



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

CSR Check 2019

Towards Responsible Business Ireland's National Plan on
Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020
2nd Progress Report



Prepared by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation

Minister's Foreword

Today's customers, investors and job seekers are more conscious than ever of the ethical record of companies; how and where they source their inputs; their impact on the environment; their contribution and impact they have in local communities; and their attitude and practice in relation to diversity and inclusion.

The Government's vision in Ireland's second National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility, *Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on CSR 2017-2020*, is that Ireland will be recognised as a Centre of Excellence for responsible and sustainable business practice. Good and authentic CSR practice is an imperative for business, and it is an imperative for building the kind of society we want to have in Ireland.

The CSR Stakeholder Forum, which was established to drive the implementation of the National Plan on CSR has energetically embraced its leadership role on CSR. A highlight for me last September was attending one of the Forum's SME outreach and networking events in Cootehill, Co. Cavan and hearing local small businesses articulate the value of sustainability for their business, the importance of a sustainable food chain, and the relationship between their business and the environment and their local community.

It is important that businesses, large or small, right across the country realise that placing CSR at the core of their business is a strategy that is good for their business. A responsible business is a more competitive, sustainable and successful business. And it is the collective response of businesses that will have an immensely powerful impact in our economy and our society. That is the premise underpinning the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and also the commitment in the Government's recently launched Climate Action Plan.

I would like to thank the members of the CSR Stakeholder Forum, and its Chair, Catherine Heaney, for delivering a busy programme of activity over the last 12 months. The csrhub.ie website has become a 'go to' place for information on CSR in Ireland. It is a showcase of best practice in CSR among Irish businesses - something we can be rightly proud of. I am particularly grateful to Forum members, who have acted as 'CSR Ambassadors'. Peer learning is a particularly effective way of achieving positive impact and can challenge us to go even further with our CSR ambition.

Finally, I want to congratulate my officials at the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation for supporting the CSR Stakeholder Forum and organising another successful CSR CEO/Leaders' Breakfast in 2019.



Heather Humphreys TD

Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation



Message from the Chairperson

The Government's National Plan on CSR *Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on CSR 2017-2020* is entering its third and final year.

The work of the CSR Stakeholder Forum in supporting and promoting the Plan has been significant and appreciated. The Forum is a voluntary body and we recognise our limitations. However, we also recognise our strengths: all of us are committed to strong CSR policy and practice. As a Forum we have used our voice, wherever possible, to promote the values and benefits of CSR engagement: in our workplaces, in the virtual space and through engagement with other businesses. We have highlighted models of excellence in CSR practice through providing a platform to showcase these at our meetings, and at our annual CSR open event. csrhub.ie and our associated communications platforms have underpinned our work, thanks to the support of a committed team at the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation.

By continued commitment and support for the CSR Action Plan, the Government of Ireland has taken CSR into and beyond the boardroom: this is embedding CSR practice more widely in business, and in the public sector.

In the past 12 months, through seven thematic Project Teams, we have focused on:

- **Circular Economy**
- **CSR in the Public Sector**
- **Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Environment**
- **Environmental, Social and Governance Factors**
- **SMEs**
- **Sustainable Development Goals**

and while the work of the CSR Stakeholder Forum remains focused on the objectives of the Plan, world events and external issues remain an important dynamic for the Forum to consider as we move into our third and final year of activity.

The influence of Greta Thunberg in drawing attention to the critical importance of arresting climate change has broadened understanding and engagement in climate action: the behaviours of business and workforces in arresting climate change will impact on the health, wellbeing and prosperity of generations to come.

In Ireland, the *Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 - 2020* is important in growing responsible and sustainable development. Many businesses are engaging with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve better outcomes for customers, workplaces and communities. The CSR Stakeholder Forum has engaged proactively with the Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment in supporting the objectives of this Plan, and we continue to urge business and public service – big and small – to think about the SDGs when setting ambition and business plans.

Within the membership of the CSR Stakeholder Forum, we have a wealth of experience, learning and good practice that can help other businesses and the public sector in a journey to deliver a responsible future that offers a sustainable future. Over the next year, we will continue to draw and share this expertise, and passion, to support Ireland in being a CSR leader.

Catherine Heaney

MD, DHR Communications



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The Four Dimensions of Corporate Social Responsibility



The Workplace

This is about how you support and engage your employees.



The Environment

This is about how you reduce, reuse or recycle resources to minimise negative environmental impacts.



The Community

This is about how you interact with your local community partners and organisations.



The Marketplace

This is about how your company makes responsible commercial decisions in dealing with suppliers and customers.

Chapter 1

Introduction

CSR Check 2019 is the second CSR Check, published by the CSR Stakeholder Forum in association with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI). CSR Check 2019 sets out the progress to date of the Forum in implementing *Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on CSR 2017-2020*, and reports on achievements of the Forum in the twelve months from June 2018-June 2019, in line with the National Plan. The CSR Check reports are available on csrhub.ie.

The CSR Stakeholder Forum, chaired by Catherine Heaney (MD, DHR Communications), brings together the business community, public sector and Government Departments and Agencies to encourage businesses in Ireland to embed CSR into the core of their business strategies and operations, be they large multinationals or SMEs. Membership is on a voluntary basis with each member committed to realising the vision for the National Plan, through their individual and organisational participation. DBEI provides the secretariat to the Forum and the current Forum membership can be seen in the centre pages of this report.

The work of the Forum is guided by the Actions in the National Plan on CSR 2017-2020 (See list of 17 Actions in Appendix 4) under four CSR dimensions; Workplace, Environment, Community and Marketplace. As part of its 2018/2019 Work Programme the Forum decided to focus on seven themes - Circular Economy, CSR in the Public Sector, Diversity and Inclusion, Environment, ESG (Environment, Social and Governance factors), CSR and Small, Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The themes are aligned with the Actions in the National Plan. CSR Stakeholder Forum members were invited to participate in or lead Project Teams that reflected the seven themes.

Each Project Team was responsible for delivering activities under its theme. The activities of each team were underpinned by the four broad strategic goals in the Plan:

- **Awareness:** Help employers and employees better understand the benefits of embedding CSR and responsible business practices into the day to day activities of businesses operating in Ireland
- **Access:** support the development of effective CSR practices in business through accessible and appropriate information resources
- **Support:** Support organisations by promoting and highlighting best practice CSR, CSR news and events
- **Policy Alignment:** Advocate and support relevant policy priorities across Government Department and their agencies, specifically those which complement CSR, including implementing the *Sustainable Development Goals Implementation Plan 2018-2020*, *National Plan on Business and Human Rights 2017-2020*, *Healthy Workplaces Framework etc.*

In addition to the ongoing work of Project Teams, the CSR Stakeholder Forum met three times during the year - September 2018 in Cavan; November 2018 in the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin; and March 2019 in the House of Lords, Dublin. Minutes of Forum meetings are all available on csrhub.ie.

Overall, 2018/2019 has been a busy twelve months for the Forum and the Project Teams. Chapter 2 provides an overview of activities under each theme.

Key highlights 2018/2019 include

- A successful SME outreach event on the environment highlighting sustainability, circular economy and energy savings was held in Cavan with Minister Humphreys in attendance
- The Forum has acquired deeper knowledge about how CSR is evolving and the thematic presentations at Forum meetings have been disseminated through csrhub.ie. (Appendix 2)
- The Forum's Social Media activity on twitter has grown in volume and followers (@csrhubirl) and the CSR Newsletter has increased its subscribers
- The [csrhub](http://csrhub.ie) now hosts over 70 case studies and shares best practice through case study development, and dissemination has continued to grow. (Appendix 1).
- Establishment of a new CSR online network. (see below)
- Forum Members have acted as CSR Ambassadors with speaking opportunities at various events in the past 12 months. (Appendix 3)

The CSR CEO/Leaders' Breakfast and this publication are an important element of the Forum's work on raising awareness and presenting good CSR Practice. The Department is pleased to include articles from Dr Rory Sullivan, London School of Economics and Politics and Tomás Sercovich, CEO, Business in the Community Ireland (Chapters 3 and 4), both of whom delivered keynotes at the CEO/Leaders' Breakfast this year. Also included are Chapters on Public Policy and CSR (Chapter 5) and Supporting CSR in Ireland (Chapter 6) which together provide a comprehensive view of CSR in Ireland today.

The CSR Stakeholder Forum has established a new

“CSR Online Network”

Does your company or organisation have a CSR plan?

Do you have case studies of good practice?

Share your CSR story and become part of a community of best practice in the CSR Network.

Please contact the CSRHub at csrhub@dbe.gov.ie and check out csrhub.ie for more information.

Chapter 2

Work Programme Project Themes 2018/2019

The CSR Stakeholder Forum identified seven themes for 2018/2019 and members of the CSR Stakeholder Forum were invited to participate in or lead Project Teams to drive forward activities and awareness under these seven themes.

Theme 1: Circular Economy

Theme 2: CSR in the Public Sector

Theme 3: Diversity and Inclusion

Theme 4: Environment

Theme 5: Environmental, Social and Governance Factors (ESG)

Theme 6: CSR and SMEs

Theme 7: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



CSR DIMENSION:

**Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020:**

'Work to increase the recognition of the impact of business operations on the environment and to encourage businesses to mitigate their negative impacts.' **(Action 15)**

In a circular economy, growth is separated from the use of scarce resources through production models based on long life products that can be renewed, reused, repaired, upgraded or refurbished.

Circular economy systems:

- keep the added value in products for as long as possible and aim to eliminate waste.
- keep resources within the economy when a product has reached the end of its life, so that they can be productively used again and again and hence create further value¹.

The current linear economy of make, use and dispose is coming under increasing environmental and social pressure. The present model is no longer viable due to increasing demand for goods, products and related resource use, which the planet can no longer sustain. Businesses who continue to rely on the linear model are exposed to greater risk of price volatility, resource scarcity and new market dynamics.

In 2015, The European Commission adopted a new Circular Economy package to 'help stimulate Europe's transition towards a circular economy, boost global competitiveness, foster sustainable economic growth and generate new jobs'² On 4 March 2019, the European Commission adopted a comprehensive report on the implementation of the *Circular Economy Action Plan*. Another useful resource is the National Economic and Social Council's (NESC) *Moving Towards the Circular Economy in Ireland*³. This report highlights the opportunities for business and social enterprises in applying a circular economy.

