



# 2026

## CROSS BORDER TOURISM CONFERENCE

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Four Season Hotel Carlingford

8:30 am - 2:00 pm

Event is **FREE** of charge for members & €20 plus Vat for non members

To book your place click on link:

<https://www.dundalk.ie/event/cross-border-tourism-conference-2026/>

### “Growing your visitors! - Learning from the best!”



#### Paul Hayes

##### Director/CEO An Táin Arts Centre

Paul is the Director of An Táin Arts Centre, Dundalk for whom he has directed 10 productions including *Everyman* and *The Remembrance Trilogy*. Paul has a BA in Drama from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth and an MA in Drama and Theatre Studies from the NUI Galway. Paul is Artistic Director of Catastrophe Theatre Company for whom he has directed 20 plays including *Up the Yard* and *LOVE and other disguises*. Paul was Head of Drama at Monaghan Institute for three years before moving on to become Community Arts Officer with Meath County Council. He worked as General Manager for Upstate Theatre Project in Drogheda for three years and was both producer and dramaturg on *At Peace* and *Submarine Man*. He has directed 5 shows for Upstate including *The Ones Who Kill Shooting Stars* and *Ship St. Revisited*.



#### Mary Claire Cowley

##### General Manager of An Táin Arts Centre.

Mary Claire has over 25 years experience in the film, television, and arts industries. In her film career her credit highlights include Golden Globe-nominated *Sing Street*, *Modern Love* for Amazon Prime, and the TV adaptation of Graham Norton's *Holding*. As General Manager of An Táin Arts Centre, she has strengthened audience insights, partnerships and marketing practice contributing to significant organisational growth. She continues to balance her role at An Táin Arts Centre with her practice as a filmmaker.



#### Pól Ó Conghaile

##### Travel Editor with The Irish Independent & a regular contributor to National Geographic Traveller.

He has been voted Travel Writer of the Year in both Ireland and the UK, has been published all over the world, and as a travel expert features regularly on national TV & radio.



#### Raquel Noboa

##### Fifty Shades Greener

Raquel is the founder and CEO of Fifty Shades Greener, an educational company for Sustainable Development through Green Skills application. The company mission is to empower People through Education for Sustainable Development, so they can support the planet and other people in society, through their everyday actions and decisions.



#### Grainne O Connor

##### Cuilcagh Lakelands

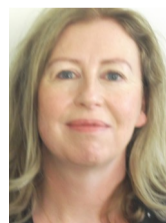
Grainne O'Connor is the manager of Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark, a cross border designation straddling the counties of Cavan and Fermanagh. Cuilcagh Lakelands was designated as the first cross border Geopark in the world when, in 2008, it expanded into County Cavan. Grainne previously worked in the areas of Environmental Planning, Local Government and Sustainable Development and brings a strong emphasis on a partnership approach to landscape management with a focus on regenerative tourism, cross border governance, conservation and community engagement.



#### Rory King

##### Rorys Travel Club

Rory King is the founder and driving force behind Rory's Travel Club, a vibrant travel community dedicated to making memorable trips accessible and affordable for Irish travellers. Hailing from Downpatrick in Northern Ireland, Rory has journeyed to over 70 countries over the past 10 years. Known for his hands-on engagement and passion for travel, he brings a fresh perspective to group trips, budget-friendly deals and inclusive travel experiences. Today, Rory speaks on how travel, community and smart value-led strategy can empower people of all ages to explore Ireland and further afield.



#### Olivia McCormack

##### Louth County Council, Senior Executive Officer for Economic Development and Tourism

Olivia McCormack is heading up the Economic Development & Tourism section of Louth County Council. With 25 years' experience in the Local Government sector, she is focused on delivering Louth's new Tourism strategy - a roadmap setting out a six-year vision to establish Louth as a standout destination. Under the new Visit Louth and Sea Louth brands, working in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland, stakeholders, and local communities to grow tourism responsibly and meaningfully across the county.



#### Tina Novak Samec

##### General Manager of Institute for Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport Brda (Slovenia)

Tina Novak Samec is a tourism and destination management professional and a representative of Slovenia as a modern, sustainable destination. She has several years of experience in developing tourism products, strategic communication, and working with international partners. Her work focuses on connecting local communities, innovative approaches, and responsible destination management. She is actively involved in projects that promote high-quality visitor experiences and long-term value for both visitors and local environments. Through her expertise and hands-on experience, she contributes to increasing the destination's visibility in international markets. At the conference, she will present best-practice examples of cross-border cooperation, innovative approaches to the development of connected destinations, and a vision for building competitive and sustainable destinations.

Visit and follow us on:



@DundalkChamber

#cbtc2026



### Dundalk Chamber

Unit 4 Partnership Court

Park Street

Dundalk, Co. Louth

Tel: 042 9336343

Email: [events@dundalk.ie](mailto:events@dundalk.ie)

Web: [www.dundalk.ie](http://www.dundalk.ie)

If you would like to be unsubscribed from these emails please reply by return email and write “Unsubscribe”.