

Laois Public Participation Network July 2020 Newsletter

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Mick Dowling Memorial Fund



Laois Public Participation Network In honour of the late Mick Dowling were honoured earlier this year to announce the Mick Dowling Memorial Fund.

Three groups (one from each Municipal District) will be awarded €1,000 each.

Application Forms can be downloaded at:
<https://www.laoisppn.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Mick-Dowling-Memorial-Fund-Application-Form.docx>

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, We have Extended the Deadline for Receipt of Applications until

Monday 31st August 2020 @ 5:00pm

For further information email ppn@laoiscoco.ie or call 057-8665661.

*Terms and Conditions Apply



Minister Ring seeks new applications for €1bn Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

Mr Michael Ring TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development, announced the third call for proposals under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

The **Fund** is part of the Department of Rural and Community Development's Rural Development Investment Programme which is funded under Project Ireland 2040. The **Fund** is providing €1 billion in investment over 10 years to support the regeneration and development of rural towns, villages and outlying areas. Initial funding of €315 million was allocated on a phased basis over the period 2019 to 2022.

Announcing the third call under the Fund, Minister Ring said:

"I am pleased to announce the launch of the third call for proposals under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund. The impact of the funding allocated under previous call to the **Fund** has been transformative for rural communities. Since the conclusion of the first call in late 2018, this **Fund** has provided €148 million in support for over 100 projects, located all across the country, worth a combined total of €212 million. The funding of these projects was very well timed, as they are right now delivering an immediate and much needed economic stimulus in rural Ireland. The assistance provided by this **Fund** has meant that businesses and communities have benefitted from the activity and jobs provided in delivering these projects, at precisely the time they have been most needed."

The call under the **Fund** is for Category 1 applications, which relate to capital projects that have planning in place and are ready to commence at the date of application. It is expected that a funding announcement relating to the second call for Category 2 applications - for projects which require assistance for project development work in order to reach full delivery readiness - will be made shortly.

This call for applications to the **Fund** seeks to provide assistance in supporting economic recovery in rural areas in light of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and to assist in delivering sustainable regeneration in rural towns and villages, driving greater economic activity and helping to address challenges such as dereliction and vacancy. Applications to the **Fund** which support in the decarbonisation of the economy and environmental sustainability are particularly welcome.



The Minister continued:

" The level of investment provided by the Fund is more important than ever to address the challenges arising from the COVID-19 crisis and to drive the economic recovery and sustainable development of rural areas. The focus of this third call will be to support large-scale strategic projects that will significantly assist our rural towns and villages to bounce back from the crisis in the months ahead."

The Minister concluded:

" It is vitally important that the project proposals for the Fund seek to make a tangible and sustainable contribution to economic recovery, the continued development of rural towns, villages and their communities and help support the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy. In order to make certain that we receive the very best applications possible and that the requirement for communities, agencies and Local Authorities to source the necessary match funding is kept to a minimum, I have increased the funding rate that will apply to projects approved under the third call under the Fund to a maximum of 90%."

The Fund is seeking to support large-scale, ambitious projects which deliver on the objectives set out above. In that regard, applications of scale are sought , with a minimum funding request of €500,000. Applications to the Fund must be led by a State-funded body - Local Authorities, Local Development Companies, State Agencies, Commercial State bodies, etc... - but collaboration between parties, including with communities, is strongly encouraged.

The closing date for the receipt of proposals is 12 noon, on Tuesday 1st December 2020.

Full details of the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund are available on the Department of Rural and Community Development website at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/c77144-rural-regeneration-and-development-fund/>

Laos County Council

Motor Tax and Cash Office Opening Times

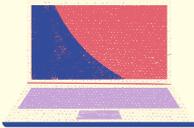


Motor Tax

- **Opened Monday - Friday 09.30am -1.00pm**
Forms must be fully completed and/or appropriate supporting documentation attached before entering the building.
- **Only 1 customer allowed access per transaction.**

Alternative Options

- **Online Taxation** - can be done from the comfort of your home via laptop, tablet or smartphone and operates 7 days a week. Visit www.motortax.ie



Information you will need to tax your vehicle online:

Vehicle Registration Number

Pin Number

(Your pin number may be received from Shannon via email, text or reminder motor tax form)

(If not, try the last 6 digits of VRC/Log book i.e C17 -----123456)

Insurance Details (name of company, expiry date & insurance policy number)



Credit / Debit Card Details

Postal Applications: Post in completed form (contact number please on form) with payment method (cash is not encouraged) to Laos County Council, Aras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Co. Laos R32 EHP9

Post Box: Drop in fully completed application form with payment method in a sealed envelope (marked for attention of Motor Tax) & drop in post box at main reception of County Hall.



