



UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN
PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. HIGGINS

It is my great honour to extend a welcome to all fans of the speculative and fantastic to Dublin in August 2019 for the 77th World Science Fiction Convention.

Ireland is a country with a strong reputation for creativity, for originality and for a unique and imaginative view of the world. It is a reputation chiefly founded on our success in the world of arts and literature, but our inventiveness and original thinking has also had a significant impact on the world of science and technology.

For example, Bell's Theorem, the development of fibre optics in communication, the splitting of the atom, the Beaufort Scale, are some of the many achievements which owe their success to the innovation, and creative thinking of talented Irish scientists.

Science fiction writing brings together these worlds of literature and science in a fruitful concoction of imagination, creativity, and originality.

Ireland is a land which celebrates stories and imagination, and our Irish heritage has always been imaginatively interwoven with new cultures and new traditions. This is aptly reflected in our deep appreciation and appetite for speculative fiction.

Works of speculative fiction can obviously reflect the society and time in which they were created, but they also help to shape and contour the world in which we live, challenging us to look at that world in different ways, encouraging us to push the boundaries and defy and critique the norms of the societies and age into which we have been born.

Creative thinking is a powerful, necessary and vital force in the creation of truly functioning societies. Speculative fiction plays a seminal role in helping us to question received versions of our contemporary world, and to dream of new worlds and new ways of thinking. It affords us a space to look beyond the immediate and utilitarian, to engage in a long form of thinking which places no limits on our curiosity.

Ireland looks forward to hosting the Convention in Dublin in 2019, and I know that the Dublin 2019 team, which is comprised of dedicated international volunteers are working exceptionally hard to ensure that the Convention will be a truly memorable, successful and enjoyable celebration. You are all most welcome to share with us in this unique Irish event.

Beir beannacht,

Michael D. Higgins
Uachtarán na hÉireann
President of Ireland