The following strategic plan was prepared by the Executive Staff of The Community Foundation for Ireland, in consultation with the Board. This three year Strategic Plan is based on the Logic Model for strategy planning and reporting and corresponding one year action plans for the organisation and individuals will be developed accordingly.

The 2015-2017 strategy has been developed against a backdrop of economic recovery following a severe recessionary period in Ireland. Net personal wealth is now at 2005 levels; some 30% off the 2007 peak. This recovery phase is characterised by rising property values (NB Dublin), declining personal/household debt, a move away from holding cash and a recovery in risk asset values. However the crisis has left a residual risk aversion amongst many people and recovery is more measured and not credit fuelled. While the recession may have curtailed charitable giving, in the past 12 months there has been a significant upward movements in wealth events – in terms of sale of businesses and the opportunity set for philanthropy should improve in particular in the context of inter-generational transfers of wealth1.

Given the direct correlation between income and philanthropy, this presents an opportunity for The Community Foundation for Ireland but also a challenge given that structured, strategic giving has not been a frequent way of giving in Ireland to date.

The Community Foundation’s deep seated commitment to the highest standards of governance and accountability has paid dividends in navigating the recent crisis of confidence in the charitable sector and governance concerns look set to be a continuing priority for charitable donors. The appointment of the Charities Regulatory Authority is likely to assist in restoring confidence in the non profit sector.

The recessionary period has had a high toll for the community and voluntary sector as articulated in a recent study2: “Ireland is a country of population growth; high in and out migration; and stability in its social patterns. The social situation is one of extreme difficulty. The economic and social crisis from 2008 saw a contraction in the economy; a sharp reduction in incomes, especially for the poor; and a threefold rise in unemployment. The political and economic context is one of continuity of austerity policy from 2008, but whose most impactful feature is the virtual elimination of the

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1 Presentation by Kevin Quinn, Bank of Ireland to Board of The Community Foundation for Ireland, July 2014

2 Brian Harvey, Scoping of need in social justice sphere, March 2014
state’s social policy architecture. Examining funding, although government funding fell -7.1%, its funding of the voluntary and community sector dropped -35%. The sector is expected to lose -31% of its workforce by end 2015. Three important philanthropic funders are leaving the field, reducing such funding from €60m to around €13m. The government has made it plain that government social spending will not rise from 2016, presenting us with a future of ‘post-austerity austerity’.

Having celebrated the centenary of the community foundation model globally in 2014, the Foundation will continue to avail of opportunities arising from its connectivity to community foundations globally (NB Canada, Silicon Valley, UK Community Foundations), as well as other global organisations (e.g. King Baudoin Foundation).

During the period of the Strategic Plan, it will be essential to ensure that certain core interests in relation to the fiscal and regulatory environment for philanthropy are protected, as well as articulating key policy positions in the run down to a General Election and key referendums.

As the Foundation enters a new period of strategic planning, it is well placed to meet these challenges and opportunities in the light of its experience and performance in its first 15 years.

Vision, mission, purpose and values

We believe in the power of philanthropy to deliver just and progressive social change.

We empower people who want to make a difference through a model of philanthropy that is based on trust, effectiveness and impact

We summarise our vision this way: Connecting People Who Care with Causes That Matter

Our mission: The Community Foundation for Ireland provides leadership by:

- Inspiring and supporting giving
- Thoughtfully caring for the assets entrusted to us, and
- Investing in people, ideas and activities that strengthen our communities

Purpose:

- We are here for the long term and operate within a proven model of philanthropy;
- We have a dedicated and committed staff with extensive experience of grant-making in Ireland and overseas;
- We have a strong commitment to ensuring that The Foundation attains impeccable standards of governance and transparency and follows best international practice;
• We have insights and a working relationship with over 3,000 non-profit organisations at a national, regional and local level throughout Ireland;
• We make giving fast, efficient and rewarding, as well as cost effective for our donors.

Our values - We stand for:
• Leadership: We are strategic and work towards being a centre of influence in the community. Our work is characterised by partnerships, learning, risk-taking, mutual respect, and a spirit of inquiry
• Integrity: We are accountable for what we do and transparent in how we do it. Our business practices are fair, equitable, and accessible
• Stewardship: We are responsible stewards of the Foundation’s assets, and focus our time, resources and energy on making a measurable difference
• Capacity-building: We value supporting the community and helping organisations succeed.

What will success look like on the 1st January 2018?
• Highest standards of governance and transparency
• Satisfied, engaged and committed donors
• Number of meetings / introductions annually increased significantly
• Number of funds increased by 10 per annum (over 75 funds)
• Closer professional adviser engagement
• Endowment increased to €50 million
• Grant making increased to €4.0 million per annum
• CFI admired for its strategic grant making
• CFI admired as a neutral convenor and thought leadership
• Excellent brand awareness within target audiences and robust digital strategy
• Professional, engaged, happy staff
• Operationally sound and a good fit with the work

**Strategic Objectives**

**Objective 1**: To grow the Foundation  
**Objective 2**: To optimise community impact  
**Objective 3**: To achieve operational excellence

In terms of implementing the above strategy, an overall three year work programme has been developed, as well as detailed annual work plans which map out a comprehensive work programme for each year.