



tourism
northernireland

Cultural Heritage Toolkit

Developing your cultural heritage
experience for tourism

Contents

Welcome to the toolkit	4-9
Step 1. Define the idea	10-15
Step 2. Finding your audiences	16-21
Step 3. How your idea measures up	22-27
Step 4. Develop a future vision	28-33
Step 5. Turn the idea into reality	34-39
Key principles	40-41
The one pager plan	42-43



Dunluce Castle, Causeway Coastal Route

As an additional resource, a companion to this toolkit is A Prospectus for Change: A strategic framework to unlock the potential of heritage-led tourism in Northern Ireland. (www.tourismni.com/Grow-Your-Business/culture--heritage/strategies-and-plans/)



Welcome to the Toolkit

The importance of cultural heritage in the tourism experiences we offer our visitors, cannot be under-estimated. It is the reason that investors are drawn to key projects in remote areas and why visitors are seeking the experiences that will connect them to a sense of place and belonging. Through our landscape, people and stories, our unique and ancient past connects visitors to the culture and heritage of Northern Ireland.

Tourism is a business, and it is fast moving, trend driven. What motivates visitors today, may not always be the same thing.

To reap the many benefits that tourism can offer the sector, you have to truly understand what motivates and drives visitors, rather than just hope that they will like what you are offering. From a visitor's perspective, the facts and stories that you tell, regardless of how historically sound, unique and authentic they are, need to be stitched into the context of their experience and their visit, not the other way around.

The purpose of this toolkit

This toolkit has been developed to help you attract new audiences, and to be more collaborative and consistent in how you tell the stories and showcase the collections. The opportunity is there to collectively tell a bigger story that links the past to the present, enhancing the strong, innovative and confident Northern Ireland that it is today.



Halloween in Derry~Londonderry

How to get cultural heritage ready for tourism

Having great castles, dramatic coastlines and inspiring local food is just not enough in itself as our 'unique selling point' (USP). Visitors can get this easily in many other places nearby - Ireland, Scotland and Wales for example. In this increasingly competitive marketplace we have to stand out with a strong voice and offer people a strong reason to visit. We need to understand the difference between having culture and heritage and having a culture and heritage OFFER. One that we can take to our chosen markets with confidence and with a distinctively Northern Ireland voice.

So, it is HOW we engage our visitors with our culture and heritage that is vital to understand and get right. To do this we have to start to think like a visitor and consider the wider tourism offer that surrounds the culture and heritage experience we are offering. This is how visitors think. They look at the whole experience, not just the individual parts.

Where do our visitors stay? Where do they eat? How do they access the experience? What souvenirs can they buy? What else can they spend money on? What other things are there nearby to see and do? Are the heritage and culture stories and themes reflected in these other activities? What kind

of information do they want? What level of interpretation do they want?

There are many links in the chain of the visitors experience that we need to consider. We need to collaborate with others, be bold and take risks.

How to use the toolkit

This toolkit is divided into five steps. It will take you through the process of developing an idea from a concept into a confident market-led plan that focusses more on the audience you want to attract, than on the content that you want to showcase. Each of the steps has 'challenges' which you can use to build the information and insights that you need to develop your summary plan. The template for the one pager summary plan is at the end of this toolkit.

This toolkit could help you as the first step to attracting funding for a new heritage experience or you may use it to engage a wider audience in what you offer. Whatever the reason - It all starts with getting the basics right...





Step 1.

DEFINE THE IDEA

The first step is to work out what the big idea is. What are you trying to develop and why? Think big, be bold and be creative. A visitor experience needs to be more than a seasonal offer or a one-off event. It must be sustainable, relevant and connected to contemporary visitors interests and concerns. We need to create and develop what visitors actually want!

TOP TIP -

BE MORE AUTHENTIC

BE MORE ENGAGING

BE MORE PERSONALISED



THE IDEA - Challenge 1

WHY	WHY are you developing this new idea? To grow your audience? To make your site or offer more sustainable? To offer visitors more to do and see in your area?
WHO	WHO is the idea aimed at? WHO might be attracted to visit? WHO can you work with to offer a more joined up experience? WHO else might be interested in your idea?
HOW	HOW will you do it? HOW will you inspire audiences with this idea? HOW will you engage people at the right level? HOW will you work with others?
WHAT	WHAT exactly is the idea? WHAT are the main parts of the idea? WHAT is the problem that you are solving for people with this idea? WHAT is the demand for this idea?

Ideas to inspire

When defining the big idea, you need to consider the whole offer from a visitor's perspective. So make sure some of the following themes and services are included within your idea. They may appear in your idea through working with others, or they may be more core to your own idea. You might link these into your idea to develop more authenticity and personalisation.

