

# ENTERPRISE FOR THE FUTURE

**BUILDING KERRY'S NEXT GENERATION OF BUSINESS**



Front l-r: Bridget Fitzgerald (Kerry County Council), Louise Burke (IRD Duhallo), Niall Kelleher (Mayor of Kerry), Moira Murrell (Chief Executive, Kerry County Council) and Brid McElligott (IT Tralee). Back l-r: Sarah Flaherty (IT Tralee and the Tom Crean Business Centre), Dónal Mac an tsíthigh (Údarás na Gaeltachta), Tomás Hayes (Kerry Local Enterprise Office), Patricia Dowling (NEWKD), Brendan O'Donnell (IT Tralee), Noel Spillane (South Kerry Partnership) and Michael Scannell (Kerry County Council).

## Kerry is taking care of business

### Local enterprise backed by local support and expertise

**K**ERRY IS home to some of the most innovative businesses anywhere in Ireland, and entrepreneurs of all backgrounds have found success in the county - ranging in size from large multinational companies to small, local enterprises.

The county has a lot to celebrate during Local Enterprise Week - and throughout the entire year, including local entrepreneurs and the huge range of supports that are available in Kerry.

Organised by the Local Enterprise Office (LEO), Local Enterprise Week from March 2nd to 6th features a variety of events and initiatives designed to help new

and developing entrepreneurs plan, start or grow their own business in 2020.

Events across the county range from a Brexit Advice Clinic in Tralee to Start Your Own Business courses in Cahersiveen and Listowel, and events covering Human Resources and Employment Law as well as Digital Marketing and competitiveness strategies for

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises.

But in Kerry, support for local business continues through the entire year - because Kerry means business when it comes to helping local entrepreneurs reach their full potential.

This dedication to success is evident at all levels in the county. In February, for example, one of the county's best-known and most successful companies, Fexco, opened a new €21m Research and Development Facility in Killorglin, that will house a world-class centre for digital innovation - and create 305 jobs by 2024.

Meanwhile, signs of success are also evident in the many smaller start-ups

marking out their future in Kerry, from high-technology companies to artisan food businesses.

At the Tom Crean Centre in Tralee, for example, Ireland's national entrepreneur development programme - New Frontiers - is helping guide local companies on the road to business success in areas as diverse as e-commerce, internet searches, tabletop board games and hand-crafted furniture.

It's just one indication of the diversity of entrepreneurship in the county, as locals take advantage of the many supports and initiatives available.

Support from services like Enterprise Ireland, NEWKD, SKDP, Údarás

na Gaeltachta and Kerry County Council are helping make a real difference to entrepreneurship in the county.

These and other support organisations work year-round to support Kerry's business people with the services and supports, from grant assistance to mentorship and business advice.

Add in the huge base of graduates from the Institute of Technology, Tralee, as well as the research opportunities and abilities afforded by a locally-based third level education facility, and it's clear that during Local Enterprise Week - and all year, every year - Kerry is a county that always means business.

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KERRY LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE - KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL

# Making it happen for YOUR business

## Local Enterprise Office at the heart of start-ups and growth

KERRY COUNTY Council's Local Enterprise Office (LEO) is here to support business. Whether you are someone who has an idea that you would like to turn into a business or someone who wants to develop the business you already have, the LEO offers the support you need to succeed.

"The primary role of the Local Enterprise Office is to support the micro enterprise sector (businesses with one to ten employees) within the county, with the exception of the Gaeltacht where Údarás na Gaeltachta has the primary role," says the Head of the Local Enterprise Office, Tomás Hayes.

"A range of financial and other supports are available to businesses throughout their lifecycle, from pre-start-up to maturity."

The specific financial supports include feasibility grants for early stage research on a proposal, business priming grants for start-up businesses, business expansion grants and marketing assistance exports grants which can be used to fund attendance at overseas trade shows.

"Last year, the Kerry County Council LEO approved core funding to 33 projects in the county, amounting to €403,023," says Tomás Hayes.

"These funding approvals have the potential to create up to 84 full-time jobs."

The LEO administers a financial aid scheme called Online Trading Vouchers. This scheme involves businesses being given a voucher worth €2,500 to spend on developing or upgrading an e-commerce website.

"This is a busy scheme with strong interest, and we approved 57 vouchers to client businesses in 2019," says Tomás Hayes.

The LEO also provides business training here in Kerry. Its training initiatives include Business Start-Up programmes, Digital Marketing, LEAN initiatives, Brexit advice and more.

In 2019, it invested €295,000 on training within the county, with a total of 987 people attending its courses and workshops.

Its Food Academy programme is a particular success story.

Aimed at local food producers, it supported ten businesses in Kerry this year.

Other supports that are available from the LEO include mentoring and advice services and a schools' programme. The 2019/2020 schools' programme has already started with the county finals taking place this month.

The LEO supports ongoing initiatives including a Retail Programme in Killarney, a Brand Development workshop that will be run in the coming weeks, a series of Brexit clinics, a food network called Taste Kerry and a craft network called Original Kerry.

Its office also supports business participation in the likes of the National Ploughing Championship Enterprise Village and the national Craft Showcase Exhibition in the RDS.

It provides assistance to businesses securing microfinance



Head of the Local Enterprise Office Tomás Hayes

supports from Microfinance Ireland. These are loans up to a maximum of €25,000 over a negotiated repayment timeframe.

The staff at the LEO have one job to do and that's to help businesses in the county. "The small business sector is a vital component of our economy with people committed to generating employment and economic development in their local areas," says Tomás Hayes.

"The maintenance and growth of these businesses is essential

and our ambition as a support office is to see these businesses start, grow nationally and continue to grow internationally. Our office has strong linkages with other agencies, and we are fortunate in Kerry to have a strong network of support."

Find out what the LEO can do for you by visiting their office in the County Buildings in Rathass, Tralee or visiting their website at [www.localenterprise.ie/kerry](http://www.localenterprise.ie/kerry).

Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil  
Local Enterprise Office

Want to grow your business in Kerry?  
We're ready if you are!

At your **Local Enterprise Office (LEO)** you'll find a hub of expert advice, information and practical supports to help you with this next important step. And we're right here on your doorstep!

Tell us about your plans and we'll match you with the relevant services, resources and progression pathways to enable your business to grow and realise its full potential, and yours.

Visit [www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie) and let's talk business!



Antoinette Butler, Irish Host Family

Niall Harty, Origin Bars

Sabine Rosenhammer, Your Ireland Specialist

#localenterprise

### For further Information

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County Buildings, Rathass, Tralee

Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil Chiarraí

Local Enterprise Office Kerry





# KERRY LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE - KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL



Kerry Local Enterprise Office, l-r: Eilish O'Donoghue, Maria Daly, Victor Sheahan, Tomás Hayes, Conor Slattery and Bríd Bowler.

## Stephan's small business takes flight

STEPHAN DE Beer has turned his passion for birds into a viable business. Trading as Genesis Nest Boxes, he is now the biggest manufacturer of nest boxes for endangered birds in Ireland - and he exports his unique products to the UK and to five countries in the EU.

"My nest boxes are primarily for swifts and barn owls," says Stephan. "They are made out of magnesium oxide which is insured to the Irish weather."

Stephan started making these nest boxes in his garden shed. "It only measures eleven square metres so there wasn't much space," says Stephan.

"Then, in 2016, somebody told me to go to the Local Enterprise Office and they gave me a grant. There was one condition: I had to move out of my shed."

The financial support he received from the LEO allowed Stephan to move to new premises in Currow, where he now shares a building with D&E Electronics. It also allowed him buy two new machines and attend an exhibition in London.

The help he has received from the LEO hasn't only been financial.

"The staff at LEO have been looking



Stephan De Beer (Genesis Nest Boxes)

after me so well," he says.

"They have introduced me to great mentors who have helped me to grow my business to the extent that it's quadrupled in the space of a year."

"Thanks to them, I'm now building six swift towers for IRD Duhallow. These are seven metres off the ground and have 20 nests each. "I could never have made those without the help of LEO."

Stephan would urge anyone with either a business idea or an established business to approach the LEO for advice and support. "I have found dealing with them to be an absolute pleasure," he says. "I don't know where I would be without them."

For more information on Stephan De Beer's nest boxes, visit [www.genesis-nestboxes.ie](http://www.genesis-nestboxes.ie).

## The tools to make learning easier

MIKE GRIFFIN teaches people how to learn. His online educational company, [www.istudyskills.com](http://www.istudyskills.com), helps people with dyslexia, ADD and ADHD by teaching them the tools they need to learn.

"The company was born out of my own experience of going to school and university and never actually being taught how my brain works," says Mike. "I was told what to learn - but never really shown how."

He has since travelled to the US and the UK to train in advanced learning techniques and has now created an online video training course to help others understand how they learn best.

"Everyone's brain takes in information, digests it and makes sense of it in a different way," says Mike.

"Our video tutorials teach tools like mind mapping, memory techniques and advanced reading strategies."

"They also help you determine whether you are more left, right or



Mike Griffin ([www.istudyskills.com](http://www.istudyskills.com))

whole brain dominant and whether you are a visual, auditory or kinaesthetic learner."

These videos cover other important topics too. They teach people how to focus and concentrate and they also teach them how to unlearn negative and self-defeating attitude.

"The mind can slip into self-limiting thought patterns such as: 'I am not good enough' or 'This will never work out'," says Mike.

"It is extremely difficult to get any real work done while your mind is in this state."

"Our Learning to Unlearn videos teach a way out of this anxiety and stress."

Mike has found the Local Enterprise Office to be very supportive when it comes to developing his business.

"In every dealing I have had with them - whether it be the Online Trading Voucher or the Priming Grant - they have been extremely approachable, helpful and knowledgeable."

"They are a brilliant resource to have on your doorstep because I have been able to make sales in the US, Canada, Ireland, the UK and Australia as a result of the support I have received from them."

[www.istudyskills.com](http://www.istudyskills.com)

## David rolls the dice on board games

THE LOCAL Enterprise Office helped David Lyons turn his dream into a reality. That dream started when he was working with an uncommunicative group of young people.

"I was struggling to get them to talk because they were all different ages and from different places," he says.

"I was watching an episode of the Apprentice where they were asked to make a board game and I decided to try designing one."

"I brought it in to the group for them to try. They loved it and it got them talking. I realised I had a product that could really go somewhere."

That product was Marathon-X, a table-top dice-based board game that is now for sale in World of Wonder, Toymaster and independent toy shops throughout the country.

"I couldn't have done it without LEO," says



David Lyons with his board game, Marathon-X

David. "I knew nothing about business, but I knew I had a good product. They set me up on a Start Your Own Business programme and gave me mentoring and funding. Basically, they showed me how possible it was."

That was two years ago, and a lot has happened since. David now trades as Rawmation Board Games.

His future plans include building on these connections, bringing out Marathon-X Junior and developing more exciting games.

For more information about Rawmation games, visit [www.marathonx.ie](http://www.marathonx.ie).

## Elite becomes market leader

OLIVER KIRWIN founded Elite Event Management eight years ago and it has now grown to become the biggest mass participation sports management company in Ireland.

"What we do is organise and manage large-scale sporting events," says Oliver.

"We run the likes of the Quest Adventure series here in Ireland and the UK."

The company now employs nine full-time staff and last year, a total of 25,000 people took part in its events.

Oliver believes that the



Oliver Kirwin (Elite Event Management)

Local Enterprise Office has played a vital role in Elite Event Management's success to date.

"We did a LEAN management programme with them," he says. "They also helped us to take on new staff and through their advice and mentorship, they gave us the confidence we needed to expand from start-up stage to become market leaders."

Elite Event Management are currently focussing on growing their share of the market and expanding into the UK.

"We already organise and manage one event in Wales, and we hope to have two more events in the UK next year," says Oliver.

For more information on Elite Event Management, see [www.runkillarney.com/about-us](http://www.runkillarney.com/about-us).

## Big demand for desirable desserts

JESSICA CLINTON and Mícheál Lenihan set up their business, Ballyhar Foods, to fill a gap in the market four years ago. As chefs with over 15 years of experience, the pair realised there was a need for wholesale luxury and bespoke desserts and that they had the skills to make them.

"We started our wholesale bakery business making desserts for restaurants and hotels in 2012," says Jessica.

"We have now moved to a bigger unit in the Kerry Food Hub in Fries and more space means that we can also make gluten-free and vegan desserts."

In the process, they have also taken on three members of staff and intend to take on a sixth in the summer.

There is a big demand for their service. "Lots of kitchens don't have the space to produce desserts on site but they have recipes for desserts that they would like to offer their customers," says Jessica.

Ballyhar Foods have won numerous awards for their products, including a Blas na hÉireann gold award for their gluten-free brownies. They were also a Kerry Enterprise Board finalist for Business of the Year in 2016.

Jessica credits the Local Enterprise Board with a lot of the business' success.



Jessica Clinton, Mícheál Lenihan and Orla Salvador (Ballyhar Foods, Fries Food Hub, Fries)

"We have received so much help from them," she says. "When we first approached them a year-and-a-half into the business, we were on the verge of closing down, but they changed everything for us."

"They provided us with financial assistance, mentoring and the knowledge that we needed to grow and expand."

