

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT FUND



IMPACT REPORT 2022

**RETHINK
IRELAND**



Udarás Áitiúla Éireann
Local Authorities Ireland



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



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Introduction

2022 marks not only the fifth year of our €4.4 million Social Enterprise Development Fund (2018-2023), but also a new beginning. Over the first four years of the Fund, we supported established social enterprises with cash grants and business support packages. We also offered them a place on a two-day intensive programme for those at earlier stages of development. The Fund supported social enterprises from every Local Authority in Ireland through its national Accelerator and early-stage Genesis programmes. This was Rethink Ireland's first dedicated Fund for social enterprises.

Building on our learnings from the first four years and responding to the increasing interest from social entrepreneurs and innovators to set up a social enterprise, Rethink Ireland and IPB Insurance, together with Local Authorities Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development, decided to respond to these needs by welcoming a further two years of the Fund.

This resulted in a refreshed, two-winged Fund offering of a Business Course for up to 100 social entrepreneurs at idea stage as well as eight Award packages worth a total of €30,000 each consisting of cash grants, tailored business supports and a place on an Accelerator Programme.

This Impact Report will provide insights not only into the renewed offering and its success but also, and most importantly, showcase the incredible impact that our 2022 Awardees have achieved. The year 2022 has proven to be a challenging and demanding year for many of our Awardees. Not only does the cost of living crisis impact them like any other business but several of them have been at the forefront of the response to the societal challenges. Be it the green transition, affordable and empowered living or supporting refugees, our Awardees have been where they were needed the most and dealt with unprecedented demand with wit, resilience and innovative solutions.

“The Social Enterprise Development Fund provides critical support to the most innovative and impactful social enterprises across Ireland, helping to spread and scale their social impact. We are immensely proud to celebrate our partnership with IPB Insurance, Local Authorities Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development, the success of which, crucially, is evident in the positive impact of the Fund on communities in Ireland. Their unprecedented investment in social enterprise in Ireland has allowed us to support 110 social enterprises in every corner of Ireland. They each have played a sterling role in supporting local social enterprises over the years, making this partnership a perfect match.

Social enterprise is part of the fabric of local communities in Ireland, providing local services and also playing a core role in the local economy.

As we strengthen the social and solidarity economy in Ireland, social enterprise has a key role to play in meeting our greatest local challenges, including climate change, tackling equality issues, and strengthening rural communities.”

Deirdre Mortell,
CEO, Rethink Ireland



“Through our ongoing partnership with Rethink Ireland on the Social Enterprise Development Fund, we are enabled as an organisation to realise our goal to make a positive social impact. Working alongside our Local Authority Members, our collaboration with Rethink Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development has focused on identifying and supporting the best social enterprises nationwide with the added benefit of promoting the sector as an important contributor to Ireland’s socio-economic development.

A core objective of the Fund is to help realise the enormous potential of the social enterprise sector. We see social enterprise as a mechanism for equitable, sustainable growth in business and the way forward for the economy. We look forward to seeing more progress made in communities around the country facilitated by the social enterprises supported by this Fund”

John Kearns,
CEO, IPB Insurance



Social Enterprise Development Fund 2022

The Fund's objective in 2022 was to find and back social enterprises that add to the social and economic fabric of their community by way of social impact.

In 2022, the Social Enterprise Development Fund launched an additional offering to support social entrepreneurs at the idea stage via its "Start a Social Enterprise Business Course". This new offering meant the Social Enterprise Development Fund now catered to the needs of social enterprises at varied levels of development. This also complemented our existing early-stage Social Enterprise Start-Up Fund & later stage Growth Fund investments.

The Fund offered eight Cash grants of €22,500 each along with a non-financial support budget of €7,500 each. It also gave Awardees a place on an Accelerator Programme which included five Workshops running from July - December 2022 and networking opportunities with social enterprises across Funds, including the newly established coffee mornings.



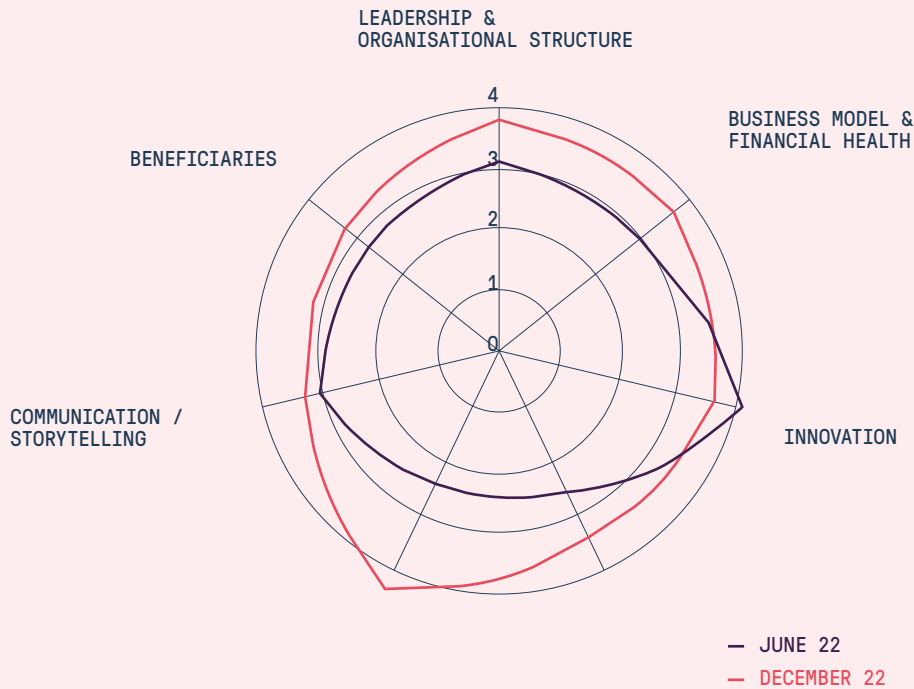


As part of the Accelerator Programme, Awardees attended workshops curated to their specific needs. This included sessions by experts on:

- **Impact Management** to equip Awardees with a better understanding of how to measure and manage their impact.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** to enable Awardees in getting a clearer understanding of the importance of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion for their social enterprise.
- **Financial Resilience** session which was aimed at providing them with support to further increase the sustainability of their enterprise.
- **Communications** Awardees were provided with training on how to develop a communications plan, as well as with individual follow ups to ensure practical relevance and implementation of their plans.

In addition, each Awardee was matched with an expert business consultant, who supported them to develop strategic plans, Outcome Frameworks and/or Growth Plans. As part of the Performance Management of the Fund, Awardees had quarterly check-ins with the Fund Team, who supported them in achieving their milestone trigger payments. The Awardees completed the Organisational Health Assessment at the start of the Fund and again after six months. This tool enabled us to help Awardees to get the support they need to build their organisation's capacity, scale their impact and achieve their goals. Aggregated results are shown in a chart below.

SED Fund 2022: Organisational Health Progress



The Awardees also had the opportunity to pitch for in-kind supports at the end of the Fund. They were asked to submit their Strategic Plan developed over the course of the programme and were invited to pitch for further support to implement one of their strategic priorities. The winners of the pitch were:

- Books at One, who received fundraising mentoring from Pádraic Vallely, Senior Philanthropy and Development Manager at Rethink Ireland
- Common Knowledge, who received mentoring from Deirdre Mortell, CEO of Rethink Ireland
- The No Barriers Foundation, who received pro bono supports from Arthur Cox LLP

“Rethink Ireland’s Social Enterprise Development Fund has made all the difference to Generation Ireland, as a newly setup charity in Ireland. All of Rethink Ireland’s team, and the consultants we were given access to in terms of Strategy, Communication & PR, Pitching, Funding and Finance were all critical to developing an implementable growth and scaling strategy for 2023 and beyond. Being able to meet and share experiences with fellow grantees in person was vital in order to grow a network of knowledge that we will be able to tap into moving forward. I highly advise any organisation to apply for Rethink Ireland’s Social Enterprise Development Fund to support them to pursue success in their organisational mission.”

