



SE-NEWS

A Newsletter for Social Enterprises in Ireland

January 2025

Welcome to the latest edition of SE-NEWS, the newsletter for social enterprises in Ireland brought to you by the Department of Rural and Community Development. Our aim is to share information and news of interest to social enterprises, to help build and strengthen the social enterprise community and to share case studies and examples of good practice.

In this edition, we look back at the sixth **National Social Enterprise Conference** that took place in Dublin Castle in November. Links to the speakers and panel discussions that you might like to revisit are included, along with a link to the whole event in case you missed it.

In this issue we are inviting applications from social enterprise practitioners for a seat on the Trading for Impact Stakeholder Engagement Group.

There is also news of recently published research on 'buy social' and socially responsible public procurement.

Our regular 'Focus on SE' segment features **'The Hub on the Hill'**, a social enterprise set up by Inner City Enterprise that provides affordable, accessible work space for marginalized & underserved clients in Dublin's Inner City wishing to start a business and requiring a safe, inclusive workspace.

Finally, as the New Year is upon us we wish you all a happy and peaceful 2025!

The Editor

NOTICE BOARD

DRCD is maintaining a list of supports for social enterprise. The list includes sources of funding, training or advice.

[Supports for Social Enterprise](#)

If you know of any supports available for social enterprise that are not on the list then let us know.

If you are organising any **events or training** in the near future that you think others in the social enterprise community would be interested in, send details to us at senews@drccd.gov.ie.

Social Enterprise in Ireland: A Baseline Data Collection Exercise

Click [HERE](#) to see the full report

Trading for Impact National Social Enterprise Policy can be found [HERE](#)

Energy Efficiency Grant for Small Business

The latest support to aid small businesses on their sustainability journey was announced in May by Simon Coveney TD, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The aim of the grant is to reduce the impact of enterprises on the environment thereby increasing the agility and resilience of these businesses.

Please see the link [HERE](#) for more details.

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SIXTH NATIONAL SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CONFERENCE HELD IN DUBLIN CASTLE

The National Social Enterprise Conference took place on Wednesday 16th November. The theme of the conference was 'Trading for Impact'. Almost 300 delegates took part at the Printworks Event Centre at Dublin Castle and over 200 delegates live streamed the event.



The annual conference, now in its sixth year, provides an opportunity for stakeholders from all corners of the sector to come together, network, provide information, share best practice examples and inform policy development and implementation. Mamobo Ogoro, founder and CEO of social enterprise Gorm Media was the MC for the conference. Details of Gorm Media can be found [Here](#).



Opening the Conference DRCD's Secretary General Mary Hurley said "I invite everyone here today to reflect on the progress made with

social enterprise in Ireland, to take time to think about our collective ambition for the sector, and to consider what more can be done to help realise that ambition.

The theme for today's conference is *Trading for Impact*. I'm sure you will agree that this is a very concise description of social enterprise, encompassing as it does, two very important sides, – the 'trading' element that is so much a part of the

DNA of a social enterprise, and the 'impact' element that alludes to the very beneficial effect social enterprise has on people, communities and the environment". Click [Here](#) to see a video of the welcoming address in full.

DRCD's Head of Social Enterprise, Ciara Bates, provided an overview of *Trading for Impact* the new social enterprise policy. Click [Here](#) to view her presentation.



Rural social enterprises took the spotlight at this year's conference, with three social enterprises taking the stage to introduce the work they are doing.

Fionn Kidney of [Common Knowledge](#), a social enterprise based deep in the Burren that shares skills in building, making, mending and growing gives his presentation [Here](#).

Colm and John Galvin from [Living Woodlands](#) a Tipperary based social enterprise that specialises in creating Biodiversity Havens to protect and enhance our native biodiversity, give their presentation [Here](#).

Elaine Baker from [Cloughjordan Community Farm](#), a member owned farm who produce high quality, nutritionally dense vegetables, while also reducing the environmental impact of producing this food, gives her presentation [Here](#).



The first of three panel discussions focused on 'Maximising your Trading Income'. Chris Gordon from [ISEN](#) facilitated the discussion, which also included Maeve Monaghan, CEO of the [NOW Group](#), Kim MacKenzie-Doyle from [The Big Idea](#) and Sean Mullan, Founder of [Third Space Cafe](#). Click [Here](#) to see the discussion in full.