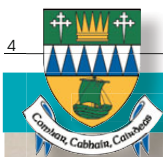
The advice they have received from the LEO has made such a difference to the success of Ballyhar Foods.

"They've supported us with everything from labelling and marketing to paperwork and scaling up," says Jessica.

"They've even put us up for awards. When you don't know where to go or what to do, they can help and we're so thankful to them for that."

For more information on the products and services offered by Ballyhar Foods, visit their Facebook page.





## KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL



Mayor of Kerry Niall Kelleher and Moira Murrell (Chief Executive, Kerry County Council)

# Driving innovation and growth

## Kerry County Council - transforming a modern rural county

**KERRY IS** a rural county which is continuing to be transformed into a modern, ambitious, vibrant and outward-looking county.

Home to several internationally-known companies, thousands of small and medium enterprises, and vibrant rural communities, Kerry has become a county renowned for research and innovation, sustainable development, cross-agency collaboration, and is a great place in which to live, work and invest.

In collaboration with stakeholders and communities, Kerry County Council is leading the economic, social, cultural and infrastructural development of Kerry through a range of services, facilities,

supports and innovations.

The Research Development and Innovation Hub supported by Kerry County Council, Institute of Technology Tralee, FEXCO and Enterprise Ireland was opened on 5th February 2020.

The Hub has been established as a not-for-profit public private partnership and provides the county with an international quality high performance training and innovation Hub, which has the qualities to attract interest from across the country and abroad. The facility significantly

enhances the reputation of the county as a centre of excellence in innovation.

The Agritech Centre of Excellence is being developed and is a collaboration with the Institute of Technology, Tralee, Kerry County Council, and the leading AgriTech companies in the country, including Dairymaster based in Causeway.

Rural development is being driven by the establishment of digital hubs and co-working spaces in regional centres, supporting the development of start-ups and home working opportunities, all aimed at keeping jobs and families living in their localities and encouraging people to return to or move to Kerry. In economic and innovations hubs in locations such as Sneem, Dingle and Castleisland, facilities are provided for entrepreneurs and businesses to develop

and grow.

The development of Food Hubs and associated businesses in the county continues to be a priority for the region. The Listowel Food Hub project will deliver a Food Hub with five state-of-the-art food production units and a research and development suite.

The project will strengthen and build sustainable food production in the region and drive entrepreneurship and enterprise development.

The Kerry Food Hub in Fírires will see six additional units created, while facilitating new jobs and opportunities. The project also involves the development of an online e-commerce artisan marketplace.

Towns and villages are being supported with research-based Health Checks and socio-economic plans which identify strengths and opportunities.



Michael Scannell (Director of Economic Development, Kerry County Council)



Bridget Fitzgerald (Economic Development Officer, Kerry County Council)



Niamh O'Sullivan (Head of Community Department, Kerry County Council)

## New initiatives, new growth

**KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL is driving economic development and growth through new initiatives, including:**

### Skellig CRI:

The Skellig Centre for Research and Innovation is a unique partnership between Kerry County Council, University College Cork and South Kerry Development Partnership and has provided training and upskilling from its base in Cahersiveen.

The UCC Certificate in Practice Support in Social Farming was launched in 2019. The one-year programme will provide students with the skills to work with people with disability both on social farms and in a community setting.

### Kerry SciTech:

Kerry SciTech which is a not-for-profit organisation led by industry and supported by IT Tralee and Kerry County Council.

Based at the Tom Crean Business Centre at the IT Tralee North Campus, the primary aim of Kerry SciTech is to promote and highlight Kerry as a science and technology hotspot. Kerry SciTech continues to grow its member companies.

### Atlantic Economic Corridor:

Kerry County Council's Atlantic Economic Officer continues to work with other counties and agencies in connecting economic clusters along the western seaboard, support job creation and improve quality of life. The Department of Rural and Community Development have initiated a three-year project to develop a network of enterprise hubs identified along the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC).

The project will include the development of a 'hub strategy' along three pillars: Infrastructure, Community Network and Marketing and Promotion. There has been extensive consultation with the enterprise hubs and local authorities along the Corridor.

### Prosper Kerry Series:

The Prosper Series initiative involves Kerry County Council, the Guinness Enterprise Centre in Dublin, Institute of Technology Tralee and Enterprise Ireland, and is aimed at engaging with the Kerry Diaspora.

A number of events were held in Dublin and Kerry in 2019 and further networking opportunities are being developed in 2020.

The Prosper Kerry Series provides an opportunity for local businesses to engage with Kerry's business diaspora to enhance prosperity in Kerry through co-operation, knowledge sharing, creativity, inspiration and a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem.

### 'Joining The Dots' Economic Conference:

The 'Joining The Dots' Economic Conference in conjunction with the British Embassy will be held on the 25th of March 2020 in the Ballygarry House Hotel.

The conference will provide an opportunity to showcase the county as an attractive location in which to work and invest and will highlight opportunities for further engagement with the Kerry Diaspora. It will also provide linkages between Kerry and UK-based businesses.

## Council's plan for a digital future

**Kerry County Council is at an advanced stage in producing a Digital Strategy for the county.**

This will see objectives set out and actions planned under six pillars, covering Digital Infrastructure, Connected Communities, Citizens Digital and Skills, Digital Council, Digital Public Services and Digital Enterprise and Employment.

Developing a Smart Kerry brand will be an objective to ensure the county has a reputation as an innovative, agile and technologically advanced location.

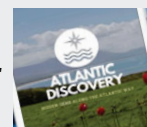
In 2020, the Smart Kerry programme will see the development of Community Hubs around the county, the rollout of free public wifi services in many of our towns, the development of Tourism Apps and initiatives and continuing the upskilling of our traditional small and family businesses and new businesses to interact and transact online and to the Council using innovative sourcing to meet a variety of challenges.

### Have you discovered

#### the Atlantic Discovery App?

Developed by Kerry County Council, the Atlantic Discovery App includes location-specific information and will enable visitors to plan their route while encouraging them to stop and explore local areas along the Wild Atlantic Way, which will benefit the local economy.

The current pilot area is North Kerry, covering the route from Tarbert to Tralee. The Atlantic Discovery App is available from Google Play Store and iTunes.





## DIGITAL HUBS

# Connecting Dingle's digital potential

**Creativity and Innovation Hub links Dingle with high-skills capacity**

THE DINGLE Creativity and Innovation Hub (DCIH) was established in 2017 with the aim of building a sustainable entrepreneurial community that would facilitate the creation of permanent year-round well-paid jobs on the Dingle Peninsula.

"We wanted to create an environment that would encourage people to start businesses or bring their jobs to Dingle with them to work remotely from here," says the DCIH Manager Deirdre de Bhailís.

They have done that by focusing on three different sectors that have the potential to create employment on the peninsula. "The first of these is environmental and energy sustainability," says Deirdre. "This is a huge growth area with considerable employment and future funding opportunities."

A Dingle Sustainable Energy Community has been set up in the Hub to facilitate energy efficiency projects.

The ESB Networks Dingle Project is based at the Hub, from where it works closely with the community to explore energy efficiency measures that will help us all to move towards a low carbon future.

The DCIH has run a Community Energy Mentor training course in partnership with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, training people to support those who are planning energy retrofits of their premises and homes.

A plan is also in place to roll out a programme called 'Activating the Energy Citizen' started on Feb 13th with a launch in Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne. This was the first in a range of awareness, engagement, education and support events and activities that will take place in 2020.

Other projects are underway too. A feasibility study on anaerobic digestion for the Dingle Peninsula will be completed by May.

A pilot Farm Ambassador Programme to help guide sustainable agriculture on the peninsula has started.

There's also the Dingle Peninsula 2030 project, which focuses on initiatives relating to energy,

transport, agriculture, tourism and the marine in a low-carbon society.

"There's a lot happening in the energy efficiency and sustainability sector in the Hub," says Deirdre de Bhailís.

The second sector that the DCIH has focused on is digital transformation.

"This includes data analytics, information communication technology, the internet of things, agritech and software development," says Deirdre.

The third is the creative sector and filmmaking in particular.

"We have a strong network of filmmakers on the peninsula and we want to support them in growing and developing

more locally-based projects," says Deirdre.

The DCIH has succeeded in building a network of over 31 filmmakers in the peninsula. The DCIH has delivered tailored business development workshops for the creative industries sector.

"From this, one business, [www.dinglebladesmith.ie](http://www.dinglebladesmith.ie), was launched last October during the Food Festival, six more businesses are ready to progress to funding application stage and five additional businesses have been identified for further mentoring," says Deirdre.

A Young Animation Group has been established and has already realised a short animated film. A 12-week series of film workshops

Deirdre de Bhailís (manager, Dingle Hub) with Robert O'Neill (Inteer-RKO), Rory McKeown (World Health Organisation), Des Ennis (Graphical Financial Analysis), Grainne Keegan (producer, Gorongosa Media), Tor Cotton (director, Comórtas-Fisín), Deanna O'Connor (freelance editor and founder of the Speak Up Club) and Maggie Breen (Dingle Hub).

has been run for aspiring filmmakers to expand their knowledge of filmmaking and analysis.

"We have also just learned that one of our filmmakers, Gorongosa Media, have been named as finalists for the World Wildlife Day 2020 Film Showcase at the United Nations," says Deirdre.

All of this and more is happening at the DCIH. "That's in addition to our physical space and facilities," says Deirdre. "We offer hot desks, the long-term desk space and private offices as well as 1Gigabit broadband

that comes as standard with many innovation centres today, but we also have something else here in Dingle. We have an established network of people working in energy and sustainability, in digital transformation and in the creative industries. There's a lot happening here and there is so much potential to exchange and explore ideas."

For more information, visit [www.dinglehub.com](http://www.dinglehub.com) or call 066 9150140.



## State-of-the-art in Sneem

**Digital Hub offers attractive options for South Kerry living**

SNEEM DIGITAL Hub is a not-for-profit, volunteer-driven initiative aimed at tackling rural depopulation by attracting jobs and people to the village and surrounding areas.

"It opened, following four years of dedicated effort, last April and it could not have done so without the invaluable support and assistance of Enterprise Ireland, the Department of Rural and Community Development, South Kerry Development Partnership, Kerry County Council and the IDA, along with ultra-generous private donors and volunteers," says manager Aidan Murray.

The hub is now a state-of-the-art facility offering a bright and airy working environment with 1Gb fibre broadband, a video conferencing room, capacity for over 40 desks, air conditioning and a flexible infrastructure to meet client needs.

"Whether you want a flexible and affordable base for your business, a satellite office for a company, a distraction-free en-

vironment from which you can work remotely, or the capacity to extend your weekend with your holidaying family by working in the hub on a Friday and Monday, the Sneem Digital Hub can cater for your needs at affordable rates," says Aidan.

The hub currently has four companies who are interested in setting up satellite offices there, subject to identifying the right candidates to meet their needs.

"The complexity of these needs is such that the most crucial element for the success of the hub is to have as many as possible professionals who work in roles suitable for remote working on our skills register, particularly in the tech space," says Aidan.

The hub is currently looking for these professionals.

"If you know of anyone working in tech who might be inter-

ested in moving to Kerry, please ask them to visit [www.sneemdigitalhub.ie](http://www.sneemdigitalhub.ie) where they can find out more, sign our skills register or peruse the jobs on our careers page," says Aidan.

There are many reasons why such professionals might be tempted to move to Sneem.

"Take the cost of living and accommodation for example," says Aidan. "A few months ago, I met a couple paying a monthly rent of €2,200 for a two-bed apartment in Dublin. That same week, I had been looking at a six-bed house directly overlooking the ocean for €700 a month."

"The savings in rent alone would amount to the equivalent of a €36,000 pay rise for this couple. Do you know of anybody who might be interested in that sort of extra space and extra money in their pockets?"

Health and quality of life are two other important priorities for people. "Can you think of people - maybe currently living in cities - who would benefit from swapping their two-hour-long return commute for being on the beach with their loved ones 15 minutes after finishing work," asks Aidan.



"Or hiking in the mountains or woods, kayaking in the sea or playing a round of golf? The physical, mental and emotional benefits of such a change are incalculable."

There are other advantages to living and working in Sneem too. There is one teacher for every 15 pupils in the local high-performing schools. There are lots of clubs, societies, res-

Aidan Murray (manager of the Sneem Digital Hub)

taurants, bars and hotels in the local area as well as a friendly community.

"At the moment, we have a particular need for tech people in roles such as software development (especially .net); AWS Senior DevOps and Automation Engineers (AWS and Python); project and service operations coordinators; data, SysOps, solu-

tions, support, cloud or DevOps engineers; security administrators and consultants and service desk experts," says Aidan.

"These jobs will only come to Kerry if we can get the best candidates for them so if you know anyone who might be interested in the above, please share this information with them."



## ÚDARÁS NA GAELTACHTA

# Creating new employment opportunities in the Gaeltacht

## Gteic digital hubs laying the foundations for future growth

ÚDARÁS NA Gaeltachta is celebrating 40 years of investment in Ireland's Gaeltacht areas in 2020. Here in Kerry, it's looking strategically to the future with a view to making sure that the county offers the best possible conditions for employment creation.

