



co-operationireland
future leaders

2025 SPRING REPORT

Co-operation Ireland Future
Leaders Programme

WHAT A START TO 2025!

This quarter was marked by powerful partnerships, impactful residentials, and inspiring leadership moments across all levels of the programme.

Participants continued their personal learning journeys and tackled important social issues, both within their local communities and on an all-island scale.

They built meaningful connections, developed strong relationships, and deepened their understanding of one another—demonstrating a genuine commitment to building good relations across the island. Working collaboratively with their peers, school leaders, local community figures, and our programme ambassadors, they brought the spirit of the Future Leaders Programme to life through action, dialogue, and shared purpose.

We also marked a major milestone – the 5th anniversary of the Future Leaders Programme – with a special reception at Hillsborough Castle.

Participants from all levels took part in a youth advocacy and peace-building workshop and had the honour of sharing their insights with His Majesty King Charles, joint patron of Co-operation Ireland.



PROGRAMME DELIVERY

Our Bronze groups continued to travel across the island, visiting each other's communities to build relationships and deepen their understanding of one another.

These cross-community exchanges were packed with learning, fun, and meaningful connection:

When Dundonald High School visited Trinity College Comprehensive in Dublin, they enjoyed a tour of the school and a historical walking tour of the city. The visit included collaborative workshops focused on leadership and youth activism.

Nagle Community College, Cork hosted Belfast High School, who visited the EY offices to explore leadership and career opportunities. The visit was followed by exciting team-building activities at Ballyhass Adventure Centre.

St. Joseph's College, Belfast welcomed Limerick Comprehensive College, with highlights including a visit to the Europa Hotel. Students explored leadership in the hospitality sector through a workshop led by hotel staff and gained valuable industry insight. In addition to these activities, students had the opportunity to speak with staff at the iNUA/Cliste Group during the launch of their partnership with Co-operation Ireland.

Dundonald High School, Belfast hosted Trinity Comprehensive College, Dublin. The group went bowling at the SSE Arena, toured the Peace Walls, and took part in reflective workshops in Newcastle. This partnership truly embraced every moment of their Belfast adventure.

SOCIAL ACTION

Trinity College Comprehensive also hosted Better Ballymun Day—a vibrant, student-led event as part of their ongoing social action work. The day brought together students, parents, local businesses, sports clubs, and community groups to make a positive impact on the area. It was a powerful demonstration of how small actions can lead to meaningful change.

Our Silver participants kicked off 2025 by coming together as an all-island group to launch an all-island social action project focused on substance abuse awareness among young people. After conducting peer research across schools and communities, they decided to create a social media campaign to raise awareness about the issue. As part of the campaign, they took over Co-operation Ireland's social media channels, sharing informative and impactful content they had developed themselves.



In February, Silver participants took part in their World of Work Residential at the Radisson Hotel in Athlone, hosted by the iNUA Group. The residential offered a wide variety of employability and hospitality-focused workshops, giving students practical insights into the world of work.

A highlight of the trip was a visit to Aaran Chemical, where students explored career pathways in sustainability and chemistry—an eye-opening experience that demonstrated the diverse opportunities available in STEM-related industries.



Getting their voice heard!



A proud moment for some of our Silver participants who had the honour of presenting to His Majesty King Charles during our 5th anniversary celebration of Future Leaders at Hillsborough Castle. They spoke about the challenges young people face today and how, through cross-border collaboration, they are working together to build a brighter future.

In January, our Gold participants began an exciting new chapter as they embarked on their mentorship journey, with many being paired with a diverse group of Programme Ambassadors.

Over the following months, mentors shared valuable insights from their own leadership experiences, offering guidance, encouragement, and support. Through regular sessions, they helped young people reflect on their goals, develop new skills, and grow in confidence as they navigated their own leadership paths.

In addition to their mentorship work, our Gold participants also collaborated with our Fundraising team to help coordinate a special Ambassador Engagement Lunch at Hinch Distillery in Belfast. This event gave participants the opportunity to connect with both existing and prospective ambassadors, sharing their personal journeys and the impact the programme has had on them over the past three years.

A highlight!

Three of our young people took to the stage at the Ambassador Lunch held at Hinch Distillery, sharing their personal journeys as young leaders on the Programme. They spoke passionately about the impact of the programme and highlighted the importance of its three core pillars: personal learning, social action, and good relations.



AMBASSADOR ENGAGEMENT

We are incredibly grateful for the continued support of our ambassadors, whose contributions go far beyond financial assistance. As already highlighted your involvement in programme delivery has been invaluable, from hosting site visits during cross-border residentials to delivering virtual and in-person workshops on key topics such as leadership, communication, and employability.

We were also thrilled to welcome so many ambassadors to both our Ambassador Lunch event at Hinch Distillery and our celebration at Hillsborough Castle, where they shared their insights and experiences, inspiring the next generation of leaders.

A special thank you goes to those serving as mentors, your guidance, and presence has made a lasting impact on the young people you support. Your willingness to show up, listen, and lead by example is never taken for granted.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Looking ahead, we have several exciting opportunities for further ambassador engagement in the coming quarter. If you're interested in getting involved, please don't hesitate to reach out.

KEEP IN TOUCH

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