Use these suggestions as a checklist:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> local crafts | <input type="checkbox"/> artisan food & drink | <input type="checkbox"/> data capture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> craft workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> kids treasure hunts & puzzles | <input type="checkbox"/> language translation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> local art | <input type="checkbox"/> walking tours | <input type="checkbox"/> car hire, bus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yoga, meditation, wellness | <input type="checkbox"/> literary greats | <input type="checkbox"/> collaboration in the area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> live music | <input type="checkbox"/> legends & myths | <input type="checkbox"/> cooperative group working |
| <input type="checkbox"/> local gardens & floristry | <input type="checkbox"/> seasonal events | <input type="checkbox"/> accessibility/ requirements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> locally sourced food & drink | <input type="checkbox"/> affordable luxury | <input type="checkbox"/> transport |
| <input type="checkbox"/> learning new skills | <input type="checkbox"/> wet weather escapes | <input type="checkbox"/> access in rural places |
| <input type="checkbox"/> major dates & anniversaries | <input type="checkbox"/> theatrical props & kids dressing up | <input type="checkbox"/> more information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> events & festivals | <input type="checkbox"/> authentic pubs & restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> make it all easy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> soft adventure | <input type="checkbox"/> e-bikes, e- transport | <input type="checkbox"/> emerging new markets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> glamping | <input type="checkbox"/> local community | <input type="checkbox"/> sustainable practices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> outdoor activities | <input type="checkbox"/> places to stay | <input type="checkbox"/> business tourism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> kids' experiences | <input type="checkbox"/> encouraging locals to get involved | <input type="checkbox"/> social responsibility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> water based activities | <input type="checkbox"/> digital technology | <input type="checkbox"/> night time economy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> local markets | <input type="checkbox"/> online bookings | <input type="checkbox"/> overtly ethical & sustainable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> family stories & folklore | <input type="checkbox"/> online platforms | <input type="checkbox"/> diaspora |
| <input type="checkbox"/> film & TV location | <input type="checkbox"/> social media | <input type="checkbox"/> academia linkages |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> augmented reality | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> virtual reality | |

Engage others to work with you now

To join the dots for visitors, you need to move out of silo working and form collaborative working groups. These collaborations should be formed around the visitor's interest, and not necessarily around your content.

Remember this is a market-led strategy not a content driven one. We will discuss

collaboration further in STEP 3 but now is the right time to discuss your idea with others. Perhaps start with the local tourism person in the area to get in a collaborative mind-set. Working together brings great rewards for everyone – better insights, more support and an opportunity to grow and learn.

How do you find people to learn from?

There are almost no ideas, products or services that are unique. Competition is everywhere and we need to embrace it. There may be other people doing something similar to you or offering similar elements of your idea. There may be other businesses chasing the same markets as you and in the same locality. Competition can always offer you great opportunities to learn.

Think of this as 'free consultancy'. Look locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

- Search for competitors on the internet

- Examine their websites
- Look at their reviews on TripAdvisor, Booking.com, etc.
- Review social media comments on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc.

Then write down five things that they do really well that you can learn from; and five things that you would improve on, if you worked for them.

Try to break your answers into themes – e.g. access, information, accessibility, connectedness, collaboration, inspiring idea, engaging communication etc.

LEARNING FROM OTHERS – Challenge 2

Name of experience/ business web address	
Why I have chosen this	
Five things I would improve if was running this business	Five things that I can learn from and add to my own idea

ACTION

You can now turn to the one pager summary plan at the end of the toolkit. Use Challenges 1 and 2 and the 'Ideas to Inspire' page to develop your idea. This completes THE IDEA.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS FOR STEP 1

- Is your idea aspirational enough and will it truly excite and inspire your audiences?
- Have you included at least ten of the 'Ideas to Inspire' in some way into your idea?
- Have you identified other people to help you develop the idea?



Titanic Walking Tours, Belfast

Step 2. FINDING YOUR AUDIENCES

Successful businesses base their activities and developments on having a good understanding of market trends and clarity on who their customers are. With this understanding they can then confidently know what products and services they should offer and what innovative ideas are worth developing.

Tourism Northern Ireland have carried out detailed research into the most likely audiences for the heritage and cultural sector. They know why people come to Northern Ireland and what they generally like to see and do. This is called segmentation. By keeping a close eye on global market trends, they can also predict what types of visitors we are likely to attract in the future. But it doesn't just happen! We have to keep pace with these ever-changing trends and be sure that we are offering the sorts of experiences that people actually want.

To find out more about the types of visitors who are most attracted to what we offer in the heritage and culture sector go to both the Tourism Northern Ireland and Tourism Ireland websites where you can find out information on the different markets.

Check out:
www.tourismni.com/Grow-Your-Business & www.tourismireland.com/Marketing



Where do the majority of our visitors come from?

Northern Ireland. This may be day trippers from other areas, short break seekers or even locals from nearby. They may be couples looking for a romantic getaway, families trying to entertain the kids on weekend and holidays or retirees looking for something new to experience.

