



SPRING

2023



FUTURE LEADERS

REPORT





Welcome & Introduction	_____	01
Programme Delivery Update	_____	02
Cross Border Residentials	_____	03
Self-Starters	_____	04
East-West & International Partnerships	_____	05
Ambassador Programme	_____	06
Development for 2023/2024	_____	07

Welcome & Introduction

As we come to the end of the third year of Future Leaders, we take the opportunity to congratulate all our young leaders for their hard work, commitment, bravery and passion over the year. We had a wonderful celebration of all their hard work at our Showcase event in W5 on the 4th of May, an inspiring event where the young leaders had the opportunity to share their learning, their highlights, and all that was gained over the year. There was a great buzz on the day during both the conversations during the market place event and a ceremony smoothly hosted by two of our young leaders, Karina and Lily.

Delivery continued apace in Spring with groups making their journeys across the Island to visit each other's communities during the second residential. The theme for these exchanges focused on youth activism with young people sharing the community-based issues they were addressing as part of their social action projects.

Our self-starters continued their OCN training in youth activism, participated in a 'diversity & inclusion workshop' hosted by the Irish Centre for Diversity and were hosted in Dublin by CIFL ambassador I-RES as part of a corporate residential focused on an introduction to the world of work. We commemorated the 25th anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday peace agreement by delivering the Film 25 initiative in partnership with the British Council.

Heading into the summer season, we are now completing final evaluations of the 2022/23 Programme. We have also launched a series of themed workshops with HawaiiKidsCan ahead of an international delegation scheduled for September, where our peer mentors will work with young people in Hawaii to create a collaborative global social action project and pledge to peace.

It has been a busy year, but so rewarding to be able to deliver a full year in person, and on behalf of the Future Leaders team we would like to congratulate all our young leaders for their commitment and dedication, and willingness to take on new challenges. We would also like to thank all our partners as well as our programme ambassadors for their support over the year and we are looking forward to working with all again in September.

Margaret Lucey,

Co-operation Ireland Future Leaders Programme Manager

Programme Delivery Update

Targeted Groups

(i.e. groups of approx. 10-20 young people working directly with teacher/youth worker in their local area)

During the spring term our groups focused on completing their second cross border residential and delivering a social action in their local communities

There were a range of issues tackled by our groups including plans aimed at promoting positive mental health, protecting the environment, tackling homelessness, promoting equality across all gender and sexuality groups, and campaigns to raise awareness of the need to improve literacy and personal safety among teenagers.

Young people participated in beach clean ups, poster campaigns, fundraisers such as a fun bake sale to raise not only funds but awareness about the issues chosen. Caitlin Peel, a student from Belfast High School, was at the centre of leading her group's social action, which was to raise money and awareness for a local food bank. She led by example baking a unique St. Patrick's Day themed cake and overall, £212.73 was raised for the charity. Caitlin was presented with an award for her outstanding contribution to the project at the Future Leaders showcase.



Partnerships have been focusing on completing cross border residentials and social actions

Cross Border Residentials

Highlights

Based in the Republic of Ireland	Based in Northern Ireland
<p>Uniting Communities, Lurgan/Portadown & Ballymun Youth Resource Centre 25-26 March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Visit to Ballymun & Ballymun Youth Centre-Team building exercises in Carlingford Outdoor Adventure Centre	<p>St. Joseph's High School, Belfast & Crescent Comprehensive, Limerick 27-29 March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tour of Belfast with welcome reception from the Lord Mayor- Visit to programme ambassador Biopax for insight into the factory and facilitated discussions- Visit to the North Coast
<p>St. Columb's Park House, Derry & Youth Work Galway April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Continued their environmental theme with a joint litter pick & beach clean up- Community Scavenger hunt in Galway city	
<p>Lagmore Youth Project, Belfast & Cork cross community group 24 – 26 March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Visit to Terence MacSwiney Community School (Location for filming of Young Offenders)-Welcome reception by Lord Mayor and Cork committee	



Self-Starter Groups

(i.e. Independent Learners working directly with Co-operation Ireland)

Over the year we delivered various independent learning and participation initiatives for our self-starters.

An OCN qualification in Youth Activism which was delivered on-line with a mix of presentations and facilitated discussions, with a number of ambassador and staff contributions. As part of this qualification the young people designed a campaign to lobby for change which they presented to a panel of ambassadors and representatives from related organisations. The themes chosen by the young people included wastepaper management in schools, raising awareness of drug and alcohol spiking, promoting equal rights for different sexuality groups in school and work, and plastic pollution.

Creation of a short film in partnership with the British Council to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. We recruited 25, 25-year-olds from across Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain to reflect on the 25th anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. The project was delivered on the 26th & 27th March in Dublin where the young people participated in a workshop sharing their reflections on the impact the signing of the agreement has had on their lives to date, and to hear their intentions and hopes for the next 25 years.

From 23-26th March, we ran our first Future Leaders corporate residential with I-RES in Dublin.

As a small pilot, we were able to give five young people the opportunity to gain a first-hand insight into the workings of the corporate world at the I-RES Dublin head office. Based on the 'Morgan Stanley' model that CI have delivered for 12 years, the event included a series of workshops, field visits, tasks, and activities to enhance the young leaders' skills, create networks and boost their confidence.