The second panel discussion focused on ‘Social Impact Measurement’. Philip O’Donnell from the [ILDN](#) facilitated the discussion which also included, Melis Aslan from the [OECD](#), Steven O’Connell from the [Football Cooperative](#), Caroline Gardner from [Quality Matters](#). Click [Here](#) to see their discussion in full.

The third panel discussed ‘Workforce Development for Social Enterprise Success’. Mairead O’Connor from the [Wheel](#) facilitated the discussion which also included Siobhán Finn from [CEAI](#), Dara Connelly from [Common Purpose](#) and Graham Harron from [Grow Remote](#), Click [Here](#) to see the discussion in full.

There were three breakout sessions for those attending the conference in person. Chris Mooney Brown of [CRNI](#) facilitated a session entitled ‘Climate Action and Social Enterprise’ with Claire Downey of the [Rediscovery Centre](#), Jenny Williams of [Habitat for Humanity](#), and Martina Hourigan of [Roscommon Women’s Network](#). Click [Here](#) to see this session.

The other two breakout sessions were not in the main room and were not recorded. Thanks to Chris Gordon of ISEN for facilitating a session entitled ‘Social Procurement and ESG’, with Fergal Grogan of the [OGP](#), Maura Kiely of [Leave no Trace](#), and Gavin Callan of [CBRE Ireland](#). Thanks also to Garret O’Donoghue of the [Social Finance Foundation](#) for facilitating a session entitled ‘Leveraging Social Finance’, with Barry Symes of [Community Finance Ireland](#), Emmet O’Hara of [Clann Credo](#) and Mario Vottero of [Rethink Ireland](#).



Sue Adams provided inspirational closing remarks which you can watch [Here](#). Sue is founder of [Education for Sustainability CLG](#), a social enterprise that is increasing

climate literacy and fostering behaviour change in Ireland.

DRCD would particularly like to thank the consortium of SERI, ISEN, the ILDN and the Wheel for the organisation of the conference this year.

Click [Here](#) to watch the full conference from the start.

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST TO PARTICIPATE IN STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT GROUP

In July 2024, the Minister for Rural and Community Development published Trading for Impact: National Social Enterprise Policy 2024-2027. The policy is focused on five main objectives:

1. Building Awareness of Social Enterprise
2. Growing and Strengthening Social Enterprise
3. Supporting the Green Transition
4. National and International Engagement
5. Impact Measurement



The policy sets out 57 commitments on the part of Government across these objectives for the development of social enterprise in terms of scale and impact. Trading for Impact aims to cultivate and sustain strong and impactful social enterprises in Ireland, and in doing

so enrich the social, environmental and economic well-being of people in our communities.

The new policy includes a commitment (action 56) to: “Establish a Trading for Impact Stakeholder Engagement Group to co-ordinate input into the delivery of the policy, to meet bi-annually”

The Stakeholder Engagement Group will be a key vehicle to advise on the implementation of the National Social Enterprise policy. Whilst

responsibility for delivery of the policy measures rests with the Department of Rural and Community Development, partnership with a wide range of social enterprise stakeholders is key to the success and sustainability of Trading for Impact.

Two seats on the group have been allocated to social enterprise practitioners, one from a rural social enterprise, and one from an urban social enterprise. The Department is now inviting suitable candidates to apply for the role.

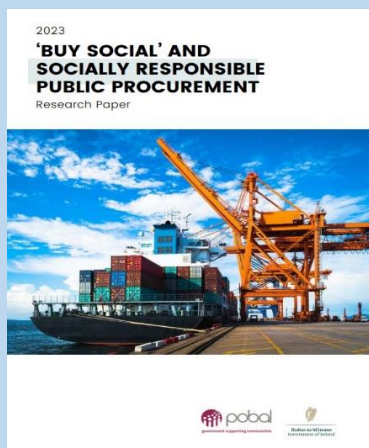
Application forms can be found [Here](#).

The Department will shortlist applicants deemed to meet the requirements of the role. A panel, comprising three members will meet to consider the shortlisted applicants and will rank them on the basis of merit.