Republic of Ireland. People looking for interesting things to do and see on a short break, perhaps also looking for good food and wine, some outdoor adventures or just a drive around some beauty spots.

Great Britain, Germany, France and North America.

These nationalities tend to have a particular reason to visit Northern Ireland. North American visitors, for example, are likely to be particularly interested in the past and their ancestors.

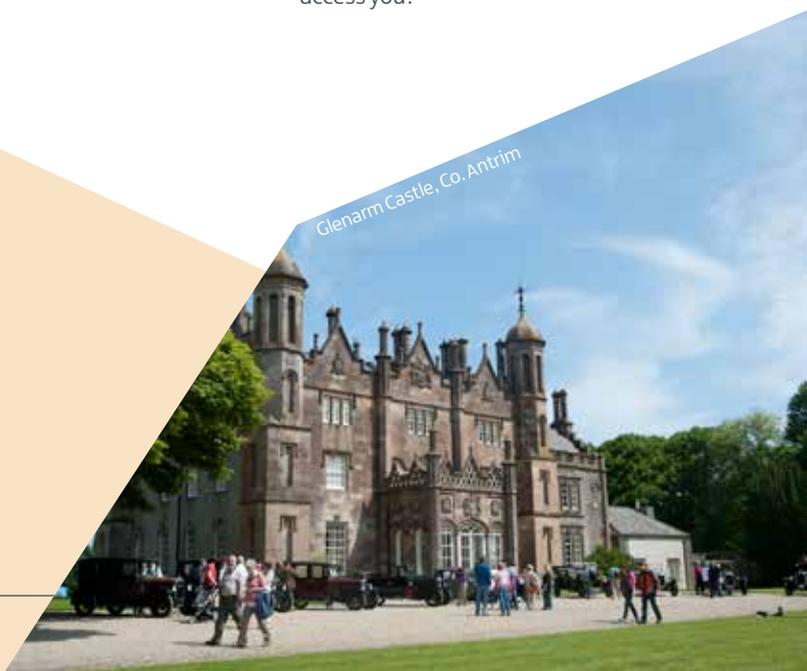
The difficulty with segmentation is that people and their motivations don't fit neatly into boxes. People are people! And so, the best way to understand segments is to realise who is more LIKELY to be interested in what you offer. By broadening out what you offer and how you do it, you are then more likely to appeal EVEN MORE to them. It really is just 'best guess' – there is very little science!

The criteria for finding new audiences

When targeting new markets there are 3 questions to ask yourself and have a YES answer.

- Is this market a good match with what you can offer?
- Do you have the ability to access these people?
- Do these people have the ability to access you?

Glenarm Castle, Co. Antrim



Engage audiences at the right level

Within the culture and heritage sector, it is not enough to just show visitors the path to our church, landmark or heritage attraction and expect them to be as engaged and inspired as we are.

Visitors want to engage in culture and heritage stories at all different levels. Not everyone wants to swallow the encyclopaedia! Some might be looking for a deeper, more informed experience but others just want to be entertained with a shallow skim over the surface. Success will be down to how well you tell stories at an appropriate level and how well you make the links to other related themes. You will ultimately be judged on how well you engage and inspire to attract return visits and recommendations to others.

Most of our visitors will tend to fall into the Dabbler or Passively Interested category and it is these people that we should focus

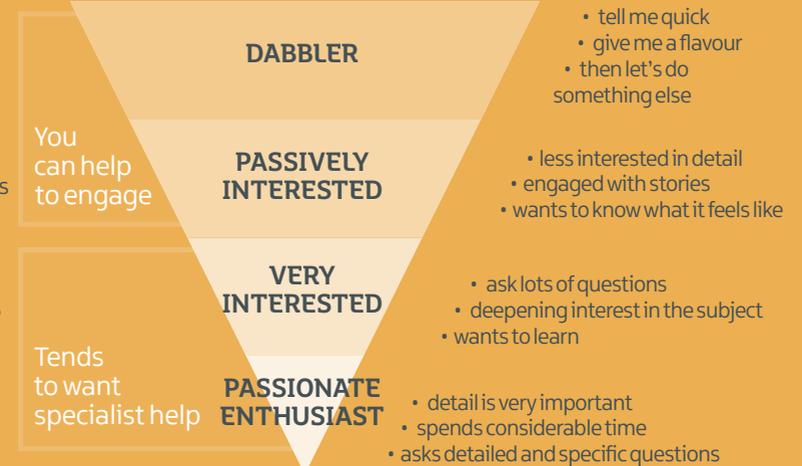
our energies on - engaging with our stories and enthusiasm. That is not to say that the other categories are left out, but you may need to offer them a more in-depth level of interpretation specific to their needs.

