

## *Dublin City Social Enterprises – Supports – Update Report*

*Evanne Kilmurray, CEO, Inner City Enterprise*

Social enterprises are businesses whose core objective is to achieve a social, societal or environmental impact. Dublin City Council and ICE are working together along with the members of the Dublin City Social Enterprise Committee to support and grow the number of social enterprises operating in the Dublin city area. Like other businesses, social enterprises trade in goods or services on an ongoing basis, but the surpluses generated are re-invested into achieving a social impact, rather than maximising profit for their owners. ICE is working to support a wide range of social enterprises who are making a positive impact on disadvantaged groups, and are addressing wider societal issues such as food poverty, elder care, inclusive societies and environmental matters. In doing, this work we are delivering on the three policy objectives of the National Social Economy Policy for Ireland launched in July 2019. We are building awareness of social enterprises, we are growing and strengthening social enterprises and we are achieving better policy alignment.

ICE works collaboratively with Dublin City Council's Economic Development Office (EDO) and Local Enterprise Office (LEO) to deliver the Dublin City Social Enterprise Awards. This work is vital in encouraging and supporting the sustainable and strategic development of the Social and Solidarity Economy Ecosystem in the city. A number of initiatives include: training, mentoring, events, grants, and the promotion of social enterprises through articles is furthering the awareness of and impact of social enterprises.

The Dublin City Social Enterprise Awards were established in 2015 by Inner City Enterprise (ICE) and Dublin City Council with the support of the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Dublin City. The awards were established in response to the need to provide small grants and seed funding to help social enterprises start and grow in Dublin City. In year one there were four winners and this year we doubled that number to eight, with a total of 41 social enterprises who have been recipients of this award. The awards have gone from strength to strength and we moved from the on line ceremony held last year to a small in person ceremony this year. The Lord Mayor Alison Gilliland met with the awardees and was photographed with them outside the Wood Quay Venue, as part of the celebration of the great work done by the eight new winners, Pocket Forests, Bee8, Connections Art Centre, Dignity Partnership, parkHIIT, Clean Slate and Mendicity.

The awards process is overseen by the Dublin City Social Enterprise Committee. The subcommittee is comprised of representatives of key stakeholders and relevant organisations. €45,000-€50,000 is typically distributed among the selected awardees each year. Funding for the awards is provided by the Department of Rural and Community Development and Dublin City Council. The awards process is managed and administrated by Inner City Enterprise. In 2021 a digital brochure of the awardees was developed to further raise the profile of the awards and the recipients and a copy of this has been circulated in the papers for this meeting.

Our work is being supported by national and international developments. Social enterprises are gaining recognition as a component of the overall entrepreneurship ecosystem, as reflected in the Government's [Future Jobs Ireland](#) strategy. We are working to provide a range of supports to social enterprises that are available to other start up and scaling businesses.

LEO Dublin City Grants may be awarded if Social Enterprise applicants meet eligibility criteria. The Trading Online Voucher have been granted to a number of social enterprises that have traded income.

Mentoring is provided by ICE to the 41 award winners and is also available through the Local Enterprise Office – Dublin City mentor panel. Social Enterprises can also join existing LEO training programmes, events and courses.

More work is needed to promote Social Enterprises and there are a series of articles on Dublin.ie that tell the stories of previous winners of the Dublin City Social Enterprise Awards:

Eco Mattress <https://dublin.ie/working/articles/how-dublin-works-eco-mattress-recycling/>

Solas Project – Yard Crew <https://dublin.ie/learning/articles/the-yard-crew/>

Dublin City was successful in being selected as a participant city in the OECD Eurocities – Respond, Rebuild, Reinvent (RRR) peer learning project. The project involves 9 cities from around the world, coming together to learn, share and collaborate with the aim of promoting peer learning on Social and Solidarity Economy Ecosystems. As part of Dublin's involvement, the Dublin City Social Enterprise Awards was highlighted and profiled as a good practice model and shared with the other participating cities. Furthermore, programme and technical details were shared with specific cities that were inspired by the model and were interested in replicating it in their context.

While we have done good work over the last seven years and we have supported 41 social enterprises who are excellent examples of the positive impact that social enterprises can have, we are ambitious to further grow the number of social enterprises operating in our communities and to amplify the positive impact of their work. In order to this we need to continue to provide the resources and supports necessary. Social Enterprises like many businesses have been impacted by Covid 19 and require our continued input and engagement. I would like to thank the members of this SPC for your continued support for this important work.