

Impact Report 2023



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“The Foundation is a philanthropic hub with the expertise and experience to deliver positive, sustainable, and strategic impact. We link the generosity and vision of donors with the energy, ideas, and time of people in the community.”

Organisational Strategy of Community Foundation Ireland

For change. For better. For all.

Introduction

Placing child poverty top of the political agenda, strengthening calls for climate action and holding policymakers to account to end sexual violence were among key activities and goals for Community Foundation Ireland and its donors across 2023.

Our mission of Equality for All In Thriving Communities was front and centre of all our actions. As a Philanthropic Hub we worked with donors and our network of voluntary, community and charitable partners to remain true to our mission in the face of major challenges.

In this Impact Report we can report that grant-making for the year reached €20+ Million with over 1,150 grants issued.

Donations exceed €22 million in 2023, continuing strong levels of giving on the part of donors to Community Foundation Ireland since early 2020.

Our [Organisational Strategy](#) informed and guided the Foundation.

Strategic projects were supported across all four pillars supporting the strategy.

Sustainable Futures providing leadership on climate, Empowering Generations to support the youngest and older members of society, Inclusive Communities to reach those often brushed aside or ignored and Accelerating Change to be there when others are not.

In addition to achieving our mission the strategy commits the Foundation to grow and promote philanthropy. We are proud to have strongly influenced the first ever National Policy on Philanthropy – which has drawn heavily from our submission and research which are detailed within this report.

Recent severe weather events and their devastating impact on communities, the continuing struggle for many households to meet basic needs and the loud voices of the far right reaching our shore show that the New Year will bring its own challenges.

However, we can also look at opportunities such as the new national agency to combat sexual violence in all its forms. We will also carefully examine a commitment for a new cross-Government open-ness to match-funding partnerships to see where they make sense and can be impactful.

As a Community Foundation our connectivity to communities is vital. It allows us not only to identify those opportunities where strategic investments can bring about lasting and profound change, but it gives us an ability to see issues as they are emerging and formulate early responses.

I hope you find this report informative as it once again seeks to give you an over-view of the year now passing.

Finally on behalf of all of us at the Foundation and the communities we work with, Thank You.



Denise Charlton,
Chief Executive,
Community Foundation Ireland.



Headlines

1150+ Grants
Issued

5,000
Community
Partners



€130M+
In Grants Since 2000



100+ Donor Funds

Sustainable Futures

Climate Action

Climate change is coming close to home as severe weather events impact on our communities.

Thanks to a growing interest among donors we have been able to develop a leadership role both in terms of climate action and through biodiversity action to protect plants and wildlife.

Community Foundation Ireland remain lead funders of those organisations which hold policymakers to account to honour existing commitments and go further to promote sustainable futures for all. Leading campaigner and head of Friends of the Earth [Oisín Coghlan believes that a lot of climate action would not happen without philanthropy.](#)

Young people are the strongest voices in this area. We were proud to honour the theme of International Youth Day #InvestInOurPlanet by announcing strategic [Grants to Boost Young Voices.](#)

More and more communities want to end waste and our [2023 Circular Economy Grants](#) are allowing 26-communities to work with experts to develop local action plans.

Biodiversity Action

Our wildlife is in crisis. Thanks to our work in partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service almost 200 communities are taking biodiversity action by drawing up and then implementing plans tailored to their local riverbanks, forests, bogs and wildlife.

This year [Seventy Communities Received Support](#) through the partnership.

A major milestone was also achieved with the Foundation launching a new online information hub called www.actionforbiodiversity.ie which represents an unprecedented mapping of our wildlife and also has many resources to empower communities to take action.

Inclusive Communities

The impact of the cost-of-living crisis dominated 2023 and we responded.

Essentials such as food and clothing were provided through community partners across Ireland. This was evident in many grant rounds including Children's Promise Grants with the Katharine Howard Foundation, [RTÉ Toy Show Appeal Grants](#) and [Cost of Living Grants with Bank of Ireland](#).

Best in class research was used by the Foundation and its partners to drive policy and ensure change. Our donors set the agenda with the second [Child Poverty Monitor](#) showing 230,000 children living in poverty. In the countdown to the Budget we did so again with our [Poverty, Income Inequality and Living Standards Research](#) with the ESRI setting out the case for targeted child supports.

Budget 2024 did take some steps. The research remains current and continues to be used by leading advocates to inform policymakers.

Minister for Children Roderic O’Gorman TD launching the Community Foundation Ireland and ESRI 2023 research on Poverty, Income Inequality and Living Standards



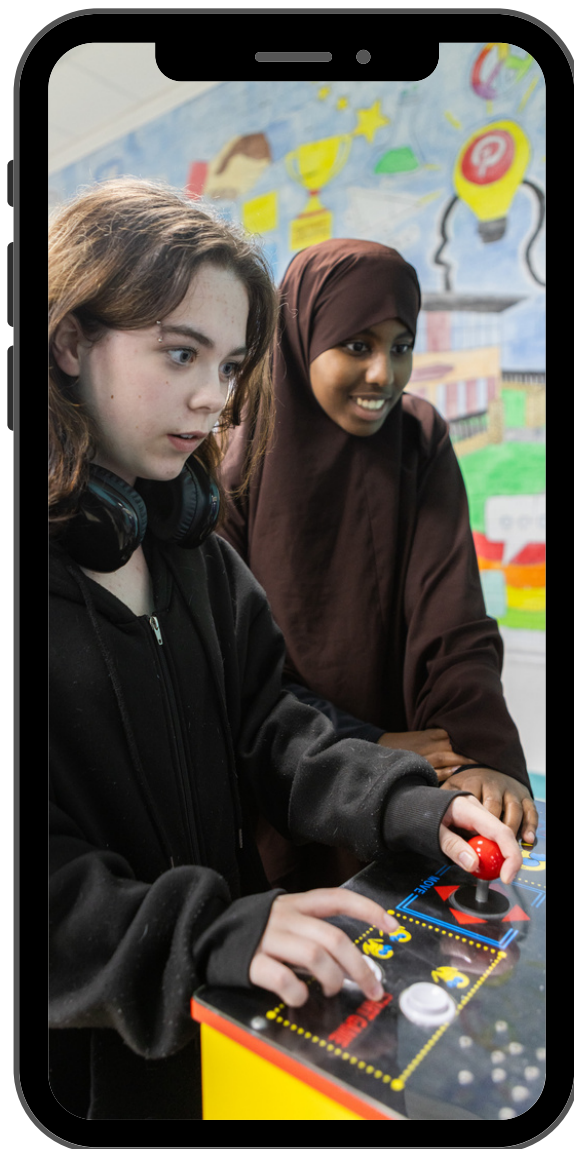
Inclusive Communities means that no-one is left behind.