2019 was a positive year for the organisation, with 695 people employed in full-time positions in Údarás na Gaeltachta client companies in Kerry by the end of the year. Some 53 of those positions were new ones. These jobs were created in companies that are primarily operating in the food and drink and tourism

sectors.

The figures for 2020 already look good. A number of projects have already been approved that will see 27 new jobs created in the Kerry Gaeltacht and a total investment of €1.9million when the projects are brought to fruition.

These proposed projects are in the food and drink,

tourism and information technology sectors.

Údarás encourages investment in the Gaeltacht through a range of financial and non-financial incentives for both new and existing enterprises in the region.

Gaeltacht companies span a range of commercial sectors, including life sciences, ICT, tourism, fish processing and aquaculture, renewable energy, food, niche manufacturing, audio visual and digital media and arts and crafts.

Údarás supports these companies in developing new markets, technologies, products and strategic alliances through research and development.

Some of the major projects Údarás is currently



Gaeltacht in hÉireann: Acclaimed Irish potter Louis Mulcahy with his son Lassa Mulcahy based at Clochar, Baile 'n Fheirtearaigh, Co. Kerry. Creates an expansive range of ceramic giftware and tableware, all made on site, from tiny pots to huge urns, in striking glazes reflecting the rich colours of the Dingle Peninsula.

involved include Sean Ospideál an Daingin. The Údarás secured funding of €415,000 from the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund to develop a masterplan for the future of the old Dingle Hospital. A project manager was appointed in December 2019.

Tascfhórsa Uíbh Ráthaigh is another significant venture. This taskforce is an inter-agency organisation that is focusing on the socio-economic and population challenges of the Iveragh Gaeltacht. Grant aid has been approved to cover the cost of a project manager and associated costs.

Another strategic project is the design and devel-

opment of a new community, sporting and educational facility in Baile an Fheirtearaigh which is expected to progress to a planning stage in 2020. This project, funded by both Údarás and the Rural Regeneration Development Fund, is being developed on an Údarás na Gaeltachta site in partnership with Comharchumann Forbartha Chorca Dhuibhne Teo, a highly successful Gaeltacht development co-operative.

Údarás has also started to develop a Gteic digital hub network within the counties. A unit with space for six workers was opened in Ballinskelligs recently and it's currently occupied by two workers.

Another unit was opened in Dingle at the end of the year. It can accommodate 18 workers and it's being used by five at the moment.

Dónal Ó Liatháin, Regional Manager of Údarás na Gaeltachta, is looking forward to building on these achievements in the year to come.

"The numbers of people in Údarás client companies in the Kerry Gaeltacht are as continue to rise and we have laid the foundations to build on that with the introduction of the Gteic

digital hub network," he says.

"These hubs will help to diversify and strengthen the employment base in the region by providing suitable business accommodation for those involved in the technology sectors as well as providing remote working opportunities.

"There are now 11 Gteic hubs operational in the Gaeltacht nationally, providing a total of 250 desk spaces, a 100% increase on 2018, and more are expected in 2020."

## A taste for adventure

### Skelligs Chocolates enjoys taking on challenges

A SENSE of adventure led Colm Healy to take over Skelligs Chocolate. Colm moved back to Ireland in 2004, having been in Asia and Australia for five years. While he was visiting his sister in Cahersiveen, she happened to mention that the chocolate factory was for sale.

"I'm always looking for a new challenge, so I went to visit it," says Colm. "I signed on the dotted line 45 days later."

Over the next five years, Colm learned how to make chocolate and got to know his existing customer base. Then, he started to develop new products and increase the number of shops that stocked his products.

2010 was a challenging year. Having expanded the premises by 50%, the building was destroyed by fire months later.

Things took a turn for the better in 2012. A new 7,500 square foot custom-built open-plan factory was opened to the public and since then, the business has continued to grow.

"We now employ 23 people in a combination of full-time, part-time and seasonal roles," says Colm. "We sell handmade artisan chocolate truffles and bars in an ever-evolving array of flavours."

"Visitors can see the chocolate-making process up close. Our café serving signature hot chocolates and a selection of handmade cakes and desserts is open from Easter until the



Colm Healy of Skelligs Chocolates

end of September.

"And last year, we had more than 75,000 visitors from as far away as China, Japan, Australia and New Zealand."

Údarás na Gaeltachta have been helpful to Colm throughout this process.

"Our new factory would not have been possible without the help and support of locals, staff and the Údarás who offered moral support as well as financial support when it was dearly needed," he says.

"The Údarás has been very responsive to requests for assistance for both specific talent hires and capital funding for equipment."

"There has also been the sense of security of knowing there is someone there to listen when experience is needed."



Diaglóin Uisce Beatha Dhaingean Uí Chlúis (Dingle Whiskey Distillery)



### Branda – Gaeltacht na hÉireann

Reigiún cruthaitheach briomhar é an Gaeltacht ó thaobh teanga, stair, cultúr, fiontraíocht, daoine agus tírdhreach de.

Tá branda nua faoi leith forbartha ag Údarás na Gaeltachta le húsáid chun iontais an réigiúin seo a chur chun cinn. Breis eolais ar shuíomh an Údarás, [www.udaras.ie](http://www.udaras.ie).

### The 'Gaeltacht na hÉireann' Brand

The Gaeltacht is a vibrant and creative region unique in its language, history, culture, people and landscape.

Údarás na Gaeltachta has developed a unique brand that can be used to promote this excellence to the wider world. For further information, visit the Údarás website, [www.udaras.ie](http://www.udaras.ie).

[eolas@udaras.ie](mailto:eolas@udaras.ie)



[www.udaras.ie](http://www.udaras.ie)



# Celebrating ten years of enterprise success

## NEWKD marks milestone in advancing local communities

NEWKD RECENTLY celebrated ten years of supporting enterprise and community ventures in the north, east and west of Kerry.

Delivering a wide range of supports to individuals and communities, NEWKD prides itself on the support it has got from, and given to, its local area over the past decade.

"We offer a full range of supports to entrepreneurs in our catchment area, both rural and urban," says Eamonn O'Reilly, the Chief Executive Officer for NEWKD.

"We are here to help everyone from start-ups through to those who want to expand their business. If you have a business idea and you need help in moving it to the next level, NEWKD is here to support you."

One of the main ways it does this is through the administration of the LEADER Rural Development Programme. In 2019, €420,188 was allocated to 24 enterprises to enhance their business.

This isn't all that NEWKD does. It also delivers a wide range of European and National Programmes that are designed to enhance the geographic area and improve the quality of life for all people living in the region.

Through its Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP), it supports 62 community and voluntary groups on an annual basis.

It helps them with skills development, capacity building, financial and non-financial grants and community development initiatives.

NEWKD's SICAP programme also supports 35

social enterprises; 150 local, regional and national collaborations and 690 individuals who have been assisted in upskilling, personal development or setting up their own business.

The Tús Community Work Placement Programme and the Rural Social Scheme (RSS) are administered by NEWKD. Last year, 120 individuals completed a 12-month job placement through the former programme, enhancing their job readiness skills.

A total of 84 community and voluntary groups were supported through these work placements.

The RSS supported 95 farmers and fishermen in engaging in off-farm services in their local communities and 70 community and voluntary groups were supported through this.

NEWKD runs the Tralee Local Employment Service and the Listowel Jobs Club. In Tralee, 700 individuals were supported in upskilling, retraining, career planning, CV preparation and improving their interview techniques last year. In Listowel, 120 individuals undertook four-week Jobs Club training to support their re-entry into the labour market.

NEWKD also runs an employment programme that's directed at women re-entering the jobs market after having taken time out to care for children or family members. Since it was set up in 2017, the Moving On programme has provided training and support to almost 200 women.



The staff at NEWKD are always interested in hearing from local businesses, community groups and voluntary organisations that are in need of advice and support.

It has offices in the Island Point Industrial Estate in Castleisland, in William Street in Listowel, at Áras an Phobail in Dean's Lane in Tralee and in Cooleen Business Centre in Dingle and North Circular Road, Tralee.

For more information, email [info@newkd.ie](mailto:info@newkd.ie) or visit [www.newkd.ie](http://www.newkd.ie).

Steve Moore (Tús Supervisor), Rena Blake (Kerry Social Farming), Eamonn O'Reilly (CEO, NEWKD), Lorraine Bowler (Community Development), NEWKD and Patricia Dowling (Coordinator, NEWKD)

### North Kerry Home Maintenance Service

provides a low cost maintenance and minor repair service which is targeted specifically at the older community of North Kerry, making home repairs affordable.

**We assist people** to make the necessary repairs, improvements or adaptation in the home. Our service aims to help a person stay in the home.

**We complete the everyday smaller jobs around the home & garden including...**



- ✓ Small interior & exterior painting jobs
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- ✓ Cleaning Gutters, Grass Cutting & Strimming
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**WE CAN HELP MAINTAIN YOUR HOME IN A WAY YOU WOULD LIKE**

**Call us now on**  
**068 23429 / 087 377 6724**



## Tralee Local Employment Service

Tralee Local Employment Service is a free, friendly and confidential service, which provides a range of supports to enable jobseekers secure employment.

We act as a gateway or access point to the full range of opportunities which are available to jobseekers, to enter / re-enter the labour market.

The LES aims to meet the needs of each individual client and the local environment within which they operate.

An Boinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta agus Coimirce Sóisialaí  
Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection



**Tralee Local Employment Service,**  
Unit 1 & 2 North Circular Road, Tralee, Co Kerry,  
Tel: 066 7129675  
[www.traleeles.ie](http://www.traleeles.ie)



Patricia Dowling (Coordinator, NEWKD), Kieran Barry (Area Manager, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection) and Elaine McKenna (Coordinator, Tralee Local Employment Service).



# Kerry women Moving On towards bright future

Moving On programme coordinator Lisa Fingleton



ARE YOU AN  
EMPLOYER  
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We offer a FREE  
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To find out more contact Lisa O'Flaherty on:

087 764 7446

lisaoflaherty@newkd.ie

NEWKD  
Employment Programme for Women

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN

We look forward  
to hearing  
from you

## Matching businesses with women returning to the workplace

KERRY WOMEN mean business. Moving On is an exciting employment programme for women in the county, matching businesses with women who want to return to work outside of the home.

According to the latest figures from the Central Statistics Office, there were 445,000 women working in the home in Ireland in 2016. When these women return to work, they bring skills such as reliability, flexibility, teamwork and problem solving with them.

Moving On helps them to return to work by providing them with free training, support and contacts with enterprise.

Since it began in September 2017, almost 200 women have participated in the programme and over 60 of those have found work with local businesses here in Kerry.

The Moving On programme is coordinated by

Lisa Fingleton and Lisa O'Flaherty. Both have extensive experience in supporting women and linking with businesses and employers.

"The programme is going from strength to strength and the response from businesses has been fantastic," says Lisa Fingleton.

"They are realising the benefits of being more flexible with their hours and offering part-time work options. By doing this, they are tapping into a huge resource of skilled workers - women who took time out to care for children or other family members and are now ready and committed to returning to work."

According to Fingleton,

80% of the jobs women have found so far have been found through networking. "Employers often ring us, describe the skills they need, and we try to match them up with the best person," she says.

The training women receive as part of the Moving On programme includes the opportunity to upskill in computers with the IT Tralee and the Kerry Education and Training Board. This gives graduates of the programme strong administration and office skills that they can offer to prospective employers.

The programme also offers a mentoring scheme as well as lots of different talks.

"Employment Support Worker Shelia Martin is currently organising talks in the area of retail and office work," says Lisa Fingleton.

"We've also run an 'Inspiring Women' series of talks given by influential and enthusiastic women in business and the community, covering topics from climate change and dressing to impress to creative women and mental health."

A significant number of graduates are interested in setting up their own business.

"We support them in doing this by helping them access Start Your Own Business courses and getting them to work collaboratively with other agencies and organisations," says Lisa Fingleton. "Some of our graduates have set up eco-tourism initiatives."

"Others have established businesses upcycling clothing. Just last week, one of our graduates launched a book."

Moving On is particularly interested in supporting the social, economic and creative infrastructure of the Kerry region with a view to long-term employment and sustainability in

food production, creative and cultural projects, tourism and Wild Atlantic Way initiatives, environmental and energy projects, social and community enterprise and small local businesses and start-ups.

"We are thinking of ways in which women can create sustainable jobs that will benefit the rural economy and environment for the next 20 or 30 years," says Lisa Fingleton.

This project is supported by the Irish Government and the European Social Fund as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2022.

"We are currently fully booked for this year and will be recruiting for participants again at the end of this year," says Lisa Fingleton.

For further information, contact Lisa at [lisaoflaherty@newkd.ie](mailto:lisaoflaherty@newkd.ie), follow @movingonkerry on Twitter or visit [www.newkd.net/moving-on-project](http://www.newkd.net/moving-on-project).

## Kingdom Furniture Revamp

NEWKD,  
Main St., Castleisland, Co. Kerry.  
Tel: 066 714 2576 Email: [info@newkd.ie](mailto:info@newkd.ie)



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Redesign!

Kerry's leading furniture upcycling project and retailer, specialising in the sale and renewing of home furnishings including sofas, units, TV Stands, sideboards, wardrobes and much more.