Ronan Harbison,
Executive Director,
Generation Ireland

Social Enterprise Development Fund 2022 Awardee Impact

In 2022 alone the Award enabled Fund Awardees to:

- Design and launch a website that will reach 100,000 Ukrainians per quarter and 65,000 Romanians, providing them with accurate, verified information supporting them in their lives in Ireland
- Triple their service delivery to persons with disabilities post hospital discharge
- Support over 1,000 refugees in Killarney alone
- Engage over 20 additional volunteers from a migrant background
- Launch two new profession-specific bootcamps for people facing unemployment
- Pilot a new support offering in 5 DEIS schools in the Dublin area
- Teach over 400 people how to build their own homes
- Launch a bookshop in Dublin with school outreach work to foster literacy
- Divert from landfill and recycled 105 bikes in Galway



Start a Social Enterprise Business Course

In 2022, the Social Enterprise Development Fund provided social entrepreneurs opportunity to participate in a “Start a Social Enterprise Business Course”, as well as the chance for 10 successful participants to receive a €10,000 Award. The Business Course was created to ensure that vital supports are offered to a wider number of idea stage social enterprises across the sector.

The course was held online over two months and ran twice during 2022 for a total of 100 participants. The 12 modules such as, ‘legal form’ and ‘defining your mission’, equipped participants with the skills and tools to make informed decisions regarding the start-up of their social enterprise. To ensure social innovators across Ireland could benefit from the course, it was run virtually, with one in-person day dedicated to networking and mentoring.

The course is not only a launchpad for the social innovators idea but also, importantly, a pathway to additional supports. It is supporting a new generation of social entrepreneurs to deliver social impact, create jobs and tackle societal challenges.

This course married the necessary modules in business skills with the development of social impact tools to make it unique and aimed specifically at social enterprise development.



5 Years of Impact

WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED SINCE 2018?