1 <https://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/environment/topics/sustainable-development/circular-economy/Pages/default.aspx>

2 <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/>

3 http://files.nesc.ie/nesc_reports/en/144_Moving_Towards_the_Circular_Economy.pdf

Key highlights under Circular Economy for the CSR Forum's Circular Economy Project Team during 2018/2019, were

CSR Stakeholder Forum Meeting and CSR Networking Event, Cootehill, Co Cavan, September 2018

Each year, the CSR Stakeholder Forum holds one of its four meetings outside of Dublin. In addition to the meeting and in support of its national agenda, the CSR Stakeholder Forum hosts a networking event for local SMEs. This year, Abbott Nutrition Ireland (members of the CSR Stakeholder Forum) hosted the event which was attended by local SMEs and Forum members. The event focused on the dimension of the Environment and one of the main themes was the Circular Economy. The audience consisted of local businesses of varying scales across different sectors including; banking, manufacturing, engineering, accountancy, retail and farming. Dr Sarah Miller, Rediscovery Centre, Dublin spoke about the importance of the Circular Economy and how the Rediscovery Centre, is the National Centre for the Circular Economy.

All presentations and case studies are available on csrhub.ie

MODOS

An exciting development during the year was the launch of MODOS. Modos is a new programme for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises focused on providing companies with the entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and toolkits on the circular economy, sustainability and resource efficiency, so that they can apply and replicate it in their own business.

MODOS, is an initiative of the Economic Development Office, Dublin City Council (DCC) and the Eastern and Midlands Waste Region Office (EMWRO) in collaboration with stakeholders. The CSR Stakeholder Forum through its Project Team on Circular Economy will continue to support the MODOS Programme through awareness raising initiatives over the coming months to encourage a strong take up by microenterprises and SMEs. Further information on MODOS can be found on localenterprise.ie/DublinCity.

The logo for Modos, featuring the word "Modos" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter 'o' is stylized with a blue and green gradient.

CSR Stakeholder Forum Project Team 2018/2019: Circular Economy

David O'Flynn, Dawn Meats

Mary MacSweeney, LEO Dublin City (Project Lead)

Natalie Hodgess, Vodafone

Shane Colgan, EPA



Case Study: Circular Economy

VivaGreen: Innovation in Sustainable Products

Location: Deansgrange, Dublin

Business Type: Research, develop & manufacture innovative, sustainable products for retail and commercial markets

Business Category: SME

VivaGreen has been operating since 1992 with the sole purpose to develop an innovative range of biodegradable, chemical-free and recycled products to substitute the myriad of harmful chemical and plastic-based products used in homes and workplaces every day.

CSR is at the core of what VivaGreen do and stand for. The success of VivaGreen and the communities within which it operates requires a commitment to sustainable management activities. These commitments can be broken down into four main areas:

Social Impact: VivaGreen products are designed to allow individuals, companies and communities to substitute harmful products with environmentally friendly alternatives. Partnerships with local communities and local projects allows an opportunity to support causes that are making a positive impact. This support can include education, product samples and man-power.

Environment: VivaGreen is committed to researching and developing innovative products made from renewable resources. Where possible these products are made locally allowing Viva Green to minimise its carbon footprint. The aim is to have the greenest products at the highest quality.

Since their establishment, Viva Green has substituted:

- over 285,000kgs of plastic and metal stakes with its biodegradable GreenStake range
- over 325,000kgs of plastic bin bags with its GreenSax compostable bag range
- close to 500,000 litres of chemical-based moss killer with its MossOff Chemical-Free product
- over 20,000kgs of virgin-plastic bin bags (imported from Far East) with its 100% post-consumer Irish plastic waste ReMade bin bags.



Ethical Sourcing: VivaGreen products are made from natural origins and sustainable sources, these ingredients are ethically sourced and sustainably produced.

Youth, Education and Research: VivaGreen is committed to educating a new generation to encourage the green movement, being actively involved in local community and helping local projects drives this message. Research with customers, communities and environmental experts is vital to VivaGreen as this uncovers problem areas sparking the development of new, green solutions.

By continually adhering to the four points above, VivaGreen have a positive social impact on their own business and employees, their suppliers, the customers who use their products and the communities in which it operates.

According to Viva Green, businesses adopting CSR initiatives will help drive demand for products such as theirs. They need to keep watching and listening to what the market requires as companies (and individuals) adjust their thinking, purchasing and practices to being more considerate of the world around them. This will feed into future product development at VivaGreen.

In Viva Green's experience, customers expect companies to adopt a more responsible approach in how they operate. It is becoming a key element in the marketing strategy of any business in order to maintain existing customers and attract new business.



**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

Goals: **9, 12, 15**

[Read the full case study at csrhub.ie](http://csrhub.ie)

Theme 2 CSR in the Public Sector

CSR DIMENSION: 

Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020:

'Support and promote Government Policy in areas which enrich responsible business practices.'
(Action 1)

'Continue to increase awareness of CSR, its value to businesses and to society as a whole.'
(Action 4)

All public bodies exist to provide a service to the public and/or communities and are responsible to different sets of stakeholders. The very nature of public service reflects many principles of social responsibility – accountability, transparency, respect for differing stakeholder's interests. A core function of Government is to regulate to ensure the safe, effective and efficient operation of society – for citizens and enterprises alike.

The Public Sector engages with CSR in a number of ways including:

- Promoting CSR to enterprises and organisations
- Adhering to good CSR practice as organisations in their own right
- Working in partnership with the private sector, NGOs etc on CSR initiatives where there is good policy alignment
- Embracing learnings from good CSR practice as an input to policy development.

In the provision of its own services and its role as an employer, the State has the opportunity to act as an exemplar in CSR practice and lead by example in adhering to CSR principles.

There are a myriad of examples of how the public sector has supported CSR, through effective initiatives in the implementation of policy, either directly through Government or in partnership with the private sector. These include; Healthy Ireland, Origin Green, Prompt Payment Code, Woodland Environmental Fund, Social Innovation Fund Ireland, SEAI and EPIC programme.

The CSR Stakeholder Forum has provided an excellent platform for the sharing of knowledge about CSR approaches and initiatives across the public and private sector. Over the past 12 months the Public Sector Project Team has sought, in particular, to build awareness of CSR in the Public Sector to a wider audience.

New Public-Sector Network

A new Public Sector Network was established in October 2018 aimed at bringing together representatives from across the wider public sector to share best practice and activate change. Central to the Network is the opportunity for peer learning as organisations learn from each other either on how to begin or deepen their CSR journey.

Public-Sector CSR Workshop

The project team is working with Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI) on the development of a workshop to explore practical ways in which the public sector can grow their CSR activity. Scheduled for late 2019, the Workshop will be aimed at Government Departments and their Agencies, as well as State sponsored Bodies. The workshop will build on the learnings from a previous workshop delivered by BITCI to public sector members of the CSR Stakeholder Forum.

Best Practice Case Studies

The project team also focused on the identification and sharing of Public Sector CSR case studies through csrhub.ie. The project team is committed to identifying case studies in Public sector organisations and developing their own case studies for dissemination. In sharing these case studies of good practice, the intention is to further raise awareness of CSR and also to provide useful practical guidance across the public sector.

[All presentations and case studies available on csrhub.ie](http://csrhub.ie)

CSR in the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI)

'dbeinnovation' is an initiative that aims to drive and deliver positive changes to the working environment in DBEI and embed and facilitate a culture of 'innovation' and new ways of working among staff across the Department.

The dbeinnovation Steering Committee is made up of a broad mix of staff across different divisions, grades, and locations, and is chaired by the Secretary General. The Committee develops an annual Work Programme through analysis of staff surveys, engagement forums and focus groups, organisational reports and other sources, prioritising issues and challenges that can be best addressed by cross-divisional staff-led teams. 'Sub-groups' are then established, bringing a range of staff together to focus on developing and delivering practical solutions to particular issues.

In the past year, dbeinnovation has championed new initiatives within the Department including a new 'Green Team', an 'Innovation Culture Group', and a new secondment programme; forthcoming focus areas include Health and Wellbeing and Knowledge Management. A Pride Network has also recently been established in the Department.

CSR Stakeholder Forum Project Team 2018/2019: CSR in the Public Sector

Alexa Toomey, Enterprise Ireland (Project Lead)

Andrew Mullins / Martin Hofler, Bord Bia

Biddy O'Neill / Kate O'Flaherty, Department of Health

Ciarán Seoighe / Cathy Foley, Science Foundation Ireland

Deirdre Kearney, Department of Rural and Community Development

Úna Ní Dhubhghaill / Frank Bradley, Department of Justice and Equality

James Hogan, Clean Technology Centre

Joe Gallagher, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment

Kathleen Gavin, Department of Education and Skills

Kathryn McGinn, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Pádraig MacCoscair, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Sandra Mullen / Deborah Dignam, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation

Tim Costello, IDA Ireland



Case Study:

CSR in the Public Sector

CSR in IDA Ireland

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan



Location: Wilton Place, Dublin

Business Type: Public Sector

Business Category: Large

IDA Ireland partners with multinational companies to win and develop foreign direct investment, providing jobs for the economic and social benefit of Ireland.

IDA's CSR and sustainability initiatives focus on areas where the organisation goes above and beyond its statutory obligations and principle functions as a Government Agency. IDA Ireland's CSR activities contribute to uphold and deepen the core values – passion for performance and achievement, public service, professionalism and people - that support IDA's overall strategy. Actions on Diversity and Inclusion form a key part of IDA's work on CSR.

A Diversity and Inclusion team was established by IDA in November 2017 to consider diversity within the organisation across five pillars of diversity: Ability, Gender, LGBT+, Multicultural and Socio-Economic.

The Diversity and Inclusion team conducted research both inside and outside IDA, mapping where IDA is, relative to international best practice, and met with other organisations to get an insight into their approach. The team developed a *Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Action Plan* which contained initiatives including; appointment of D&I Champions across the five pillars, programme of D&I events, and a supporting communications strategy.

The action plan was presented to IDA's Executive Committee in early 2018 and since then the Diversity and Inclusion team have worked with Executive Sponsors and HR to begin implementing the action plan's recommendations.

