



co-operationireland

working for a future together

FUTURE LEADERS

Summer 2022



Summer is here!

Welcome to the Future Leaders Summer Report 2022

As we come to the end of our second year of the programme, we would like to congratulate all the young people who participated in our training over the year, engaging in sports leadership training, OCN courses in Communication & lobbying, and leadership; peacebuilding/good relations and climate change workshops as well as tackling a range of social issues, making a positive impact in communities across the Island.

Since our last report in March, we hosted an EU Region Network Meeting in April, bringing together graduates of the Active Citizens Programme (Social Action for Climate Change) to share best practice and explore the potential to develop an international element to their projects. In-person delivery continued with 4 cross border youth exchanges, where our young people had the opportunity to spend time in each other's communities, learning from and about each other. We were also delighted to hold the first in-person Showcase event in the EPIC Museum in Dublin, bringing together participants from across our programmes to acknowledge and celebrate their achievements and learning over the year.



Programme Delivery Routes

1. Our Self-Starters

A group of 7 young leaders continued work on their social action project, which was to produce an awareness video highlighting children as the silent victims of domestic violence in the home. Filming took place on Saturday 30th of April. With the support of programme staff, the young leaders created their storyboard, cast, and planned the shoot, as well as taking on several acting roles themselves. The final product will be ready for launch in September.

We co-hosted an International Climate Change Networking Event for the EU Region in Dublin from the 28 April - 1st May with the British Council. This event, *Stronger Together*, had representatives attend from Poland, Greece, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Cyprus, Croatia and Bulgaria, and was facilitated by Damien Nee from EcoEdforAll. The workshop was developed as an extension of the successful Active Citizen Programme, delivered last year by both Co-operation Ireland and British Council Ireland.

Delegates were welcomed to the international gathering by Peter Sheridan, CEO of Co-operation Ireland, and Kerry McCall Magan, Country Director of British Council Ireland. They had the opportunity to visit the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun, as well as the Airfield Estate in Dundrum. The event gave participants the opportunity to reflect on their learning and to share best practice; with the view to brainstorming project ideas for collaborative social action projects that are cross-border and international in nature.



2. Our Targeted Groups

A number of cross-border residentials gave 124 of our young leaders the opportunity to come together with their partner group, participate in a range of team building activities and workshops exploring different identities North and South. They examined issues affecting young people in their communities and identified opportunities to make a difference by addressing these issues.

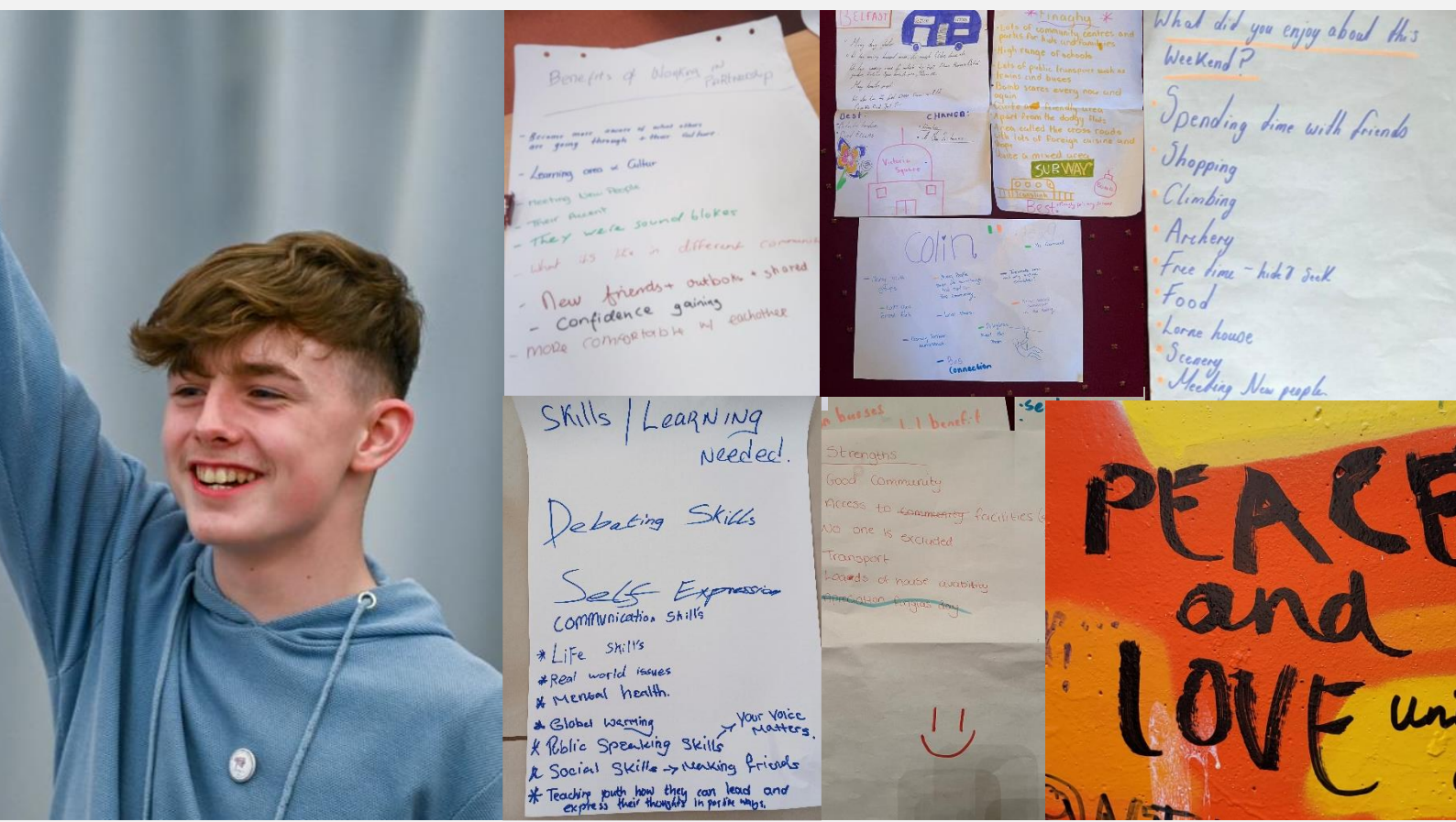
In preparation for these residentials, both groups took part in sessions exploring their perceptions of their partner's communities across the border, as well as creating presentations to share their identity and community.