110 SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

through cash grants and non-financial supports

Awardees delivered
services to over

400,000

people throughout Ireland

Awardees mobilised

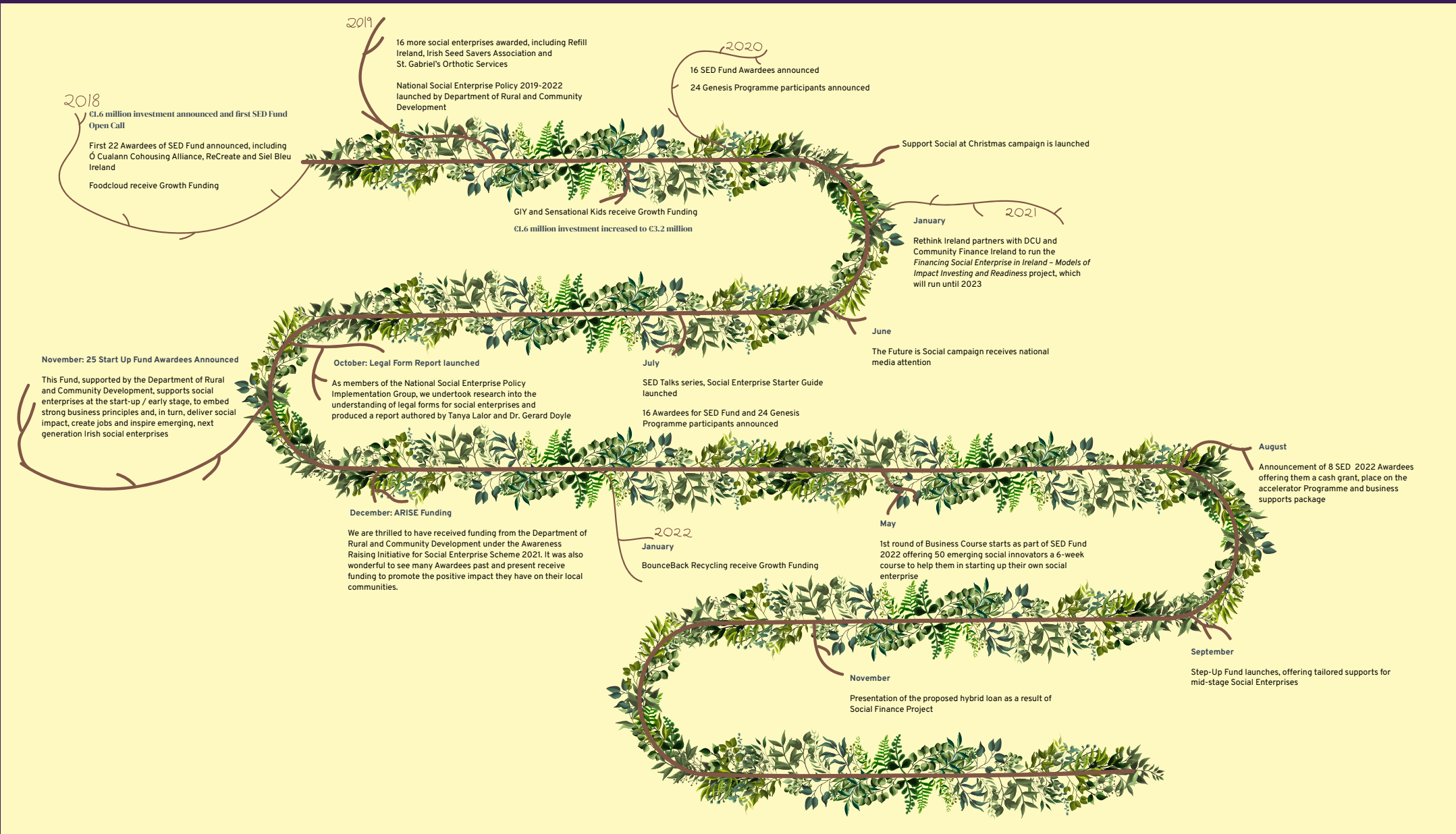
16,000

volunteers

In 2022, the Social Enterprise Business Course
SUPPORTED 100 SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS AT IDEA STAGE
to join a six-week course equipping them
to set up their social enterprise.

Over **209 JOBS** have been created within the sector

(Updated January 2022)



