and Opportunity/Bealtaine 2015 and devised and produced by Michael Fortune and Aileen Lambert, the Bird Song Project was a research and performance project involving traditional singers and the National Library's collections.



Five special concerts took place across the country, with 15 traditional singing circles, from Wexford to Derry, also participating by hosting their own bird song night, each with a unique line-up. The National Library hosted two concerts. On Wednesday 6 May, the Leinster Concert featured Paddy Berry, Phil Berry, John O'Byrne, Mary O'Brien, Alannah O'Kelly, Gerry Cullen, and Páidrigín Ní Uallacháin, and on Thursday 7 May the Dublin Concert featured Luke Cheevers, Niamh Parsons, Francy Devine, Tony McGaley, Tom Finn, Eugene McEldowney and Anne Buckley.



Performers at one of the Birdsong concerts in the NLI.

Yeats 2015

2015 was the 150th anniversary of WB Yeats' birth, and was marked by a national and international programme of Yeats2015 events. The National Library marked the poet's birthday, 13 June, with a month of literary events, including lunchtime talks, lectures and a panel discussion; music and theatre performances; poetry readings; and public tours of the Yeats exhibition.

The first event, a lecture by Professor Jerusha MacCormack, was followed by the annual Joseph Hassett Yeats Lecture 'Players and Painted Stage: The Drama of Yeats' Life' by Roy Foster, Carroll Professor of Irish History at the University of Oxford. Professor Foster also took part in a History Ireland Hedge School panel discussion of Yeats 150.



Music in the NLI for Yeats Day 2015.

Yeats' birthday was celebrated from 2pm to 4pm with a free programme of live flute, harp and cello music in the Library's beautiful front hall accompanying a selection of Yeats' poems read by students from the Poetry Aloud competition and introduced by Niall MacMonagle.

Music and drama performances by Curlew Theatre Company amongst others rounded out the month.

Gallipoli Perspectives: A Seminar

A special seminar focusing on the Gallipoli campaign of World War I was held in the National Library on 14 November. Moderated by Tom Burke of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association, five speakers offered five different perspectives on the Gallipoli campaign and its aftermath. Turkish Ambassador Necip Egüz, historian Philip Orr, broadcaster David Davin-Power, academic Dr Jennifer Wellington and researcher Neale Rooney offered stimulating and thought-provoking presentations to a packed lecture theatre.

Towards 2016



Eamonn Ceannt, grandnephew of Proclamation Signatory Éamonn Ceannt views a photograph of Áine Ceannt with her son Rónán.



The Front Hall on 7 December 2015 at the special event to launch the NLI's 2016 programme and 1916 Digital Collections.

On the evening of Monday 7 December 2015 the NLI launched the 1916 Digital Collections, together with details of the programme for 2016.

Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys, officiated at the event, announcing details of a unique digital repository telling the stories of the signatories of the 1916 Proclamation. A number of descendants of the signatories of the Proclamation also attended.

Dr John Bowman introduced the event, which took place in the NLI's Front Hall, featuring music, animated projections of portrait images and a striking light installation on the pillars and ceiling.

The NLI's Work with External Partners

Partnering with other bodies allows the NLI to achieve more by combining its particular strengths and expertise with those of its partner organisations. 2015 was a very active year on this front, with the Library engaged in an extensive programme of partnership and engagement throughout Ireland.

Activity around the Decade of Commemorations was an important feature of the NLI's partnerships in 2015. The Library worked closely with RTÉ on their Road to the Rising event on Easter Monday, running a public engagement day around privately held memorabilia in the GPO. Later in the year, we partnered with Inspiring Ireland, a joint project of the DRI and the cultural institutions, on a series of 1916 community collecting initiatives. Throughout the year, we supported the development of Century Ireland, the online historical newspaper, with content from our digitised collections. We also initiated other collections-focused partnerships, including one with the Irish Film Institute. This is a collaborative project to process, preserve, conserve, and catalogue the Liam O'Leary Film Archive and to make it available to the public for research.

