The Dublin Brand Strategy 2026 - 2028



Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

dlr
Comhairle Contae County Council

Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall
Fingal County Council

SDCC
Comhairle Contae Átha Cliath Theas
South Dublin County Council

WHY DUBLIN NEEDS A BRAND



Enhances Global Reputation
Positions Dublin as a leading centre for innovation, enterprise, and talent on the international stage.

Strengthens Investment Appeal
Communicates confidence, ambition, and opportunity, encouraging both domestic and international investment.

Attracts and Retains Talent
Promotes Dublin's strong education ecosystem, dynamic economy, and quality of life to draw and keep skilled professionals, students, and entrepreneurs.

Builds a Cohesive Identity
Fosters a unified sense of purpose and pride among stakeholders, reinforcing Dublin's position as a connected and forward-looking region.



FOREWORD

Since the inception of the Dublin place brand, we have built a platform that unites the region's story, amplifies our strengths, and connects us with audiences at home and internationally. The next chapter is about staying relevant and enhancing competitiveness in a changing world — turning proven principles into a sharper, more coordinated and impactful programme, supporting the shared vision for the Dublin region.

Over the next three years, our focus will be on continued regionalisation and delivery of a range of initiatives to support our communities and businesses. Our place brand-led communications will follow a dual-track approach. We will maintain brand visibility through consistent themed campaigns centred on key attributes that align with Dublin's reputation: sustainability, inclusivity, innovation, culture, quality of life, and economic strength. These campaigns will be rolled out regionally and build brand awareness and consolidate the identity of the Dublin region. Running in parallel, vertical campaigns will target specific outcomes in investment, enterprise, talent attraction, and placemaking. These will be co-designed with partners and aimed at generating measurable impact — from investment enquiries to talent leads. The scope of these campaigns will vary from regional to national and international as appropriate. Partnership will remain the engine of success.

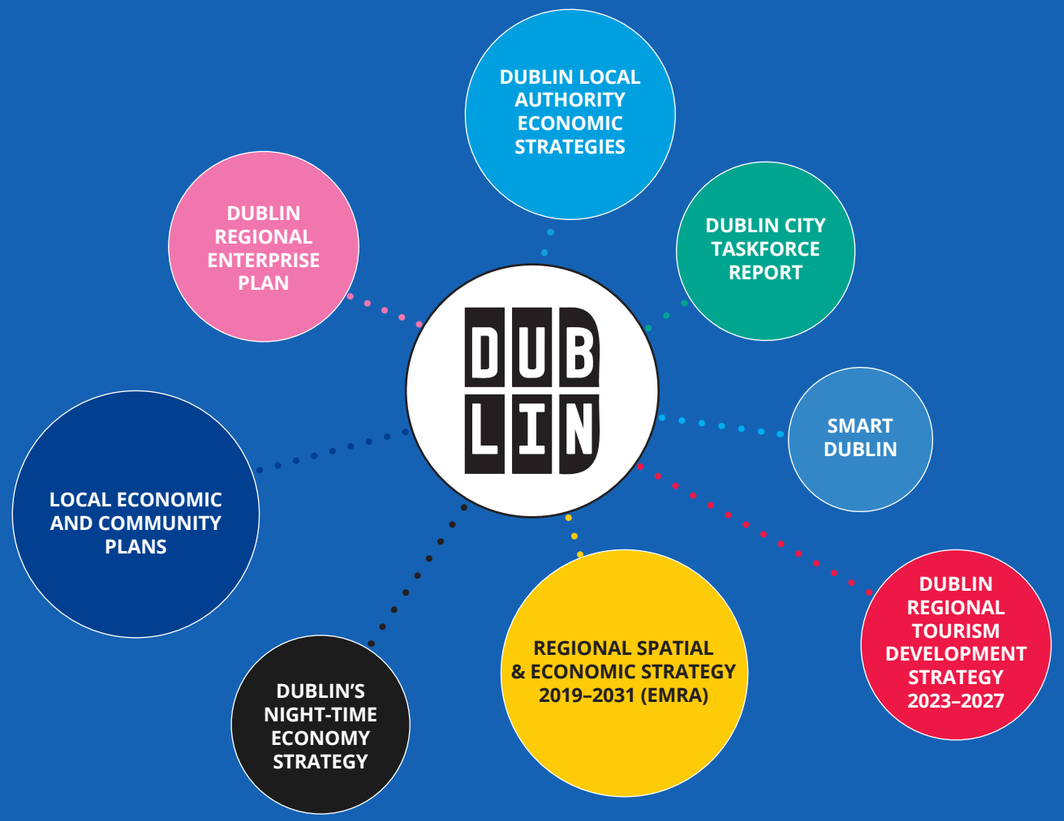
The Dublin brand will act as a shared platform, aligning with central Government objectives, regional and local strategies, supporting physical placemaking, and ensuring our story is embedded in the developments and initiatives shaping our future. We will measure progress with clear KPIs for both brand awareness and direct campaign results, ensuring accountability and the ability to adapt in a fast-changing environment.