IDA aims to mirror the diversity in society at all levels of the organisation and strives to build a culture of inclusion, fairness and opportunity. A key element of the D&I programme has been inclusiveness and bringing colleagues together around common themes or ideas. Feedback in this regard has been positive and staff engagement around D&I is positive, per our staff survey.

Progress will be monitored as the programme moves into its second year.

IDA's key learning from the D&I programme to date, is to continue to actively engage with colleagues as the plan is developed and rolled out. This ensures the programme is fully inclusive and evolves in line with organisation's needs.

IDA's D&I programme has been advocated from the top of the organisation, with the full support of the CEO and Executive Leadership team. This has been a key success factor in building momentum and support for D&I initiatives as they are rolled out in IDA Ireland.

IDA's key recommendations for companies starting a D&I programme:

- Talk to colleagues and elicit their feedback around what's important to them from a diversity and inclusion perspective
- Prioritise staff feedback in line with organisational goals for D&I
- Engage thought leaders and peer companies to identify best practice
- Set key deliverables for year one so you can track progress.



**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

Goals: **5, 10**

[Read the full case study at csrhub.ie](https://www.csrhub.ie)

Theme 3 Diversity and Inclusion

CSR DIMENSION:



Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020:

'Identify and examine ways in which workplace related Government policies outlined in Action 2 (National Plan on Business and Human Rights) can be supported and promoted through business.' **(Action 11)**

'Work to increase recognition among large businesses of the value of sustainable business practices and corporate social responsibility in boosting employment, attracting and retaining talent and their impact on wider society.' **(Action 10)**

Best practice sees organisations committed to creating positive working environments where all employees, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical or mental disability, civil status, ethnic grouping, and geographic location are respected, valued and can reach their full potential.

The 2017 CSR baseline survey published by DBEI⁴ showed that many companies were active in some areas of equality and diversity, and in employee health and well-being.

The CSR Stakeholder Forum's Diversity and Inclusion Project Team set out to enhance understanding of Diversity and Inclusion through the identification of good practice and highlighting it through Forum meeting presentations and/or case studies for wider dissemination.

A key output of the Project Team's work was a dedicated session on Diversity and Inclusion at the CSR Stakeholder Forum meeting in November 2018. Three presenters were invited to speak on the topic, and the meeting was open to non-Forum members. Over sixty people attended from Government, business and civil society and heard:

- **Dr Maria Quinlan**, UCD, who spoke about Photovoice – a photography methodology used by Deloitte to highlight diversity to promote positive social change (see case study)
- **Deirdre Lynch**, Not so Different, who talked about her company Not So Different - a social enterprise which supports people with mixed abilities to realise their full potential through education and employment
- **Tom Tully**, Bord Bia, who discussed Diversity and Inclusion in the Food and Drink Industry from a Bord Bia perspective.

All three presentations are available on csrhub.ie

4 Indicative baseline assessment of CSR in Ireland, by Research Matters, available at csrhub.ie

The presentations showcased the ability and capability of a range of groups and how they can reach their full potential and play active roles in business and society within a supportive and positive environment. The session provided an opportunity for attendees to explore practical ways of driving Diversity and Inclusion initiatives in their own organisations.

The Diversity and Inclusion Project Team continues to focus on the identification and sharing of Diversity and Inclusion case studies through csrhub.ie. All of the members are committed to identifying case studies in enterprises and organisations and developing their own case studies for dissemination. In sharing these case studies of good practice the intention is to further raise awareness of CSR and also to provide useful practical guidance to organisations.

The presentations showcased the ability and capability of a range of groups and how they can reach their full potential and play active roles in business and society within a supportive and positive environment.

CSR Stakeholder Forum Project Team 2018/2019: Diversity and Inclusion

Amy Cradock, Grant Thornton Ireland

David O'Flynn, Dawn Meats

Deirdre Kennedy, IBM Ireland

Deirdre Ryan, Lidl Ireland

Gerry Fitzpatrick, Deloitte Ireland
(Project Lead)

Karina Howley, KPMG

Louise Archbold, DHR Communications

Paul Rogers, Northside Partnership



Case Study:

Diversity and Inclusion

Deloitte: Exploring Cultural Diversity in partnership with Photovoice

Location: Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2

Business Type: Professional Services

Business Category: Large

Deloitte's mission is to make an impact that matters for their clients, their people, their profession, and in the wider society by delivering the solutions and insights they need to address their most complex business challenges.

Photovoice is a methodology that is typically used in social advocacy and has not been used in a corporate setting in Ireland before. The methodology encourages people to use their voice and provides them with a platform to do so through the medium of photography. For Deloitte, the combination of a visual image and a personal story captioning the image really touched people as to what their colleagues' experiences were. The richness of the data gathered was powerful and engaged leaders and colleagues in Deloitte in a way that is not possible with numbers or words. The project also aimed to engage the wider workforce in the inclusion agenda more broadly by trying something innovative and visual that would capture people's imagination and empathy.

Participants came from across all departments in Deloitte and from nine different countries in four continents.

Leaders in Deloitte were enabled to see beyond the "otherness" to the individuals behind and therefore sparked a desire for greater personal connection to those from different backgrounds. The feedback was so positive that the company have been encouraged to run a second Photovoice project (with parents in the workplace). The Photovoice project has also helped move Deloitte to a new stage in their cultural maturity around inclusion. Instead of pushing the inclusion agenda with the firm's leadership, leaders are now coming forward with initiatives to drive greater inclusion, such as opening up conversations with their teams, reviewing training programmes, speaking at events etc. and working with Deloitte's Respect and Inclusion Council.

Longer term, the firm hopes to be able to measure the impact through retention and promotion statistics for minority groups.

The key learnings for Deloitte have been around the importance of giving people a voice and a forum to be heard; to enable the firm to get beyond the hard metrics; to really understanding what will make a difference to people's working lives. Having support from the CEO has been critical to their ability to share the results and use them to implement change. They also learnt that it paid off to take a risk and try something different by having the right leadership support from the start and beginning with a small group.

Deloitte's advice to businesses starting their CSR Journey would be to get buy-in and sponsorship from the top of the organisation, to engage with a diverse mix of people from across the organisation and to focus on doing one thing initially – perhaps a pilot. Then tweak and build from there.



**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

Goals: **3, 10**

[Read the full case study at csrhub.ie](https://www.csrhub.ie)

Theme 4 Environment

CSR DIMENSION:



Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020:

'Work to increase the recognition of the impact of business operations on the environment and to encourage businesses to mitigate their negative impacts'. **(Action 15)**

For organisations that integrate environmental management practices into their business, they are helping to not only minimise any negative impacts of their business on the environment and reduce their carbon footprint but also to contribute in a positive manner to sustainable development whilst reducing costs.

It was evident from discussions amongst the CSR Stakeholder Forum's Environment Project Team that large and multi-national companies typically have environmental management practices already embedded in their businesses. There are varying reasons for this, including some or all of the following: the company's own vision and values, cost reduction incentives, regulatory compliance, marketplace (customer) requirements/preferences, and the attraction/retention of employees in a competitive labour market.

Many companies employ environmental specialists to achieve their environmental management practices whilst others have 'Green Teams' that work alongside other key departments such as facilities management to bring about change.

The situation is often different for SMEs who, beyond meeting regulatory compliance, may not have sufficient additional resources to consider the broader environmental impact of their business or to assign resources to manage it. There may also be a perception that adopting environmental management principles into their business would be costly and that the business benefits are not clear.

At the same time, many SMEs are leading exemplars of environmental sustainability, and the CSR Stakeholder Forum's Environmental Project Team is keen to share good practice in environmental management within the SME cohort. A great start was made in September 2018 when the CSR Stakeholder Forum hosted an SME outreach and networking event on environmental awareness and sustainability in Cavan.

Abbott hosted the event and introduced their CSR and sustainability story. They were joined by local businesses; Áine Hand-Made Chocolate, LacPatrick (supplier to Abbott) who both talked about the importance of a sustainable food chain and the relationship between their business and the environment. Green Business, (no longer operational) provided useful guidance for SMEs on how to cut costs, increase savings and support the environment by becoming more energy efficient.

In March 2019, Environmental Project Team lead Neil Menzies, Transdev Dublin Light Rail presented on the company's sustainability journey at the Technological University Dublin (Tallaght Campus) and British Academy of Management Seminar "Developing CSR: The Challenges and Opportunities". His presentation is available on csrhub.ie.

The Environmental Project Team continues to focus on the identification and sharing of relevant case studies through csrhub.ie. All of the members are committed to identifying case studies in enterprises and organisations and developing their own case studies for dissemination. In sharing these case studies of good practice, the intention is to further raise awareness of the environmental dimension of CSR and also to provide useful practical guidance to organisations.

For organisations that integrate environmental management practices into their business, they are helping to not only minimise any negative impacts of their business on the environment and reduce their carbon footprint but also to contribute in a positive manner to sustainable development whilst reducing costs.

CSR Stakeholder Forum Project Team 2018/2019: Environment

James Hogan, Clean Technology Centre

James Kiernan, Chambers Ireland

Martin Hofler, Bord Bia

Neil Menzies, Transdev Ireland
(Project Lead)

Sinéad Hickey, Abbott



Case Study:

Environment

Hotel Doolin: Green Team Initiative

Location: Doolin, Co. Clare

Business Type: Hospitality

Business Category: SME



Hotel Doolin's vision is to "Strive to do it better, Dare to be different, Care to do it right".

Key to achieving their vision is listening to customers, acting on feedback, going the extra mile for all guests, spending time and resources training staff and continuously benchmarking the business against competitors and market leaders.

Hotel Doolin are proactive in re-inventing their products and services, looking for new and innovative ways to deliver great hospitality and experiences. Integral to this is that they carry out their business in a way that benefits the local community, the environment and their staff, while also realising that profitability is essential to their future success as a team.

Hotel Doolin is the only carbon neutral hotel in Ireland and their aim is to become carbon negative. CSR is pervasive throughout the business and some of its initiatives are as follows:

- Monitoring their food waste with targets in place to reduce the food waste in the hotel each month
- Organising the Doolin Writers's weekend and involve the local schools and library to encourage reading
- Buying 75 percent of their produce from a 30-mile radius of the hotel and support local businesses as much as possible
- The 'Smiling on the inside' initiative which includes a free Health Staff menu, monthly team activities, complimentary access to the local gym and swimming pool and free nutritional consultation.