From research, cultural and heritage visitors don't feel that they need 'cultural reassurance'. They know that what we can offer is authentic, real and with deep and inspiring stories. The reassurance that these visitors need is much more about the place they are visiting and what it can offer outside of the cultural or heritage offer.

Their questions are more likely to be "will there be transport to get around"; "will there be any decent places to have a nice dinner", "will we be able to get the wheelchair around the site?" "will we be able to find somewhere to stay that we like" what else is there to do nearby"; "what can we do if it is pouring with rain" "will they speak French / German..." etc.

Tends to be:

- younger
- families
- visiting for other reasons
- more mature
- couples
- specialists



MARKETS & MOTIVATIONS

– Challenge 3

Topic	Question
Current market	<p>Where are your main markets from? Hint: Are they 30% from NI, 20% from ROI or 80% from North America? Are they arriving in groups through an agent or independently?</p>
Customer specifics	<p>What types of people come to visit you? What are their demographics and why are they visiting? Hint: Are they young travellers, retired people or families on a day out. Are they even couples looking for romance?</p>
Level of engagement	<p>What level of engagement are your audiences looking for? Hint: Are they Dabblers? Passively Interested? Very Interested? Or Passionately Enthusiastic? Is your content at the right level? Can you be flexible with how you tell the stories? Do you engage at the right level?</p>

<p>How do they get to you?</p>	<p>What means of transport do they use to get to you? Hint: Do they arrive on a tour coach? In a hired car? Have they come from Derry~Londonderry/Belfast / Dublin or elsewhere?</p>
<p>How did they find out about you?</p>	<p>How did they research the things to do and see? Hint: online? Social media, word of mouth? Interest group, social grouping? Media article? Special offer with travel partners? Stumbled across you</p>
<p>What was their main attraction to your area?</p>	<p>What attracted them to your town/ city/ locality? Hint: were they interested in visiting a signature attraction? What was it? Were they on a different tour? Were they looking for things to see and do in the area and then found you? How long did they stay? Where did they stay/ dine?</p>

ACTION

You can now turn to the one pager summary plan at the end of the toolkit. Use Challenge 3 to help you develop your idea to be more market-led. This completes FINDING YOUR AUDIENCES.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS FOR STEP 2

- Do you understand the motivations and characteristics of your audiences better?
- Have you researched the wealth of information available to help you?
www.tourismni.com/Grow-Your-Business/ www.tourismireland.com/Marketing
- Can you identify the appropriate level of interest for your customers? Do you know how to deliver it? Are you flexible and adaptable enough?



Step 3.

HOW YOUR IDEA MEASURES UP

In STEP 2, you have started to dig a little deeper to find out more about who the target audience will be for your idea/ experience. Now we need to think more about how the overall experience shapes up for them in your locality.

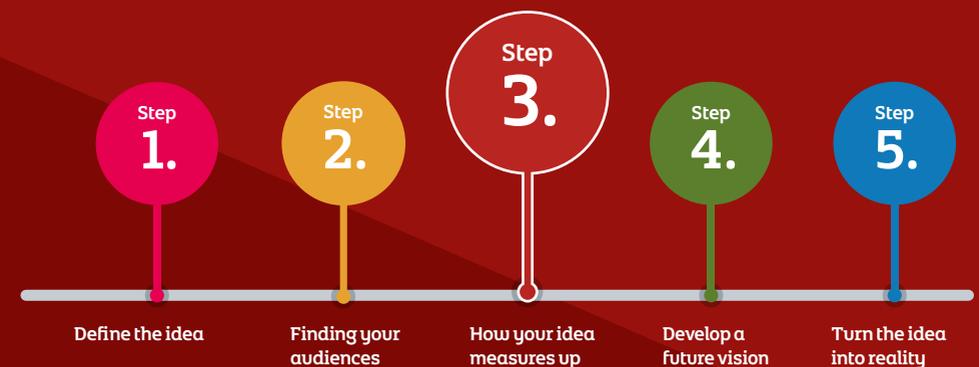
Tourism markets and trends may be continually shifting but the principles remain the same:

- A strong quality product
- Excellent value
- Good customer service
- Thoughtful hospitality
- A connectedness with other businesses in the locality

Collaboration with others is essential

We also need to think outside of our own sector. Key to success is working in collaboration with others. We may link by geography, by theme, by product or simply by values and beliefs. But whatever the reason, the purpose of collaborating is to make the experience easier and more accessible for visitors. Giving them more of what they want and need so they have the best experience possible. Collaboration partners could include arts organisations, event producers, local authorities, tourist agencies, attractions, hotels, transport providers, food and drink companies, retailers and so on.

Take a walk in the visitors' shoes... A good way to look at how well your experience measures up for visitors– is to look at the whole experience from their perspective.



It will help you to identify

- The quality of the wider experience that visitors have - of which your experience is part
- Who you should form a collaboration with to make the overall experience easier for visitors?