Collaborating with national festivals and programmes amplifies the Library's message and increases our reach around Ireland. In 2015, this included working together with Adult Learners' Week, One City One Book, Bealtaine, Yeats2015, Heritage Week, and Culture Night. We also contributed to festivals and programmes around the country, including Cashel Arts Festival.

We continued to work with UCD on the development of the Ulysses Centre, a new literary visitor attraction at Newman House. October also saw the announcement of a Seamus Heaney exhibition to be staged by the National Library at the Bank of Ireland on College Green, in a major partnership with DAHG and BOI. The Little Museum of Dublin produced an exhibition based on the Christy Brown Archive featuring the collection jointly acquired in 2014.

Collaborative working enhanced our engagement across the education sector. We hosted a series of adult education courses drawing on the Library's collections in partnership with UCD Adult Education, and together with Poetry Ireland organised Poetry Aloud, the all-island poetry speaking competition for post-primary schools which attracted over 1,800 participants in 2015.

Contributions from partners also enhanced and contributed to our programme. This included generous support from Joseph Hassett for the annual Yeats lecture, and funding from the British Embassy in Ireland for several aspects of our work on the Irish experience of WWI, including two exhibitions and a free public seminar on Gallipoli.



James Harte, NLI, with the Brady family and memorabilia at the Road to the Rising event in the GPO on Easter Monday.



NLI Director Dr Sandra Collins pictured with Poetry Aloud 2015 winners Alice Magorrian, Kevin Fitzpatrick and Nuala Whittle.



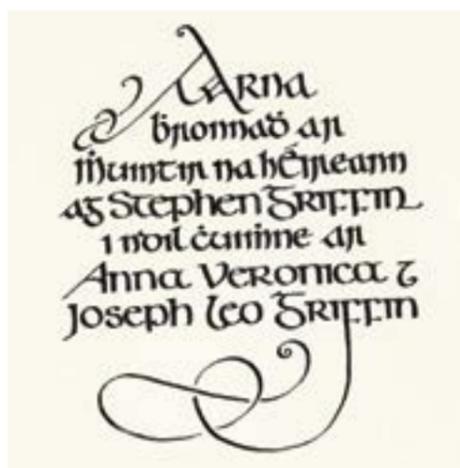
Pictured at the announcement of the Seamus Heaney exhibition were Minister Heather Humphreys, Dr Sandra Collins, Mick Heaney and Richie Boucher.

Supporting the NLI

Since its foundation in 1877, the National Library of Ireland has enjoyed great support in the form of financial and material donations, which have enabled it to become the world's leading repository for Ireland's history and heritage. Almost all of the NLI's services, public events and programmes are open to the public free of charge, and donation boxes are located throughout the NLI's buildings to help support the ongoing programme of work.

In addition, the National Library of Ireland Trust was established to facilitate the generosity of people who wish to endow the NLI by financial donation or bequest. The Trust is an approved body within the meaning of section 484 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 which, in effect, means that donations to the Trust are tax deductible, subject to certain conditions. Full details of conditions can be found on www.revenue.ie

For further information about the Trust, please contact the National Library of Ireland by email to nlitrust@nli.ie or by phone at 00353-1-6030244.



The Griffin Collection

We particularly wish to acknowledge a further gift of books dealing with the presence of the Irish in America from the 18th century to the present day, donated by Mr Stephen Griffin. The collection is presented to the NLI by Stephen Griffin in loving memory of Anna Veronica and Joseph Leo Griffin. We are very grateful to Mr Griffin for his ongoing donation, which constitutes a major resource in this important area. The Griffin Collection of Books and Materials pertaining to the Irish Experience in America contains over six thousand items, including many rare and ephemeral items.



Donors 2015

The NLI would like to acknowledge the generous support of its donors in 2015. We would like to thank them for their valuable donations to the Library which have greatly enriched the National Collections.