Calls: If customers have a particular query, please phone **057 86 74305** (leave your name, contact number and a brief message) and we will get back to you during the course of the day.



Cash Office



- **Opened to the public Monday - Friday 09.30am - 1.00pm in conjunction with Motor Tax Opening Hours**

July 2020

2020 AIC Scheme Bursaries: focusing on Cultural Diversity and Human Rights

2020 marks ten years since the Artist in the Community (AIC) Scheme Bursary Award was inaugurated. CREATE are pleased to announce that this year, we will award two AIC Scheme Bursary Awards.

The first will focus on the theme of Collaborative Arts and Cultural Diversity, and specifically aims to support an artist from a minority ethnic or migrant background. This bursary, offered in partnership with the Irish Refugee Council, closes for applications on the 17th August.

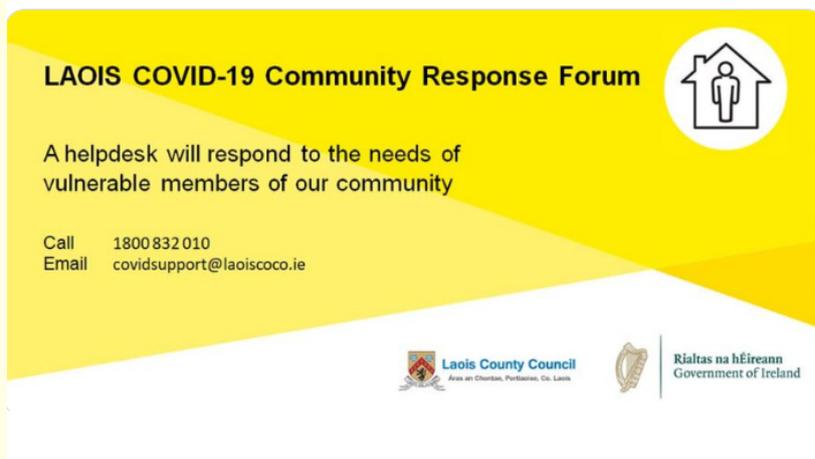
The second bursary to be offered in 2020 will take as its focus Collaborative Arts and Human Rights. Full details and closing date for this bursary will be published in September.

The objective of the Artist in the Community Scheme Bursary Award is to support individual professional artists whose practice centres on collaboration with individuals or groups (non-arts professionals). The AIC Bursary Award 2020: Collaborative Arts and Cultural Diversity, offered in partnership with the Irish Refugee Council, specifically aims to support individual professional artists from a minority ethnic or migrant background working in collaborative socially engaged arts practice.

The purpose of the award is to support and nurture professional arts practice; it is specifically aimed at an artist with a track record of working collaboratively with communities of place or interest. The bursary of €10,000 provides the selected artist with time and resources to carry out research and to reflect on their practice. More particularly, it allows the artist to consider key questions associated with human rights using collaborative methodologies.

The closing date for applications to this bursary is the 17th August 2020.

<https://www.create-ireland.ie/projects/subpage/aic-bursary/2020-bursary-collaborative-arts-and-cultural-diversity/>



Community Call Helpline Update

After almost 17 weeks of operation, the Community Call Helpline has been stood down effective from lunchtime on Tuesday 28th July 2020.

This decision was taken having regard to the phased reopening of society, and also mindful of the ongoing very low level of calls being received at the Helpline.

Calls which were received at the Helpline will now revert to the main switchboard number of Laois County Council from where they will be diverted to the appropriate department within the Council.

A sincere thanks to the staff from across the various service divisions of Laois County Council who made themselves available to support the Community Department in the operation and management of the Helpline during the 4 month period.

A huge THANK YOU to all the Laois PPN groups and their members who registered to help the elderly and vulnerable members of our communities during this COVID-19 crisis.

Well done to all involved!

Minister Ring announces €2 million Community Enhancement Programme and urges communities to engage.



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Michael Ring TD, the Minister for Rural and Community Development, has announced details of the 2020 **Community Enhancement Programme (CEP)** and highlighted the potential benefit of the **Programme** for local communities.

The **CEP** is funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and will provide €2 million of grant funding towards enhancing the facilities available to communities. The **Programme** has a focus on supporting groups in disadvantaged areas.