The opportunity before us is to position Dublin not just as a place to live, study, work and invest — but as a region defined by creativity, ambition and community.

Richard Shakespeare - Chief Executive, Dublin City Council
Frank Curran - Chief Executive, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
AnnMarie Farrelly - Chief Executive, Fingal County Council
Colm Ward - Chief Executive, South Dublin County Council

POLICY AND STRATEGY CONTEXT

This strategy aligns with key individual and cross-regional workstreams across the Dublin Local Authorities. It builds on the Dublin Regional Enterprise Plan (REP), developed under an Enterprise Ireland initiative, which identified the need for collaborative place branding. A revised REP will be issued in 2026..



*** Indicative list of relevant policies and strategies**

MAKING THE MOST OF THE DUBLIN BRAND

A more cohesive and straightforward brand system is required to align with best practice and to ensure clear functions and relationships between the place brand, the Local Authorities, and other regional stakeholders.

Best practice shows that the Dublin Brand is most effective when applied as a standalone identity, maximising visibility, impact, and return on investment. This approach reflects how other leading city regions structure and deploy their place brands and associated campaigns (see Appendix 2).

Achieving regional alignment under a single brand delivers greater impact and supports the shared brand vision set out in the Dublin Regional Enterprise Plan. In international markets, particularly those targeted through economic campaigns, local authority identities carry significantly less meaning and recognition compared to a unified regional brand.

Appendix 1 outlines the practical guidelines for deploying the Dublin Brand across the full spectrum of requirements.



OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR 2026–2028

1. Strengthen Awareness and Reputation

Build recognition of the Dublin region through promotion that reflects its values and enhances its standing locally, nationally, and internationally.

2. Deliver Targeted Campaigns

Develop and execute initiatives with clear calls to action for priority audiences such as talent, investors, students and entrepreneurs.

3. Integrate with Placemaking

Align brand activity with physical and experiential place-based developments that are local authority led to reinforce the Dublin proposition.

4. Deepen Stakeholder Engagement

Expand both the reach and quality of collaboration with stakeholders across the public and private sector.

5. Advance Regional Coordination

Continue the regionalisation of the brand in line with best practice from leading city regions. Ensure operational efficiency, strong governance and effective management underpinned by a collaborative approach. Work towards a long-term shared funding model.

6. Embed Best Practice

Apply international standards in place branding, through learning from other city regions. Ensure the value of brand activities are communicated to and with partners.

Objective 1
Strengthen Awareness and Reputation

Build recognition of the Dublin region through promotion that reflects its values and enhances its standing locally, nationally, and internationally.

ACTIONS

1.1 Content planning & management

- Develop and maintain a 12-month rolling content calendar aligned with brand themes and Local Authority activities.
- Coordinate content contributions from the four Local Authorities and key partners.

1.2 Asset development

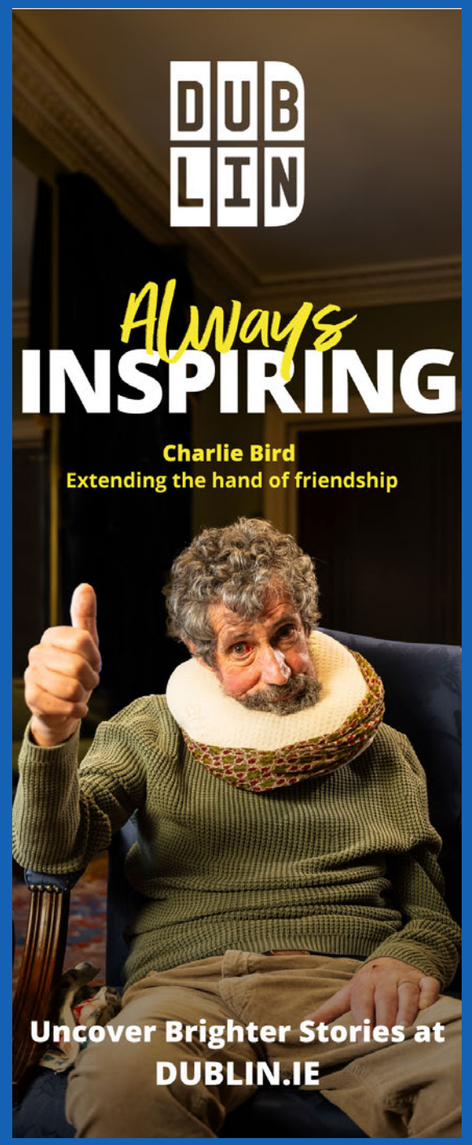
- Commission and curate photography, videography, and brand merchandise to support campaigns and events.
- Maintain an organised asset library for easy partner access.