As a result of engaging and implementing their CSR initiatives Hotel Doolin has: reduced costs in terms of energy, water and waste initiatives; achieved carbon neutral status; increased staff retention levels, reduced employee turnover; increased business levels with support from the community; raised a significant amount of money for charity, and hotel guests are becoming more environmentally aware and choose to visit Hotel Doolin because of its initiatives.

Amongst Hotel Doolin's tip for businesses starting their CSR Journey are:

- Whenever something needs to be changed, don't just go with what you have been doing all along. There may be a more environmentally friendly ways of doing it.
- Change your electricity to green electricity.
- Try working with Green Hospitality and use their spreadsheets for reporting on waste, water and energy consumption.
- Do team activities that help to raise money for charity – climb a mountain!
- Train your team on being more responsible for the earth.
- Try to plant trees or commit to planting trees.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goals: **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16**

[Read the full case study at csrhub.ie](#)

Theme 5 Environmental, Social and Governance Factors (ESG)

CSR DIMENSION:



Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020:

'Encourage businesses to report CSR activity in their Annual Reports and other publications to communicate these initiatives to their stakeholders thereby building reputation and gaining trust in the marketplace'. **(Action 14)**

Environmental, Social and Governance Factors (ESG) are a set of standards for a company's operations that socially conscious investors use to assess potential investments. Environmental criteria consider how a company performs in relation to environmental responsibility. Social criteria look at how a company manages relationships with employees, suppliers, customers, and communities. Governance deals with internal governance and reporting.

Responsible businesses know that building and keeping trust with its many stakeholders (be it employees, customers, suppliers, government, local communities) is a necessary condition for business success. Trust is fostered through openness and transparency by the business, and reporting is a component of this trust process between business and its stakeholders. In recent years, a vital business stakeholder has taken a significantly expanded interest in sustainability reports – and that is the investor community.

There is a growing market demand for more information on ESG issues and considerations. Internationally, sustainability and integrated reporting is increasing due to market drivers and investor expectations rather than through regulatory requirements.

The CSR Stakeholder Forum's ESG Project Team sought to raise awareness of ESG and related topics initially through a dedicated session at the CSR Stakeholder Forum Meeting in March 2019. Three presenters spoke to the topic of ESG and the presentations were uploaded to the csrhub.ie website to facilitate wider dissemination. The speakers and topics were as follows:

- **Bernadette Phelan**, BITCI, provided an overview of ESG and non-financial reporting developments and challenges. A summary of her presentation is included below.
- **Laura Heuston**, Sustainability Works, discussed ESG from the investor perspective and provided helpful definitions that distinguished between CSR, ESG and Responsible Investment (RI).
- **Andrew Colgan**, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation spoke about the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the Department's role as the OECD National Contact Point for Ireland (The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation represents Ireland at the OECD on the implementation of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.)

All three presentations are available on csrhub.ie

The European Union (Disclosure of Non-Financial and Diversity Information by certain large undertakings and groups) Regulations 2017⁵ (amended 2018) were brought to the attention of the CSR Stakeholder Forum members, circulated via the CSR Network and Newsletter and material updated on csrhub.ie. The Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement will present to the CSR Stakeholder Forum in late 2019.

The ESG Project Team will continue to explore the evolution of non-financial reporting and ESG factors over the coming year and continue to raise awareness through its members, including the enterprise agencies (IDA and Enterprise Ireland).

Responsible businesses know that building and keeping trust with its many stakeholders (be it employees, customers, suppliers, government, local communities) is a necessary condition for business success.

CSR Stakeholder Forum Project Team 2018/2019: **Environmental, Social and Governance Factors**

Audrey Nolan, Bank of Ireland

Claire MacEvilly, Danone

Bernadette Phelan, Business in the Community Ireland (Project Lead)



Environmental, Social and Governance Factors

Title: Why does sustainability reporting matter?

Author: Bernadette Phelan, Head of Advisory Services, Business in the Community Ireland

This is an extract from the address delivered by Bernadette Phelan at the CSR Stakeholder Forum meeting March 2019

A responsible business knows that building and keeping trust with its many stakeholders (be it employees, customers, suppliers, government, local communities) is a necessary condition for business success. Trust is fostered through openness and transparency by the business, and reporting is a component of this trust process between business and its stakeholders.

In recent years, a vital business stakeholder has taken a significantly expanded interest in sustainability – and that is the investor community. There is growing market demand for more information on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors. Internationally, sustainability reporting is increasing due to market drivers and investor expectations rather than through regulatory requirements.

Larry Fink, Chairman and CEO of Blackrock Investments (the worlds' largest asset manager) predicts that sustainable investment will be a core component of how everyone invests in the future. The *Task Force on Climate Related Financial Disclosure* is developing voluntary, consistent climate-related financial risk disclosures for use by companies and as information to investors, lenders, and insurers. These changes make sustainability a priority issue for Boards and the C-suite. Ireland's future success will be dependent on businesses understanding, and accounting for, the risks due to sustainability challenges.

The EU's *'Sustainable Finance Action Plan'*⁶ is working to deliver changes in investment flows, risk management, and transparency, and these will influence the business risks and opportunities open to Ireland. The EU's Directive on non-financial reporting⁷ was transposed in Ireland, and while focused on specific categories of company, it is an important signal to demonstrate the maturing of the reporting landscape.

But we are at an early stage of development, and investors are struggling to find the information they need to compare companies on ESG. However, the trajectory is set and work is happening to overcome current barriers. Initiatives such as the Corporate Reporting Dialogue⁸ and the Reporting Exchange⁹ are working to support companies, investors, and financiers to bring to market consistent and comparable reporting standards.

Reporting is challenging for companies – there are many reporting frameworks; there is a range of KPIs to potentially select; defining social KPIs is difficult; there can be a lack of consistency in internal processes; it is difficult to define scope and subject matter (i.e. what to include, what are the boundaries); and understanding what is materially critical to your business is challenging. Over time these difficulties will reduce; for instance work is on-going with Accountancy Europe and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development¹⁰ on how to upskill the sector to support companies.

Reporting on sustainability is a technical and challenging discipline, and we know that in many respects we are at an early stage of development. But big changes are ahead, and Irish companies need to consider their reporting on CSR and sustainability, for all their stakeholders, and the investors will bring very specific requirements. Companies need to better integrate sustainability into financial and investment discussions – and it is important that our learning curve starts now. By doing this, business will benefit from having a better understanding of risks, and critically business opportunities.

[Read the full article at BITCI.ie](#)

6 https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/sustainable-finance_en

7 <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Legislation/SI-No-360-of-2017.html>

8 <https://corporatereportingdialogue.com/>

9 <https://www.reportingexchange.com/>

10 <https://www.wbcscd.org/Programs/Redefining-Value/External-Disclosure/Assurance-Internal-Controls/News/ways-to-strengthen-sustainability-assurance-practices>

CSR DIMENSION:


Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020:

'Encourage more micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to raise their competitiveness through improved CSR engagement'. **(Action 9)**

Small and Medium Enterprises - SMEs (companies with up to 250 employees) account for over 98 percent of businesses in Ireland. Of these, 99 percent are micro-enterprises (10 or less employees).

In the past Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was often thought of as of as being something for larger organisations as they had greater resources to draw from. Nowadays, SMEs recognise that they too can and should embrace good CSR practice and operate in a more socially responsible manner. Indeed, many new start-ups today emerge with that purpose.

A key aim of the CSR Stakeholder Forum through the implementation of the National Plan on CSR is to increase the level of awareness amongst SMEs and micro enterprises of existing supports and resources on CSR practices, and to demonstrate that CSR is a win:win no matter what size a business is.

The CSR Stakeholder Forum's Project Team has helped to keep the SME perspective to the forefront of the Forum's activities. In the past year, the Forum strengthened its representation from the SME cohort by adding two new SME members. The Forum also continued its outreach activities by hosting a second SME Outreach and networking event in Cavan in 2019 where SMEs and local businesses shared their experiences of developing and implementing their CSR initiatives with peers. The collection of case studies from SMEs on the csrhub.ie has grown to 12 with an additional link to SME case studies from Business in the Community Ireland and the Forum's SME Project Team will continue to focus on showcasing good SME practice in CSR.

The CSR Stakeholder Forum is keen to encourage more research in the area of CSR, and in particular CSR in the SME sector. Below, CSR Stakeholder Forum member Dr Briga Hynes, outlines some of the knowledge gaps relating to the factors influencing SME engagement with CSR.

Unpacking the Dimensions of CSR in Irish SMEs – building the evidence base

Dr Briga Hynes, Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick

Course Leader, MBS in International Entrepreneurship Management and Lecturer in Entrepreneurship

Within this relatively nascent field of CSR, researchers' work to continuously improve the knowledge base supporting the link between theory and practice in CSR. In recent years, theory has evolved suggesting what factors influence CSR mainly at the macro level, but knowledge gaps still exist affecting the best responsible managerial practices. This problem is exacerbated when it comes small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) and more so in the Irish context. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has traditionally been the premise of the multi-national sector as they are better resourced and more able to invest in CSR and thus the majority of CSR research is completed within this domain. The applicability or transferability of learnings from large firms are problematic and questions arise as to how appropriate or relevant it is to retrofit large firm CSR frameworks to the SME context. Thus size matters, and for the many small and medium firms there is a lack of detailed evidence to support or explain the what, why and how of CSR practices. Moreover, the effectiveness of CSR efforts in SMEs is often difficult to observe and may be limited by internal systems that do not allow companies to measure, track, and optimize their sustainability impact.

Given the emergent status of CSR in Irish SMEs and the parallel efforts to provide supports to increase the level of CSR activity further study is required to build the evidence gap.

The Kemmy Business School (KBS), University of Limerick (UL), is one of Ireland's leading business schools and is academic home to over 3,000 students and over 100 faculty and staff and offers a wide range of business and management education programmes, both on campus and at external locations throughout Ireland. The Kemmy Business School are members of the CSR Stakeholder Forum.

