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SOCIAL INNOVATION TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Throughout May to September we delivered a localised training programme with community members and organisations in our target areas in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Donegal. Across the programmes, 70+ individuals took part and 25+ community organisations/groups were represented. In Belfast, the training was facilitated by Roger Warnock of Zano Collective, and in Derry/Londonderry and Donegal, Clare McGee and Barney Toal of Fusion NI facilitated. The training covered topics such as: writing a business plan, pitch/presentation skills, marketing and communication, and how to write successful grant applications, and focused on supporting participants to work through the planning of their own community-led social innovation projects. Participant feedback on the training has been very positive; many felt they have a clearer understanding of how to further develop their social innovation projects, and feel well equipped to bring this learning back to their own organisations. Participants also noted the benefits of undertaking group training and the opportunities this creates in terms of receiving peer feedback, networking and collaboration.



APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN SOCIAL INNOVATION SUPPORT FUND

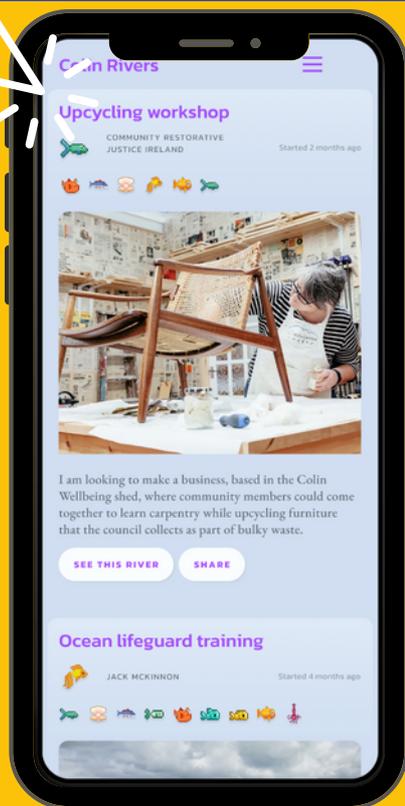
Future Innovators participants are now eligible to apply for further support to continue developing the social innovation projects they identified through the training, and help transform their concept from an idea into a reality. Groups can apply for up to £8,000 or €9,000 worth of support, which could include a wide range of goods and services. The aim of this fund is to invest in local projects that are underpinned by community-led social innovation. This involves encouraging the stimulation of new interventions that have the potential to innovatively address the challenges of peace building and social and economic development in a local community context.

The deadline for applications is 28th October 2022. Successful applicants will be announced in November 2022.



SHARED FUTURES

Click on the image to open a video tutorial of the Shared Futures online platform.



ONLINE PLATFORM

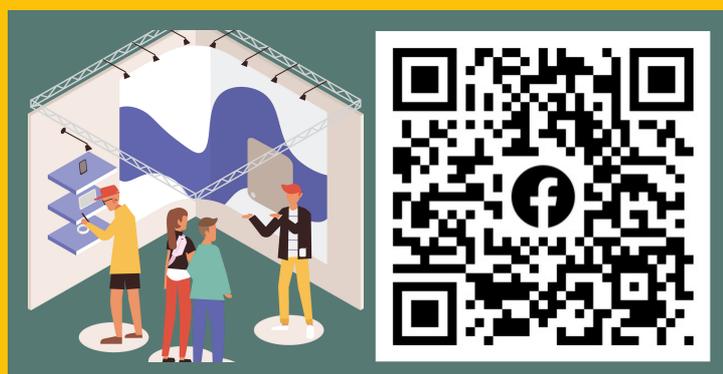
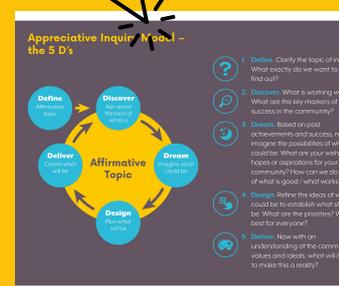
In Autumn, we will be launching a **free, custom-made** online platform called **Shared Futures**. This platform will be packed with tools and resources that will empower community members and community groups/organisations to **collaborate online** and **take the lead** on designing and implementing their own social innovation projects. Shared Futures is being **co-designed with Future Innovators participants**; this is crucial as we want to ensure the platform is accessible, practical and relevant for the local communities we are working with. This online platform is the **first of its kind** in Northern Ireland and will pioneer a new approach in supporting communities who are recovering from the legacy of the conflict, equipping them with the skills and know-how to use social innovation and social enterprise methods to **strengthen the local social economy and bolster community cohesion**.

Keep an eye on your inbox - will soon be issuing invitations to an official launch event and hope you can join us in promoting this innovative online platform.

Click on the image to open reports.

RESEARCH REPORTS

The first stage of the Future Innovators Project involved undertaking an Appreciative Inquiry process in each of the target areas of the project. This research has now been published and an area-based report of our findings is available to download from Co-operation Ireland's website.



NEW TEAM MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome two new staff members to the Future Innovators Team. Dragos Muscat has recently joined Belfast Interface Project to take up the role of Project Development Officer, and Laura Reid has joined Co-operation Ireland to take up the Project Manager post.

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REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

We have set up a dedicated Facebook Group to bring participants together from across the project. Joining the Future Innovators Network will give participants the chance to learn about the projects being developed in other areas, network with other community groups and collaborate on ideas. We will also be posting information on relevant resources and signposting to further opportunities. Scan the QR code to find the Future Innovators Network online. In early 2023, we hope to bring participants together in person for a dynamic social innovation conference. More details will be announced in our next e-zine. Watch this space!

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