As part of the residentials the young people enjoyed a guided tours of local areas of interest to give their partner group a greater insight into local history and community divisions.

Feedback from the young people on their experience highlighted...

“I loved it because I met loads of great people who were very nice to me and didn’t judge me for where I’m from. I really enjoyed the activities and felt it was really easy to socialise with the Northern Ireland people. “

The concept of social action and effecting positive change is core to Co-operation Ireland Future Leaders and as such, our groups undertook a range of social action projects, using the skills and capabilities gained through the year. These projects ranged from an awareness campaign of the dangers of vaping, to creating a safe space for young people in schools & youth clubs away from social media; to running a sponsored *Skipathon* as a fundraising for a local homeless charity; to creating mental health & well-being awareness campaigns, as well as an awareness campaign to promote greater gender equality.



International Programme

We continued working on the comparative study undertaken with young people from Belfast, Dublin, Cork and Boston on the views and opinions of young people to peace-building and good relations. The study was extended to Luton England and Scotland with an online workshop delivered on the 11th May by our young mentor trainers. A final report on the study will be generated and published over the summer.

- We have launched a formal partnership with HawaiiKidsCan, beginning with a design group involving 6 young people representing ROI, NI and Hawaii. This design group will help to develop a programme plan for an international youth led exchange focusing on global citizenship and social action to be launched in September 2022.

As a follow up to the successful delegation visit to Boston in March, we have established a link with a number of schools and colleges in the US, with a design group being set up to develop a framework for an international exchange on the theme of shared learning in relation to peacebuilding/good relations. The design group will involve young people from Notre Dame Academy, Hingham Boston who were involved in the initial research project undertaken in relation to young people's views and opinions of peacebuilding and good relations in different communities.



Future Leaders Showcase

The Future Leaders Showcase took place in EPIC the Irish Emigration Museum in Dublin on the 17th May showcasing and celebrating the achievements of our young leaders.



This was followed by a graduation ceremony which was hosted by two outstanding graduates of the programme, Prince Osarobo (below, left) from the Dublin Youth Leadership Programme and Nicole Parkinson-Kelly (below, right), who recently completed the OCN Leadership & Communication/Lobbying courses.



Peter Sheridan, CEO of Co-operation Ireland, presented the certificates and plaques to the young leaders and youth groups/schools who participated in the programme over the year. He congratulated the young people, highlighting the importance of their contribution: *"It is critically important that we develop the next generation of young leaders, to ensure a peaceful future for everyone on this island. Thank you to you all for making this programme such a success."*

An Outstanding Contribution Award was presented to two of our Future Leaders, Leah Delaney and Tiarnan Moss (pictured below with CEO Peter Sheridan), recognising and acknowledging their exceptional commitment to not only their own training and development, but also in giving back to others.

Throughout their journey with Co-operation Ireland, they have inspired others to continue their journey of learning and participation, as active members of the Future Leaders design group. Leah is a graduate of the Dublin Youth Leadership, recently travelled to the US exploring the potential to develop the international dimension of the programme. Tiarnan has not only participated in our recent OCN training but has also committed to supporting all programme activities, including the connect days as well as the social action project creating an awareness video on children as the silent victims of domestic abuse.



Ambassadors Programme

We completed this year's Ambassador programme with an invitation to the Showcase event and were delighted to facilitate conversations between some of our supporters and the young people. It's always inspiring to hear from the young people themselves about their journey – a big thank you to all those who attended.



Over the course of the year, we had a total of 40 volunteers from 12 organisations volunteer their time, experience and expertise. A reflection survey (again thanks to those who responded) told us that the activities carried out were well organised and enjoyable, and working with the young people inspiring and fulfilling. We had feedback too in terms of plenty of advance planning, providing a greater range of activities, especially in person, and looking at being more visible on social media, which of course we will take on board heading into the next year.

We'll share dates and times for September briefings to kick off the year with 3 opportunities to attend so we can hopefully suit everyone's diaries. These will involve a quick review of this year and then our plans for the coming year, with opportunities for discussion too.

Whatever your plans, please have a great summer, thank you again for your support and we'll see you in September.