Ecosystem Impact

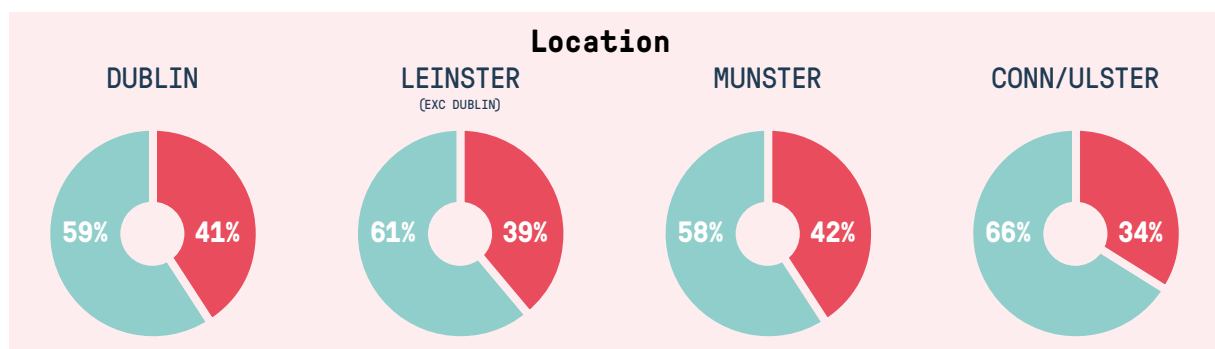
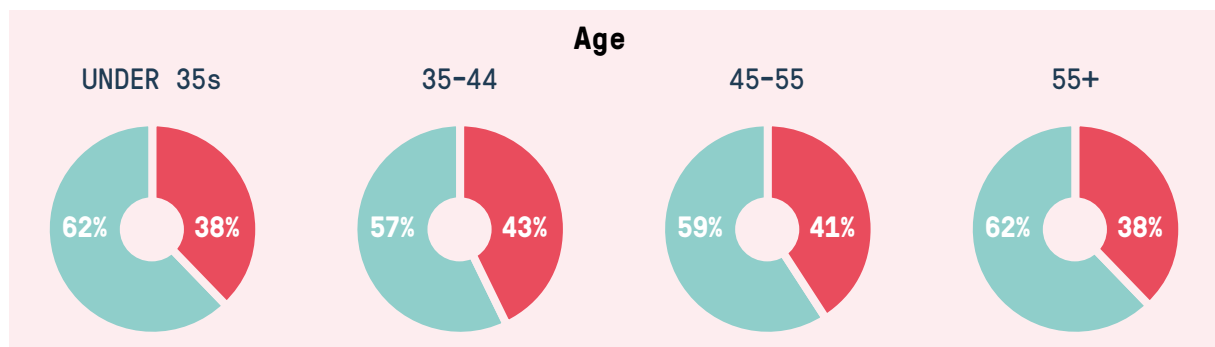
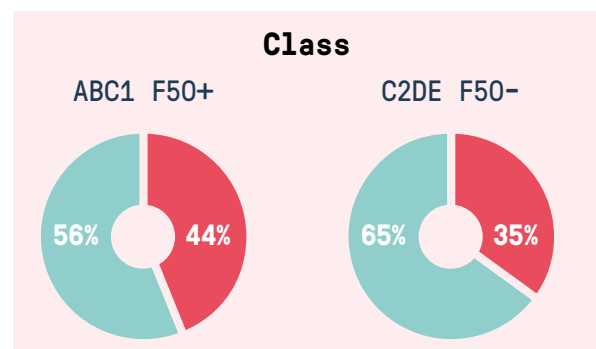
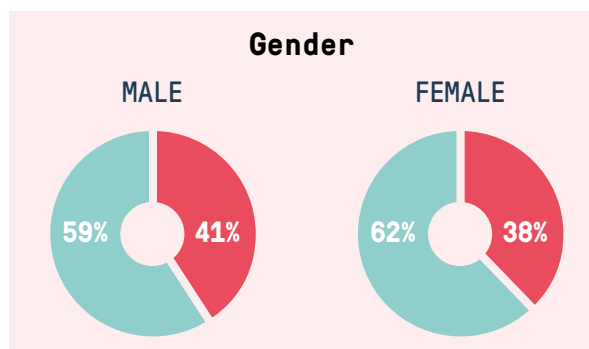
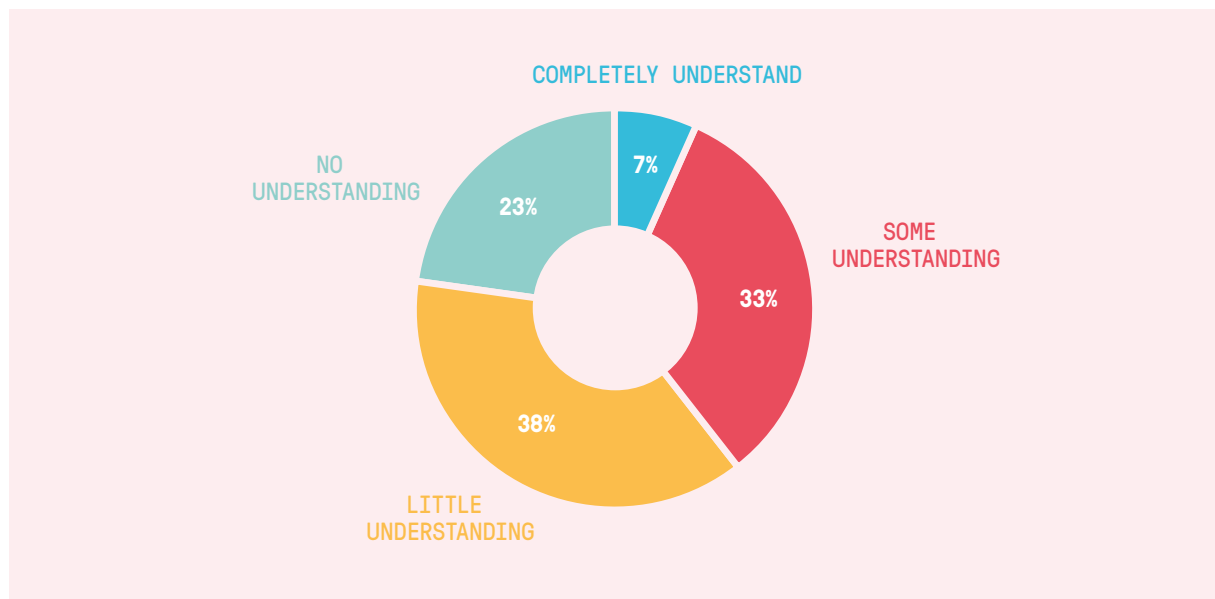
Rethink Ireland would like to thank IPB Insurance, Local Authorities Ireland, and the Department of Rural and Community Development for the continued investment in the Social Enterprise Development Fund. We have been able to create positive impact on the Social Enterprise Ecosystem across Ireland. We have had an incredible journey since the first Social Enterprise Development Fund in 2018 and have successfully delivered our Think Future, Think Social campaign as part of the Awareness raising Initiative for Social Enterprise scheme, which has enabled us to engage the public to better understand the concept of social enterprise and inspire many more people to support (or set up) social enterprises across Ireland.

