

# Impact Report 2022



For change. For better. For all.

A close-up, high-resolution photograph of a person's face, focusing on the right eye and the lower half of the face. The person has light brown eyes and is smiling slightly, with their lips visible at the bottom right. The skin is fair and has a soft texture. The background is a blurred, light blue-grey color.

*“The purpose  
of Community  
Foundation Ireland is  
to drive impactful social  
change. We link the  
experience, evidence,  
and expertise from our  
frontline partners with  
changemakers who want  
to make a difference.”*

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**Community Foundation  
Ireland Strategy**

# Impact Report 2022

## Introduction

“Permacrisis,” may have been named as word of the year but at Community Foundation Ireland, we believe our commitment to *equality for all* allows us to be both proactive and reactive – no matter the circumstances.

In 2022, in partnership with our donors and the community and voluntary sector, we have far exceeded our goals to deliver significant achievements at every level.

By linking the experience, evidence, and expertise of our frontline partners with key changemakers, we have been able to respond to the rising costs of living, the needs of people fleeing war, and the growing climate and biodiversity crises.

We also progressed longer-term work, achieving major policy changes on sexual violence, setting the agenda through research on energy poverty, and supporting 30 civil society partnerships operating on an all-island basis.

Our new strategy establishes Community Foundation Ireland as a philanthropic hub with a mission of *equality for all in thriving communities*.

All of our work is grounded in our four pillars: Inclusive Communities, Empowering Generations, Accelerating Change, and Sustainable Futures. I hope that this impact report helps illustrate the ways we progressed the first year our strategy.

Grants of €25 Million Plus were provided to communities in support of these pillars throughout 2022. A new record for annual grant-making.

On behalf of Community Foundation Ireland, I want to thank all our donors and supporters who play a key role in creating change. You are at the heart of our new brand, which says it more clearly and concisely than ever before: **For change. For better. For all.**

*Denise Charlton*

Chief Executive

Community Foundation Ireland







# HEADLINE FIGURES



Record breaking  
annual grant-making

**€25**  
million +



**100**

Donor-Advised Funds  
powering our  
grant-making



**€24,000**

Average size  
of grant



**€110**  
million +

Total grant-making  
over 22 years



**1,200**

Grants provided  
to support  
all communities



## Key Impacts

- Our input to the new National “Zero Tolerance” Government Policy results in:

A commitment to put consent in education curricula



A commitment to increasing domestic violence refuge spaces



The recognition of prostitution as Gender-Based Violence



- The RTÉ Toy Show Appeal delivers for 1.1 million children and their families
- ESRI research supported by Community Foundation Ireland and our donors puts energy poverty on the national agenda, leading to budget measures
- Our Environment and Nature Fund supports the development of 80 local Biodiversity Action Plans, protecting plants and wildlife with community involvement
- The All-Island Fund brings cross-border focus to 30 civil society partnerships promoting equality, human rights, and climate action







## Sustainable Futures

The twin crises of climate change and biodiversity are growing, but so is our commitment – and our donors' commitment – to building a climate movement. On Earth Day in April 2022, we launched our newest pillar, Sustainable Futures.

On a systems-change level, our Youth Fund, Older Persons Fund, and donor grants have strengthened the voice of leading campaigners who are holding policymakers to account in delivering on commitments including the 9-year National Climate Action Plan.

Through our Environment and Nature Fund, more than 80 communities across Ireland now have local Biodiversity Action Plans. These inform a national mapping of plants and wildlife and a new national biodiversity database, and many of the plans include farmers and landowners in the work. This work is also informing the Citizen's Assembly on Biodiversity.

The AXA Parks Fund invested over €900,000 across all 32 counties to support communities in enhancing and creating green spaces. Projects include conservation and restoration of woodlands, coasts, and rivers; community participation in creating pollinator corridors and disability-accessible spaces; and citizen scientist projects.

Our longstanding partnerships with Government further support communities with circular economy projects, bringing new life to dis-used mattresses, old clothes, bicycles and much more.

Our donors approach the pillar with innovative grants, including a multi-year commitment to support the Centre for Environmental Justice at Community Law and Mediation.

The Centre provides legal information, support, and training in environmental justice, with a particular focus on disadvantaged communities. This means working with Travellers, older people, those living in poverty, and those with disabilities to have a voice in the ways that climate change affects them on a day-to-day basis, including impact on jobs, health, housing, and food and energy costs.

Other donors support research on biodiversity, carbon capture and afforestation projects, and educational programmes for children and youth.

In 2023, we'll continue building the movement with support from our donors and our Sustainable Futures Advisory Group.

*“We are the leading foundation for thriving communities, equality, and environment in Ireland. We have a positive impact on communities, key social issues, and the planet. We grow philanthropy in Ireland as well as our assets and deploy them for impact.”*

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## Inclusive Communities

Our mission is *equality for all in thriving communities*. It has underpinned our partnerships with Travellers, The LGBTQIA+ community, migrants and many others over the past 22 years.

The war in Ukraine galvanised established and new donors to respond immediately, and spurred the creation of 'Ireland for Ukraine', a powerful coalition of leading media outlets, public generosity and Government to help people fleeing for their lives.

These combined efforts as part of our Inclusive Communities work provided over €7 million to 117 groups addressing immediate needs, protecting the rights of those seeking safety and shelter in Ireland, and supporting families in Ukraine forced into bunkers to escape bombs and bullets.

The Ukraine response spans every county and beyond, with significant funding directed toward international organisations shaping Ireland's humanitarian response for over 60,000 people. Family Resource Centres and local groups have received grants to help integrate refugees into their communities through social activities, English classes, therapeutic services, and other supports.

The Inclusive Communities pillar has also addressed the growing violence by a small but vocal minority against Travellers, LGBTQIA+ people, and other communities. Across all our funding we include those communities which are often at greater risk of inequality, particularly at a time of crisis.



Chief Executive Denise Charlton with Minister of State, Joe O'Brien, TD at launch of Ireland for Ukraine grants.

*“We offer confidence to donors, grantees, and communities that they are partnering with a committed, professional, and cutting-edge organisation committed to openness, transparency and best in class internal policies and Governance.”*

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## Accelerating Change

The cost-of-living crisis is now a reality. Ground-breaking research with the ESRI, made possible by our donors, put the issue of energy poverty on the national agenda, demonstrating the importance of Accelerating Change.

The research laid out the stark reality that almost 40% of homes are at risk of energy poverty, and it directly influenced support measures in Budget 2023. We also supported ESRI research on Poverty, Income Inequality and Living Standards, which showed that almost 70% of the 695,000 people in material deprivation are not regarded as being 'at risk of poverty'. The research acknowledged the vulnerable circumstances of households with lone parents and with people living with disabilities, and pointed to the necessity of calculating rental and mortgage expenses in assessing poverty levels.

This agenda-setting research has sparked a conversation about true levels of poverty in the cost-of-living crisis.

The publication of [Zero Tolerance](#), the new national action plan to end sexual violence, saw the goals of many of our frontline partner and advocates become policy with commitments to classes on consent, to increase refuge places, and recognition that prostitution is gender-based violence.

In 2023 we will continue to shape the narrative and turn the dial on these issues. We will partner with grantees and donors to help ensure commitments become actions.

## Empowering Generations

Equality means every voice should be heard, irrespective of age.

During COVID-19, we supported the Alliance for Age Sector NGOs to produce research that offered insight to the experience of older persons throughout the pandemic. Many said they 'felt cancelled'.

As a philanthropic hub, research informs our actions and grant-making. Our Older Persons Fund has responded to this finding by supporting advocacy and civic engagement projects for many groups, including those for veterans, older Travellers, Migrants and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. We are also supporting regional forums so older people can influence policy which impacts on their lives.

Listening to voices of all ages is true equality. Throughout the year, a panel of Youth Ambassadors informed our work and support for young people. They were given an active input in framing and deciding our grant-making. Their input gave a unique perspective allowing us to deliver projects which they are passionate about, including support for marginalised groups and climate action.

The Youth Panel not only supports the integrity of our own grant-making; it also fosters an interest in philanthropy for the next generation.

The RTÉ Toy Show Appeal continues to deliver incredible support for over 1.1 million children and their loved ones in every county. The third year of the appeal brings the total raised by viewers to over €17 million.

At the same time, we have continued to partner with Children's Rights Alliance to end child poverty. Their work on the Child Poverty Monitor has created a benchmark to measure progress over the long-term and serves as a powerful tool for advocacy.



## Thank You

Our achievements in 2022 are all the more incredible given they happened against a backdrop of huge challenges for communities, our country and the planet.

They would not have been possible without the support of our donors or the insights and knowledge of our 5,000 voluntary, community and charitable partners.

The coming year will bring its own challenges. We continue to respond to the cost-of-living crisis, the continuing impact of global events closer to home as well as the biggest threat of all – climate change.

Our grant-making approach stays the course on long-term issues while allowing for agility to respond to emerging needs.

As a philanthropic hub we remain committed to delivering our equality mission, informed by our four pillars. We also remain committed to our role as strategic connector, simultaneously supporting communities, synthesising knowledge on both current and emerging challenges, and working with donors and changemakers who share our mission.

**To all who work with us - thank you!**







# Community Foundation Ireland

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