Typical enhancements under the **Programme** include the renovation of Community Centres and Community Amenities, improvements to town parks and common areas and spaces, and the purchase of equipment for community usage. The **Programme** has also supported energy efficient upgrades, development of community gardens, provision of defibrillators, CCTV, and sports and IT equipment.

The **CEP** is administered by Local Community Development Committee (LCDCs) in each Local Authority area. Funding allocation for the Laois Area is €58,297.

Since it was first launched in 2018 by Minister Ring, the **CEP** has funded over 5,000 projects in urban and rural communities throughout Ireland.

Speaking in relation to the Community Enhancement Programme, Minister Ring said:

" The CEP provides vital support to community groups in order to help them improve their facilities. It supports small-scale funding for projects which range from purchasing lawnmowers and IT equipment to minor renovations to buildings. Ultimately the Programme responds to local needs and therefore it also provides some funding towards larger projects where needed.

" We depend hugely on these community groups and I hope that this funding will help them to continue the important work that they carry out within our society. I urge communities to familiarise themselves with the CEP and to apply for funding if they feel that it can be of local benefit.

" While the CEP will be similar to last year, the LCDC in each area will have flexibility to use some or all of this funding for COVID-19 related expenditure by community groups where this is a priority in individual local authority areas. This is in addition to other funding announced recently by my Department, such as the €25 million COVID-19 Emergency Fund and the €35 million Stability Fund."

The closing date for receipt of applications is 14th August 2020 at 4.00pm.

Application forms can be downloaded at :

<https://laois.ie/wp-content/uploads/CEP-Application-Form-2020.pdf>

Please ensure that all documentation required to complete the application is included, otherwise this may render your application invalid.



July 2020

National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)

NALA is putting on a Literacy Awareness webinar in August.

Registration is **FREE**.

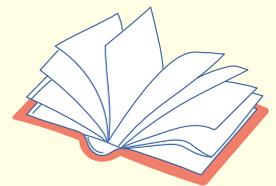


Thursday 27th August: <https://www.nala.ie/support-us/nala-literacy-awareness-training-thursday-27-august-2020/>

This 1 hour webinar will give participants tips on how they or their organisations can be more accessible to people with literacy or numeracy difficulties. They will look at the challenges of participating fully in society with literacy needs and how to deal sensitively with adults with literacy needs. An adult literacy student and a **NALA staff member will discuss literacy and how to deliver a literacy-friendly service.**



Who are these webinars for?



The webinar is for those working with the public. For example in government departments, semi-state bodies, County Councils, libraries, charities, **Community and Voluntary Sector Organisations as well as health, legal and financial organisations.**

July 2020

Minister Ring publishes Report on the pilot Town Centre Living Initiative

Michael Ring TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development, published a report on the pilot "Town Centre Living Initiative" which examined how to encourage more people to live in rural town and village centres.

Under the Initiative, the Minister provided funding of up to €100,000 to each of 6 rural towns to explore how to encourage increased residential occupancy in those towns while addressing the issue of vacant properties. The initiative was delivered by the relevant Local Authorities in collaboration with the local communities.

The independent report, prepared by Space Engagers, outlines the approach taken by each town under the pilot to encouraging increased town centre living. It sets out the key issues identified in repurposing vacant properties for modern living, and the key findings which emerged. The report concludes by identifying a range of 15 suggested actions for further consideration.

Publishing the report, Minister Ring said:

" I welcome the completion of this report on the pilot "Town Centre Living Initiative" by Space Engagers. This report shows that the reasons why more properties in town centres are not being used for residential purposes are many and complex, not least the challenge of adapting older buildings to meet modern living requirements.

Notwithstanding the challenges, this initiative illustrates that there are steps that can be taken to assist and encourage people to move back into our town centres. The pilot has shown that addressing the challenges of vacant premises in a piecemeal way will have little impact on the issue of town centre living as a whole. There is merit in towns developing a Vision or Master Plan which takes a holistic approach to developing the town centre and which builds buy-in from existing property owners and potential investors.

The initiative also highlights the central role that Local Authorities play in town centre revival and that individual property owners need both financial and non-financial supports to help bring vacant buildings back into use."



The Minister continued:

" It is envisaged that the lessons learned through the pilot initiative will help to inform the approach to supporting and investing in rural towns and villages in the future. I want to thank the Local Authorities and the representatives from each of the individual towns for their engagement with this initiative over the last 18 months or so. Through their efforts, we have significantly improved our understanding of the reasons why more people do not chose to live in town centres and the steps that could be taken to counteract this. I hope that the results of this work will have a transformative impact on these towns in years to come.