1.3 Website development & management

- Undertake a full content review for regionalisation to ensure balanced coverage of the four Local Authorities.
- Maintain site with regular updates on events, case studies, and success stories.
- Monitor developments with AI assisted search and the impact on web traffic for Dublin.ie.

1.4 Social media growth & engagement

- Manage and grow social platforms, focusing on LinkedIn for professional and investment audiences.
- Develop platform-specific content strategies for higher engagement.



1.5 Events calendar & participation

- Curate and maintain a branded events calendar, including cultural, community, and economic events.
- Coordinate brand presence at key events (branding, activations, content capture).

Objective 2
Deliver Targeted Campaigns

Develop and execute initiatives with clear calls to action for priority audiences such as talent, investors, students and entrepreneurs.

ACTIONS

2.1 Campaign development & execution

- Plan and deliver two vertical campaigns per year with a clear call to action for a priority audience. One larger scale, one smaller.
- Plan 'always on' awareness activities for the brand both in the public realm and online.

- Collaborate with relevant partners to extend reach and impact (e.g. Education Ireland for student campaigns, Local Enterprise Offices or Enterprise Ireland for enterprise-focused campaigns).

- Formalise co-marketing agreements outlining shared resources, channels, and outcomes.



Objective 3
Integrate with Placemaking

Align brand activity with local authority-led, place-based developments to reinforce the Dublin proposition.

ACTIONS

3.1 Integration with physical place development

- Incorporate brand into signage, marketing materials, and launch events.

3.2 Presence at major festivals & sporting events

- Maintain a consistent and visible brand presence at major Local Authority–funded or supported events with strong cultural or international appeal (e.g. St. Patrick's Festival, Flavours of Fingal, Bram Stoker Festival, Dublin Pride, Dublin International Film Festival, DLR Summerfest, Red Line Book Festival etc).
- Extend presence to relevant community festivals across the four Local Authorities, ensuring brand alignment and visibility.

3.3 Brand alignment with placemaking initiatives

- Consider the opportunity for a physical representation of the brand in sites across the Dublin region. These physical brands have proven popular with both residents and tourists across many other European cities.



Objective 4
Deepen Stakeholder Engagement

Expand both the reach and quality of collaboration with stakeholders across the public and private sector.

ACTIONS

4.1 Implement an account management approach

- Identify and categorise priority stakeholders across public, private, cultural, academic, and community sectors.
- Assign relationship leads and maintain a structured engagement log to track interactions, opportunities, and agreed actions.

4.2 Develop a stakeholder toolkit

- Create a standardised set of resources for stakeholders to align with the Dublin brand, including messaging guidelines, visual identity assets, content templates, and case study examples.
- Provide guidance on how partners can integrate the Dublin brand into their own communications and activities.

4.3 Extend reach through strategic engagement

- Proactively expand the stakeholder network to include new partners.
- Schedule regular touchpoints, workshops, and briefing sessions to update stakeholders on campaigns, opportunities, and outcomes.





Objective 5
Advance Regional Coordination

Continue the regionalisation of the brand in line with best practice from leading city regions. Ensure operational efficiency, strong governance and effective management underpinned by a collaborative approach. Work towards a long-term shared funding model.

ACTIONS

5.1 Establish a formal steering committee

- Form a dedicated Brand Management Committee with representation from the four Local Authorities, key public agencies, and strategic partners.
- Define terms of reference, decision-making processes, and work plans based on this strategy.

5.2 Develop bi-annual reporting

- Produce and distribute a concise, data-led report for senior management teams in Local Authorities and other stakeholders twice yearly.
- Include KPIs, campaign performance, stakeholder engagement updates, funding status, and forward plans.