CSR Stakeholder Forum Project Team 2018/2019: CSR and SMEs

Alexa Toomey, Enterprise Ireland

Dr Briga Hynes, Kemmy Business School,
University of Limerick

Conor Mulhall, The Little Milk Company

James Kiernan, Chambers Ireland

Lorraine Corcoran, Afanite (Project Lead)

Louise Archbold, DHR Communications

Neil McDonnell, ISME

Siobhán Masterson, IBEC



Case Study:

CSR and SMEs

CSR at The Little Milk Co Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities



Location: Dungarvan, Co Waterford

Business Type: Agriculture

Business Category: SME

The Little Milk Company passionately believe in the sustainability of rural communities. They have asked their team to get involved in their community of West Waterford to foster growth and invest in healthy communities. The company have funded and are organising, promoting and running Mental Health Workshops and in growing three local community groups, through financial investment, leadership assistance and organisation empowerment.

The Little Milk Company also engage with their local community partners, local sports club, local community centre. Having people engaged in local community groups is vital to the enjoyment of living in a rural setting, therefore their project has helped this in a small way thereby enhancing rural life in this community.

This collaboration has created a positive view of The Little Milk Co team in the community thereby increasing sales and brand recognition of their products. It is regarded as an ongoing and long-term project that the company feel they can enhance the lives of all those who live in local communities.

The Little Milk Company have learnt that the process of giving feels better than the process of taking. The initiative of sustainable local rural development is one that has many benefits, from sense of purpose to positive mental health benefits.

Their advice for an SME like themselves starting on their CSR journey would be to remember to focus on the social responsibility rather than the Corporate. Look at what makes sense in your community and realise that companies like yours making a small difference locally can make a large difference collectively.



**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

Goals: 3, 11

[Read the full case study at csrhub.ie](https://www.csrhub.ie)

Members of the CSR Stakeholder Forum



Business to Arts
Developing Creative
Partnerships





Theme

7

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

CSR DIMENSION:



Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020:

'Encourage Business to align their CSR strategy and activity to the Sustainable Development Goals' (Action 17)

As part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by unanimous vote by every country represented at the United Nations. The SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The goals are interconnected – often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another. The Goals provide clear guidelines and targets which can be adopted in accordance with the priorities of each country and the environmental challenge of the world at large.¹¹

The SDGs offer a framework to drive CSR activity and to further deepen and enrich it. Attainment of the Goals is based on a progressive partnership model between government, civil society and business, and represents an historic opportunity for business to engage more broadly, as a positive force for society.

The CSR Stakeholder Forum has embraced the SDGs' call to action for the business community and is actively examining how to encourage more businesses to consider aligning their CSR Agenda with the Goals.

The SDG Project Team sought to raise business awareness about the SDGs. Representing the CSR Stakeholder Forum, the team has brought a strengthened business voice to the National Sustainable Development Goals Stakeholder Forum through attendance and formal presentations in October 2018, January, and March 2019. CSR Stakeholder Forum member Dawn Meats (David O'Flynn) presented on how the company aligns its objectives to the SDGs as part of the company's sustainability reporting process. The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (Deborah Dignam) presented on the National Plan on CSR; and Chambers Ireland (Elisha Collier O'Brien) presented on the work of Chambers Ireland, their CSR Council and linkages to Chambers Europe. Elsewhere, Dawn Meats (David O'Flynn) represented the CSR Stakeholder Forum with a presentation at the launch of the BITCI Business Impact Map in March.

Through the gathering of CSR case studies, the CSR Stakeholder Forum actively encourages businesses and organisations to consider how their CSR strategy and activities align with the SDGs. Each case study maps CSR activities against the relevant goals. For some businesses this is the first time they will have undertaken that mapping. The SDG Project Team will continue to identify case studies of good practice in SDG - business alignment.

¹¹ <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html>

CSR Stakeholder Forum Project Team 2018/2019: SDGs

David Joyce, ICTU

David O'Flynn, Dawn Meats

Fergal Fitzgerald, ESB (Project Lead)

Joe Gallagher, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment

Lorraine McCann, EY Ireland

Neil Menzies, Transdev Ireland



Case Study:

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Dawn Meats CSR and Sustainability Strategy



Location: HQ Waterford (10 manufacturing locations in Ireland, 12 in the UK, and 10 Sales offices in Europe and Asia)

Business Type: Beef and Lamb Processor

Business Category: Large

Dawn Meats CSR and Sustainability Strategy is built across 5 pillars, with strong alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals:

- Resource Management
- Sustainable Sourcing
- People and Community
- Food Safety, Health and Nutrition
- Animal Welfare.

Resource management (which covers emissions, energy, water, waste, biodiversity) and sustainable sourcing aligns with the environment dimension of CSR. The People pillar links in with the workplace dimension of CSR. The community pillar links in with the community dimension of CSR and sustainable sourcing and food safety, health and nutrition links in with the marketplace dimension of CSR.

Across the five pillars, all actions undertaken incorporate a win:win approach as only actions that are win:win can be truly sustainable, because both the company and their stakeholders will be motivated to continue to develop initiatives and engage with the process leading to further benefits. The company's initiatives under the five pillars touch across most of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Reducing energy and water intensity while also saving money for the company reduces emissions and the impact on the local environment. Improving health and safety and providing more training both improves the working lives of employees and supports increased productivity. Putting measures in place to improve employee engagement improves staff retention through increasing job satisfaction.

Improving animal welfare lowers emissions, improves profitability and improves the environment for livestock for farming families and for the wider community. Sourcing products more sustainably helps to improve many aspects of the supply chain such as the environment, product quality and working conditions. It de-risks the sustainability of future supply by protecting the very resources the supply chain relies upon.

Food safety, health and nutrition are clearly important for customers, the ultimate consumer and are core to the continuing licence to operate.

Dawn Meats has learned that while CSR and sustainability is critical for business continuity, it still requires change, and change can often be challenging. It is critical to have senior level buy in, but equally critical that all levels particularly those which are implementing the initiatives, are given ownership.

CSR for Dawn Meats is about continuous improvement and it is important to set strict targets with timelines which are reviewed and revised when progress is made and when external factors require modification. Progress against these targets is reported internally and externally as what gets measured gets managed and what gets reported is managed even more carefully.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goals: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17

[Read the full case study at csrhub.ie](https://www.csrhub.ie)

Chapter 3

Progressing towards meaningful CSR?

Tomás Sercovich, CEO, Business in the Community Ireland

CSR appears to be mainstream practice in large businesses in Ireland. What evidence do we have of this evolution? Whether we look at the increase in volunteer hours featured in our Business Impact Map, or whether we study the number of companies signed up to our Low Carbon pledge, there is no single indicator of overall reference to see if we are in the right direction.

We suggest a critical indicator from the 2019 Edelman Trust Barometer: 70% of respondents consider that “A company can take actions that both increase profits and improve economic and social conditions in communities”- an increase of nine points on the 2018 figure, and 75 percent “expect CEOs to take the lead on change rather than waiting for government” – an increase of 12 points on 2018. What these figures evidence is that CSR has become fundamental in terms of societal expectations towards business and in the perception that CSR is more than doing good for employees and communities, it is about the purpose and strategy of businesses and its role in our economy and society.

This increased expectation contrasts with our member company Ricoh Ireland’s survey which revealed: “Irish businesses rank lowest in Europe when it comes to realising the benefits of environmentally-friendly approaches with just 45% seeing environmental regulations, including the Paris agreement, as an enabler of success and 60% of Irish respondents saying sustainability is nice but not a critical aspect of their business”.

Despite the diverging indicators, evidencing a need for more convergence between CSR and the business model, the critical trends marking the evolution of Irish business embedding sustainability are:

- 1. Climate action is a reality:** From activist Greta Thunberg denouncing “Our house is on fire” to David Attenborough stating, “the collapse of our civilisation is on the horizon”, there is a clear cry for concerted climate action. Business has a critical role to lead on the transition to a net zero emissions economy. Measuring, reporting and reducing carbon emissions across operations and supply chain will be defining for ensuring we remain within the 1.5-degree limit of global warming set by the IPCC.
- 2. Social inclusion as a driver of economic success:** As our economy continues to grow, a sense of the greater exclusion in our society becomes evident. Even with the live register at historical lowest levels, significant groups in our society remain marginalised. The focus for business has to centre on a broad notion of diversity including mechanisms to favour inclusion of marginalised groups, jobless households, homeless, people with disabilities, lone parents, migrants and refugees. The focus must be on job creation and retention.

- 3. Accountability and transparency:** Moving CSR from principles to embedded practices will require a better-defined capacity for businesses to demonstrate how they embed sustainability into their business. Expectations towards greater transparency and substance will be critical. Our Business Working Responsibly Mark, Ireland's only third party verified standard for CSR is helping companies demonstrate the evidence of responsible business across company operations.
- 4. A common roadmap for humanity:** The UN Sustainable Development Goals highlight the key areas that need attention as well as the business opportunities for progressive companies. Knowing how to embrace the 2030 agenda will be critical for any business with a serious intent of winning the markets of the future.
- 5. We must work together:** Partnerships and collaboration will be critical for the success of the 2030 agenda. There are inspiring platforms bringing together businesses to collaborate on common agendas, be it climate action or social inclusion. More engagement will be needed to include also supply chains, employees, local communities and government in these initiatives. Great transparency and accountability will be needed to ensure partnerships deliver on strategic intentions.

Business in the Community Ireland believes in "Better Business for a Better Ireland". For business to succeed and be profitable, CSR must be a key enabler of new market opportunities, new ways of working and new ways of engaging with employees and communities.

We must work together to ensure Ireland's transition to a low carbon economy and we must facilitate meaningful social inclusion. Business is a key driver of progress and we must harness this transformational power to be future-fit.

This will impact on our competitiveness, investor appeal and talent attraction.

Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI) is a not for profit organisation based in Dublin. They work with companies on their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Their vision is to make all companies in Ireland responsible and sustainable. BITCI is a member of the CSR Stakeholder Forum.

Chapter 4

‘Responsible Investment’

Environmental, Social and Governance Factors and their relevance to investment decision making

Dr Rory Sullivan

Visiting Professor, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and Chronos Sustainability

One of the most striking features of the global responsible business landscape is the growth in the number of investors that have made commitments to responsible investment. For example, the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) which was established in 2006, now has over 2,300 signatories, including asset owners, asset managers and service providers, representing almost US\$85 trillion in assets under management¹².

The PRI defines responsible investment as an approach to investing that aims to incorporate environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors into investment decisions, to better manage risk and generate sustainable, long-term returns.

