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SOCIAL INNOVATION SUPPORT FUND

In October 2022, the Social Innovation Support Fund was opened to Future Innovators participants to apply for further support to continue developing their social innovation and social enterprise projects. Groups could 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. To date, seven community projects across our target areas have been awarded support. Pending confirmation with SEUPB, we hope to announce more support for community groups who applied but were not successful in the first round.



MEET THE PROJECTS

EXCEL CIC (Excellence through Exercise and Learning) based in Derry/Londonderry, aims to promote change using interactive games and teach the skills of martial arts and other multi skills games within a safe, enjoyable environment. Future Innovators will support EXCEL to set up pop up dōjō's in socially deprived communities and bring sports to the young people in these areas who may not normally be able to avail of them.



Supported by Charter NI, the Diamond Health Club was opened in East Belfast in 2019 to help people in the community with their physical and mental health and social well-being at a low, affordable rate. Future Innovators will support this project to grow and continue developing as a sustainable social enterprise.



North West Cultural Partnership will soon open a newly renovated and extended New Gate Arts & Culture Centre in the Fountain area of Derry/Londonderry, which will include a number of social enterprises. Future Innovators is providing support to set up a professional recording studio within the Centre that will support NWCP's educational and arts projects with the local community, and will be available for hire.



Future Innovators will support a new social enterprise led by **Mná Phort Mhaise**, a women's group based in Magheraarty, Donegal, who want to open **Teach Míic Mac Gabhann** (a restored thatched cottage and heritage site) to the general public and visitors, to sell locally made crafts and other produce. Visitors can also take part in workshops to make their own crafts and take a tour of the cottage to learn about its history.

Alongside the Education Authority, Future Innovators will support **Lagmore Youth Project** to establish a youth-led social enterprise in West Belfast involving the conversion of a bus into a mobile pizzeria/youth facility. **SOC Pizza** (every slice of pizza creates a **Slice Of Change**) will travel throughout the area and engage with young people through pizza and outreach work. The general public will be able to purchase pizza, which will support the youth work provision. Profits from the social enterprise will be reinvested to train young people to work with SOC Pizza as chefs and youth workers.



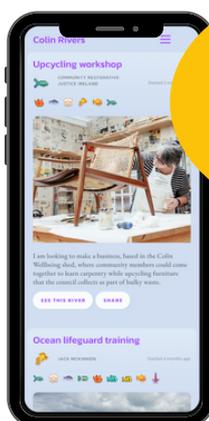
Street Move is a new social enterprise project in Belfast led by **Street Soccer NI** that supports the local community by providing an affordable furniture removal service as well as taking unwanted items to the recycling centre. Furniture donations are also distributed for free to clients with low income. Future Innovators will support this project to continue to grow and develop as a sustainable social enterprise.

The Multi-Cultured Club is a social enterprise in Belfast creating opportunities for skill sharing and training, community integration, and empowerment and employment opportunities for women with direct experience of the asylum system. Focusing on food fermentation skills, they produce 14 products on sale to the public through retail outlets, artisan food markets, online and via a subscription box scheme. Future Innovators will support this social enterprise to refine and upscale their operations and help their brand become more established in the marketplace, in turn, providing more opportunities for employment and social connection with the minority groups they work with.



DIGITAL PLATFORM

Launching soon: a free, custom-made digital platform packed with tools and resources to empower communities to collaborate online and take the lead on designing and implementing their own social innovation projects.



Click on the image to open a video tutorial of the digital platform.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

In the coming months some groups will take part in a study visit to learn more about social innovation and enterprise in other contexts. Planning is also underway to host a Social Innovation Conference in May - more details coming soon!

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