Revamp is a NOT FOR PROFIT Community Service.

Our main objectives are to supply and upcycle quality products at competitive prices whilst providing our customers with excellent levels of service and support. Something you are finished with can be revamped and passed on to a new home, saving it from landfill.

Revamp Project: NEWKD  
Lower Main St., Castleisland, Co. Kerry.  
Phone: 066 714 2576  
Email: [info@newkd.ie](mailto:info@newkd.ie)



## FREE PRE EMPLOYMENT SKILLS AT Listowel Jobs Club

NEED ASSISTANCE & SUPPORT  
WITH APPLYING FOR A JOB?

If, so we can provide skills training,  
CV preparation, digital support and on line  
applying etc.

Dates of skills training sessions

**Ballybunion**  
16.03.2020 to 10.04.2020 4 Weeks

**Tarbert/Moyvane**  
20.04.2020 to 15.05.2020 4 Weeks

**Ballylongford/Asdee**  
25.05.2020 to 15.06.2020 4 Weeks

**Listowel**  
29.06.2020 to 24.07.2020 4 Weeks

All workshop start dates/weeks and location  
subject to numbers and area needs

Expense Allowance €20 paid to every participant  
per week

To book a place or find out more information  
about these sessions please contact: 068 24981

Tina O'Connor [tinaoconnor@newkd.ie](mailto:tinaoconnor@newkd.ie)  
Sandra Noel [sandranoel@newkd.ie](mailto:sandranoel@newkd.ie)

OR  
Find us on Facebook @Listowel Jobs Club  
Location: 20 Upper William Street Listowel  
(The Old Post Office)



## Enterprise Supports

- LEADER Programme
- Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)
- Back to Work Enterprise Allowance (BTWEA)



FOR FURTHER  
INFORMATION  
CONTACT



Sean Linnane,  
LEADER  
066-7142576



Eibhlís Hanrahan,  
SICAP  
068-23429





## Supporting our senior citizens in Ballybunion

**NEWKD SUPPORTS** the Ballybunion Senior Citizens Group in providing much-needed services to the elderly.

"We have a day care centre that opens on Tuesdays and Thursdays and the Kerry Flyer, which provides accessible transport to the people of North Kerry, picks people up and brings them in to Ballybunion from Asdee, Ballylongford and Ballydonoghue," says Con McCarthy of the Ballybunion Senior Citizens Group.

When they arrive at the centre, a day of activities and entertainment is arranged for them.

They do chair exercises to keep fit and enjoy games and activities such as music and meeting Transition Year students from the local school to swap stories about their lives," says Con.

"They also get given a hot home-cooked lunch and are brought home again before dark."

Other services offered by the Ballybunion Senior Citizens Group include an annual Christmas party for all of the area's elderly population and a twice-weekly meals on wheels delivery.

Ballybunion Senior Citizens Peggy Creed, Kathleen Brady, Catherine and Margaret Barry enjoying the afternoon in the Towers Friendship and Respite Centre in Ballybunion.

"These meals are delivered by a van owned by NEWKD and driven by someone employed by the NEWKD RSS scheme," says Con.

"They make sure that everyone who receives the meals has a microwave with which to heat them and knows how to use that microwave properly."

Con McCarthy and the team behind the Ballybunion Senior Citizens Group are grateful to NEWKD for their ongoing support.

"They allow us to look after the elderly in our local population," he says. "They are always so helpful and try to do everything they can to support us."



Staff at the Ballyheigue Community Centre Theresa Burkett and Caroline Casey with (in front) Joanne Leen.

## At the heart of Ballyheigue

**BALLYHEIGUE COMMUNITY** Centre is at the heart of life in the village. It's open from 9am to 10pm from Monday to Friday and provides a wide range of services to its local community during that time.

"We've got a meals on wheels service that delivers 60 meals to people living in Ballyheigue and in surrounding areas as far away as Causeway and Ardfert," says the manager of the community centre, Joanne Leen.

"This is a service that is open to everyone and we always welcome new clients." Ballybunion Community Centre operates as a day-care facility on Wednesdays. "Members of the local retired community come to the centre on that day and enjoy a lunch and some organised activities," says Joanne.

This isn't all that happens in the centre either. Ballyheigue Community Centre has its own laundry, which

offers special discounted rates to old age pensioners and commercial rates to other customers.

There's a gym which is regularly used by locals. There's a hall which hosts a series of weekly classes including pilates, fitness and yoga.

Meeting rooms are available for use by local groups and organisations.

"The Ballyheigue Community Centre is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year and we're glad to say that it's being used more than ever," says Joanne. "We'd like to thank NEWKD for the help they gave us with facilitating our grant application process. It was greatly appreciated."

## Reviving Cloghane and Brandon



Gearóid Ó Cathasaigh, Gina Overy and Caitríona Ní Churraín inside Siopa an Phobail in Cloghane Brandon.

**THE VILLAGES** of Brandon and Cloghane were dealt a blow when their local shops and post offices closed a decade ago. It seemed as if the people of the area would be left without much-needed services.

"The nearest shops in Dingle and Castlegregory are very far away if all you need is a carton of milk," says Gina Overy, who now manages Siopa an Phobail, the community shop that was set up in response to the problem.

In 2011, some members of the community together with the local development group Comharchumann Forbartha an Leith Triúigh decided that the area needed a shop and Siopa an Phobail was opened.

It's located in Cloghane Village and at the beginning was staffed by volunteers. "We are pleased to say that it now pays for its own staffing and is open for 70 hours

a week," says Gina.

Not only does it sell all of the necessities that are needed by local people, it also functions as a place for them to get together.

"We often host coffee mornings and charity events," says Gina. "The shop is a great place to meet your neighbours and have a chat."

A variety of organisations were involved in covering the initial costs of the shop and NEWKD was one. "They have been a fantastic support to a rural social enterprise such as ours," says Gina. "Just recently, they gave us a grant to buy new refrigeration for the shop and we're very grateful."

## Centre provides essential services



Michelle Walmsley, Cathy Scanlon and James Hussey at Cumann Iosaef Community Centre in Tralee on Tuesday.

**CUMANN IOSAEF** in Balloonagh in Tralee is a community centre and sports hall with a difference. It's a centre that offers a huge number of essential services to its local community.

The sports hall is a valuable resource within the centre. It's made up of a soccer pitch and two basketball courts that can be used si-

multaneously.

A crèche, playgroup and after-school services are offered at Cumann Iosaef too. The afterschool service

offers a pick-up service from local schools for children in junior and senior infant classes.

There's the Cúnamh Action community employment project, which provides painting, cleaning and gardening services for the elderly and low-income households in the Tralee area.

There's the Tralee Jobs Club. This offers support to jobseekers in Tralee and the surrounding areas.

The Sharing and Caring Community Employment Project is based at Cumann Iosaef. So is the Kingdom Voluntary Housing Association, Tralee Community Care and Action and Tralee Together Special Olympics Club.

The meeting rooms in the hall are also used by smaller groups to provide classes in fitness and education as well as by local residents to hold monthly meetings.

## Building inclusivity in Tralee

**THE TRALEE** International Resource Centre is a welcoming place. Located in Saint Patrick's Bungalows, it offers support for asylum seekers, refugees and members of the international community in the town.

"We have a drop-in centre here from Monday to Thursday," says Mary Carroll, the coordinator of the centre.

"People call to us to ask us all sorts of questions such as where to go for social welfare services, how to find housing and how to become citizens." Answers to questions aren't the only things that people will find at the Tralee International Resource Centre. English classes are taught here throughout the week, while smaller practice sessions take place too.

"We host women's groups, parent and toddler groups and an international friends' group," says Mary.

"Our mission is to help build an inclusive community where everybody is



At the Tralee International Resource Centre in Boherbee, were Mary and Brogan O'Sullivan and Bimpe Obadina with (in front) Mary Carroll.

integrated and accepted."

NEWKD plays an important role in this. "They have been great to us," says Mary. "They come to our board meetings and help us to plan groups and events. They offer advice and support when we need it."

The organisation has helped with providing funding too.

"They have provided financial assistance in running the drop-in centre," says Mary.

"They have also helped us

to set up a new social enterprise from our new kitchen. We have been running a pop up café there for a while and now we want to expand into offering catering services.

"It will be a way for us to provide training to asylum seekers. If they have HACCP certification, they will be more likely to get work."

Last but not least, NEWKD has helped by securing LEADER funding for a project with male asylum seekers in Atlas House.

## Out and about in the community



Rathlea Irremore Community Group in St Senans Club, Mountcoal on Thursday morning. L-r: Marion McAuliffe, Robert Barry and Peggy O'Connell.

**RATHEA IRREMORE** Community Group was set up to provide outings, social gatherings and activities for young, senior and disabled members of the local community.

A wide range of groups now make use of their facilities. The senior citizens, the active retired and the

local youth group meet there on a regular basis, as does the Irish Wheelchair Association.

"NEWKD helped us with funding for a new kitchen which should encourage more groups to make use of our facilities from now on," says local man Robert Barry.

"These days, when it's harder than ever to raise funds, we are so grateful for NEWKD for their help. We wouldn't have been able to upgrade our facilities without them."

This isn't the only help that the Rathlea Irremore Community Group has received from NEWKD. The group has its own gym and NEWKD came on board to help pay for the cost of new equipment.

They also contributed towards the recent upgrade of the carpark as well as the group's purchase of a defibrillator.

"We had to be trained how to use that defibrillator and NEWKD supported us in that too," says Robert Barry. "We really would be lost without them."





## SOUTH KERRY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Joanne Griffin (Enterprise Officer with SKDP)



### Supports for local jobseekers

HELPING PEOPLE to find employment in their local area is a priority for the SKDP, and one of the ways they do this is by making sure that people access available enterprise supports, through the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme.

"These include the Back to Work Allowance Scheme," says Joanne Griffin, Enterprise Officer with SKDP.

"This scheme allows people who have been on social welfare to continue receiving 100% of their payments for the first year after setting up their own business and 75% for the second year."

The supports also include access grants of up to €2,500, which cover accountancy and advertising services as well as the cost of purchasing equipment. There's a separate capital funding grant of 65% of the cost of the item being purchased up to a maximum of €500.

"People participating in the programme get invited to local networking events where they get to meet each other and build relationships as well as build talks about LEADER funding and other

related topics," says Joanne. "They are also given access to a bookkeeper who teaches them how to manage their finances and how to keep books of accounts."

Another way the SKDP helps people to find work is by encouraging employer engagement locally. "We build relationships with employers in South Kerry in order to help the people who are most distant from the labour market to find jobs," says Joanne.

A recent example of this was an event organised for the hotel sector in the area.

"This was our second hotel event and we had 12 of the main hotels in Killarney involved," says Joanne.

"87 of our registered jobseekers turned up to meet the HR managers from those hotels and 50% of people got an interview as a result."

### Local employment services

THE SOUTH KERRY Local Employment Service (LES) and South Kerry Jobs Club have been helping people to find work since 1995.

With offices in Cahersiveen, Killorglin, Killarney and Kenmare and outreach offices in Sneem, Waterville, Valentia Island and Annascaul, they are well placed to serve the people of South Kerry.

"We provide a range of employment supports and career guidance to enable unemployed and underemployed jobseekers in South Kerry to access work and training," says Bridie Buckley, manager of South Kerry LES and South Kerry Jobs Club.

"We also provide services to employers, help with recruitment, upskilling and access to employer incentives. Our services are tailored to the needs of each individual client with no cost to the employer or jobseeker."

South Kerry LES and Jobs Club have built up detailed knowledge of the local economy and its various support services over the past 23 years. This has enabled them to provide thousands of people with the relevant skills training, assistance with CVs



Bridie Buckley (manager of South Kerry LES and South Kerry Jobs Club) and letters of application and interview skills advice that has ultimately led to them finding a job.

In 2019, South Kerry LES assisted more than 700 new jobseekers, placing 261 into full-time employment or self-employment and 118 into part-time employment.

A further 181 accessed training and education courses and 145 took up positions on Labour Market programmes like Community Employment Programmes, TUS and the Rural Social Scheme.

Offices are found all over South Kerry, with the main ones in Cahersiveen, Killorglin, Killarney and Kenmare. To find out more about the services or to make an appointment, call 066 9473068.

# Backing local enterprise success



### Enterprise supports with impact from SKDP

SOUTH KERRY Development Partnership (SKDP) supports enterprises at all stages of their development by offering a comprehensive suite of services and supports.

"We are here to help," says Noel Spillane, the CEO of South Kerry Development Partnership.

"Whether you are an aspiring entrepreneur with a business idea, or an established business looking to expand and grow, SKDP have a range of enterprise supports that can assist the individual or business on their enterprise journey."

The SKDP range of enterprise supports include training, mentoring, feasibility studies, grant aid, support to access other state-funded grant schemes, the provision of labour resources to support Social Enterprise Groups and referral to other enterprise support agencies where appropriate.

SKDP also provides a range of supports to employers - including support with recruitment and advertising staff vacancies through the South Kerry Local Employment Service weekly job sheet.

