

## **PRESS RELEASE**

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, YOUTH, SPORT AND MEDIA

### **COMEET wins The Flemish Culture Award for Local Cultural policy 2015**

Flemish Minister for Culture, Sven Gatz, has today handed over the Flemish Culture Award for Local Cultural policy 2015 to 'Cultuuroverleg Meetjesland' COMEET in short at the launch of Cultuurconnect in Brussels. The jury lauded COMEET for its comprehensive and broad approach.

COMEET is a culture service and a project partnership on behalf of 14 municipalities in the 'Meetjesland' region. The partnership's remit extends to libraries, heritage, local cultural policy and performing arts. Thanks to COMEET consultation on cultural matters has been promoted in the region during the past 12 years.

Through this distinction the jury aims to highlight the role of regional partnerships as models for local cultural policy. Smaller entities in particular may benefit from inspiring regional cooperations. Sound partnerships prove that local cultural policy in smaller municipalities can be ambitious.

"The success of COMEET is testimony to the importance of cooperation, assistance, reinforcement and support within local cultural policy beyond the boundaries of the individual municipalities.", according to Sven Gatz.

COMEET regularly brings together policy coordinators and cultural service staff from the Meetjesland region with the purpose of exchanging knowledge and experiences. These trainings and meetings have the added benefit of reinforcing them in their role. COMEET initiates projects and informs the Meetjesland inhabitants on the culture and leisure offer in their own region.

Stijn Coppejans, president of COMEET explains the organisation's success as follows: *"For all the vastness of our catchment area, we have managed to keep the distance to our stakeholders small. It is thanks to the enthusiasm of the various cultural organisations, the Board of Directors, our advisors and staff that over the years a culture of confidence, ambition and creativity has been instilled. So this Flemish Culture Award for Local Cultural policy actually is a reward for the hundreds of enthusiasts from the whole region."*

## Background information

### **Culture Awards Flanders 2015**

On the proposal of a jury of experts the Flemish Minister for Culture pays tribute to individuals or an organisation that in the course of the past season made a notable contribution to cultural life in Flanders. The Culture Awards Flanders create public awareness of the laureate at a major event in the sector, which generates attention and appreciation for both the sector and the winner. A cash prize of 10,000 EUR is connected to the Culture Award. The Government of Flanders sets aside 20,000 EUR for the Flemish Community Award for General Cultural Achievement. Each laureate also receives the bronze statuette 'La ultima isla' by [Philip Aguirre](#).

[www.cultuurprijzen.be](http://www.cultuurprijzen.be)

### **Cultuurconnect**

Is a brand new laboratory in which libraries, cultural and community centres can try out solutions for the digital challenges within local cultural policy.

[www.cultuurconnect.be/](http://www.cultuurconnect.be/)

<http://comeet.be/>