5.3 Maximise public sector co-funding

- Identify and apply for public funding streams at local, regional, national, and EU levels to support place brand activities.
- Embed funding considerations into campaign and project planning stages.

5.4 Explore private sector funding & sponsorship

- Test private sector appetite for sponsorship, co-branding, or in-kind contributions. Develop sponsorship packages linked to events, campaigns, or research outputs.



Objective 6
Embed Best Practice

Apply international standards in place branding, through learning from other city regions. Ensure the value of brand activities are communicated to and with partners.

ACTIONS

6.1 Undertake a European study tour

- Organise a study visit to a leading European city recognised for excellence in place branding and marketing.
- Document learnings and produce a short internal report with recommendations for application in the Dublin context.

6.2 Attend and contribute to key industry events

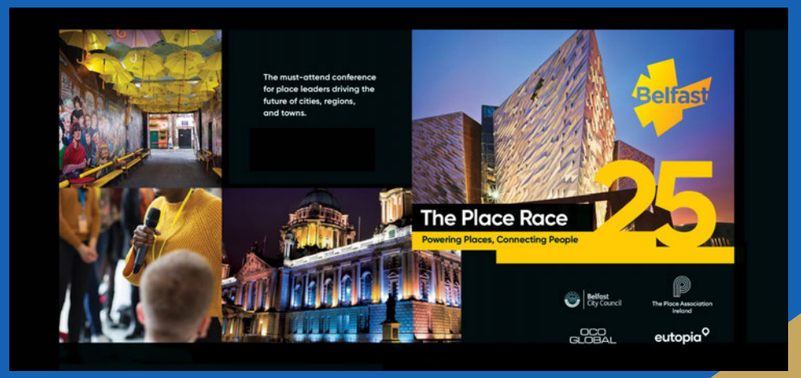
- Ensure representation at major place branding and marketing conferences such as City Nation Place and The Place Race.
- Where possible, secure speaking slots, panel contributions, or workshop facilitation roles to position Dublin as an active thought leader.

6.3 Contribute to industry publications and platforms

- Publish articles, case studies, or insights in sector platforms such as The Place Brand Observer.
- Share Dublin region successes, innovations, and collaborative approaches with the international place branding community.

6.4 Embed continuous professional development

- Track and plan attendance at relevant webinars, training sessions, and workshops for team members.
- Maintain a shared internal resource library of best practice examples, reports, and toolkits.

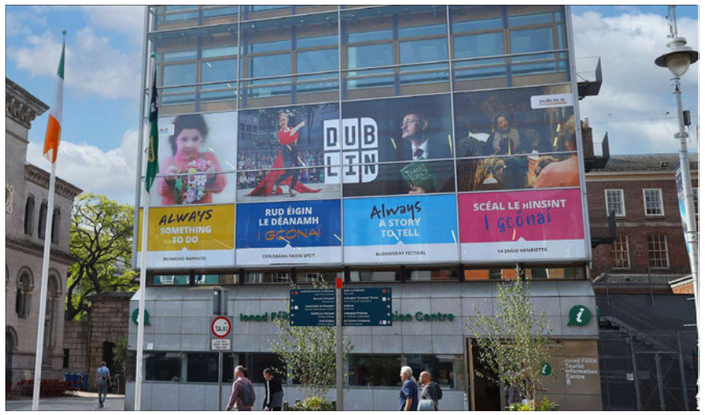


BACKGROUND

The Dublin brand was developed as part of an EU-funded initiative to create a cohesive identity that could position Dublin in a local, national, and global context. It's designed to promote the region as a place to live, work, invest, and study — complementing, but distinct from, the destination 'Visit Dublin' brand.