SKDP in Killorglin, l-r: Maureen O'Donnell (Rural Development Coordinator), Sean De Buitléar, Joanne Griffin (Enterprise Officer), Noel Spillane (CEO), Ann O'Riordan (Enterprise Officer), Aisling O'Sullivan Darcy (Development Officer) and Bridie Buckley (LES Coordinator).



Noel Spillane (CEO of South Kerry Development Partnership)

Through the Rural Development (LEADER) Programme, SKDP can provide grant aid of up to 50% to support qualifying micro, small and medium sized businesses across a number of eligible areas.

Social inclusion is a core ethos, and SKDP places an important emphasis on supporting individuals who are unemployed and who wish to pursue

self-employment as a career option.

Working closely with the Dept of Employment and Social Protection, SKDP supports eligible individuals to access the DEASP funded Back to Work Area Enterprise Allowance Scheme.

The scheme enables participants to retain their social welfare benefits for the first two years of the scheme (100% in year 1 of the scheme & 75% in year 2) whilst they establish their enterprise.

Advice and guidance is also available on small scale capital funding, mentoring and start your own business courses for those who establish an enterprise through the scheme.

Through its training network - South Kerry Skillnet, SKDP provides a range of enterprise-led training opportunities to upskill business at all levels, including owners, managers and employees.

"Ensuring that enterprises have the range of skills needed for their current and future operating needs is crucial in ensuring their competitiveness and growth in what is now a fast-moving and dynamic business environment," says Noel Spillane.

Details of all the SKDP programmes and contact details can be found in our offices in Cahersiveen, Killorglin, Killarney and Kenmare or through our website [www.southkerry.ie](http://www.southkerry.ie) or on our Facebook page.

## Business training from Skillnet



Aoife O'Reilly (manager of South Kerry Skillnet)

SOUTH KERRY Skillnet is a business training network that aims to support lifelong learning in enterprise across every sector in Kerry and throughout the wider region.

"Our goal is to develop the workforce in the region by upskilling people in employment," says Aoife O'Reilly, manager of South Kerry Skillnet.

"We want to help employers to retain their staff and we want to ensure that employees have opportunities for career progression within their chosen fields."

The needs of enterprise and employers are to the forefront of what South Kerry Skillnet does.

"They tell us what the skills gaps are in their workforce and we respond by organising sub-

sidised training programmes for them, taught by the best trainers in the business," says Aoife.

In 2019, South Kerry Skillnet assisted more than 160 of its member companies with over 800 trainees availing of courses or networking events.

"It's free to become a member," says Aoife. "Our membership has grown by over 100% in the past four years as more and more people become aware of the training and networking opportunities we have to offer."

Some of these member companies were large businesses such as Astellas and Fexco,

while Skillnet's services are available to small and medium-sized enterprises too.

South Kerry Skillnet also hosts a number of forums for owners and managers working in different industries such as childcare, HR, leisure centres and spas and hairdressing.

Aoife would like to emphasise that South Kerry Skillnet is an organisation that offers a full and affordable support system to facilitate learning and development needs throughout the Kerry region and even further afield.

Visit our website at [www.kerryskillnet.ie](http://www.kerryskillnet.ie), email: [info@kerryskillnet.ie](mailto:info@kerryskillnet.ie) or call us on 066 9762477.



## SOUTH KERRY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

### Crafty about local beer

**CRAFT BEER** has come to the Iveragh Peninsula. McGill's Brewery is the first craft brewery to be set up in the region.

Founded by Radio Kerry presenter and beer enthusiast Joe McGill, its beers are directly inspired by the local area. "Each beer reflects local heroes, culture and history," says Joe.

Joe began home brewing in 2014 and became so passionate that he finally decided to set up a brewery of his own in Murreigh in Waterville.

"I found the perfect premises in what was formerly Moran's Shop, right across from the church," he says.

He opened last year, selling hand-crafted traditional Irish beer styles.

"There's the Skellig Monks blonde beer and the Dark Sky Reserve Stout," says Joe. "This summer, I'll be launching the Maud De Lap red ale. All of these are 4.5% sessionable beers and produced in small batches."

The response from the public has been positive so far. "So many pubs and restaurants have approached me asking if they can stock the beer because they want to have a local product to offer their customers," Joe says.



Joe and Mags McGill from McGill's Brewery at Murreigh, Waterville.

The beer is now stocked in 65 different locations throughout South Kerry and as far afield as Tralee and there are plans to introduce draught McGill's beer in select locations over the summer.

"SKDP's LEADER funding helped

with the cost of purchasing equipment and to pay for marketing and signage," he says.

"The support and advice I've been given is invaluable too. It's great to know that they're behind me."

More at [www.mcgillsbrewery.com](http://www.mcgillsbrewery.com).

### Kim Elliot is on a Rocket to success!

**KIM ELLIOT** has been living in Southwest Kerry for over 20 years. Two years ago, she set up Rocket Deliveries, providing fresh organic fruit and vegetable boxes to homes on the Ring of Kerry and the Tralee area.

"I have always enjoyed seasonal Irish-grown fresh organic produce," says Kim. "When I ran a market stall, I found that customers loved the taste too as well as the knowledge that no chemicals had been used to grow the produce and no plastic was used in the packaging, just reusable bags and boxes."

When Kim decided to set up Rocket Deliveries, she approached SKDP Cahersiveen for advice.

"Enterprise Officer Anne O'Riordan explained the benefits of availing of the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance," she says.

"This enabled me to attend an SKDP-organised Start Your Own Business Course in Killorglin."

SKDP provided Kim with financial assistance too, part-funding the gazebo she needed for her market stall and helped her purchase a tablet.

"Last year, I teamed up



Kim Elliott (Rocket Deliveries)

with an organic farmer in Galway as I needed a higher volume of produce to meet demand," says Kim.

"They helped me to grow the business to where it is today, to the point where I

was shortlisted for an ILDN National Enterprise Award in May 2019," she says.

[www.rocketdeliveries.com](http://www.rocketdeliveries.com), or contact 087-4118678.

### From craft company to high-end manufacture

**PAUL HURLEY** and Kevin Gallogly founded Mango Crafts in 2003, shortly after they graduated from university.

"It was initially a craft company but over time, we have moved into high-end furniture manufacture," says Kevin.

"We custom-make furniture to the express specifications of our customers, using only the finest timbers in the world to make something that is truly unique."

They source their timber from Asia but do so in a sustainable way. "We only use timbers from salvaged, reclaimed or managed sources," says Kevin. "We also plant 500 teak trees every year in order to offset our shipping footprint."

Mango's furniture is on display in their two showrooms, one on Shelbourne Street in Kenmare and one in



Paul Hurley and Kevin Gallogly of Mango Crafts in Kenmare and Killarney

the Killarney Outlet Centre.

Kevin and Paul received a lot of support from SKDP, especially when things were economically challenging.

"Following the downturn, SKDP helped us move into new markets and with producing higher-end products," says Kevin.

"They sat down with us to discuss our strategy for entering the UK market and helped us to upgrade our workshop and website. They also helped with marketing, distribution

and enabled us to take on new employees."

SKDP provided support again in the aftermath of Brexit.

"They couldn't do enough to help us respond to the changing needs of a changing market," says Kevin.

"They have played a huge part in our success and in making us the company we are today, with eight full-time employees including ourselves."

[www.mangocrafts.com](http://www.mangocrafts.com).

### High spirits in Cahersiveen



**SPIRITS ARE** high in Cahersiveen thanks to the ongoing success of the town's Skellig Six 18 Distillery. Founded by locals June O'Connell, Patrick Cooney and Pat Sugrue, this distillery is already producing Skellig Six 18 Gin and has plans to produce premium pot still Irish whiskey by the end of 2021.

The distillery is located on Valentia Road, where it enjoys excellent views of Valentia Harbour, Douglas Head, Ballycarbery Castle and Beginish Island.

"We acquired the former Wilson Socks factory here with the intention of converting it into a destination distillery with state-of-the-art production supported by a visitor centre," says Pat Sugrue. "The plan is to commence developing the visitor centre later this year."

"We believe Cahersiveen to be an excellent location to base our business and intend for Skellig Six 18 to develop into a global participant in this fast-growing industry."

The company has installed a 500 litre gin

The management team at Skellig Distillers pictured at a recent Taste the Island Event held at the new distillery in Cahersiveen, l-r: Stephen Kelleghan, Patrick Cooney, June O'Connell, Pat Sugrue and Norma O'Shea.

still and is making inroads into the Irish and European gin markets with its signature Skellig Six 18 brand of gin.

The team behind Skellig Six 18 Distillery are thankful to the South Kerry Development Partnership for their support.

"Stepping into the domestic and international drinks market is a capital-intensive activity," says Pat.

"SKDP's professionalism and knowledge have been just as important as the financial support received. Because of them, we have made an excellent start."

SKDP has also introduced Skellig Six 18 to the FILECS programme. "We are delighted to engage in this programme because sustainable production is centre to our mission statement development," says Pat.

[www.skelligsix18distillery.ie](http://www.skelligsix18distillery.ie)

### Ireland's only Creamery Experience museum



**FOUNDED BY** Paul and Annette Garland last year, the Kerry Creamery Experience visitor centre recreates the creamery, showing how it once functioned as a pivotal point of rural life.

The Garland family had purchased the old creamery site at Lissavane East from the Kerry Group in 2002, and ran a garden centre there until 2018. When they closed the garden centre, they decided to convert the site into a museum devoted to the creamery movement in Ireland, the first and only one of its kind in the country.

"We wanted to educate younger generations about bygone rural life and the creamery movement," says Annette Garland.

"We wanted to introduce tourists to our history, and we wanted to evoke fond memories for older visitors who remember their local creamery."

They had to renovate the original creamery building, which still had an intact manager's office complete with paperwork. They collected a large exhibition of machinery

Paul and Annette Garland of The Kerry Creamery Experience in Listry

and objects.

"Visitors see the arrival of the churns on donkey and cart," says Annette. "They are talked through the whole process of measuring and grading the milk and then hear interviews with local people about their recollections of the creamery."

"We highlight the social importance of the creamery, how it was a place where news was exchanged, and help was offered when need became known."

The Kerry Creamery Experience can also be booked for private tours, birthday parties and school tours.

The Garland family are very grateful to SKDP for their help. "We'd like to thank Noel Spillane for his guidance and support when we applied for LEADER funding," says Anne.

"He was always there for advice when we needed it."

[www.thekerrycreameryexperience.ie](http://www.thekerrycreameryexperience.ie).



## INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE



Brid McElligott (Vice-President for Research, Development and External Engagement, IT Tralee)

# Backing enterprise for future success

## IT Tralee fosters growth and innovation throughout region

IT TRALEE is a key player in supporting enterprise activities in the region, through IT Tralee research centres, the Tom Crean Business Centre, academic school and departments, the lifelong learning department and programmes such as New Frontiers and Student Inc.

The strong collaboration between the Institute with industry and public partnerships continues to foster the growth of indigenous and foreign direct investment organisations across the region.

The supports and networks provided through the Tom Crean Business Centre and Kerry Technology Park create

an optimum environment to build and scale international businesses.

"Funded by Enterprise Ireland, the Tom Crean Business Centre opened in 2006 and is now home to over 30 businesses, employing 80+ people, ranging from early stage start-ups to growing companies that have already established themselves in interna-

tional markets," says Brid McElligott, Vice-President for Research, Development and External Engagement.

"All of these businesses are able to take advantage of facilities including a staffed reception, fully equipped meeting and training rooms, a canteen, social area, shower facilities, print and post facilities, private parking, office access 24 hours a day, seven days a week and top quality Wi-Fi throughout the centre."

Businesses based at the centre also avail of networking opportunities inherent in a centre filled with fellow entrepreneurs, and the access to facilities and resources at IT Tralee.

Those looking to scale up existing businesses or any budding entrepreneur who wishes to embark in devel-

oping a new business are advised to contact the Institute where, in addition to accessing talent & research facilities, they could also consider locating themselves in the Tom Crean Business Centre.

The Tom Crean Business Centre is also home to the Agricultural Centre of Excellence (ACE) - a new and exciting approach to AgriTech sectoral learning, development and research.

A collaboration between Dairymaster, McHale Engineering, Abbey Machinery, Kerry County Council and IT Tralee, ACE uses immersive learning technologies such as e-learning and virtual reality platforms to deliver excellence in learning and development for the AgriTech sector.

Industry-led, ACE works to enhance

the capabilities of Ireland's AgriTech companies, enabling them to expand their reach and global ambition.

The vision is to position Ireland at the forefront of the international AgriTech Industry.

"Over the past five years, IT Tralee has partnered on a number of game-changing public-private initiatives to ensure Kerry and the south-west region thrives into the future," Brid McElligott says.

"Multi-million euro projects such as ACE, KerrySciTech and RDI Hub will help businesses of all sizes to identify, research, share and implement best practice in innovation, processes and systems, people skills, company capability and internationalisation to deliver sustainable growth."

## University status with new MTU

### ITT and CIT merger to bring major benefits and opportunities

ITT AND CIT are in the process of merging to become the Munster Technological University (MTU). MTU will be integral to the South-West region's identity, looked up to as a transformative university nationally and recognised and respected internationally - and bringing opportunities on multiple levels to all stakeholders in this region of Ireland.