Various factors have underpinned this growth. Environmental, social and governance (ESG) or sustainability issues are widely recognised as important drivers of investment value. Issues as diverse as climate change regulation, labour rights, tax, and bribery and corruption illustrate how ESG issues can directly affect company value and financial performance. There are other factors at play. These include client and beneficiary demand, societal awareness of issues such as climate change, diversity and tax, growing and increases in the mandatory and voluntary requirements on investors to take account of ESG issues in their investment practices and processes¹³.

When analysing companies on sustainability-related issues, investors broadly focus on two distinct (albeit overlapping) aspects of company performance. They look at a company’s exposure to wider political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and regulatory factors, and ask whether or not the company will benefit from these factors; that is, will the company be a ‘winner’ or a ‘loser’ in the economy of the future. They also look at how the company conducts its business, and how it manages issues such as human resources, energy and resource use, business ethics and diversity. Expressed another way, investors want to know how well companies manage their sustainability-related strategic value drivers and how will companies manage those sustainability issues that are relevant to the operation of their businesses.

¹² <https://www.unpri.org/about-the-pri>

¹³ See, for example, the PRI’s Responsible Investment Regulation map at <https://www.unpri.org/sustainable-markets/regulation-map>.

It is, therefore, important that companies communicate carefully and thoughtfully with their investors about the costs and the benefits of their sustainability-related activities and investments, and clearly link these to their business priorities and needs. They need to explain how they manage both the upside opportunities and the downside risks, and how they assess and reconcile the costs and benefits over the short, medium and long-term. Companies that are able to do this effectively are more likely to be able to build investor support for strategies that enable successful long-term growth of the business and that improve the company's impact on society and the environment¹⁴.

When we look at the Irish context, we see that the investor-company landscape is undergoing radical and rapid reshaping. The EU Directive for Institutions for Occupational Retirement Provision (IORP II)¹⁵ requires pension funds to publish their position on ESG issues in their statements of investment policy principles (SIPPs), to consider these issues in their risk assessments and in their governance structures, and explain how these issues are taken into account. The European Commission's *Action Plan for Financing Sustainable Growth* will increase the pressure on institutional investors to integrate ESG factors in their investment decision-making process, to report on how they carry out this integration and to report on the extent to which ESG risks are expected to have impact on the returns of the product or service provided. These changes, when taken with national policy developments in Ireland (e.g. on climate change, on the Sustainable Development Goals, on human rights) mean that the level of attention paid by investors to sustainability issues will increase in coming years. These changes, when taken with national policy developments in Ireland (e.g. on climate change, on the Sustainable Development Goals, on human rights) mean that the level of attention paid by investors to sustainability issues will increase in coming years.

But there are challenges. There is an urgent need to build capacity and knowledge on ESG issues and their relevance to investment decision-making across the Irish investment industry¹⁶. There is a need to develop and share case-studies and examples of ESG and responsible investment best practices that are relevant to the Irish context. There is a need to strengthen the disclosures provided by Irish firms on their management of sustainability-related issues, both those that are seen as strategic value drivers (which should be provided in annual reports, with a clear explanation of the relationship between these issues and the company's business model) and those that are less obviously strategic value drivers but which provide investors with the confidence that these issues are being effectively managed.

To summarise, investors have a clear interest in encouraging companies to manage sustainability-related issues in a way that supports long-term value creation and better risk management. This interest clearly aligns with the aims of Ireland's National Plan on CSR, which are to support Irish businesses to use CSR as a source of sustainable business advantage.

Dr Sullivan is an internationally recognised expert on climate change, human rights and investment. He has over thirty years' experience in the public and private sectors on these issues, including over fifteen years in investment management. Dr Sullivan is the co-founder and director of Chronos Sustainability and is a visiting professor in practice in the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Dr Sullivan is the author/editor of eight books and many papers and articles on responsible investment and climate change.

14 For a more detailed discussion of how companies might effectively engage with their investors and the potential benefits, see Chesebrough, D. & Sullivan, R. (2017), *Coping, Shifting, Changing 2.0: Corporate and Investor Strategies for Managing Market Short-termism* (UN Global Compact and Principles for Responsible Investment), <https://www.unpri.org/download?ac=4215>

15 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32016L2341>

16 This was a key conclusion from the recent analysis of fiduciary duty in Ireland, Sullivan, R., Heuston, L., McGann, C., Martindale, W., Kearney, G. & Feller, E. (2018), *Fiduciary Duty in the 21st Century: Ireland Roadmap* (The Generation Foundation, PRI and UNEP-FI), <https://www.sustainableireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Fiduciary-duty-in-the-21st-century-Ireland-roadmap.pdf>

Chapter 5

Public Policy and CSR

There are a number of examples across Government of where public policy and CSR align; these include the; *National Plan on Business and Human Rights 2017-2020*; Prompt Payment Code; Origin Green; Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) initiatives; Social Innovation Fund Ireland; and *the Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018-2020*. In addition to National Policy, the EU also has an important role to play in supporting and encouraging companies in their efforts to conduct their business responsibly.



Climate Action Plan 2019

Climate disruption is already having diverse and wide ranging impacts on Ireland's environment, society, economic and natural resources. The Government's Climate Action Plan, which was launched in June 2019, outlines the current state of play across key sectors including Electricity, Transport, Built Environment, Industry and Agriculture and charts a course towards ambitious decarbonisation targets. Reflecting the central priority climate change will have in our political and administrative systems into the future, the Plan sets out governance arrangements including carbon-proofing our policies, establishment of carbon budgets, a strengthened Climate Change Advisory Council and greater accountability to the Oireachtas.

Further information can be found on dcae.gov.ie



Healthy Ireland

Healthy Ireland is a government-led initiative aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of everyone living in Ireland.

The Healthy Ireland Framework was launched in 2013 and articulates four central goals for improved health and wellbeing:

- increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life
- reduce health inequalities
- protect the public from threats to health and well being
- create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland

Further information can be found on gov.ie



National Plan on Business and Human Rights 2017-2020

In 2011 the Human Rights Council of the United Nations (UN) adopted the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. These Principles, 31 in all, address the risks of adverse impacts on human rights from business activities, and centre on: the duty of the State to protect; the corporate responsibility to respect human rights; and access to remedy.

Ireland's *National Plan on Business and Human Rights 2017-2020* gives effect to the UN Guiding Principles and promotes responsible business conduct at home and abroad. It was approved by the Government in 2017 making Ireland one of only 21 states to have adopted a National Plan.

As part of the Plan, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade commissioned an independent baseline assessment of the regulatory and legal framework pertaining to business and human rights in Ireland. A Business and Human Rights Implementation Group, comprising representatives from civil society, business and Government, was established in late 2018 to oversee the execution of the Plan.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is represented on the CSR Stakeholder Forum and has presented on Ireland's *National Plan on Business and Human Rights 2017-2020*, to the Forum.

[Further information can be found on dfa.ie](https://dfa.ie)



Origin Green

Origin Green is Ireland's food and drink sustainability programme. It is a voluntary programme, led by Bord Bia, that brings together food industry – from farmers to food producers, retailers to foodservice operators – with the common goal of sustainable food production.

The programme enables Ireland's food industry to set and achieve measurable sustainability targets that respect the environment and serve local communities more effectively. Origin Green members include farmers and food businesses such as food and beverage manufacturers, retailers and foodservice operators.

[Further information can be found on origingreen.ie](https://origingreen.ie)



Prompt Payment Code

The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation introduced a voluntary Prompt Payment Code (PPC) in 2013 to help improve cash flow for businesses and ultimately achieve change in Ireland's payment culture.

The PPC has been developed by business for business and it is therefore vital that it is supported by business. Organisations can play their part by signing up to the Code through the online portal. Government is leading by example and has ensured that all Government Departments, their Agencies and Public-Sector Bodies sign up to the Code.

Signatories to the Code undertake to

- Pay suppliers on time within the terms agreed at the outset of the contract, or in accordance with legislation.
- Give clear guidance to suppliers by providing them with clear and easily accessible guidance on payment procedures.
- Ensure there is a system in place for dealing with complaints and disputes which is communicated to suppliers.
- Advise suppliers promptly if there is any reason why an invoice will not be paid to the agreed terms.
- Encourage good practice by requesting that lead suppliers encourage adoption of the Code through their own supply chains.

[Further information can be found on promptpayment.ie](http://promptpayment.ie)



Social Innovation Fund Ireland

Social Innovation Fund Ireland is the venture capital fund of the social innovation sector. The purpose is to find and back innovative solutions to address critical social issues in Ireland. Created by Government, every euro donated in private philanthropy is matched by a euro from the Department of Rural and Community Development, from the Dormant Accounts Fund. The original target set by Government was to raise €5 million in philanthropic funds, creating a €10 million national social innovation fund. After exceeding this target, the Department of Rural and Community Development announced the Government's commitment to create a €50 million social innovation fund. Since the first year of operations in 2015, 20 Funds have been created and over 80 of the best social innovations in Ireland have been supported. This has been done in partnership with Bank of America, Google, IPB Insurance, Medtronic, Mason Hayes & Curran, and more corporates, SME's, families and individuals. The vision is to create the world's best ecosystem for social innovation in Ireland.

[Further information can be found on socialinnovation.ie](http://socialinnovation.ie)



SEAI

SMEs play a vital role in the Irish economy, providing over 90 percent of national employment and contributing significantly to GDP and export income. Collectively SMEs account for a significant portion of national energy demand. Saving energy contributes to a better, cleaner environment for our future. Saving energy also cuts energy costs and makes business sense. These savings can be invested in more productive activities, making more resilient and competitive businesses.

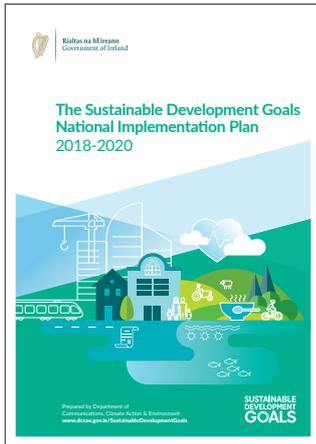
SEAI offers supports including:

- Financial supports
 - e.g. EXEED Grant which is designed for organisations who are planning an energy investment project and provides grant support of up to €500,000 per year. Projects that implement the EXEED process can save up to 30% in energy use.
 - A grant to install a heat pump system
 - A tariff for businesses that install biomass or biogas heating systems in a new build or in place of an existing fossil fuel heating system. You will receive an ongoing quarterly payment for 15 years based on how much heat you produce and consume.
- Training and advisory services
- Business events and supports

SEAI's Six Top Tips to help you save:

- 1** You know your own business – look around, if energy is wasted then so is your profit! Get to know your energy bills, talk to your energy supplier and make sure that you measure your energy use. If you don't measure you can't manage.
- 2** Attend a short training session on understanding your energy bills from SEAI – In January 2019 one company saved €6,000 on the spot!
- 3** Heating is a major contributor to energy costs. Lower your thermostat by 1 degree.
- 4** Save up to 30 percent by setting timers on heating and cooling systems. Properly maintain your heating and cooling systems to keep them working at maximum efficiency.
- 5** Contact SEAI about availing of an energy audit for your business.
- 6** Switch off your lights and electrical equipment when not in use.