AgendaNi Magazine

John Aher

Hanan Hassan Al-Khalifa

Allotrope Press

June Armstrong

Dr John Ashdown-Hill

Ashmolean Museum

Ballinascreen Historical Society

Mary Bateman and the Friel family

Belfast Royal Academy

Simon Berry

Bruce and Linda Bidwell

Leif Bodnarchuk

René Böll

Ann Bouch

The Braid (Mid-Antrim Museum)

Larry Breen

Susan Brind and Jim Harold

Patricia Brock

Vincent Brogan

Professor Dario Calimani

Ian Campbell

Rory Campbell

Mary Casey

Frances Conlon

Frances Corkery Thompson

Joseph Cosgrave

Dr James T Covert

Sheila M Craik

Clara Cullen

Joe Curtis

Jane d'Arcy

Alice Mary Dee

Noel Donnellon

James Doyle (Turnpike Books)

Eamonn Duffy

Caroline Dwyer

Emain Publications

Brian Farrington

Forbairt Feirste

Alex Findlater

Wayne Fitzgerald

Bill Foley

Folio Society

Charles Foster

Laurence Foster

Dr Andrew Galwey

Wilbert Garvin

GLEN Gay and Lesbian Equality Network

Maureen Gill-Sharp

Goa Association, UK

Richard Gregory

David J Griffin

Stephen Griffin

Robert Grumbacher

Adolphe Haberer

Keith Haines

C K Hall

Anthony Hand

Ronnie Harkness

Professor Margaret Harper and Ann Christian Harper

Avril Harris

Dan Harvey

Harry Havelin

Anna Hayes

Margaret Hayes

Gerald A Hearne

Vicky Herbert

Richard Humphreys

Pearl Hutchinson

Keith Inman

Ireland's Great Hunger Museum (Quinnipiac University Press)

Noel Jenkins

Cheryl F Jensen

Karolinum Press

Hannah Keating

Dennis Kennedy (Ormeau Books)

Joseph Kennedy

Colum Kenny

Robert Kerr

Deirdre Kilmurry

Sean Kinsella

Lagan Construction

Lagan Press

Lapwing Publications

Laurence Lennan

Fr Patrick Leonard

Lucian Blaga University Press

Frankie McCarron

MacDermot family

Pat McErlean

John Michael McEvoy

John McKee

Paul B McNulty

Dr Philip Maddock

Marriage Equality

Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission

Dermot Meleady

Adrian Monaghan

William Monaghan

Enrique Morata

Brian (Barry) Murphy

Carson Murphy

Christopher Murray

Judy Murray

National Portrait Gallery, London

Elizabeth L Nichols

David Norris

James O'Brien (Smenos Publications)

Honor Ó Brocháin

Dónall Ó Buachalla Architects

Brendan O Donoghue

Gréagoir Ó Dúill

Patrick O'Flanagan

Sláine O'Hogain

Donall Ó Luanaigh

Micheál Ó Súilleabháin

Mark O'Sullivan

Richard Palmer

Letitia Parker

Eilish MacCurtain Pearce

Pretoria University Law Press, South Africa

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)

Gregory Raftery

Randalstown Historical Society

Matthew Russell

Dr Jim Ryan

Thomas Ryan

Jonathon Riley

Royal County Down Golf Club

Hans-H Schiesser

Clive Scoular

Perry Share

Mary Smith

Elizabeth Smyth

Anne Spillane on behalf of Gretta Kelly (deceased)

