



Meeting of Higher Education Institutions Network on Social Enterprise

MINUTES OF MEETING

Venue: Webex meeting

Date: 21/10/2020

Time: 10:00 – 11:30

IN ATTENDANCE

Higher Education Institutes

- John McKenna Athlone IT
- Deiric O'Broin DCU
- Ivan Mc Phillips GMIT
- Jessica Fuller IADT
- Kate Morris Irish Universities Association
- Simon Stephens Letterkenny IT
- Marie Taylor Limerick IT
- Lorraine McIlrath NUI Galway
- Emma McEvoy NUI Maynooth
- Sheila Cannon TCD
- Ziene Mottiar TU Dublin
- Gerard Doyle TU Dublin
- Olive McCarthy University College Cork
- Oonagh Breen University College Dublin
- Suzi Jarvis University College Dublin
- Briga Hynes University of Limerick
- Felicity Kelliher Waterford IT

Department of Rural and Community Development

- Andrew Forde Principal Officer
- Sam Dowzard Administrative Officer
- Íde Holden Clerical Officer

Other Organisations

- Caroline Cooke Foróige
- Laura Dennehy Enactus

APOLOGIES

- Caroline McMullan Dublin City University
- Lindsay Malone IT Carlow
- Jennifer Brennan Technological Higher Education Association
- Mary-Lee Rhodes Trinity College Dublin
- Mary O'Shaughnessy University College Cork
- Bridget Carroll University College Cork
- Patrick McGarty IT Tralee

Opening

With reference to the three key objectives of the National Social Enterprise Policy (NSEP), Andrew Forde commenced the meeting highlighting the important contributions Higher Education Institutions (HEI) make in regards to social enterprise through teaching, research, and community engagement, as well by providing linkages to student bodies and the social enterprise base.

Emphasising the importance of these meeting as a forum for engagement between the Department and HEIs, and noting the work being carried out by the Department and the different HEIs, the intention to hold more regular meetings was stated.

Approval of First meeting's minutes

Minutes approved without comment. Approved document to be uploaded to gov.ie website.

DRCD Updates

Andrew outlined the ongoing work of the Department relating to the NSEP under the following headings:

- NSEP Implementation awareness sub group – Social Enterprise Awareness Raising Strategy.
 - HEI Network members were invited to share ideas regarding awareness raising.
- Foróige - NFTE (Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship) Programme Social Enterprise module.
 - Caroline Cooke gave an update on behalf of Foróige.
- Upcoming Procurement Training/Webinars.
 - Details of these webinars will be shared with the HEI network once announced
- DAF COVID Supports for Social Enterprise

- DRCD Social Enterprise Networking and Support events in partnership with ISEN
- Virtual National Conference on Social Enterprise 19 November 2020.
 - Save the date details to be sent to group members
- Social Enterprise Legal Form
 - Phase 1: Trust Law - The Department has engaged with Trust Law who worked alongside the law firm Mason Hayes Curran in the creation of a Legal Form Guide for social enterprise. The guide will provides an overview of the various types and requirements of the different legal forms which social enterprises can use.
 - Phase 2: Rethink Ireland. – Undertaken in collaboration with Rethink Ireland, research is to be commission to examine the need for a discrete legal form for social enterprise based on an objective analysis of the challenges and opportunities they face. This research will consist of a survey of social enterprises and a set of structured interviews with stakeholders from the social enterprise ecosystem in order to gather a broad grassroots perspective on the topic of legal form. A report detailing the finding of this research is to be published in 2021.
 - It was noted that Gerard Doyle who was in attendance was one of the selected consultants engaged in phase 2 of this project. A number of group members asked whether information relating to both phases could be circulated to the group and also offered assistance and expertise relating to this work.
- Irish Research Council Social Enterprise Impact Fellowship 2021.
 - A suggestion to provide funding support for doctoral level research in order to help generate a pipeline of interested applicants for the fellowship was made by B.Hynes.
- Data Collection on Social Enterprise and ongoing work with Benefacts.
 - Group member’s advice in this regard was invited. S.Cannon highlighted how the mapping work can overlap with legal form research and outlined the value of crowd sourced mapping using a digital app.

Social Economy Research Network of Ireland (SERNI) Update

D. Ó Broin outlined the scope and purpose of SERNI, with meetings taking place every 3-4 months and having recently concluded their sixth meeting. A potentially beneficial overlap for work relating to SE mapping and legal form was highlighted and SERNI’s offer of support and assistance to the Department was welcomed.

At A. Forde’s suggestion, it was agreed to include a SERNI update as a standing item on the agenda for future meetings of the HEI SE network.

Member Updates (ongoing/forthcoming activities and projects relevant to Social Enterprise)

In alphabetical order the attendees gave a brief update on the research, teaching, collaborations, and other activities in the field of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship being undertaken by the HEIs.

The importance of coordination on work relating to social enterprise was discussed, highlighting the value of coordination between HEIs and within HEIs due to the variety of disciplines that the concept of social enterprise/the social economy involves.

During the discussion A.Forde made the suggestion of a national research conference on social enterprise as a way to bring visibility to the different activities that were highlighted by network members and invited suggestions/proposals on the topic.

In addition, A.Forde encouraged members to submit the outlined activities, along with any useful links that the HEIs believe would be beneficial, for inclusion in the HEI Social Enterprise Activity Summary document which was started after the first meeting. The most recent version was circulated prior to the meeting.

Enactus Presentation

Laura Dennehy, Enactus Country Manager for Ireland, gave a brief presentation as an introduction to the work of Enactus for HEI network members. It was agreed that the slide deck used for the presentation would be circulated to members.

AOB

The date for the next meeting was suggested to be towards the end of Q1 2021.

Actions

- Details of National Social Enterprise Conference and Procurement Webinars to be shared with network members
- Slides of Enactus presentation to be shared with Network members.
- Legal form guide to be shared upon completion to HEI SE network
- Draft minutes of second meeting and updates to HEI SE activities summary to be shared with network members.
- Members to continue to send in submissions for activities summary document and contribute in regards to topics highlighted during meeting – Mapping, Legal Form, and National Research Conference.
- Date for the third HEI SE network meeting to be decided in Jan 2021
- HEI network members are invited to revert suggested approaches and feedback in regards to a national research conference on Social Enterprise.