Further information can be found on seai.ie or register your interest at business@seai.ie



The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018-2020

The *Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018-2020*, published in April 2018, sets out a clear structure of responsibility across all Government Departments, allocating ownership of SDG activity to both Departments and State Agencies with lead responsibility with the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment. The Department of Foreign Affairs, through Irish Aid reports on the international aspects of the SDGs.

The National SDG Stakeholder Forum, established in June 2018 brings together policy makers, civil society, business and other interested parties to share experiences and information on SDG related activities taking part at a national and international level. The Forum is scheduled to meet not less than four times a year, with each meeting having a thematic focus.

The aim of the 2019/2020 SDG programme is to both raise awareness of the SDGs and to demonstrate that everyone in society can make a contribution to achieving the 17 Goals. In January 2019, a call was issued at the SDG Forum meeting for SDG Champions. The 2019/2020 SDG Champions are due to be announced later this year.

One of the key objectives of the SDG National Implementation Plan is to ensure that more businesses embed SDGs into their business strategy. The CSR Stakeholder Forum contributed to the SDG Implementation Plan and continues to focus on the SDGs at CSR Stakeholder Forum meetings.

Further information can be found on dccae.gov.ie





European Commission

Ireland's National Plan on CSR has its origins in the European Commission's 'A renewed EU strategy 2011-2014 for Corporate Social responsibility'¹⁷ which included a call for all Member States to develop or update National Plans to promote Corporate Social Responsibility.

In March 2019, following up on its strategy, the European Commission published a staff working document (SWD(2019) 143): *Corporate Social Responsibility, Responsible Business Conduct, and Business & Human Rights: Overview of Progress*. This document provides an overview of progress made by the Commission and European External Action Service (EEAS) on the renewed EU strategy for Corporate Social Responsibility¹⁸ of 2011. It covers social, environmental, ethical, customer and human rights as defined in the strategy and their international dimension.

Further information can be found on ec.europa.eu



OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (MNEs)

The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) are recommendations addressed by governments to multinational enterprises operating in or from adhering countries, including Ireland. They form part of an international framework to ensure that the operations of MNEs are in harmony with government policies, to strengthen the basis of mutual confidence between enterprises and the societies in which they operate, to help improve the foreign investment climate and to enhance the contribution to sustainable development made by multinational enterprises. The OECD guidelines provide voluntary principles and standards for responsible business conduct consistent with applicable laws and internationally recognised standards. The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation is the OECD National Contact Point for Ireland and represents Ireland at the OECD on the Implementation of the Guidelines.

Further information can be found on mneguidelines.oecd.org

17 In their 2011 Communication, the European Commission define CSR as "The Responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society".

18 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions: A renewed EU strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility, 25.10.2011 COM (2011)681 final

Chapter 6

Supporting CSR in Ireland

Below are some of the many non-Governmental organisations who support CSR in Ireland today.



BUSINESS
IN THE
COMMUNITY
IRELAND

Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI)

BITCI supports and engages businesses to accelerate their transition to more sustainable and inclusive business models. Their purpose is to create 'Better Business for a Better Ireland'. For nearly 20 years, they have worked with businesses to progress and challenge their strategies and understanding of what sustainable and responsible business practice looks like. They work with over 90 of Ireland's largest companies, and partner with 250 businesses through social impact programmes.

BITCI works in three ways:

- The Network for Responsible Business
A movement of member companies striving for sustainability, and document best practice, promote learning by sharing, and advocate for a sustainable Ireland.
- The Business Working Responsibly Mark
Ireland's only certified standard for sustainability and CSR. Audited by the NSAI and based on ISO 26000, the Mark is the premier business standard in Ireland.
- Business Action Programmes
Supported by government funding, BITCI run a number of initiatives on education and employment through business support and employee volunteering.

In June 2019 BITCI launched its first Low Carbon Pledge Report with almost 50 leading companies, signed up to halve their direct carbon footprint between now and 2030.

[Further information can be found on bitc.ie](http://bitc.ie)

Business to Arts
Developing Creative
Partnerships



Business to Arts

Business to Arts is a membership-based, charitable organisation that brokers, enables and supports creative partnerships between businesses, individuals and the arts.

Business to Arts works to team their business members up with arts organisations and artists to develop solutions in areas such as sponsorship, commissioning, brand development, training, leadership development, internal and external communications and events. They also work with artists and arts organisations providing a range of training opportunities and coaching to help diversify income streams, grow audiences and improve efficiencies.

Minster Humphreys recently supported Business to Arts call for expressions of interest from businesses that would like to develop new (or significantly enhance their existing) CSR activity through the AR Programme.

[Further information can be found on businessstoarts.ie](http://businessstoarts.ie)



Chambers Ireland CSR Awards

Chambers Ireland is Ireland's largest business organisation with a network of Chambers of Commerce in every major town and region in the country. As Ireland's largest business network, Chambers Ireland continuously strives to support the development of a sustainable network of Chambers of Commerce nationwide, equipped to attract and retain members through meaningful contributions to create the right environment for those business to reach their potential.

The *Chambers Ireland CSR Awards* were established to recognise the work being carried out by Irish and multinational companies to improve the lives of their employees and to enhance the civic environment in which they operate. It is a unique competition that offers the business community a chance to promote their efforts in CSR and gain recognition for best practice. The awards are presented in a variety of categories covering all areas of CSR including; Marketplace, Workplace, Community, Environment, Diversity and Inclusion, CSR by an SME and CSR Communication.

The annual CSR Awards, which are supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development, will be held on 19th September 2019. The 2020 awards will open in mid-March 2020.

[Further information can be found on chambers.ie](https://chambers.ie)



IBEC

IBEC is Ireland's largest lobby group representing Irish business both domestically and internationally. Its membership is home grown, multinational, big and small, spanning every sector of the economy and together they employ over 70 percent of the private sector workforce in Ireland. Business today aims for something more than just returns on capital invested. This requires bold leadership and commitment in the long term even when conditions are unfriendly. More and more IBEC see this trend to a long-term orientation in business and CSR is at its heart. Sustainable business ensures that whole commercial networks work better – enriching all participants, rather than separating winners from losers.

There is strong evidence to show how having a healthy workforce can reduce sickness leave, lower staff turnover and boost productivity. This is good for business, employees, the economy and society. In support of this, IBEC introduced *The KeepWell Mark*, an evidence-based accreditation that recognises and celebrates business that puts the wellbeing of employees at the forefront of company policy. With standards of excellence and the roll out of this initiative across participating companies, IBEC with its members, can make Ireland's workplace a safer and healthier one.

[Further information can be found on ibec.ie](https://ibec.ie) and Thekeepwellmark.ie



The Wheel

The Wheel is Ireland's national association of charities, community and voluntary organisations and social enterprises. It provides leadership and a strong voice for the sector as well as a wide range of practical supports (advice, training, information, networking) for non-profits of all sizes and in every part of Ireland. With over 1,600 members, their mission is to strengthen the capacity and capability of non-profits to be their best and to play their part in changing Ireland for the better. Their core work programmes are: Public Policy and Advocacy, Networking, Training and Development and Information Services. The Wheel welcomes support from companies to assist them and their members change Ireland for the better. Such CSR partners have a unique and unparalleled reach into the 10,000 registered charities in Ireland and the people the charities work with. Partners benefit from aligning their brand with The Wheel to make a meaningful impact across a whole sector while playing a part in the tireless work carried out by community groups, charities, clubs and associations across the country.

Further information can be found at wheel.ie



Volunteer Ireland

Volunteer Ireland provides a service to support companies that want to engage their employees in volunteering – everything from practical “Team Impact Days” to professional skills sharing. There is significant interest in employee volunteering, and Volunteer Ireland receives a strong volume of enquiries. Volunteer Ireland works with organisations and business to identify projects where there is a real need, and ensuring they are executed to high standards and with real impact. Impact is then measured on both the employees and the host organisation (including their service users/beneficiaries). For example, it can be seen that as a result of volunteering, 76 percent felt an increased sense of belonging to the company, and motivation increased for 63 percent of volunteers. For the host organisation, as a result of corporate volunteering 100 percent felt that their premises had been enhanced, service-user and staff morale were boosted for 93 percent, and 46 percent felt that the service users benefitted from the interaction with employee volunteers.

Increasingly more companies talk about professional skills share, but these opportunities are not taken up as frequently as demand is still largely for practical volunteering. Volunteer Ireland's experience is that practical volunteering is both sustainable and impactful. If done well, practical volunteering can have a very positive impact on the volunteers, the company, and the host organisation – as exemplified by some of the stats above. The corporate volunteering programme addresses social inclusion by working primarily with small, local, grassroots organisations that don't already enjoy access to corporate partnerships, for example, *Cook Together Eat Together*, is a social inclusion programme which aims to break down barriers and increase awareness and understanding of others.

Further information can be found on volunteer.ie

Appendices



Appendix 1

Case Studies

The CSR Stakeholder Forum continues to identify and gather best practice case studies from Forum members and the wider business and public sectors. The full collection of CSR Case studies can be viewed at csrhub.ie. The full list is set out below.