The theme for day one was Environmental & Social Sustainability and included a tour of the Dublin waste to Energy Facility (Covanta) in Poolbeg, with a visit to Deloitte offices in the afternoon to discuss their green approach to operations.

Diversity & inclusion was the theme for day two with a range of themed activities and visits including a trip to Naomh Olaf GAA grounds where they discussed their inclusion approach in the club. The young leaders then made a final presentation on their learning and experience to I-RES staff and guests.

**CO-OPERATION IRELAND FUTURE LEADERS
SPRING REPORT 2023**



East-West Partnerships

One of our peer mentors and member of the Future Leaders design group, will deliver several identity workshops as part of a diversity and inclusion youth conference in Corymeela Ballycastle this summer.

The conference is part of an initiative in Scotland called 4Ward 2Together, which brings together young people from across Scotland to tackle sectarianism.

Several of our young people will be participating in the conference which will include a series of themed workshops and guided cultural tours of Belfast city.

As part of the development of our East/West links, we are in talks with the Kilmarnock based 4Ward 2Together and hope they will become part of our targeted programme come September.

International Partnerships

The Hawaii & Island of Ireland initiative continues to grow, with on-line workshops developed to share our identities and island communities, ‘exploring the challenges faced in our communities & the issues that young people face and increase the local and international impact of positive advocacy at the community level’.

The planned delegation visit to Hawaii has been put back until September, but our mentors are no less excited at the prospect! There, they will work with peers on a joint international youth advocacy initiative, which will then be delivered to our young leaders back at home.

Ambassador Programme

Thank you for the fantastic turn out at our showcase and celebration event at W5 on the 4th of May. We had an amazing 30 invited guests which is a testament to your enthusiasm and investment in Future Leaders.

Over 180 young people, delivery partners, staff and invited guests attended, where the young leaders displayed an overview of their projects in a market-place style event. They were delighted to have the opportunity to discuss their learning and experiences with invited guests and other participants. This was followed by an awards ceremony during which the young leaders made further presentations and received bronze and silver peace awards, as well as group plaques. As Mags said in the intro, there was a fantastic buzz around the event, as is always the case when you bring together lots of teenagers en masse. It really gives us all here a massive boost to be in the midst of an event like that and hope the case was the same for those of you who were able to come along.

As well as the presentations to and by the young leaders, a special thanks go to Aisling Botes and Ciaran Kavanagh, daughter and brother of the late Paul Kavanagh, long time supporter of Co-operation Ireland and advocate for the power of young people to embody and promote peace and reconciliation. Aisling kindly launched the Paul Kavanagh award which will offer the chance for four young leaders per year to apply for a place on a leadership voyage in partnership with Sail Ireland.



You'll have noticed earlier in the report that we delivered our first Dublin based corporate residential with I-RES and a small group of five young leaders. Thank you to all at I-RES for their warm hospitality and hard work in putting together a valuable programme for the young leaders. We're already planning the next installment for 2024. Thank you also to Deloitte Dublin for hosting the group for the first afternoon.

As I mentioned in the last report, we are now absorbing our long standing student diversity programme in partnership with Net Eire at Morgan Stanley into Future Leaders 'Gold' level (more on that below) and will begin that transition this year.

If anyone is interested in either hosting one of these residentials in early 2024, or getting involved as one of the contributors or partners in its delivery, please do reach out. We're open to ideas, especially looking at a Belfast offering.

Site visits to our ambassadors during residentials have been a great hit and a highlight for many of the young people in their feedback. Biopax hosted St Joseph's College, Belfast, and Crescent Comprehensive, Limerick, at their headquarters in west Belfast for an insight into their sustainable printing/packaging business. We're really pleased to have facilitated a new relationship that has been taken forward by the teachers/leaders involved and to learn that a number of students from St Joseph's College have secured work placements there for the autumn term.

Our development plans for next year include an ambassador interaction at all levels of the programme, as we are hearing more and more the positive impact of these activities, and there's no doubt that they (you!) are a unique selling point for this programme.

You'll see from the graphic below how we plan to go about this and will give full details at our end of summer briefings in early September.

This may be my last report as I take on my new role as team leader for our youth and education programmes. However, we will continue to have a dedicated resource to develop the ambassador programme as an integral part of Future Leaders.

Best wishes,
Corinna.

Development Plans

We want to deliver the best we can for our young people, and as such are reflective practitioners. We take on board feedback, especially that of the young leaders we serve.

With that in mind, we have been working hard on our plans for delivery next year, aiming to provide a clear offering of progression activities around our three pillars of relationship building, personal learning and social action. We recognise that the cross border/cross island and ambassador engagements are unique selling points and seek to maximise those.

The graphic below shows our thinking and we look forward to presenting our ideas in more detail at the ambassador drop in briefings in early September (all times in GMT): Please save one of the dates!

Monday 4th September at 4.30pm

Tuesday 5th September at 1.30pm

Wednesday 6th September at 8.30am

Future Leaders NEW Peace Awards

PLATINUM >> International Residential >> Internship >> 10 Places

GOLD >> Corporate East/ West Residential >> Mentoring >> 20 Places

SLIVER >> Corporate NI/ROI Residential >> Accredited Award >> 30 Places

BRONZE >> Cross border Residential >> Certificate Award >> 150 Places

Thank you

We thank you for your continued support for the Co-operation Ireland Future Leaders programme.



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