- Any accessibility issues physically or in transport linkages
- Obvious gaps in the overall experience of your surroundings
- Ideas for further innovation and development of your idea / offer

When thinking about your local area....

WHAT'S ON YOUR DOORSTEP – Challenge 4

Where do visitors stay?	Which would you recommend to YOUR visitors
E.g. hotel, self-catering B&B	
Where do visitors eat in the evening ?	Which would you recommend to YOUR visitors
E.g. café, pub, hotel	
What else is there to do the area?	Which would you recommend to YOUR visitors
E.g. museum, theatre, festival, outdoor activities	
Getting here and getting around	Which would you recommend to YOUR visitors
E.g. bus, hired car, taxi, local bike hire	

Now you need to look harder again at your own idea outlined in STEP 1. Within the context of the local environment – how does the idea shape up. Does it offer people something that will truly inspire and delight them? Have you identified others who you can work with in collaboration to grow the idea and make it even better?

Tips on how to collaborate

- Choose other providers who have the same quality, values and beliefs as you do.
- Select and approach those businesses that your visitors also engage with. You are then 'linked' by the visitors that you share.
- Have trust, loyalty and transparency between everyone in your collaboration group.

COLLABORATION PLANNER – Challenge 5

Sector	Who I will contact?	Why I will contact them?	What gap am I addressing for visitors?
Accommodation			
Transport provider			
Food & drink provider			
Other tourism provider			
Local authority / Council			
Other			

What could possibly go wrong?

With the initial burst of enthusiasm, it is all too easy to only focus on the strengths of an idea, but you can learn much more from looking at the down-side to identify the weaknesses and threats at an early stage and try to address these. The term SWOT, measures Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and is commonly used in the development of ideas. Every idea has a mix of all four SWOT values.

Here is an example of how a SWOT Analysis might look

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third party collaborative opportunities • Already proven demand in the area • Good stories to connect people to places • Engagement of visitors in a new innovative way 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor linkages with the tourism providers in the area • Over focus on the content and not who will consume it • Lack of skills and experience to deliver this idea
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with tourism providers through the stories/themes to expand the experience • Appeal to a younger audience by using more technology in the delivery • Develop new routes to market through collaborative partners 	<p>THREATS (external)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of skill and experience and not addressing this • Poor clarity on how to deliver the idea • Working in a silo and not connecting the experience in a place • No identified routes to market • Low understanding of who the audience is and could be

Now try to develop a SWOT analysis for your own idea on the next page.

SWOT ANALYSIS – Challenge 6

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS (external)

ACTION

You can now turn to the one pager summary plan at the end of the toolkit. Use Challenges 4,5 and 6 to understand where the gaps might be in your idea and who you can collaborate with. firm up the Action Plan. This completes HOW YOUR IDEA MEASURES UP.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS FOR STEP 3

- Do you know where the gaps in the experience are for visitors? Do you know how to address them?
- Have you identified what the weaknesses and threats are for your idea? Do you know how you will overcome these challenges?
- Have you clearly identified who you can collaborate with to make your idea more sustainable?



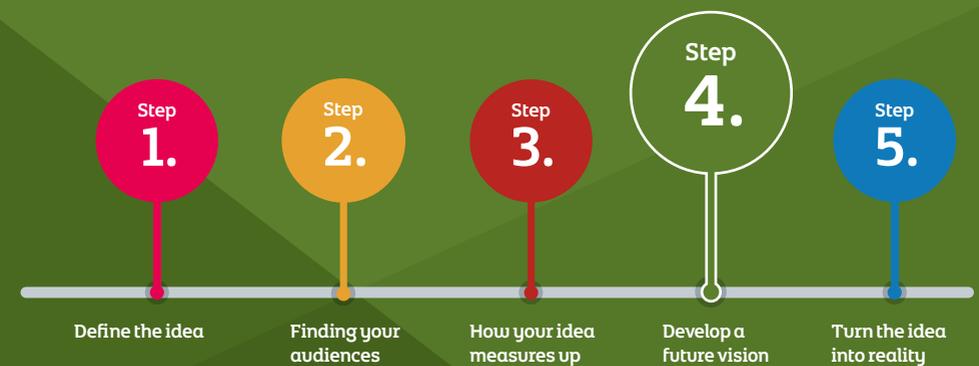
Devenish Island Co. Fermanagh

Step 4. DEVELOP A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Protecting and investing in our heritage is essential to creating a better future, because it supports our prosperity, strengthens our society, and shapes our character.

Although we must protect our culture and heritage for future generations, we also want people to engage with it. This must be in such a way that a balance is struck between using our heritage to grow tourism whilst ensuring protection and care of the same assets for future generations.

As we look at how our visitor experiences can become more sustainable and grow, it is worth remembering that ultimately it is authenticity and personality that builds our credibility and are vital to encouraging visitor loyalty and trust.



