



## Meeting of Higher Education Institutions Network on Social Enterprise

### MINUTES OF MEETING

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**Venue:** Webex meeting

**Date:** 5 November 2021

**Time:** 10:00 – 11:30

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#### IN ATTENDANCE

##### Higher Education Institutes

- Caroline McMullan      Dublin City University
- Deiric O’Broin      Dublin City University
- Simon Stephens      Letterkenny IT
- Marie Taylor      Limerick IT
- Ziene Mottiar      Technological University Dublin
- Briga Hynes      University of Limerick
- Felicity Kelliher      Waterford IT
- Mary O’Shaughnessy      University College Cork
- Breda O’Dwyer      Munster Technological University
- Oonagh Breen      University College Dublin
- Lucia Walsh      Technological University Dublin
- Maeve McArdle      Dundalk Institute of Technology

##### Department of Rural and Community Development

- Richard Gavin      Assistant Principal Officer
- John Ryan      Higher Executive Officer
- Declan O’Brien      Administrative Officer

##### Others

- Clodagh O’Reilly      Technological University Dublin
- Lucas Olmedo      University College Cork

#### APOLOGIES

- Andrew Forde      Chairperson (Principal Officer, DRCD)
- Lindsay Malone      Carlow Institute of Technology
- Olive McCarthy      University College Cork
- Suzi Jarvis      University College Dublin
- Emma McEvoy      NUI Maynooth
- Jennifer Brennan      Dublin City University
- Catherine Molyneaux      Cork Institute of Technology
- Sheila Cannon      Trinity College Dublin
- Ger Doyle      Technological University Dublin
- Ivan McPhillips      Galway Mayo Institute of Technology

## Opening Remarks

Richard Gavin commenced the meeting, saying it is a very busy time in the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) with both ARISE and DAF applications being reviewed, he highlighted the importance of the forum as a way to connect researchers and policy makers, and advised that DRCD are always open to suggestions or proposals e.g. Social Enterprise Research Conference in supporting the HEI network.

Mary O'Shaughnessy said she wanted to convey how grateful the University were for DRCD's support of the 2021 EMES/UCC International PhD School.

Declan O'Brien was introduced as a new team member in DRCD.

## Approval of Second meeting's minutes

Minutes of the second meeting were approved without comment.

## Brief Update on Implementation of Policy

John Ryan from DRCD gave a brief update to the meeting on the Social Enterprise policy implementation including the following:

- Over 100 applications have been received for ARISE Scheme funding.
- An 'Our Rural Future' Rural Social Enterprise Event was held in Kilmovee, County Mayo on 30 September.
- The Chambers Ireland Category Winner was announced - William Fry pro bono programme.
- Updates were given on the DAF 2021 Covid Regeneration Scheme, Start-Up-Scheme and LCDC Capital Supports.
- The Legal Form study Report was Launched on 6 October.
- Update on the Irish Research Council Post-Doctoral Fellowship (see below)
- The National Census/Data Collection Open Tender has been published.
- The Annual Report 2020 will be included in a Memo for Government.
- Approval received from the Management Board for the OECD to conduct a review of the policy.
- The British Irish Council Virtual Showcase event took place in September. Kilcannon, Foodcloud, GIY and An Meitheal Rothar were all showcased.
- The National Social Enterprise Conference will be a hybrid event. It will take place on 18 November, streamed live from Dunhill Ecopark, County Waterford.

Richard Gavin advised that the William Fry pro bono programme is available to all Social Enterprises.

## Irish Research Council Update

Richard Gavin commented that DRCD will be unable to facilitate an IRC Post-Doctoral Fellowship to research the impact of Social Enterprises in Ireland until next year. DRCD were looking at other options including the New Foundation Scheme and the COALESCE Scheme.

Caroline McMullan from DCU remarked that they had used the COALESCE scheme while working on a case study with MET Eireann and would highly recommend it. It worked very well with an IRC support person being assigned to the case with very good administration. DCU gave the scheme a positive endorsement. Caroline McMullan also advised the recruit assistant assigned to the case was very good. It was very productive and the scheme was willing to extend timeframes if required.

Mary O'Shaughnessy from UCC noted it was very difficult to get a PH doctorate that would take on the case study.

Mary noted that the new IRC Foundations scheme provides funding to support networking.

Breda O'Dwyer advised that it is harder to get work funded and combined activity is not ideal. There may be a need to go down the philanthropic side for funding.

#### **Presentation: The role of Policy unlocking the potential of Rural Social Enterprise Report**

Lucas Olmedo presented his report on 'The role of Policy in unlocking the potential of Irish Rural Social Enterprises'.

A follow up discussion took place covering a number of areas of the report.

#### **Updates from Members**

- Deiric advised the IAM-SERNI Social Enterprise Symposium & Interactive Discourse virtual event took place on 26 August and was a success. The symposium may create a journal.
- Briga noted the Irish Journal of Management on 20 January 2022 online addition will have a section on research under Social Enterprises.
- Mary O'Shaughnessy commented that she will be convening a two research panels at the EMES International Conference hybrid event in Spain on rural based enterprise and rural solutions on 15 November.
- Lucas advised the event will hear presentations from all around the world.
- Mary O'Shaughnessy noted there is a special issue in Journal of Rural Studies Rural Studies coming out with empirical evidence on the topic of rural social enterprise, social innovation and sustainable rural development.
- Oonagh from UCD advised SERNI are looking for a good insight into Social Enterprise in the area of Co-operative law.
- Breda O'Dwyer commented that Waterford Social Enterprise eco system are carrying out a study on 'What prohibits and promotes Social Enterprises'.

#### **Presentation: Exploring the factors that influence the scaling of social enterprises**

Clodagh O'Reilly TUD presented 'What are the factors that impact the scaling of Social Enterprises'.

- Lobbying and alliancing are crucial for scaling a Social Enterprise.
- Choosing a pathway for scaling is the hardest decision to make. Social Enterprise's may use multiple strategies at different times.
- Internal talent a priority in order to scale. Resources like support, sharing knowledge and experiences key.
- Social Enterprise must know what social impact they are trying to address.

A follow up discussion took place among the group.

**AOB**

Felicity commented that Waterford IT will open a special issue of the Journal and will add Clodagh O'Reilly's research paper.

Richard Gavin DRCD advised the date for the next meeting will be early next year, and noted that there is time now to think about future proposals.