The South-West, connected by the N22, has a portfolio of national, international and globally leading companies with significant strength in engineering, fintech, cybersecurity, agritech, tourism, manufacturing, food, pharma, medtech and bio-based industries.

The CSO data 2017 reveals that this translates to a workforce of 333,900 employees and labour force participation rate of 62.9%

across 32,981 micro SME, 2364 SME, 392 medium and 58 large enterprises.

It represents industry from the micro to the global corporate, with a strong and vibrant start-up sector, supported by incubators, enterprise centres and digital innovation hubs located throughout the region.

"As a technological university with 3 key pillars: Teaching & Learning; Research; and Engagement; staff

and researchers will play a key role in preparing students, industries and businesses, and society for a rapidly changing world," stated Dr Helena McMahon, co-chair of the MTU Engagement Working Group.

Understanding the fundamentals of business, arts, culture and creative media will be necessary if MTU is to build resilient communities in which citizens can expect to live a healthy, fulfilling life that respects sustainability and environmental diversity now and for future generations.

It will be an important source of talent, advocacy, business competitiveness and social discourse, establishing opportunities for communities in both the private and public sector.

Through a unified engagement strategy, industry stakeholders across the southwest will be offered access to the entirety of the proposed MTU's capabilities in a

structured and coherent manner.

The MTU will continue to collaborate and engage with all stakeholders and provide the leadership necessary to respond to the challenges and changes that we face over the coming decades.

Engagement will be integrated within teaching and learning, research, innovation and regional development activities. It will co-design, co-develop and co-deliver transformational programmes and strategies for the South-West region with the education, research and engagement pillars of the proposed technological university for the South-West.

Together with the enhanced levels of investment set out in the TURN report, the rate of production of skilled research graduates will be expected to increase, enhancing the capacity of the region to further develop indigenous industry and anchor current and new FDI



Dr Helena McMahon (External Services Manager, Co-chair of MTU Engagement Working Group)

investments. MTU will provide opportunities for people across the South-West region and beyond to avail of new learning and professional development opportunities.

"ITT and CIT are already well ex-



Breda O'Dwyer (Research and Engagement Lead, MTU Project)

tended into the community and workplaces. MTU will build on this to lead change and, through education, research and engagement empower people for a successful future in a globalised world," stated Breda O'Dwyer.



## INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE

# A thriving research community

Dr Siobhán Mac Sweeney  
(Head of Research, IT Tralee)

## Supporting progress across a wide range of activities

IT TRALEE provides university level education, training and research services for the economic, social and cultural advancement of Ireland, with a particular reference to the region it serves.

Since its establishment, the Institute has contributed to developing the prosperity of the region, based on successful engagement with society on every level and across every sphere of activity.

Today, the Institute has over 3,500 students, employs 350 staff and provides an annual financial contribution of circa €60m to the local economy.

The Institute supports a thriving research community of over 150 researchers including

academic staff, research professionals and postgraduate students many of whom are linked to one of our three research centres: Shannon ABC, IMaR and the UNESCO Chair.

Shannon ABC ([www.shannonabc.ie](http://www.shannonabc.ie)) and IMaR ([www.imar.ie](http://www.imar.ie)) are both members of the Enterprise Ireland Technology Gateway Network. This network was established by Enterprise Ireland in 2013 to increase the level of interaction between the Institutes of Technology and industry in Ireland.

The key aim of a Technology Gateway is to support industry growth by providing Irish companies with access to highly-skilled professional researchers, state-of-the-art research equipment and research funding programmes. Researchers at IMaR and Shannon ABC in IT Tralee complete over 40 collaborative research projects for the benefit of Irish companies on an annual basis.

In 2013, IT Tralee became the first third level institution in the world to receive a UNESCO Chair in Inclusive Physical Education, Sport, Fitness and Recreation ([www.unescoittralee.com](http://www.unescoittralee.com)).

The UNESCO Chair research goal is to inclu-

sive Physical Education, Physical Activity, Fitness, Sport and Recreation for everyone with all abilities.

UNESCO Chair researchers at IT Tralee work together with their global partners to design and undertake research projects that aim to support the full and effective inclusion of persons with disabilities on an equal basis in physical education, sport, fitness and recreation activities.

Funding for all of the research undertaken at IT Tralee is competitively awarded from a wide variety of external sources, including the EU Horizon 2020 programmes, Erasmus+, Science Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and industry partners nationally.

Over the period 2018 /19, IT Tralee secured a research income in excess of €7.5m, highlighting the significant growth in professional research activity at the Institute in recent years and this growth is continuing into 2020.

*If you or your company is interested in working with our researchers or if you are interested in undertaking a Masters or PhD degree, please contact our Head of Research, Dr Siobhán Mac Sweeney, confidentially at (066) 7191846 or email [research@ittralee.ie](mailto:research@ittralee.ie)*

## Shannon Expertise as simple as ABC

THE SHANNON Applied Biotechnology Centre (ABC) Technology Gateway is a collaboration between the Institute of Technology, Tralee and Limerick Institute of Technology.

With a focus on developing, enhancing and commercialising biotechnology through collaboration, the centre has benefited a wide range of Irish food, cosmetic and pharmaceutical companies.

"We work with companies in the Biotech, Food and Life Sciences sectors, helping them to address key challenges within their companies," said Dr Tim Yeomans, Centre Manager. "Companies often see us as their external R&D department, and our focus is on delivering a result that helps them."

Shannon ABC has specific expertise in biore-sources, and in taking natural materials and 'mining' them for high value compounds such as anti-oxidants or anti-microbials.

Shannon ABC can also provide access to facilities and equipment, as well as accommodating companies basing themselves on site.

"We've recently been awarded over €1 million from Enterprise Ireland for the purchase of new equipment - we're very excited to put this new equipment to work to help Irish companies," said Dr Yeomans.

"Shannon ABC can work with companies through contract research, Enterprise Ireland Innovation Vouchers and Innovation Partnerships, and other state-funded mechanisms."

For more information, please contact tim.yeomans@ittralee.ie.



Dr Tim Yeomans (Shannon ABC Technology Gateway manager)

## The IMaR Research Centre

SINCE 2013, The IMaR (Intelligent Mechatronics and RFID) Research Centre at IT Tralee has been delivering technology solutions for industry under the direction of an industrial steering committee, with a proven track record of delivering technology solutions to industry.

A team of 30 researchers are actively involved in projects ranging in value from €1,000 - €2,000,000 each partnering with industry of all sizes from pre-start-ups to SMEs to multinational companies.

The key aim of IMaR is to assist in the continued prosperity of our industry partners by offering access

to the expertise of our highly-skilled researchers, usage of our state-of-the-art equipment and facilities and access to the nationwide expertise in the Technology Gateway Network and Lero: The Irish Software Research Centre.

"IMaR exploits the use of smart mechatronics via

sensor integration, precision instrumentation, automatic identification technologies, industrial IoT, robotics and automation technology to enhance process automation, reduce lead times and ultimately deliver significant cost reductions to our industry partners in manufacturing," says Dr Daniel Riordan, manager of the IMaR Centre.

Further to this, IMaR has a strong track record in mechatronic technology development in automotive, telecommunications, pharmaceutical, production/manufacturing, aer-

onautical, environmental and agri-technology sectors.

IMaR is also the lead partner in a consortium of five research teams (IMaR (IT Tralee), TEC (Cork IT), WISAR Gateway (Letterkenny IT), MSTG (Waterford IT) and Command (Athlone IT)) to form the Enterprise Ireland Applied Internet of Things Technology Gateway Cluster (A-IoT). Through the A-IoT's dedicated Dublin office, they aim to deliver expertise in all aspects of IoT technology to industry with direct access to over 300 researchers nationally.

## Silver linings for Digiwiz friends

EVERY CLOUD is said to have a silver lining. That's definitely true for Nick Lucid and Declan Lowe.

These long-time friends were both living away from home when ill-health forced them to move back to Ballyheigue to recover. That's the cloud. They discovered the silver lining when Nick realised his digital marketing skills could help Declan develop his newly-established Digiwiz business.

He designed a website, [www.digiwizkits.com](http://www.digiwizkits.com), and is now fully involved in the company.

"We aim to teach young people how to take a positive and proactive approach to the internet and technology," says Nick.

Digiwiz sells a variety of kits through its website. "We have sole rights for these kits in Ireland and the UK and we



Nick Lucid (Digiwiz)

go into schools to show kids how to use them to build things like circuit boards or hydraulic systems," says Nick.

"Taking part in the New Frontiers programme is a massive stepping stone in us getting to where we ultimately want to be," says Nick.

## In the business of doing business

VINNY O'BRIEN of 'Vinny & Co.' is an e-commerce consultant who provides independent advice to companies ranging from small businesses right up to multinationals.

He was a mentor to Derek O'Sullivan of Crua Outdoors in Tralee, and he now has a director's role in that company.

"I'm very proud of the success of Crua Outdoors," says Vinny. "We're a small team of six with a further three in North America and the sales of our thermally-insulated tents generated €1.5million in turnover last year."

However, Vinny's greatest passion is the E-Commerce Summit event, which was launched in 2019.

The first event took place last year. "We had speakers



Vinny O'Brien

from Facebook, eBay, Amazon and Waterpipes and we had so much positive feedback afterwards."

It takes place on September 30th and October 1st, 2020.

Tickets cost €450 per person. "That covers the cost of attending the conference, bed and breakfast in the hotel and all meals," says Vinny. "We will also have favourable rates for locals." [www.vinnyandco.com](http://www.vinnyandco.com)

## Your paperwork problems solved!

FINDING A solution to the problem of paperwork drove Caroline Sugrue to set up TICCbox.

TICCbox is a software platform that allows you to record and manage statutory compliance in a better way.

Caroline ran an electrical and energy business for 15 years and constantly heard her customers complaining of problems with recording and maintaining compliance. She decided to do something about this and applied for an innovation voucher from Enterprise Ireland.

"This allowed me to work with the IT Tralee to develop a minimal viable product," she says.

Caroline is taking part in the current New Frontiers Programme.

"It's been my best decision so far," she says.



Caroline Sugrue (TICCbox)

"I'm from a business background and I've learned so much about sales presentations and how to build a team from scratch.

"Not to mention being surrounded by all of the strong successful businesses here." [www.ticcbox.com](http://www.ticcbox.com)



Dr Daniel Riordan (manager of the IMaR Centre)



## INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE - NEW FRONTIERS

# Reaching out for the New Frontiers



## Where support meets innovation and creativity

NEW FRONTIERS is Ireland's national entrepreneur development programme, delivered by the Institute of Technology Tralee in Kerry at the Tom Crean Business Centre in the Kerry Technology Park.

The programme provides budding entrepreneurs with a package of supports, including funding of up to €22,500, office space, training, mentoring and workshops to help accelerate their business development. Run over three phases, the aims of the programme are to equip participants with the skills and contacts they need to successfully start and grow a company.

Now in its eighth year, the programme has supported over 100 start-ups in the region which in turn has created more than 180 jobs.

Many of these companies have retained space at the Tom Crean Business Centre with exciting plans to grow and move on to larger premises over time.

"The New Frontiers programme offers an



New Frontiers Programme Manager Sarah Flaherty

opportunity to develop your business idea in a supportive, yet accelerated environment," said New Frontiers Programme Manager Sarah Flaherty.

"Phase 1 is a part-time programme and Phase 2 is a full-time 6-month accelerator programme.

New Frontiers programme participants at the Tom Crean Centre, Kerry Technology Park, Tralee, from left: Mark Hanly (Hydrogen Power Ireland), Nicholas Lucid (DigiWiz), Chris Barrett (Fox in a Box Design), Caroline Sugrue (TICBox), Clodagh Shannon (Nonna Diary), David Lyons (Rawmation), Shauna Cashell (Style Search) and Krista Clem O'Sullivan (Emerald Isle Growers).

"The nine start-ups that joined us at Tom Crean in September 2019 as part of Phase 2 have made significant progress, working side by side for the past four months and benefiting from peer-to-peer learning, custom training, workshops and other supports as they develop and commercialise their businesses."

The call for applications in Kerry is now open and entrepreneurs with an innovative business idea are encouraged to apply for a place on the programme.

You can register your interest in the programme at any time at [www.newfrontiers.ie](http://www.newfrontiers.ie) and a member of the team will talk you through the application process and eligibility criteria.

Phase 1 will run part-time from Monday March 2nd - March 25th, three evenings per week at the Tom Crean Centre.

If you are interested in the New Frontiers programme, contact IT Tralee at 066 7191895, or visit [www.newfrontiers.ie](http://www.newfrontiers.ie).

## Ethan's got fitness with a Sequel

ETHAN participated in the Student Inc. business development programme at IT Tralee. Held over 12 weeks during the summer months, IT Tralee is only one of three third level institutions nationally to offer a fully-funded business accelerator programme to students who have a business idea they wish to pursue. Ethan McGrath wants to share his passion for fitness with everyone. He has launched his business, The Sequel Way, with this in mind.

"I graduated with a degree in health and fitness from IT Tralee where I specialised in adapted physical activity," says Ethan.

"I've worked with stroke patients, cardiac patients, children and adults with mild to severe disabilities and older adults.

