

THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR IRELAND

32 Lower O'Connell Street, Dublin 1.

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday 28th July 2006

AIB DONATION WILL BE USED TO AID MANY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS IN THE COMMUNITY

The Community Foundation for Ireland (CFI) welcomes a donation of €10 million from AIB Group for its Endowment Fund.

This donation results from AIB's 2004 agreement on the handling of the sum set aside in relation to Foreign Exchange charges. AIB agreed with the Financial Regulator that when all reasonable efforts had been made to identify individual customers entitled to refunds any money remaining should be applied for community purposes.

Commenting on the donation AIB Group Chief Executive, Eugene Sheehy said that "We chose the Community Foundation for Ireland because of its independence and its ability to make grants throughout the Country to local community and voluntary organisations across a wide range of causes and initiatives"

Tina Roche, the Community Foundation's Chief Executive said

"This donation will support the Foundation's programmes aimed at tackling the root causes of isolation and promoting diversity across Ireland."

"The Community Foundation for Ireland works in partnership with individuals, businesses and organisations to reach out to many of the most marginalised groups in our society. We will ensure that this donation from AIB is used to support a variety of necessary projects across the country."

Ireland has many thousands of voluntary and community groups, ranging from local play groups to drug rehabilitation units and from wildlife sites to carer centres, - and so for people wanting to support their local communities it is often difficult to choose which organisation to support. What donors find attractive about the Community Foundation is that it can support the full spectrum of causes, at national, area and local level as it is neither confined to a geographic area, or a particular type of philanthropy.

The Foundation is able to ensure that donors' money goes directly to groups that are well-run and to projects that are viable and will make a genuine difference to the community. CFI acts as a unique community "catalyst" by providing a personalised service for donors linked to local, on the ground, expert knowledge, supported by a small and effective centralised administration.

ENDS

FURTHER INFORMATION

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Background to the Community Foundation for Ireland

The first Community Foundation was established in Cleveland, Ohio in 1914, and since then, over 1,700 have been established across the world, managing over EUR 30 Billion in assets. These funds enable foundations distribute grants to a wide range of humanitarian, educational and cultural programmes within their (local, regional and national) communities.

The Community Foundation for Ireland was established in 2000, the first community foundation in the Republic of Ireland. It came about because the government, NGOs and individuals were looking to the future and trying to find new mechanisms to raise private independent funding for the Community and Voluntary Sector. Ireland had gone through significant growth from 1994 onwards and for the first time in its history had a significant number of individuals with independent wealth. In 1998 a paper was produced on behalf of a Combat Poverty on the issue of establishing a community foundation. This led to the Government issuing a challenge to the private sector to establish a community foundation.

Thus, the Community Foundation for Ireland was established with the support of a £1 million Government grant. It has as its remit civic philanthropy and civic leadership. The founders included businesses, NGOs, employer organisations and Government.

In little over six years, the Community Foundation has awarded grants totalling almost €1 million to over 400 community and voluntary organisations.

In 2004 the Community Foundation for Ireland (CFI) received a "challenge grant" from The Atlantic Philanthropies of €4 million, which is conditional on the Community Foundation raising €7 million in endowment funds. This "challenge grant" will further assist the CFI to raise significant funds and awareness of the community foundation and philanthropy throughout the Republic of Ireland.

Current status and recent accomplishments

Among the various fundraising initiatives being undertaken, CFI has begun to establish a special fund in each county in the Republic. (A separate Community Fund for Northern Ireland exists, with which CFI has an excellent working relationship). In the coming year, CFI plans to establish county funds in Limerick and Wexford, and has already successfully established a fund in Co. Monaghan, which is both fundraising from within and grant aiding projects benefiting marginalised individuals and groups in Co. Monaghan.

Community Foundation staffing

The Community Foundation for Ireland operates from an office in O'Connell Street, Dublin and is run by a core staff of four, supported by two volunteers that assist with administration. It has a board comprising fourteen members of eminent individuals chaired by John Gallagher.

EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS FUNDED BY CFI

- DUBLIN:** > Blakestown Mountview Youth Initiative, Dublin 15.
Personal development courses for young people at risk.
- > Dochas Family Centre, Clondalkin.
Participation of young people in inter-cultural voluntary work programme
- > Fatima Majorettes, Rialto, Dublin 8.
Training and equipment for majorettes.
- CORK:** > Community Action Enterprises, Mahon, Co. Cork
Traveller men's health and education project
- LIMERICK:** > Bedford Row Family Project, Limerick.
Research & publication of information handbook for prisoners' families.
- DONEGAL:** > Community Creations, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal
Development of the sexual health section of SpunOut.ie which provides information & support to sexual minorities for youths in rural areas.
- CLARE:** > East Clare Community Group, Scarriff, Co. Clare.
Skills, family training courses for isolated women in rural areas.