Spectrum Centre

Jill Steer

Sarah Strong

Martin A Timoney

Robert Towers

Transitional Justice Institute, Ulster University

Brian S Turner

Ulster Institute for Social Research

Ulster-Scots Agency

Ulster-Scots Community Network

University of Wisconsin Press

Vital Nutrition Limited

Jennifer Wallace

Sr Constance Warde

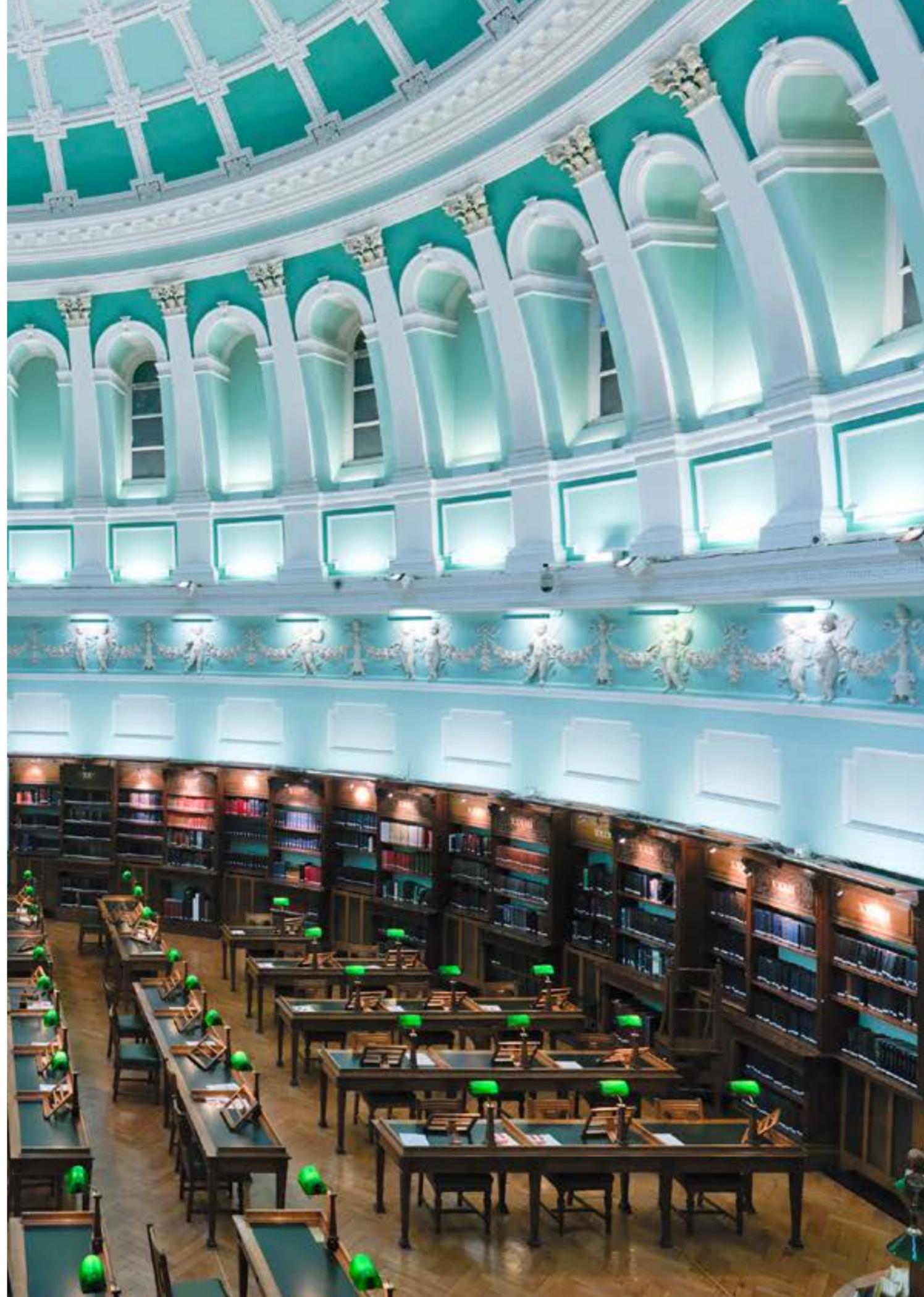
West Church Ballymena

James C Wilder

Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

Women's Resource and Development Agency

Yale University Press





*Leabharlann
Náisiúnta
na hÉireann*

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