	ORGANISATION	TITLE OF CASE STUDY
1	3fe Coffee Ltd	Engaging with the Circular Economy
2	Afanite	CSR Programme
3	A & L Goodbody	Writer in Residence Programme
4	Accenture	Corporate Citizenship Report
5	Achill Island Sea Salt	Sustainable Products
6	AIM2Flourish	Transforming Old Peat Harvesting Site for People and Community
7	Arthur Cox	Human Rights Legislation around Immigration
8	ARUP	Community Engagement Programme
9	B H Consulting	CSR Programme
10	Bank of Ireland	Workbench Initiative - Supporting Start-Ups
11	Bord Na Móna	Back to School with the Eco Rangers Programme
12	Cisco Galway	Partnership with Age Action
13	Chambers Ireland	Chambers Ireland CSR Awards 2018 - SMEs
14	Dawn Meats	CSR and Sustainability Strategy
15	Deloitte Ireland	Volunteering Programme
16	Deloitte Ireland	Exploring Cultural Diversity in partnership with Photovoice
17	Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation	Prompt Payment Code
18	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection	Employment and Youth Activation Charter
19	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Diversity and Equality Working Group
20	Department of Health	Healthy Ireland Framework
21	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	Learning & Development Strategy
22	DHR Communications	CSR Commitment
23	Diageo Ireland	CSR Programme
24	Dublin Bus	Workplace Gender Transition Policy
25	Dundalk Credit Union	Community Engagement Programme
26	Dropbox	Dropbox for Good Dublin Programme
27	Enterprise Ireland	Developing Enterprise Ireland's CSR Statement
28	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	National Green Teams Programme
29	ESB	ElectricAid Initiative
30	ESB	Supporting and Promoting Education Programmes
31	Freightspeed	Collaboration with HSE for Sustainable Transport
32	Gas Networks Ireland	Primary School STEM Education Programmes
33	Green Business	Online Resource Efficiency Tool can save €Thousands for SMEs
34	GIY & SAP Landscapes	Donation of 500 Trees for 1916 Centenary
35	Hotel Doolin	Green Team
36	IBM	Addressing the SDGs through Skills Based Volunteering
37	IBM	Be Equal
38	IDA Ireland	Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

	ORGANISATION	TITLE OF CASE STUDY
39	Intel Ireland	Volunteer Matching Program
40	Irish Life	In partnership with the GAA to Promote the Healthy Club Project
41	John Craddock Limited	CSR Programme
42	Keystone Procurement	CSR Programme
43	Kilbarrack Fire Station	World's First Carbon Neutral Fire Station
44	KPMG	Corporate Citizenship
45	Libraries Nationwide	Healthy Ireland at your local Library
46	LIDL Ireland	Sustainability Strategy "A Better Tomorrow"
47	LIDL Ireland	Autism Awareness Initiative
48	LIDL Ireland	Inclusion Strategy
49	Marks & Spencer	Marks & Spencer's Plan A: There is No Plan B
50	Mason Hayes & Curran	Supporting Art and Education
51	Mayo County Library (Mayo County Council)	In partnership with BITCI 'Time to Read' CSR Literacy Programme
52	Mental Health Reform	Steps into Work
53	Microsoft Ireland	Microsoft Business Mentoring Programme
54	Midlands Science	In Partnership with Bord na Móna
55	Midlands Science	In Partnership with Integra LifeSciences
56	Musgrave Group	CSR Programme
57	Presentation College Bray	Energy Bandits
58	RTÉ	Elimination of Single Use Plastic from Donnybrook Site
59	SAP	In partnership with BITCI Skills @ Work initiative
60	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)	Electric Vehicles for Business
61	The Community Reuse Network Ireland (CRNI)	Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
62	The Little Milk Company	Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities
63	The Q Café Company	CSR Programme
64	Tico Mail Works	Supporting Work/Life Balance
65	Transdev Ireland	CSR Strategy
66	Transparency International Ireland	Integrity at Work - Changing Attitudes towards Whistleblowing
67	Technically Write IT	In partnership with Cork Simon and Pieta House
68	Trinity College Dublin	Trinity Access 21 Initiative
69	Ulster Bank	Do Good, Feel Good in June
70	Ulster Bank	Sustainability in Ulster Bank
71	University of Limerick	First National Plan to improve the Resource & Energy Efficiency of IT Equipment across Each Stage of the Product Life Cycle
72	VivaGreen	Innovation in Sustainable Products
73	Vodafone Ireland Foundation	ISPC Childline and Vodafone Ireland Foundation
74	Voxpro	'Voxgro' Garden Initiative
75	Youth Work Ireland	'Work to Learn' Work Experience Programme for Young People Facing Educational and Work Readiness Challenges
76	William Fry	Incognito Initiative as part of Making a Difference in the Community Activities

Appendix 2

Presentations to the CSR Stakeholder Forum

During 2018/2019 the Forum invited speakers across the various themes to present to the Forum. The following sets out the presentations made at Forum meetings during the year.

September 2018

- Mr Joe Gallagher, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment updated the Forum on the SDG Stakeholder Forum meetings.
- Ms Sinéad Hickey, Abbott, presented on sustainability in Abbott.

November 2018

- Dr Maria Quinlan presented on Deloitte's Photovoice Initiative.
- Ms Deidre Lynch, Not So Different spoke about the inclusion of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder in employment.
- Mr Tom Tully, Bord Bia gave a presentation on Bord Bia's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
- Ms Úna Ní Dhubhghaill, Department of Justice and Equality outlined the Migrant Integration Strategy.
- Ms Deirdre Mortell, Social Innovation Fund Ireland gave an overview of the Social Innovation Fund Ireland.
- Mr Kevin Collins, Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine spoke about the Woodland Environmental Fund.
- Ms Laura Mahoney, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform addressed the Forum on the Public and Civil Service Reform Programmes.

March 2019

- Mr Rory Geraghty and Mr Markos Volikas, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade spoke about the implementation of the *National Plan on Business and Human Rights 2017-2020*.
- Ms Bernadette Phelan, Business in the Community Ireland gave an overview of Environmental, Social and Governance factors (ESG).
- Ms Laura Heuston, Sustainable Nation Ireland spoke about investors and the markets perspective of ESG.
- Ms Audrey Nolan, Bank of Ireland spoke about business perspective of ESG.
- Mr Andrew Colgan, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation spoke about the OECD Guidelines and the National Contact Point.

Appendix 3

CSR Ambassador Events

In 2018, Forum members were invited to become CSR Ambassadors to communicate the value and importance of CSR for business and society. The following sets out the full list of CSR Ambassador speaking engagements during 2018/2019.

September 2018	Forum Member	CSR Ambassador
Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) New Ways of Working Steering Group	Department of Business Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI)	Céline McHugh
CSR Stakeholder Forum SME Networking Event	Green Business	James Hogan
Youth Work Ireland – Co-Op Seminar	DBEI	Deborah Dignam
October 2018		
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Stakeholder Forum Meeting	DBEI	Deborah Dignam
	Dawn Meats	David O'Flynn
	Chambers Ireland	Elisha Collier O'Brien
November 2018		
CSR and National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA)	DBEI	Céline McHugh
	KPMG	Karina Howley
	IDA Ireland	Senan O'Riain
Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) Heads of Enterprise Network Meeting	DBEI	Deborah Dignam
Future in Food Ireland	Dawn Meats	David O'Flynn
December 2018		
DBEI Lunch and Learn Session	Chambers Ireland	Elisha Collier O'Brien
	DBEI	Céline McHugh Helen Keane-MacDonough Sandra Mullen
February 2019		
The National Biodiversity Conference	Dawn Meats	David O'Flynn
March 2019		
Technological University Dublin, Tallaght Campus and British Academy of Management (BAM) joint seminar on CSR	DBEI	Deborah Dignam
	Transdev Ireland	Neil Menzies
Launch of Business Impact Map by Business in the Community Ireland	Dawn Meats	David O'Flynn
April 2019		
Agri-Food Diversity & Inclusion Forum (AgDif) Masterclass Series (Bord Bia and Aon, in association with The 30% Club)	Dawn Meats	David O'Flynn
Open Doors Interdepartmental Seminar	DBEI	Céline McHugh

Appendix 4

Towards Responsible Business Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020

Table of Actions

ACTION	
1	Support and promote Government policy in areas which enrich responsible business practices.
2	Collaborate with DFAT through the CSR Stakeholder Forum to communicate the National Plan on Business and Human Rights.
3	Monitor best practice and evolving trends in CSR and benchmark activity through relevant tools and studies.
4	Continue to increase awareness of CSR, its value to businesses and to society as a whole.
5	Develop a CSR Award – Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum.
6	Develop a Work Programme to implement the actions contained throughout the Plan.
7	Arrange a CSR Leaders Breakfast Forum.
8	Collaborate with Chambers Ireland and the Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government to emphasise the increased need to expand the categories in the annual Chambers CSR Awards.
9	Encourage more micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to raise their competitiveness through improved CSR engagement.
10	Work to increase recognition among large businesses of the value of sustainable business practices and corporate social responsibility in boosting employment, attracting and retaining talent and their impact on wider society.
11	Identify and examine ways in which workplace related Government policies outlined in Action 2 can be supported and promoted through business.
12	Support and promote Government policy in areas which enrich responsible business practices in the Marketplace.
13	Implement National CSR Voluntary Mentorship Programme.
14	Encourage businesses to report CSR activity in their Annual Reports and other publications to communicate these initiatives to their stakeholders thereby building reputation and gaining trust in the marketplace.
15	Work to increase the recognition of the impact of business operations on the environment and encourage businesses to mitigate their negative impacts.
16	Encourage businesses to build their CSR capacity in the Community.
17	Encourage businesses to align their CSR strategy and activity to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Appendix 5

Glossary

BITCI	Business in the Community Ireland
CE	Circular Economy
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DBEI	Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
DCCAIE	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DJE	Department of Justice and Equality
DEASP	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development
EI	Enterprise Ireland
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESG	Environmental Social Governance
ICTU	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISME	Irish Small and Medium Enterprise Association
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LIC	Large Indigenous Company
MNC	Multinational Corporations
NSAI	National Standards Authority of Ireland
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SIF	Social Innovation Fund
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Our vision for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is that *Ireland will be recognised as a Centre of Excellence for responsible and sustainable business practices practice through the adoption and implementation of best practice in CSR in enterprises and organisations.*

Towards Responsible Business, Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020

Learn more

csrhub.ie

[@CSRHubIrl](https://twitter.com/CSRHubIrl)

[#CSRforIreland](https://twitter.com/CSRforIreland)

CSR Check 2019

A copy of this report is available on csrhub.ie

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Prepared by the Department of
Business, Enterprise and Innovation



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland