The Role of HEIs in Supporting the Development of the Social Enterprise Sector through Lifelong Learning Initiatives

Waterford Institute of Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE

Dr Mary Fenton, 11 December 2019

Waterford Institute *of* Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE

"Social Enterprise is a new and emerging 'third sector' that will help us to build a society and not just an economy."

Tammy Darcy,

Founder Shóna Project

SHONA
The Survival Kit for Girls

What is a Social Enterprise (SE)?

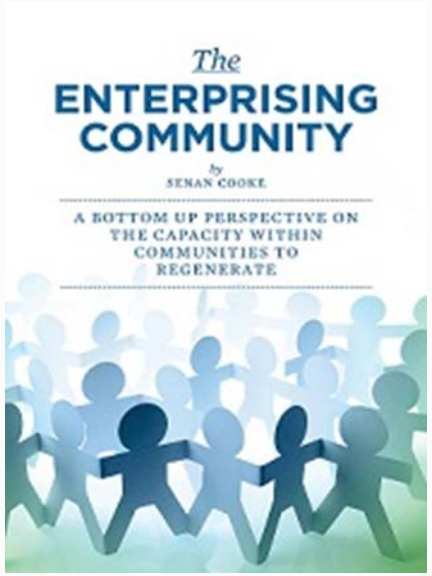
Waterford Institute *of* Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE

- An enterprise whose objective is to achieve a social, societal or environmental impact, rather than purely maximising profit for its owners/shareholders

- Trading goods or services and reinvesting *"profits"* into achieving social objectives

- Fully accountable and transparent Governance

Hybrid Business Model



Irish Social Enterprise Ecosystem

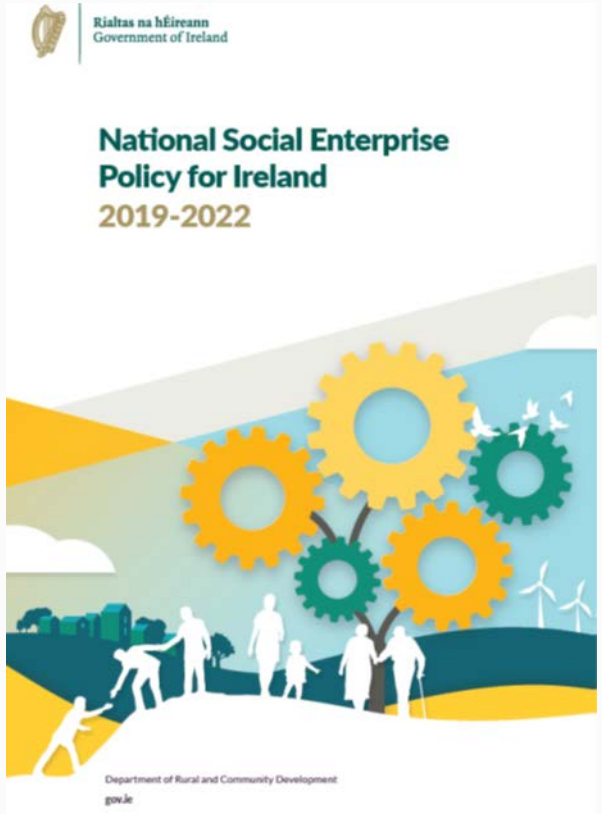
Waterford Institute *of* Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE

- ✓Emerging sector delivering important economic and social returns across a spectrum of activities with potential to:
  - ✓Create 40,000 jobs
  - ✓€2 billion to the Irish economy

(CPA Ireland, 2018)

- ✓National Social Enterprise Policy has given visibility and legitimacy to the SE sector

- ✓Implementation of policy needs a multi-faceted approach by key stakeholders: Government Departments, State Agencies, HEIs, Media, Activists etc.



First Steps: Understanding the Needs and Expectations of Social Enterprises

Waterford Institute *of* Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE

WIT hosted a national seminar for academics, thought-leaders, social entrepreneurs, social enterprise enablers, policy-makers and DRCD representative.

8 November 2019, Dunhill Ecopark

T&L NATIONAL FORUM
FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

What Social Enterprises want HEI's to do?

Waterford Institute *of* Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE

Visibility and Buy In

✓Institutional Commitment

Teaching

✓Inclusion of SE in Curricula

✓Student Placements in social enterprises

Research

✓World-class SE ecosystem relies on cutting-edge research particularly in Impact Measurement

Engagement

✓Access to HEI Staff Expertise, Facilities and Resources

Potential Initiatives for Lifelong Learning

Waterford Institute *of* Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE

Pathways to Employment and CPD

- Supporting people to gain meaningful and paid employment in the social enterprise sector and their own communities through accredited lifelong learning

Creating a SE Community of Practice

- Group Work methods promoting collaborative and shared learning
- Informal network of academics and SE stakeholders; Guest Speakers; Case Studies

Developing a SE Leadership Academy

- Accelerator Programme: Providing Incubation Space for Social Entrepreneurs

Applied Postgraduate Research

Over to You …

Dr Mary Fenton
Head of Department of Education,
School of Education and Lifelong Learning
mfenton@wit.ie

Waterford Institute *of* Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE