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Institiúid Teicneolaíochta  
Leitir Ceanainn

Letterkenny Institute  
of Technology

**Project Title:** Best practice in the creation of authentic and creative cellar-door visitor experiences in the Irish craft beverage tourism sector

**Supervisors:** Dr Conor McTiernan, Dr Elizabeth McKenzie, Dr Ciarán O hAnnrachain

**Keywords:** Craft beverage tourism, creative placemaking, economic development

**Project Summary:**

With over 9.7 million overseas visitors and c13 million domestic trips within the island of Ireland, tourism contributes over €9.5bn to the Irish economy, supporting 177,700 jobs in 2019 or 7.6% of total employment. In terms of food and beverage tourism, Fáilte Ireland estimate that one-third of all tourism expenditure relates to the purchase of foods, beverages and, importantly, food and beverage experiences such as visits to producers and food festivals. An increasingly important element of such experiences is the visitation to craft beverage tourism visitor centers such as micro-breweries and micro-distilleries.

As of 2019, there were 137 craft beverage producers in Ireland, an increase 105% since 2008. A 2018 study suggested that a significant percentage of craft producers had or planned to develop a tourism visitor centre, subject to the Intoxicating Liquor (Breweries and Distilleries) Bill 2018. While the Act clarifies and defines the guidelines for craft beverage tourism providers, the Covid-19 pandemic may have impacted proposed development.

The rationale for this study is to explore best practices in the development of craft beverage tourism at both the single business unit and collectively at a sectoral level. Through the collection of desk-based research and quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, this project contributes to the development of an internationally recognised, authentic and sustainable niche tourism offering that is desired by a growing number of dedicated food and beverage tourists and the culturally curious visitor. The project will benefit not only the craft beverage tourism sector, significantly it will also positively contribute to their host communities.

**Candidate Qualifications/Requirements:**

To apply, candidates must be qualified to undertake a Master/PhD Degree (Minimum 2:1 Honours Bachelor Degree). The successful candidate will undertake taught modules to support their research journey.