Developing the idea to be sustainable for the future

Sustainability all starts with a vision and this needs to be focussed on people. A vision is an essential part of developing an idea. Its not just a statement but a carefully thought out and collaborative picture for what the idea or business will look like in the future as seen from a visitor's perspective. It would look to the future for the next 5 and 10 years.

- Be aspirational
- Create a total vision of the experience and covering all the different parts that a visitor will be in contact with
- Don't get caught up in the detail of how things will happen
- Do this as a collaborative effort and listen to everyone's views
- Be flexible and encourage creativity
- Keep the vision underpinned by sustainability, technology and communication

"A vision is the ability to see beyond our present reality and to create, to invent what does not yet exist to become what we are not yet" SR Covey.

Build your vision by answering the following questions. Imagine a small group of visitors taking part in your experience or outside your site/attraction. It is 10 years from now.

Use these questions to get you thinking ...

1. Who are the visitors?
2. Where are they from?
3. Why are they here?
4. What stories do they want to explore and know more about?
5. What is it about what they find with you that touches them emotionally?
6. Why did they connect to your stories so powerfully?
7. How did they find out about you?
8. What did they do before coming to your site/attraction?
9. What are they planning to do next?
10. What themes are they linking together during their visit to your area?

Now review the details about audiences that you have discovered in STEP 2. Review the experiences available on your doorstep and the product gaps that you have identified. Should any of these insights be included and addressed in your vision?

How important are these missing products and services to help your idea be sustainable for the future?

Now write a sustainable future vision for your idea that has a clear distinctive voice. Be bold, be creative and above all be aspirational.



Cathedral Quarter, Belfast

VISION FOR THE FUTURE – Challenge 7

It needs to be aspirational

It needs to ensure you include values and beliefs

It needs to be exciting and inspiring to you and your team. – or it will not excite anybody else!

Maximum of 100 words so make every word count

Routes to market

There are a variety of ways to attract the right visitors to your experience.

Regardless of where the visitors come from or who you would like to attract, four basic rules apply to be able to choose the right way to reach them.

- **Define what the objectives are.** Why are you trying to attract this audience? Will it grow your audience? Engage new people? Increase revenue? Increase profile?

- **Look at your current activities** and analyse how well they are working and how well you are using existing visitor information. What information do you know about them that you are not using?

- **Research your target market** to make sure you know enough about who they are, what choices they make and preferences they have. Review this in STEP 2

- **Choose the most appropriate routes** to reach your target market based on the easiest, quickest, best value and most effective way to reach them.

Routes to market

There are a variety of ways to attract the right visitors to your experience.

Regardless of where the visitors come from or who you would like to attract, four basic rules apply to be able to choose the right way to reach them.

- **Define what the objectives are.** Why are you trying to attract this audience? Will it grow your audience? Engage new people? Increase revenue? Increase profile?
- **Look at your current activities** and analyse how well they are working and how

well you are using existing visitor information. What information do you know about them that you are not using?

- **Research your target market** to make sure you know enough about who they are, what choices they make and preferences they have. Review this in STEP 2
- **Choose the most appropriate routes** to reach your target market based on the easiest, quickest, best value and most effective way to reach them

As a rough guide there are 8 main routes but with a little creativity, you may well uncover many more opportunities through working with others.



ROUTES TO MARKET – Challenge 8

What are the best routes to market to access your target market? REFER BACK TO STEP 2. For example, if you know that your target audience are from Northern Ireland and aged

65 plus, you may decide against an online strategy! Choose carefully and wisely for the people you are trying to attract.

Target market	Proposed ways to reach them	How do you know?

ACTION

You can now turn to the one pager summary plan at the end of the toolkit. Use Challenges 7 and 8 to identify your thoughts for the future and to decide how to reach your market. This completes DEVELOP A VISION FOR THE FUTURE.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS FOR STEP 4

- Do you have a clear and aspirational vision for your idea/experience that is sustainable?
- Do you know how you can build more authenticity and credibility?
- Have you researched and identified appropriate routes to market to attract your target audience?
- Have you researched the wealth of information available to help you?
www.tourismni.com/Grow-Your-Business/ www.tourismireland.com/Marketing



Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Co. Londonderry

Step 5. TURN THE IDEA INTO REALITY

The STEPS that you have been working through, will give you enough information to now develop strategic objectives and priorities. Then you can develop an Action Plan for the project.

Let's recap what information you have now gathered and why.