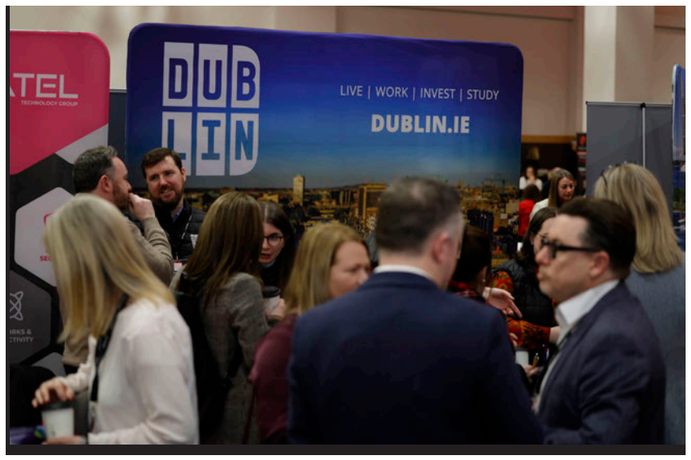
Over the past decade, the brand has evolved into a strategic communications tool, aligning with international best practice by embedding collaboration, regional coordination through the Dublin Regional Enterprise Plan, and a balance between external promotion and local engagement. Managed by a dedicated team within Dublin City Council, its scope spans brand stewardship, campaign delivery, content and platform management, stakeholder engagement, and event support.

Campaigns have adapted to shifting priorities and external challenges — from public safety messaging during the pandemic to highlighting Dublin's role in global business amid shifting trade and investment narratives. Stakeholder engagement has expanded significantly, leading to co-marketing initiatives with agencies such as Education in Ireland and, more recently, the first fully regional foreign direct investment campaign co-funded by the four Dublin Local Authorities.



DUB
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SUCCESSES



10 CAMPAIGNS SINCE 2020

Biggest Campaign
'INVESTED in DUBLIN'
- **6** large **FDI** Companies
- **395K** LinkedIn accounts reached
- **306K** VIDEO VIEWS

54K followers ACROSS 5 PLATFORMS

7 MILLION Video Views *for* **'ALWAYS BRIGHTER STORIES'**

Notable achievements in the last two-year period:

- Establishing the Dublin brand as a shared regional platform with growing stakeholder buy-in.
- Expanding content and channels, with a stronger emphasis on video and digital storytelling.
- Sponsoring and supporting major economic and cultural events whilst reinforcing Dublin's reputation across multiple sectors.
- Demonstrating resilience and adaptability in the face of global, national, and local challenges, from a community and business perspective.

This foundation positions the Dublin region to move confidently into its next strategic phase — one that will consolidate governance, extend partnerships, and amplify the brand's impact on both economic and community outcomes.

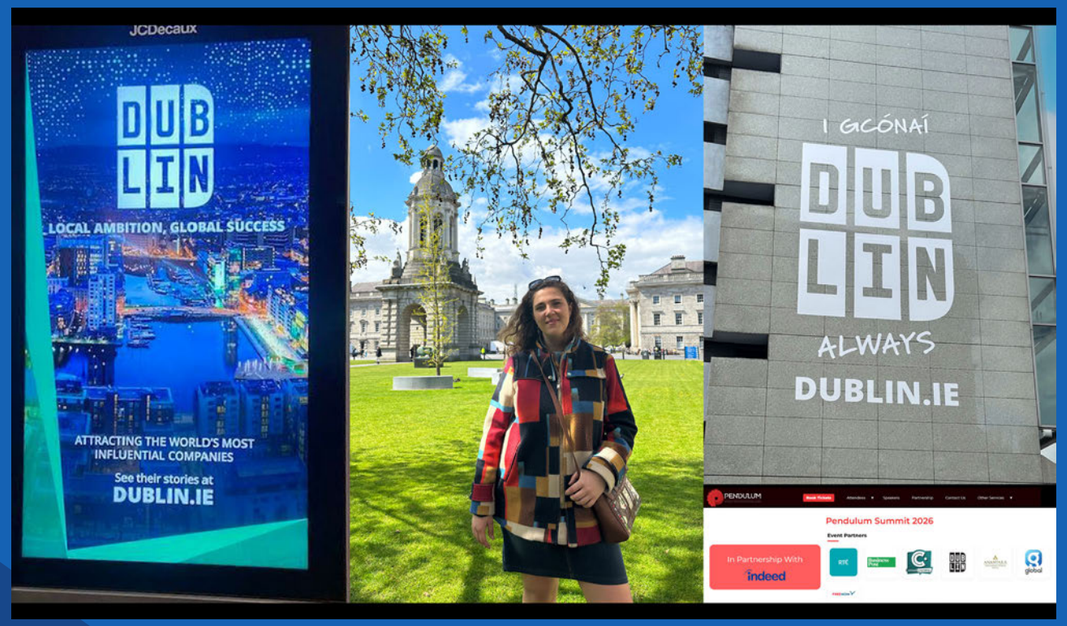
Appendix 1 -

Where and How We Use The Brand

Solely the Dublin Brand

Used where a unified, city-region identity delivers the strongest impact, particularly in international and economic contexts:

- Investment promotion campaigns such as:
  Invested in Dublin: Local Ambition, Global Success.
- Skills and talent attraction campaigns.
- Student recruitment initiatives, such as The Dublin Scholarship, delivered in partnership with Education in Ireland.
- Flagship economic events including Pendulum and Dublin Tech Summit.
- International flagship events and trade shows, such as MIPIM and major sector-specific fairs.
- Placemaking and public-realm initiatives, including large-scale branded signage, airport installations, and strategic wayfinding.



