MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL LIBRARY of IRELAND

'UNESCO City of Literature' – a proud day for Dublin and Irish writers

Monday 26 July 2010: The Director of the National Library of Ireland, Fiona Ross, has welcomed today's announcement designating ***Dublin 'UNESCO City of Literature'.***
The accolade (a permanent title) was bestowed by the UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova, and recognises Dublin's cultural profile and its international standing as a city of literary excellence, one of only four in the world.

Speaking following the announcement, Fiona Ross congratulated Dublin City Council's library service on leading the campaign to win this sought-after accolade. The National Library was one of a number of partners who successfully lobbied UNESCO for the designation ***Dublin, UNESCO City of Literature,*** **which** provided wonderful recognition of the work and creativity of Dublin's writers past and present, she noted.

> "The Library is an unmissable experience for anyone interested in Irish literature and culture. We look forward to welcoming visitors from around the world to our award-winning ***Yeats*** and ***Discover*** exhibitions; the annual **'Summer's Wreath'** festival, and the hugely successful series of **'Library Late'** public interviews with leading writers.
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> Scholars and researchers will be especially interested in the Library's wonderful collections of literary manuscripts. These range from the papers of internationally acclaimed contemporary Irish writers such as **Roddy Doyle, Colm Tóibín, Brian Friel, Hugo Hamilton, Paul Durcan** and **John Montague, to those of WB Yeats** and Dublin-born **James Joyce. We also provide access to** the archives of the Dublin-based Focus Theatre founder **Deirdre O'Connell**, and the archive of the Project Arts Centre, also in Dublin. Among those whose early careers were closely associated with the Project Arts Centre are Ireland's Cultural Ambassador, **Gabriel Byrne**, writers and filmmakers **Jim Sheridan** and **Peter Sheridan**, film director and writer **Neil Jordan** and playwright **Gerard Stembridge**", Ms Ross added.

Spring 2011 will also see a new adult education course hosted by the Library in conjunction with UCD exploring a number of texts by writers associated with Dublin, including Swift, Burke, Yeats, Joyce, Shaw, O'Casey, Beckett and the contemporary poet Eavan Boland.

Detailed application was made to UNESCO last November by a steering and management group led by Dublin City Council's library service and was subject to a rigorous vetting procedure. Partners in the submission included representatives from literary-related organisations as well as culture, arts, tourism, government, media and educational institutions across the city and country.

The designation as City of Literature, part of the UNESCO Creative Cities network, provides a unique platform for Dublin's literary community and enables the city to increase its market share as a destination for business and pleasure - and Ireland as a creative, exciting, and vibrant nation. *Dublin, UNESCO City of Literature* has enormous potential for beneficial cultural and economic impacts not alone in the capital city, but in communities across the country.

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For further information, contact: Katherine McSharry, National Library of Ireland. Tel: 01-6030 281 or 087 994 8144. Email: kmcsharry@nli.ie.