The closing date for expressions of interest to be submitted, by email to Sesi@drcd.gov.ie, is Friday 31st January 2025.

RESEARCH ON BUY SOCIAL AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PUBLISHED

A 'Buy social' and socially responsible public procurement research project completed by Sam Marchetti from ConsortiaCo has been published. This research explores best practice in Socially Responsible Public Procurement (SRPP) and the Buy Social movement across 10 countries across the UK, Europe and North America.



The research was co-financed by the Department of Rural & Community Development (DRCD) and the Department of Justice and supported by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP). Pobal was contracted to conduct the tender and appraisal process as well as taking on the project management role. The research successfully identified the future trends of social enterprise

development, inclusive and ethical supply chains, and an overall shift towards socially-conscious business models through benchmarking.

You can view this research [Here](#).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION SEEKS YOUR VIEWS ON LAWS AND POLICIES CURRENTLY IN DEVELOPMENT

Citizens and businesses of Europe are invited to share their views on all laws and policies currently in development in the European Union.

A resource was launched by the European Commission [Here](#) in early January where you can sign up and study the laws and policies under development and share your opinions.

ALL ISLAND CONFERENCE 'COLLABORATION AND TRANSFORMATION TO BE HELD IN FEBRUARY

Carmichael Ireland and Development Trusts Northern Ireland (DTNI) are holding an all-island conference on the theme of 'collaboration and transformation' which will explore the challenges and opportunities for civic organisations across the island of Ireland.



The conference will take place in Draíocht in the Blanchardstown Centre on Tuesday, February 25th 2025.

- Engage with inspiring speakers
- Network with like minded visionaries
- Discover innovative opportunities for our communities

Representatives of community organisations, voluntary organisations, and social enterprises are invited to book a free place [Here](#).

Focus on SE



Inner City Enterprise's 'Hub on the Hill' is a great example of a business that works primarily to improve the lives of people. Their mission is to provide affordable accessible workspaces for marginalized social enterprises and sole traders.

The HUB ON THE HILL is based in Dublin 7's Coleraine Street and is very much a Dublin City Hub, with special focus on Dublin's Inner City Area! It is one of the first of its kind to be run as a social enterprise in Dublin City.



The hub provides affordable, accessible workspace for marginalized social enterprises and sole traders requiring workspace. Services include hot desking, co-working space and individual offices units. The hub also provides training rooms and in time will also have a

community space and shared office facilities. A Craft Makers Space as well as outdoor markets are also envisaged in the near future. The hub employs 2 full-time staff, 5 part-time, and there are 22 volunteers.

To improve people's lives, ICE are running Hub on the Hill as a social enterprise. 40% of occupants who are marginalized social enterprises and sole traders will pay well below the market rate with the remaining 60% paying the full commercial rate. Though only partially refurbished,

the Hub on the Hill is fast becoming known for its affordable, accessible and inclusive space. Most of all it's a safe space for all creed and nationalities to engage and work side by side.

Over the last decade, One of ICE client's most pressing requirements is for affordable, accessible workspaces. In 2019, the Board of ICE took a key strategic decision to secure a building to convert into a Social Enterprise space. By November 2022, ICE had signed a 15 year lease with Dublin City Council for a former derelict Housing Depot in Dublin 7.

By the start of 2023, ICE had secured DAF funding of €100k, €50k from DCC and a further €15,000 from ICON PLC. They were then fortunate to partner with John Paul Construction who refurbished the top floor largely pro bono, as did their suppliers. This support earned them the DRCD Sponsored Award for *Best Corporate Partnership with a Social Enterprise* at the Chambers Ireland Sustainable Business Impact Awards in 2024.



Pictured: Ian Talbot - CEO Chambers Ireland, Deirdre Kearney - DRCD, Liam Kenny - Managing Director of John Paul Construction, Evanne Kilmurray - CEO of Inner City Enterprises Gary Howard - Associate Director of John Paul Construction, Alasdair Henderson - BAM Executive Director Ireland.

The next step for the HUB is to secure further funding to refurbish the downstairs of the building, which will be done in 2 phases. John Paul Construction are fully on board to complete the HUB's renovation programme.

CONTACT DETAILS

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If you would like your social enterprise to feature in 'Focus on SE' then email senews@drcd.gov.ie and ask for an application form