Step 1.	Define the idea and engage others in the process	WHY, WHAT, WHO, HOW Learning from others	To get the idea out of heads and down on paper. The purpose of this is to encourage you to develop a market-led plan and not a content-led one. Comparing your offer with the competition is helpful in refining and reviewing. It lets you see your experience through a visitor's eyes.
Step 2.	Finding your audiences	Market and Motivations	Understanding your visitor's motivation helps you to design the experience around a likely audience. This gives ideas of ways to do things and new products and services to include.
Step 3.	How your idea measures up	What's on your doorstep Collaboration planner Looking at the down side	This step helps you to identify what products and services are missing when you consider the overall experience from a visitor's perspective. Collaboration is key. We must make it easy for visitors to access all parts of the experience they are looking for.
Step 4.	Develop a vision for the future	What's on your doorstep	A successful vision will help you to be sustainable and grow over time with a clear idea of how you want to develop. Now that you know who your audience is likely to be, finding a way to reach them is the next step. This is also where your collaboration partners can be a great help.

Setting objectives and priorities

Thinking back to your aspirational Vision in STEP 4 and also to your Finding your Audience in STEP 2– what are your key priorities to develop and grow this experience?

Timings, targets and measurements

With each of your objectives and priorities, you will need to know whether you have been successful or not. You will need to have

measurements in place to track this. It is important to set this up from the outset. For instance, if you say that one of your objectives is to ‘increase visitor spend – you need to also know what the current spend per head of an average visitor is per day, per month per year. How will you track this increase? How will you know you are achieving your objective? Over what timescale do you give this objective to be achieved?

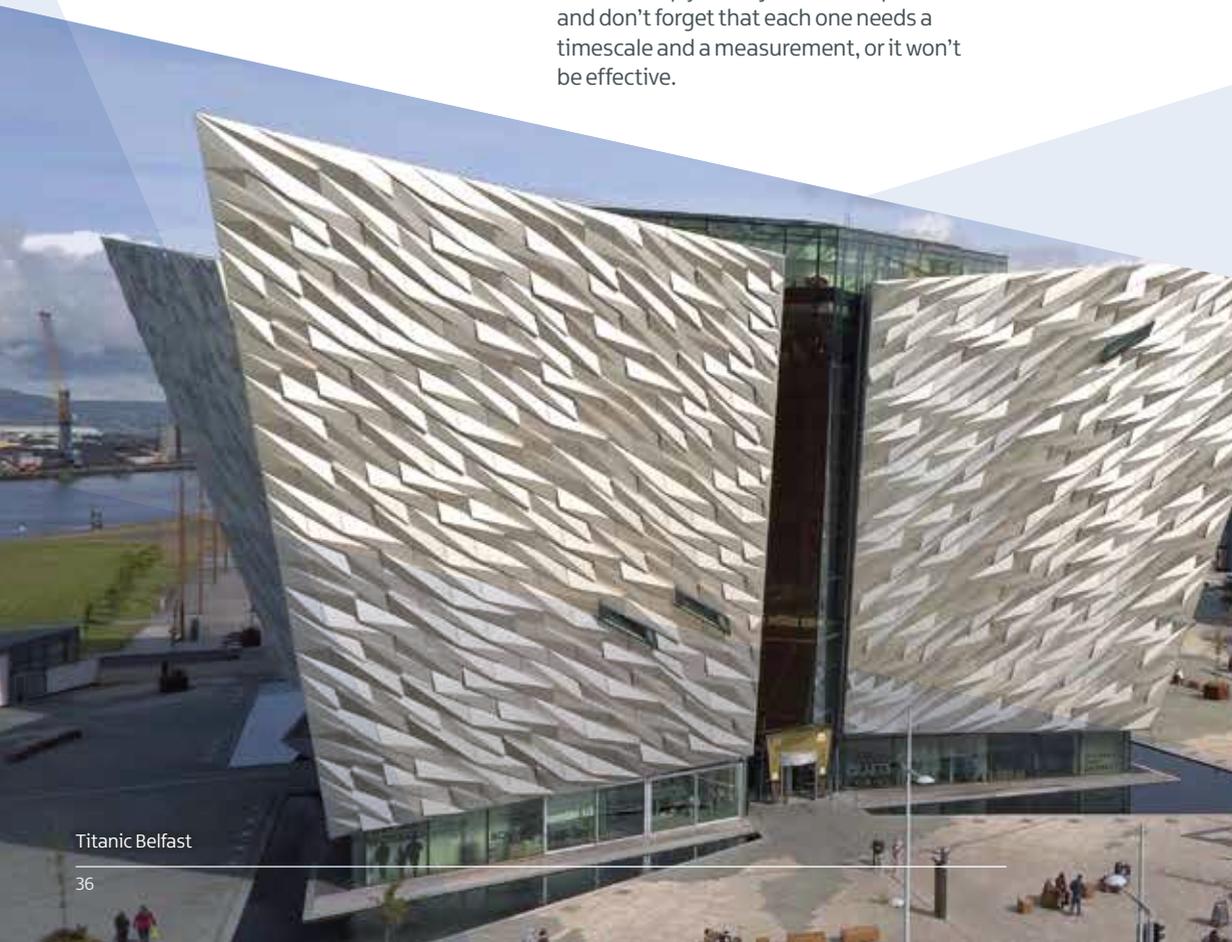
“Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen.”
Michael Jordan

Now develop your objectives and priorities and don’t forget that each one needs a timescale and a measurement, or it won’t be effective.

OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES – Challenge 9

- Are you going to increase the numbers of visitors?
- Are you going to increase the spend of your visitors?
- Are you going to engage them for longer?
- Are they going to consume the experience in a different way?
- Are you going to target and attract different types of visitors?
- Are you going to develop new products and services? Or just make the existing ones better?
- Have you got all the investment you need to make this idea happen?
- What are the main threats and weaknesses you need to address? Do you know how?

Objectives and priorities	Why is this a priority? How do you know?	Timescale	Measurement
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			



The next stage of development is to make things happen. Look back over the information you have gathered in the previous STEPS and gather together your team. Decide who will commit to what action and don't forget to include the most important part – timescales and measurement

ACTION PLAN – Challenge 10

Action	Who	When	Cost	What will success look like	How we will measure this

Getting the basics right every time

In these competitive times, we need to be always striving to be the best. In Northern Ireland, like elsewhere, we will miss opportunities if the experiences we offer visitors doesn't match the bold, distinctive national advertising messages. It's not just about offering experience with the best programming, animation, branding, interpretation and interactivity. These things help, but the biggest wins will come

from us being authentic, having a good personality, a distinctive voice and doing what we do to the very best of our ability. And this means ALWAYS getting the hygiene factors right. Level of service, warm welcome, good hospitality, plenty information, good connectivity, joined up transport options, inspiring itineraries, accessibility etc. We need to continually challenge ourselves that we are getting this right and going further to exceed expectations.

Hygiene factors include.....

Good service	Storytelling at an appropriate level
Warm personality	Good hospitality
Distinctive voice	Clean and litter free
Community minded	Flexible to visitor needs
Working in collaboration	Good transport links
Involving locals	Value for money
Good connectivity	Sustainable practices
Excellent interpretation	Inclusivity

The Review Cycle

Continuous improvement of the visitor experience that you are offering is essential. The process is cyclical in nature and not a journey with an end destination. You should regularly review all of the STEPS in this toolkit to make changes and updates. None of the STEPS can be seen as independent, as each one has a knock-on effect on another and ultimately on how effective your idea, vision and plans will be.

ACTION

Use Challenge 9 and 10 to firm up your Action Plan.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS FOR STEP 5

- Do you have a clear understanding of how to make your idea happen?
- Have you the appropriate measurements and timings in place to achieve your objectives and priorities successfully?
- Are you certain that your hygiene factors are always as good as they can be in the eyes of visitors? How do you know?



GOOD LUCK

And finally,

10 KEY PRINCIPLES to developing and delivering outstanding visitor experiences in the culture and heritage sector

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | It is all about the place - focus on the whole offer |
| 2 | No quick fixes – takes time to change perceptions |
| 3 | Collaboration, continuity, consistency |
| 4 | No silos – think outside the sector |
| 5 | All heritage and culture is not equal - must be highly targeted and market led |
| 6 | Identify the risk – focus on holistic visitor experience |
| 7 | Be selective - a good match, access to a market, a market's access to you |
| 8 | Find a distinctive voice – authenticity and personality builds credibility |
| 9 | Amplify it – go digital for focus and reach |
| 10 | Innovate - long range planning balanced with flexibility |

The One Pager Plan

CULTURE AND HERITAGE EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Name of the Experience: _____

THE IDEA (STEP 1) Describe the idea in 150 words

Use the following Challenges

1. THE IDEA
2. LEARNING FROM OTHERS

WHY are you developing this new idea?

WHO is this idea aimed at?

HOW will you do it?

WHAT exactly is it?

FINDING YOUR AUDIENCES (STEP 2)

Use the following Challenge

3. MARKETS AND MOTIVATIONS.

Who is the target market for this experience? What are their motivations?

HOW YOUR IDEA MEASURES UP (STEP 3)

Use the following Challenges

4. WHATS ON YOUR DOORSTEP
5. COLLABORATION PLANNER
6. SWOT ANALYSIS

What is available in your locality to offer visitors more of a rounded experience?

Who can you identify to collaborate with? Success does not come from working in a silo!

DEVELOP A VISION FOR THE FUTURE (STEP 4)

Use the following Challenges

7. VISION FOR THE FUTURE
8. ROUTES TO MARKET

What are your thoughts on the future and how to get there?

TURN THE IDEA INTO REALITY (STEP 5)

Use the following Challenges

9. OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES
10. ACTION PLAN

Do you have a robust plan in place with timings and measurement? What is your action plan?



tourism
northernireland