Joint Branding with Local Authorities

Used where local relevance and community identity strengthen impact and where shared ownership is required:

- Flagship community events such as the Dublin Marathon, Flavours of Fingal, PRIDE Festival, Bloomsday Festival, St Patrick's Festival, and the International Literary Festival.
- Domestic enterprise and social-enterprise events including the AI Awards and SoCircular.



Joint Branding with Other Stakeholders

Used where specific partnerships add value, extend reach, or support strategic objectives:

- Targeted collaborations, co-developed campaigns, and sector-specific initiatives delivered with regional and national partners.



Appendix 2 -

Looking to our peers: Understanding Best Practice

As part of the development of our brand strategy, we reviewed international best practice to learn from our peers and embed effective approaches. Across Europe, cities are leveraging the power of place brands. These brands are at different stages of maturity and employ different tactics, but all demonstrate consistent investment, excellent execution, and strong governance. Place branding and associated campaigns are positioned as strategic assets that drive local economic growth and enhance resident satisfaction.

As highlighted in our strategy, we intend to conduct a study tour to one of these best practice cities to further engage, learn about their activities, assess effectiveness, and explore their governance models.

Below, we set out highlights from selected cities and their approaches.

Helsinki

(Brand developed 2017)



Focus areas:

- Innovative digital solutions
- Resident participation
- Brand visibility

What they do well:

- Positioning Helsinki as a 'happy place' with quirky, imaginative creative.
- Seamlessly integrating lifestyle, tourism, and business into one brand journey.
- Strong emphasis on resident and visitor engagement through digital platforms.

Standout initiatives:

- **MyHelsinki** – A one-stop digital platform providing curated recommendations and relocation information for investors, businesses, residents, and tourists.
- **Virtual Helsinki** – A fully navigable virtual city that hosts events and enables residents to provide feedback on urban planning projects.

Governance & execution:

Led by Helsinki Partners, a city-owned organisation ensuring alignment across stakeholders. The digital-first approach demonstrates innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability.

Takeaway for us:

Helsinki illustrates how digital tools can attract visitors and investors while also involving residents in shaping the city's future.

Eindhoven

(Brand developed 2022)



Focus areas:

- Resident engagement ('Feel the energy – share the vibe') Resident participation
- Promoting lifestyle and inclusivity
- Strong brand management and governance

What they do well:

- Positioning the city around authenticity and energy rather than heritage or aesthetics.
- Using brand values – Imagine, Experiment, Realise – to tell a consistent story.
- Focusing on resident participation through the 'Share the vibe' campaign..

Standout initiatives:

- **Share the vibe –** A campaign encouraging residents to tell Eindhoven's story
- **EHV365 –** The city's marketing organisation acting as brand custodian, storyteller, and proposition developer. It employs around 12 FTEs across content marketing, brand identity, PR, and campaign management.

Governance & execution:

Eindhoven365 manages the brand with a dedicated professional team, ensuring consistent storytelling and packaging of city assets for different stakeholders.

Takeaway for us:

Eindhoven demonstrates the power of aligning a city's story with resident energy and involvement, supported by professional governance.

Lyon

(ONLYLYON initiative, developed 2007)

Focus areas:

- Coordinated stakeholder action
- Strong governance and brand integration

What they do well:

- Creating a multi-stakeholder initiative coordinated by Lyon Metropole.
- Building effective differentiation with a confident, powerful brand identity.
- Recognising the brand as a strategic asset for the region.

Standout initiatives:

- **ONLYLYON –** A platform uniting 12 founding partners, including public institutions, private companies, and universities, into a cohesive branding initiative.

Governance & execution:

The initiative is governed collaboratively, with Lyon Metropole ensuring coordination and stakeholder engagement across sectors.

Takeaway for us:

Lyon demonstrates the strength of integrated governance and stakeholder collaboration in building a globally recognised place brand.