There is now a growing awareness of the critical role social enterprise can play in making Ireland a healthier, happier and more prosperous place to live for everyone. As part of the campaign, Rethink Ireland commissioned, for the third year, research from Amarach Research examining into the awareness within society of social enterprise within society.

The results are promising as the statistics overleaf illustrate, For example, understanding of the term 'social enterprise' has increased by 7% to 40% in the latest year.



Understanding of the term 'Social Enterprise'



Ecosystem Impact

As part of our commitment to provide comprehensive supports to social enterprise across the entire Lifecycle of Social Innovation, and in response to a need identified by our past Social Enterprise Development Awardees, we also launched the Social Enterprise Step Up Fund in 2022. This Fund provides cash grants and business support for social enterprises to scale their impact. Its aim is to support social enterprises to ultimately scale out to other locations, or scale up their services across Ireland. It focuses on elevated funding for social enterprises at the next stage.

IPB Insurance's foresight to invest in the sector at an early stage continues to have a catalytic impact, resulting in social enterprises creating more jobs and social impact in their communities, and ultimately changing the way we shop, live and connect with each other.



Awardee Spotlight

COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Common Knowledge is a social enterprise based outside Ennistymon on Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way. They empower people with the skills and solutions needed to address some of our most basic needs for a sustainable life: affordable, sustainable housing and greater self-sufficiency at home. They do this through hands-on learning programmes, research and community initiatives focused on areas like building, growing and making. Over the past year, with the help of the Social Enterprise Development Fund, they have provided more than 379 people with the knowledge, skills and community to create a more joyful and truly sustainable homelife.

Over the next three years they intend to support even more people to build, make, mend and grow, while also creating a physical space where people can come together to increase their confidence, grow their competence and gain a greater sense of community. For Common Knowledge, success centers on

engaging 2,100 people over a three year period in their signature in-person courses, engaging an additional 1,000 people through online learning content, all while building and maintaining a diverse and inclusive instructor and course support team of 10 people to help deliver on this ambition.



“The support of Rethink Ireland has been invaluable in our startup as a social enterprise. From working with our team and consultant, we’ve had the space to understand and articulate the outcome of our work - building people’s sense of confidence, capability and connectedness to meet their own needs. Our work with Rethink Ireland has really done the same for us as an organisation, providing a touchstone for us as we work through the many challenges of establishing an impact-oriented business, enabling us to deliver our plans for the year whilst inspiring us to think bigger and plan for the future. With many new courses in the pipeline and moving into a new HQ in March, we’re excited for what lies ahead and are proud to be part of this community of beneficiaries. Thank you everyone at Rethink Ireland for being a vital, warm and supportive springboard for Common Knowledge!”

Fionn Kidney,
Co-Founder and Co-CEO of Common Knowledge

SENSATIONAL KIDS

Kildare based social enterprise Sensational Kids provides affordable and accessible therapy services for all children, including those with additional needs, and those that cannot access or afford timely services to help them reach their potential.

Sensational Kids had only one child development centre in Kildare town when they were Awarded a cash grant by the Social Enterprise Development Fund in 2018. Now, they are Awardees on our Growth Fund and have established a development centre in all four provinces of Ireland.

Over 9,000 children have already benefited from Sensational Kids'

therapy supports including subsidised speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and play therapy. Since 2007, Sensational Kids has saved families €2.5 million in therapy fees, bridging the gap between public and private services for children in need.

"Rethink Ireland has played an instrumental and significant role in the growth of Sensational Kids. Not only did the financial supports help us to build capacity in our team, but the learning opportunities and consultancy supports has provided us with both the finances and the knowledge required to build and grow our social impact. It has been a game changer to bring us to the next level."

Karen Leigh, Project Lead,
Sensational Kids



Meet the 2022 Social Enterprise Development Fund Awardees

GENERATION IRELAND

Generation Ireland promotes job opportunities for people who face structural hurdles to employment. They accomplish this through a prepare-place-support model, in which they provide classes and subsequent help to job seekers in industries where there is a high need for workers, developing the modules together with potential employers. They have also launched two new programmes: IT Support with Cyber Skills and Retrofit Advisor - the first Green skills bootcamp of its kind in Ireland. Since their engagement with Rethink Ireland, the project has expanded across Ireland and adapted to deliver bootcamps nationally.

