



Meeting of Higher Education Institutions Network on Social Enterprise

MINUTES OF MEETING

Venue: Webex meeting

Date: 5 November 2021

Time: 10:00 – 11:30

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. Richard 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 University summer school.

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

Approval of Third meeting's minutes

Minutes of the Third 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 Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF) 2021 Covid Regeneration Scheme, Start-Up-Scheme and Local Community Development Committees (LCDC's) Capital Supports.
- The Legal Form study Report was Launched on 6 October.
- Update on the Irish Research Council (IRC) 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 (BIC) Virtual Showcase event took place in September. Kilcannon, Foodcloud, Grow It Yourself (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 Foundations 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 Foundations scheme is quite limited.

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 commented that she will be convening a two panel International Conference hybrid event in Spain on rural based enterprise and rural solutions on 15 November. There will be delegates from the National Rural Network and LEADER present.
- Lucas advised the event will have presentations from all around the world.
- Mary noted there is a special issue in Rural Studies coming out with empirical evidence.
- 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 thanked those who participated in the Social Economy Symposium, held at the Irish Academy of Management Conference 2021 in August and for contributing to the symposium report. She directed attendees to an open call for journal papers to the Irish Journal of Management special issue titled '*Building a better tomorrow – Bridging the disconnect between policy, practice, education and research in social economy*'. Closing date is 28 January 2022. Articles must be submitted to the journal through an online Editorial Manager system <https://www.editorialmanager.com/ijom/default.aspx>. For further information, please contact the guest editors, Dr Briga Hynes, (Briga.Hynes@ul.ie), Prof Felicity Kelliher (fkelliher@wit.ie), and Dr Ziene Mottiar ziene.mottiar@TUDublin.ie.

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.