"My new business builds on this, offering a wide range of one-to-one and group sessions that are open to everybody."

These sessions are currently being run in the Gleneagle Hotel in Killarney. "I've formed a partnership with them whereby I can provide exercise and aqua-therapy classes using their facilities," says Ethan.

These include an Aqua Fit class, where aerobics are performed in the water, stretching muscles without putting pressure on the joints. "I

offer a large variety of exercises and rehabilitation therapies to everyone, whether that's in a gym, a pool or even in their own home," says Ethan.

Since graduating in 2019, Ethan has taken up a space at the Tom Crean Business Centre.

"It's great to be there," he says. "The networking is a fantastic help and the fact that they want you to succeed and push you to do so is a huge motivating factor."

Ethan encourages everyone who has an interest in fitness to take a look at The Sequel Way Facebook page or to contact him on 087 1151502 if they have any questions.



Ethan McGrath (The Sequel Way)

## MEET THE NEW FRONTIERS CLASS OF 2019

Since 2016, the New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme has already helped a wide range of companies, access to the advice and expertise of academic and central services staff, student placements, and participation in ITT programmes.

### AMONGST THE COMPANIES CURRENTLY TAKING PART IN THE PROGRAMME ARE:

#### ■ Nick Lucid, DigiWiz

Dedicated to providing innovative and effective tools for education systems including tools to teach young people through STEAM, including kits and workshops in robot building, 3D Pen Design, VR, Coding, Computer Lessons and Internet Safety.

#### ■ Mark and Lorraine Hanly, Hydrogen Power Ireland

Sourcing and supplying combined heat and power systems that are hydrogen ready to the domestic housing and commercial market. These systems are both self-sustaining and energy neutral.

#### ■ Sinead O'Connor, Mindful Meditation

Online platform providing services and resources for data privacy rights, specialising in the financial services sector.

#### ■ Shauna Cashell, Style Search

Fashion search engine that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to gather the best fashion choices for your size, occasion and budget onto one platform. Personalising the hugely impersonal online shopping world, Style Search enables consumers to make inspired fashion choices and spend their time and money wisely.

#### ■ David Lyons, Rawmation

Rawmation designs, promotes and sells tabletop dice board games. Rawmation's flagship board game 'Marathon-X' is available in Toymaster, World of Wonder and independent toy stores throughout Ireland. New product 'Junior Marathon-X' is launching soon.

#### ■ Krista Clem O'Sullivan, Emerald Isle Growers

Vertical farming enterprise growing fresh, sustainably-produced crops, with minimal electricity and water resources, at an agri/eco-tourism destination located on Valentia Island. Also offering e-learning and destination learning courses.

#### ■ Christopher Barrett, Fox in a Box Design

Sustainable design firm, creating hand-crafted furniture that's built to last a lifetime. Operating on a direct-to-consumer, e-commerce platform ensures the guaranteed delivery of timeless pieces.

#### ■ Caroline Sugrue, TICBox

TICBox software solution that reduces workload and protects businesses against the risks of statutory non-compliance. It is particularly designed for the retail, healthcare and hospitality sectors.

#### ■ Clodagh Shannon, Nonna Diary

E-commerce retail brand offering goal-orientated, productivity diaries to assist people on their health, fitness and wellbeing journey. With an extensive diary portfolio to target various health and fitness markets, as well as a subscription box service to assist the customer to reach their goals.

## Weight loss plan goes to next level

FINDING AND maintaining the motivation to lose weight led Clodagh Shannon, to set up her own business, Nonna Diary.

"I had put on some weight and wanted to lose it and I always do better if I set myself goals by writing things down," she says. "So, I decided to start a motivational diary." She couldn't find any that were stylish and cute enough for her online, so she decided to create her own.

"I decided to print 300 of my diaries and set myself the task of selling them within three months," she says.

They sold out in less than three weeks and within a matter of months, Clodagh decided to devote herself to designing and selling motivational diaries full-time.

"What started as a little hobby has now grown into an award-winning business with orders being shipped



Clodagh Shannon (Nonna Diary)

worldwide on a daily basis," she says.

"There's also a new subscription box service and a growing online community."

Clodagh is currently participating in the New Frontiers programme and is learning a lot from the experience.

"We're all based at the Tom Crean Centre and having worked at home for a year, I have to say that it's great to have the community support of co-working," she says.



# Staying on the right side of the law

## Employment legislation can be a challenge - but help is at hand

WITH OVER forty separate employment legislations protecting employee rights in the workplace, it's no wonder that employers can sometimes feel like they have a mountain to climb.

"The onus is always on employers to abide by the legal obligations, and should a case be taken against them, employers must show that the company has complied with the laws," says Caroline McEnery of the HR Suite.

According to Caroline, companies need to ensure they are in compliance with their legal requirements before it becomes an issue.

"It is important that all

companies abide by their obligations set out in employment legislation, to ensure not only legal compliance, but the employer/employee well-being and relationship also," she says.

The following are some of the requirements employers need to have in place to be legally compliant:

- Provide employees with a contract of employment [compliant with legal requirements] within 3

months of commencing employment.

- Provide employees with relevant policies and procedures and record a signed acceptance of same on the employee's file e.g. disciplinary and grievance procedure within 28 days of commencing employment.

- Pay employees the appropriate rate of pay. Since February 1st 2020, the national minimum wage is €10.10 per hour for anyone aged 20 and over.

- Ensure any under 18 employees comply with the necessary legislation in relation to additional rest breaks, working hours and providing the Under 18s legislation for signing.

- Ensure employees get a payslip showing all deductions on a continuous basis.

- Record rest breaks pro-

vided to employees on a daily basis and maintain for three years.

- Provide statutory leave in accordance with the legislation e.g. force majeure, maternity, paternity, parental and carers leave, etc.

- Ensure that employees who are from outside of the EU have the relevant permits on their employee file.

- Ensure that employees take their minimum annual leave and public holiday entitlements, and that this is recorded.

According to Caroline, employees also have rights should concerns or disputes arise.

"Employees have rights to do the following if they believe their rights have not been met: raise an internal grievance, take a Workplace Adjudication case

on the issue while still in employment, inform WRC Inspections anonymously which may result in an audit," she says.

Based in Tralee and Dublin, The HR Suite provides employers with advice on HR-related issues along with a range of other services and training options.

Upcoming local events include the South Kerry Skillnet HR Forum on April 29th at the Brehon Hotel. The free event is suitable for all SMEs and business owners, and will cover legislation on minimum wage, family leave, WRC issues, as well as hot topics including the gender pay gap and bogus self-employment/contracting arrangements.

Registration is from 9am with the event scheduled from 9.30am to 11.30am

Caroline McEnery  
(managing director  
of the HR Suite)



with time for networking and a questions/answers session. The event is free and spaces are limited.

"The forum will help you improve your understanding of key employment law changes and hot HR topics for 2020," says Caroline

McEnery.

"They are suitable for all small-medium business owners and multinationals."

Contact The HR Suite on 066 7102887 to discuss your requirements, or see more at [www.thehrsuite.com](http://www.thehrsuite.com).

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## ENTERPRISE IRELAND

# Building on Kerry's strengths

## Enterprise Ireland companies tap into a skilled workforce

KERRY HAS been one of Europe's most picturesque and popular destinations for decades but in recent years, it has also evolved into a home for global brands and local enterprises.

There can't be many who are unfamiliar with the immense success achieved by Kerry Group and fintech company Fexco. Having started as small local operations, they are now both leading global giants in their fields.

Their success has not only inspired regionally-based entrepreneurs to be globally ambitious, but they have also prompted other newly-emerged companies to base their headquarters in Kerry and to tap into the region's skilled and talented workforce.

Enterprise Ireland's goal is to build on these existing regional strengths in collaboration with other stakeholders.

Its team in Tralee engages with Local Enterprise Offices, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Kerry County Council and IT Tralee to boost

local enterprise and to support emerging start-ups to base themselves in Kerry.

"Several collaborative centres of innovation including RDI Hub in Killorglin, ACE Agricultural Centre of Excellence, Sneem Innovation Hub, Mol Teic in Dingle and the Furies Business Development Hub were recently awarded over €7million in Enterprise Ireland funding," says Jerry Moloney, Mid-West Regional Director at Enterprise Ireland.

"These smart-working hubs are essential testbeds for new designs in innovation while helping to retain talent and enterprise capability in our region."

Kerry businesses are at the forefront of advances in technology nationally and internationally and Enterprise Ireland want to ensure that this continues.

"As part of our commitment to balanced regional development, Enterprise Ireland awarded Kerry SciTech over €300,000 in regional development funding," says Jerry Moloney.

"They are already making a major impact on the business ecosystem right across the county and are a source of much-needed mentoring and support in assisting companies to attract and retain key science and technology talent to Kerry.

"Kerry SciTech is actively working with over 50 companies in the county to support this effort."

There are currently 120 Enterprise Ireland client companies in Kerry. "Many of these began their journey in business as one individual pursuing a novel business concept with commercial value," says Jerry Moloney. "With Enterprise Ireland backing, they have grown into substantial employers venturing into new export markets.



Jerry Moloney (Mid-West Regional Director at Enterprise Ireland)

"Overall, Kerry is proving that turning to entrepreneurship and building local businesses of scale as a strategy for success can contribute to balanced regional development and positive economic trends."

While Enterprise Ireland recognises the ongoing success of businesses in Kerry, it also wants to help prepare those businesses for potential challenges ahead.

In February, it launched its Roadmap for supporting High-Potential Start-Ups. This set out the formula to start-up

success and outlined how the organisation plans to further its engagement with and support of export-led, fast-growing companies in an age of digital disruption.

"Seeking out the right support and resources is the cornerstone of success in business," says Jerry Moloney. "Connecting with investors or accessing financial capital while based in rural Kerry might seem an impossible pursuit but with our assistance and working with the likes of the New Frontiers programme team

in IT Tralee, the Kerry Local Enterprise Office and other key stakeholders, we are determined to make it happen."

Enterprise Ireland has a variety of funding and advisory supports available to those wishing to fulfil their potential in developing their business every step of the scaling journey, and to existing client companies to help them embrace the changes coming their way.

To find out more, please contact the local office on 061 7149394.

# An ACE up your sleeve!

## Centre of Excellence supporting a change in AgriTech

THE AGRITECH Centre of Excellence (ACE) at the Tom Crean Centre in Tralee aims to support exponential change in the Irish AgriTech industry.

"The vision is to position Ireland at the forefront of the international AgriTech industry," says Dr Fiona Boyle, ACE Manager.

ACE is a collaboration between Dairymaster, McHale Engineering, Abbey Machinery, Kerry County Council, Enterprise Ireland and IT Tralee. It was co-funded through Enterprise Ireland's Regional Development Fund, industry, local authority and academia. This makes it a true public-private partnership which has succeeded through the efforts of its founding companies.

ACE is industry-led and aims to enhance the capa-

bilities of Ireland's agritech companies, enabling them to expand their reach and global ambition.

It was established to collectively leverage the value of the relationships that exist among the public and private stakeholders across the Atlantic Economic Corridor (the counties along the west coast of Ireland).

"There is a growing importance and need for this approach in an increasingly globalised networked economy," says Dr Boyle. "ACE is the first of its kind in Ireland and indeed in Europe and is therefore - by its very nature - innovative."

The centre offers a new

and exciting approach to sectoral learning and development through its use of e-learning, virtual and augmented reality technologies. This allows ACE to enhance the capabilities of Ireland's AgriTech companies, positioning the country at the forefront of the international AgriTech industry.

ACE is currently identifying, researching, implementing and sharing best practice in terms of learning innovation through the deployment of a learning and development system and the associated processes and technologies for Irish AgriTech companies.

"This will ultimately improve skills, company capability and internationalisation, while delivering sustainable market growth for our AgriTech companies," says Dr Boyle.

"These technologies are key in order to help our AgriTech companies train staff and dealer networks in different regions of Ireland and in overseas market, which is



AgriTech Centre of Excellence who design VR software for agricultural technology in the Tom Crean Centre, Tralee from left: Muiris O'Grady, Fiona Boyle, Hans Moolman and Niall Trant.

currently a challenge for the entire AgriTech sector.

"Due to the work of ACE, multidisciplinary teams dispersed across our AgriTech companies' dealer networks on an international scale will be able to learn and work more seamlessly together."

ACE's offering to AgriTech companies includes train-

ing, education, knowledge sharing, development activities and sectoral promotional activities.

"We use cutting-edge technologies including virtual and augmented reality (VR and AR) and E-learning to reimagine and redesign the learning experience and to revolutionise the AgriTech sector in the country," says Dr Boyle.

She believes that using these modern technologies has huge advantages.

"These technologies enable geographically-dispersed learners to meet together in a virtual environment to carry out training, role-play, conduct meetings and exchange information.

"Our use of VR and AR technologies allows staff

to practice skills with rich feedback in a safe environment that does not impact on real processes or customers."

For more information on ACE and what it can offer to the Irish AgriTech sector, contact Dr Fiona Boyle, ACE Manager at [fiona.boyle@ace.ittralee.ie](mailto:fiona.boyle@ace.ittralee.ie) or call 066 7128563.



## RDI HUB - KILLORGLIN



Réidín O'Connor (Members and Community Manager), Liam Cronin (CEO) and Fionnuala O'Callaghan (Operations Manager) at RDI Hub in Killorglin.

# Over 300 new jobs by 2024

## RDI Hub in Killorglin seeks ambitious high-tech start-ups

RDI HUB, the new research, development and innovation hub backed by Fexco, IT Tralee and Kerry County Council, has launched its application process to recruit ambitious companies and individuals as members.

RDI Hub is located in Killorglin and its aim is to create skilled jobs and to drive economic growth in the southwest region.

Its member companies will enjoy first-class facilities along with innovation and globalisation opportunities.

"We are ambitious for the quality of companies that we will attract, which will be world-class in terms of the facilities and support programmes on offer," says Liam Cronin, CEO of RDI Hub.

"RDI Hub which is a not-for-profit public private partnership will create over 305 direct jobs by 2024, and in this initial period plans to support the

establishment of over 35 high-

tech funded start-ups."

RDI Hub is currently looking for funded start-ups with a team, a clear purpose and which are using technology to build their business.

"They don't necessarily have to be in fintech. Transactions don't necessarily mean money," says Kit Aherne, Director of Strategic Business Develop-

ment.

"It could be the movement of data from one company to another, from one product to another. It could be the transaction of an experience."

Members will have access to state-of-the-art physical space, cutting-edge technology and a global network of supports including researchers, designers

and technologists as well as a network of entrepreneurs and founders to mentor and guide.

They will be able to seek advice from an investor panel on funding streams, pitches and help get access to capital. The new facility will also offer bootcamps, accelerator and innovation programmes for its incoming start-ups.

Even though RDI Hub has only been open for a few weeks, two companies have already moved in.

Taxamo is a start-up that provides EU VAT compliance software solutions to online retailers and the second is a multinational that required space for its innovation team.

"All members go through a very competitive application process," says Réidín O'Connor, Members and Community Manager of the RDI Hub.

"The application process allows us to curate the community, to ensure it's diverse and helps us engineer those serendipitous moments of collaboration."

If you would like to find out more about the competitive application process, you should visit [www.rdihub.com](http://www.rdihub.com).

This project is supported under the Department of Business, Enterprise & Innovation's Regional Enterprise Development Fund administered by Enterprise Ireland.





## ENTERPRISE FOR THE FUTURE

# At the centre of innovation in Killarney

## Support for knowledge-based companies at the Killarney Technology Innovation Centre

THE KILLARNEY Technology Innovation Centre is a hub for business in the town. With its mix of enterprise suites and start-up spaces, it offers an innovative environment for new and expanding knowledge-based businesses.

A range of client companies are based at the KTI Centre. Some were set up by locals and others by individuals who decided to relocate to Killarney in order to benefit from the quality of life and excellent business development opportunities on offer in the county.

These client companies work in a range of sectors from financial services and language translation to online-gaming and quality management and food safety systems. Well-known names include Monex Financial Services, Aisling Software, Straker Translations and Seaniemac, all of which sell their products and services internationally.

What attracts these companies to the KTI Centre? Firstly, there's the entrepreneurial environment of the centre itself. Start-up businesses are attracted to a location that hosts businesses that

are already established in the software development, e-commerce and knowledge-based sectors.

They know that there are many benefits to networking with such successful companies. The learning opportunities, informal mentoring and support on offer at an enterprise incubation hub such as the KTI Centre are invaluable.

Secondly, there are the facilities that are available to client companies of the KTI Centre. These include state-of-the-art office suites up to a maximum of 2,000 square feet, co-working desks and a modern boardroom/meeting room.

All of these spaces come complete with high-speed broadband, free and secure on-site parking, access to meeting and



Micheal Jordan and Paudie Sheahan (Directors of Emerald Health and Safety) at the Killarney Technology Innovation Centre.

training rooms and a coffee dock. All of this is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

One might think that such facilities would come at a premium but the KTI Centre aims to support businesses and one of the ways in which it does that is to keep its services affordable.

These facilities are not only available to those who want to base themselves in Killarney for the long term. Desk space can also be rented on a monthly basis.

Last but not least, there's the KTI Centre's location. Set in a secluded spot just off Deepark Road in Killarney, it's easily accessible yet quiet.

The Killarney Technology Innovation Centre is always keen to welcome new businesses to the hub and to offer them the support they need to grow.

Find out more by calling 064 6637034 or visiting <https://www.killarney-innovation.com/>

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## Kudos for your business projects



Marie Lynch of Kudos offers a suite of intensive, in-company workshops, to drive creativity, innovation and change.

### ■ Innovative approaches to getting things done

**STRETCHED FOR time and struggling to recruit the right talent, businesses are searching for alternative solutions for getting things done - solutions that are fast, flexible and cost-effective.**

This means considering options such as outsourcing and contractor services in order to move projects forward and reach business milestones.

Kudos works with SMEs and not-for-profit organisations to provide a mix of consultancy and hands-on implementation services.

Kudos has a successful track record in strategy

development and implementation; market research and business case development; brand development and positioning; project management and delivery, and business events.

Kudos also offers a suite of intensive, in-company workshops, to drive creativity, innovation and change. Using a suite of practical tools and tech-

niques, business teams can quickly begin to address issues and opportunities in a structured way.

Workshops include Team Time, Customer Centric, Ideas Engine and Business Boost. While each Kudos workshop offering is designed to achieve specific results, they can also be seamlessly integrated to become milestones in a journey of change and growth.

Managing Director of Kudos Marie Lynch is a respected professional with an excellent track record in strategy development, project management and delivery.

Her career spans business innovation and growth in

both the commercial and not-for-profit sectors. Marie works with a wide range of clients including early-stage entrepreneurial start-ups, SMEs, not-for-profit organisations and community initiatives in the areas of strategy, innovation, business planning, project implementation, new business development and funding.

Her personal strengths include a practical, results-driven and customer-oriented approach; strong analytical, problem-solving and facilitation skills, and an ability to build strong partnerships.

To book a free consultation, email [hello@kudos.team](mailto:hello@kudos.team).



## KERRY SCITECH

# Kerry's growing science & tech reputation

## KerrySciTech showcases county as hi-tech hotspot for global success

**KERRYSCITECH** IS a not-for-profit member organisation which showcases the region as a science, technology and engineering hotspot for talent, jobs and investment.

"We were established to connect, promote and develop Kerry's science, technology and engineering ecosystem," says Programme Manager Aoife O'Brien. "By helping our member companies to attract and retain talent in the science, technology, engineering and mathematical (STEM) sectors; developing programmes of work to ensure the availability of the right skills within the region; and fostering collaboration between members; KerrySciTech helps companies grow, accelerate innovation and have a positive impact on the economic development of the Kerry region and beyond."

The reason for the establishment of KerrySciTech lies in the county's reputation as a home to almost 70 companies in the science, technology and engineering sectors. "Even though we have a national and international position as a top-class holiday destination, it's a little known fact that the region has a strong heritage in creating global success stories," says Aoife O'Brien. The calibre of companies founded in the

county are exceptional - Fexco, DairyMaster, TriCel, Tweak.com, Netfeasa, Aspen Grove Solutions, Pulse-Learning and FreeFlow are just some of the entrepreneurial success stories on our doorstep.

The county also boasts large global players such as JRI America who now employ more than 170

people in their offices in Tralee. There is also a vibrant start-up and SME sector which includes businesses that are beginning to make their mark internationally.

"For example, ViClarity - which provides audit, risk and compliance management technology - recently announced its merger with US consultancy firm PolicyWorks," says Aoife O'Brien. "This will see ViClarity more than double in size and grow globally."

"This is only the tip of the iceberg," she continues. "We have companies creating tech solutions across lots of sectors such as Diomac, which implements fully-integrated management information systems or Salaso, which uses a technology platform to track patient's daily exercise routines which can be used by physios and healthcare professionals and has been rolled out in the US by one of New York's largest healthcare providers."

KerrySciTech aims to support and drive growth in companies like these and in the process, further develop Kerry as an exciting destination for tech talent and entrepreneurs. It does this by addressing the problem of the global skills shortage in the STEM sector. By elevating Kerry's reputation in the industry and advancing programmes and initiatives, KerrySciTech plans to attract, grow and retain the right skillsets for its member companies

in the region.

With the support of Enterprise Ireland under its Regional Enterprise Development Fund, KerrySciTech has grown significantly over the last 2 years and its membership now includes start-ups, SMEs, multinationals, incubation centres and digital hubs as well as strategic alliances with academia, education and training organisations, and local government such as Kerry County Council.

"We're growing a strong

skills base here in Kerry by working with partners such as IT Tralee, Kerry ETB and the Regional Skills Forum on the development and delivery of courses in areas such as software development and artificial intelligence," says Aoife O'Brien.

KerrySciTech also enables its members to reach a global market. "For example, last year with partnered with Jobbio, an inbound hiring platform which helped KerrySciTech to promote careers to a national and international audience," says Aoife O'Brien. "In just over three months, we had over 13,000 views of our members' job postings and almost 700 applications to the 87 jobs posted. You cannot underestimate the power of the collective. All our members and partners working together to raise our reputation in the SciTech space is starting to pay dividends - the talent is coming, with candidates realising that you can have a great career and lifestyle here in Kerry."

For more information on KerrySciTech, see [www.kerryscitech.com](http://www.kerryscitech.com) or contact [info@kerryscitech.com](mailto:info@kerryscitech.com) if you would like to become a member.



Members of KerrySciTech pictured on Friday morning last, l-r: Deirdre Carr (DIOMAC), Donal Lawlor (ViClarity), Aoife O'Brien (programme manager, KerrySciTech), Emer O'Connor (JRI America) and Aoife Ni Mhuiri (Salaso Health).



John Moriarty (NEWKD Skillnet)

## Rural Food Skillnet delivers for companies of all sizes

**FOOD AND** hospitality is the name of the game when it comes to the Rural Food Skillnet, a learning network for companies of all sizes in the food and hospitality sector.

"Rural Food Skillnet delivers a number of courses specifically aimed at the food and hospitality sector in Kerry," says Network Manager John Moriarty.

"We also collaborate with South Kerry Skillnet and South West Gno Skillnet on a wide range of events throughout the

year."

In February 2020, the three Skillnet groups partnered with Tralee Chamber Alliance to run a 'People Make Business' workshop facilitated by Michael Cox of MCX Training.

"The aim was to identify the training and development needs of local businesses," says John.

"Once these needs are identified, we can help business to find solutions as we have access to a panel of local, regional and national trainers that can be used to deliver training specific to their business' needs."

Food safety training is always needed in the county and the Rural Food Skillnet has a number of FSPA certified level 2 Food Safety HACCP courses running in Killarney this year. These take place on April 6th, June 8th, August 10th, October 5th and November 30th.

"The aim of these one-day courses is to provide food workers with adequate training in the basic principles of food safety," says John. "They cover the necessary skills required to practice HACCP safely in the workplace."

The Rural Food Skillnet has

also worked with industry experts to develop innovative training programmes that are integrated with work.

"This helps promote a culture of investment by businesses in their employees," says John. "It helps to develop new ways for businesses to become more competitive through training and further professional development."

There are lots of benefits for companies joining the Rural Food Skillnet.

It assists businesses to identify and address their skills

needs and shares information regarding successful approaches to learning and talent development.

Skillnet also delivers flexible training programmes that are tailored to the needs of the sector, gives businesses access to a network of other businesses within the sector and also arranges conferences, seminars and other informal learning and networking events.

For further information, go to [www.ruralfoodskillnet.com](http://www.ruralfoodskillnet.com) or email [info@ruralfoodskillnet.com](mailto:info@ruralfoodskillnet.com).





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# Supporting Enterprise and Innovation in Kerry

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## Tom Crean Business Centre

- Home to the Centre of Entrepreneurship & Enterprise Development (CEED), which plays a key role in fostering and developing the entrepreneurial mindset as part of the innovative ecosystem of the Institute of Technology Tralee
- Supportive environment and incubation facilities to assist entrepreneurs to take ideas from proof of principle to full commercial success
- Business training, consultancy, mentoring supports, and events



TOM CREAN Business Centre

## IT Tralee's Academic Schools and Departments

- Work placements and internships with IT Tralee students and graduates across a range of disciplines
- Student/staff led work-based projects from market research, feasibility studies, business plans and R&D projects
- Mentoring and expertise from 200+ academic staff
- Access to a network of 100+ international partner institutions

## New Frontiers Programme

- Ireland's national entrepreneur development programme, delivered at local level by Institutes of Technology and funded by Enterprise Ireland
- Package of supports including: training, mentoring, office space, up to €22,500 tax-free scholarship and more



## Student Business Incubation Programme

- Open to all registered students at IT Tralee, 'Student Inc.' is a summer business incubation programme that helps student entrepreneurs to develop their business ideas. Students receive dedicated training and mentoring in the areas of market research, finance, business planning, among other areas. Each thriving entrepreneur receives €4,000 to fund their business and office space at Tom Crean Business Centre.

## IT Tralee's Lifelong Learning Department

- Bespoke certified programmes for industry - delivered on campus, online and/or at your company premises
- Springboard funded programmes for upskilling in the workforce