Originally supported through our All-Island Fund, LGBT Ireland and the Rainbow Project (NI), in 2023 formed a national forum for the community. The result has been incredible with 30-Pride Celebrations supported to combat isolation and loneliness for people outside major cities.

Supporting those fleeing war in Ukraine remained a challenge and through our connectivity with communities and leading advocates we provided leadership. An [Ireland for Ukraine Impact Report](#) captures how the €7.5M in grant-making was allocated.

Support for Travellers again included support for Ireland's only legal service for the community while other needs were addressed across major grant rounds.

Marginalised communities and minorities are targets for the emboldened voices of the far right. Across a two-day convening the Foundation brought together thought-leaders and advocates, the convening will inform further actions in 2024.



“We nurture Inclusive Communities where everyone is respected and has the opportunity to contribute and thrive”

Organisational Strategy of Community Foundation Ireland

Empowering Generations

Equality means every voice is heard, irrespective of age.

Community Foundation Ireland works with people of all ages to ensure they can be active members of society.

Older people are empowered to form forums which influence the decisions which impact on their lives. A key learning from the days of enforced cocooning during the global pandemic.

In addition through family resource centres, local clubs and national organisations a whole host of activities are supported.



Our work with young people is informed by Youth Ambassadors who have a direct say in our grant-making. They brought a climate-focus to funding announced around International Youth Day.

For the RTÉ Toy Show Appeal this year alone transformed the lives of 1.2 Million Children and their loved ones as detailed in the [Toy Show Appeal Impact Report](#).



Accelerating Change

Community Foundation Ireland has been accelerating change since our establishment in the year 2000.

Our All-Island Fund has turned the desire to bring a cross-border lens to civil society into action with the formation of 30 North-South partnerships. This year more than half of those partnerships received [An Extra Level of Support](#) which will deliver big projects including an All-Island Manual on Climate Justice, Migrant Rights Ambassadors as well as services for children.

It has been the first year of Zero Tolerance, and our partners are seeing key asks being implemented including consent classes across all educational curricula, new refuge spaces and improved exit routes for women and girls out of prostitution.

As a philanthropic hub we continue to provide on the ground insights and best in class research to drive policy and attitude change.



Our Donors

Donors are central to our philanthropic hub. Donations exceed €22 million in 2023, continuing strong levels of giving on the part of donors to Community Foundation Ireland

This demonstrates the growing interest on the part of individuals, families, companies and other trusts and foundations in engaging in strategic and impactful philanthropy.

We continue to see renewed interest from existing donors, exploring how they might expand their giving to new issue areas, their local community or directing support to new and emerging areas of impact.

The year will see the establishment of at least 13 new Donor Advised Funds.

At Community Foundation Ireland we are seeing a number of trends emerging, notably a growing interest in longer term giving options.

This is being done in a number of ways:

A greater focus on legacy giving and legacy planning

Donors are now considering how their resources can continue to benefit society when they're no longer able to actively manage their philanthropy or perhaps where they wish to "pass the baton" to the next generation of philanthropists within the family or network.

Endowed giving

A key part of any sustainable philanthropic portfolio is an invested, or what we call an "endowed" (perpetual) fund. Over the past year we have seen a surge in donor pledges to endowed funds, ensuring that their philanthropic funds will be available to support communities, in perpetuity.

An appetite for innovation and sustainability within philanthropy

Donors are now considering philanthropy as a key element of their investment portfolio and with that comes a keenness to steward and grow assets available for grant making.

The Future of Irish Philanthropy

Ireland's first National Policy on Philanthropy offers an opportunity to grow and promote strategic giving. The policy represents a significant body of work which has seen the Foundation engage with Government and other partners for more than 18-months.

Three of our key asks are reflected in the final policy:

Placed Based Giving

A sense of place is central to Irish philanthropy with people supporting those communities with which they have a connectivity. Official recognition of this form of giving opens the way for us to grow our leadership in local funds.

Match Funding

A new cross Government open-ness to match funding arrangements allows us to grow our leadership in this area which has already seen successful partnerships on climate, in response to covid and the impact of the war in Ukraine as well as combatting sexual violence.

Legacy Giving

A commitment to grow legacy giving allows us to continue our goal to incentivise this form of gift-giving and bring Ireland into line with other countries.

In 2024 we will continue our partnership approach to ensure the Policy leads to meaningful changes so that the value of strategic giving and philanthropy is allowed to be even more impactful.

“We know philanthropy. It is different from public funding or charitable giving. It allows strategic and sustainable funding. It allows us to push boundaries. It is solution driven. It is brave”

Organisational Strategy of Community Foundation Ireland

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For change. For better. For all.