KASI

KASI is a local NGO based in Killarney and has been providing practical, moral and social support to Asylum Seekers, Refugees and other Migrants since 2000. Their work evolved from providing the necessary services and support to the new communities like providing information, practical help – filling in forms, advocacy work, referrals, outreach work; to organising various social and integration activities; to in recent years setting up social enterprises to create employment through training, placements and employment in the project itself. As a result of their time spent on Social Enterprise Development 2022, KASI have employed a full time gardener and have established a 10 – week gardening workshop that will run consecutively until summer 2023.



NO BARRIERS FOUNDATION

No Barriers Foundation assists those with varying levels of disability who find it difficult to find appropriate post-care support after being discharged from the HSE, their lack of aftercare support resulting in increased social marginalisation as well as physical and mental comorbidities increasing readmission rates. The No Barriers Foundation addresses this lack of accessible and affordable ongoing rehabilitation and health support for their target group, by providing ongoing specialist support services in an affordable manner in a socially inclusive gym environment. As a result of Rethink Ireland funding and non-financial supports, the service has expanded their workforce and tripled their revenue from service delivery in a financially sustainable manner.

TOGETHER RAZEM CENTRE

Together Razem Centre supports those in the Polish and Eastern European migrant community facing problems related to marginalisation, exclusion and isolation in Ireland. The centre offers advocacy, social and legal advice, mental health support and educational programmes for children and adults, enabling the Polish community to be a more cohesive part of the Irish community. One of their key goals is to provide reliable information in Polish, Ukrainian and Romanian about current Irish and European affairs through a website which is the only one of its kind in Ireland today. In response to the arrival of Ukrainian refugees into Ireland, they created a Ukrainian language website to provide real time information and available support in conjunction with their Polish and Romanian language websites.



WAY 2 WORK IRELAND

Way 2 Work Ireland is a mentor-based supported employment program developed in collaboration with Tusla to assist young people aged 16 to 21 who have been in care. The organisation promotes and supports opportunities for young people to engage in training, education, and work, as well as establishing specialised and individual training and employment programs to enable young people to achieve full autonomy in their life and overcome poverty and marginalisation. Of the ten young people that availed of Way2Work's services in 2022, three have secured full time employment, two have begun training placements that will see them qualified to work in the construction industry and two have secured interviews for full time employment and volunteering opportunities. Two clients attained certifications in vocational training. As a result of Rethink Ireland funding and non-financial support the service was able to build partnerships with five DEIS schools in Dublin and are in communications with a number of other schools throughout the county. Partnerships with private businesses and training providers have also increased.

BOOKS AT ONE

Books at One is a network of community bookshops run by local people to address the social and economic decline that many areas in Ireland are experiencing. The absence of investment in facilities for intergenerational socialising outside of pubs and sports clubs is a key emphasis for the organisation. Books at One is currently opening a new store in Dublin, as well as developing engaging activities for local schoolchildren, teachers, and families to enjoy and benefit from free reading events and workshops. Through Social Enterprise Development funding and support, the service has undertaken staff training in the areas of HR, volunteer management and event organisation. They are also in the process of developing a programme of community and outreach events relevant to each of their three local communities. Books at One have also reduced the barriers to reading for pleasure where opportunities are limited through economic circumstances, lack of access and motivational disadvantage by providing exciting events and free books in a disadvantaged area.



COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Common Knowledge empowers people with the skills and solutions needed to address some of our most basic needs for a sustainable life: affordable, sustainable housing and greater self-sufficiency at home. They do this through hands-on learning programmes, research and community initiatives focused on areas like building, growing and making. Their founding team has taught 200+ people through their 'Build School' since 2020, and in 2022 will expand their reach significantly.



AN MHEITHAL ROTHAR

An Mheithal Rothar focuses on providing bicycles to those who do not have access to cycling, particularly those who are unable to participate in the Bike to Work program, while also creating an impact on the areas of employment and sustainability. Their one-of-a-kind approach combines recycling and waste reduction with delivering affordable bikes, as well as personalised information sharing and problem solutions for each user. Multiple workshops and sessions were held with staff and consultants. They defined their theory of change and strengthened their strategic plan. 105 bikes were diverted for reuse between July and November 2022, 20 of those have been sold; 8 are ready (2 at AMR's shop for sale, 6 for University of Sanctuary students in need); 14 are in the process of being refurbished and 63 in storage for refurbishment.