The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund provides an opportunity to build on some of the ideas that emerged from this pilot by providing funding for high quality strategic proposals that can rejuvenate towns and increase town centre living.

Areas identified by the authors of the report for further consideration include:

- **Building public confidence in the future of town centres.**
- **Re-imagining and communicating how town centres can be desirable places to live, work and belong, for example through a "Vision Plan."**
- **Appointing Town Centre Officers and / or Management Teams to assist property owners and to drive implementation of plans for each town.**
- **Incentivising the reuse of vacant buildings through financial and non-financial supports.**
- **Strengthening legal supports and instruments to facilitate easier and clearer change of ownership.**
- **Establishing a cross-cutting Town Centre First Approach which puts town centres at the heart of decision making.**

The Minister said:

" I have asked my officials to review the 15 suggested actions identified by the authors of the report for further consideration, and to prepare proposals for new policy measures that will further encourage and support people to live in rural town centres. To this end, I have asked my Department to convene a senior officials group from Key Departments and agencies to bring forward a set of proposals for consideration by the incoming Government before the end of the year."

The full report on the Town Centre Living Initiative is available at:

<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/77498/3b9f04d1-987f-4ed9-ac4c-750162e3f2a6.pdf#page=null>



July 2020



Laois Libraries Mobile Phone Photography Competition for Teenagers

As part of our summer events, Laois Libraries are running a mobile phone photography competition for teenagers. With libraries opening up to the public, we are seeking to get existing teen members re-engaged with our services and also to sign up new members.

Here's a brief summary of how the competition works:

- **The competition is open to teenage library members; membership and competition entry is, of course, FREE.**
- **Competition runs from 12th July 2020 to 12th August 2020.**
- **The competition's theme is 'Landscape and Townscape'; this theme is linked to Heritage Week and the prize-giving will take place during Heritage Week on Thursday 20th August.**
- **There are two age categories - 13 to 15 years and 16 to 18 years.**
- **Application forms and a form outlining the rules may be collected in Laois Library Branches - or on our webpage and resubmitted to the branch.**
- **There will be one First Prize of €50.00 one-for-all voucher and one Second Prize of €20.00 one-for-all voucher in EACH category.**
- **Photographs are to be submitted to laoislibrary@laoiscoco.ie stating the applicants name, age category and contact details.**

GOOD LUCK!



Minister Ring announces €13 million in funding for 24 projects across the country under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund

Mr Michael Ring TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development, has announced the allocation of €13 million in funding to 24 projects under the €1 billion Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

The **Fund** is part of the Department of Rural and Community Development's Rural Development Investment Programme which is funded under Project Ireland 2040. The **Fund** is providing €1 billion in investment over 10 years to support the regeneration and development of rural towns, villages and outlying areas. Initial funding of €315 million was allocated on a phased basis over the period 2019 to 2022. To date, the **Fund** has now provided €161 million for 134 projects across Ireland, worth a total of €229 million.

Today's announcement relates to Category 2 of the **Fund** which provides seed capital funding for strategic, large-scale projects which will assist in delivering town and village regeneration and contribute to economic development and recovery. The funding provided will allow for further development of the projects to take place enabling projects to reach a stage where they are developed to a high standard and the project is in a position to commence works. This will also provide a ready-made pipeline of projects which can be progressed in the future with the support of the **Fund** or other funding streams. The applications for funding were subjected to a comprehensive assessment process by the Department, with oversight provided by an independent Project Advisory Board, made up of representatives drawn from Key Government Departments along with external experts.

Announcing the successful projects today, Minister Ring said:

"The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund represents an unprecedented opportunity to deliver the scale of investment necessary to allow rural communities to further develop and prosper.

This investment is more important than ever to help address the challenges arising from the COVID-19 crisis and to drive economic recovery and sustainable development in rural areas.

"The Category 2 funding I am announcing today is for projects that require further development to make them ready for construction. There can be a significant work and expense involved in getting projects to the point where they are ready to be delivered.

This support is critical to ensure that a pipeline of ambitious regeneration projects are ready to hit the ground running in the future."

The successful projects announced today include:

- **The Re-use and Development of Derelict and Vacant Properties Projects, led by Limerick City and County Council - an innovative proposal seeking to bring derelict properties back in use, with an emphasis on the housing, in the core towns and villages in rural Limerick.**
- **Portumna Vision 2030, led by Galway County Council, that will further prepare plans to develop the town of Portumna and its natural and built heritage into a key hub for Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.**
- **The Banagher Regeneration Project, led by Offaly County Council, which will further develop a project seeking to regenerate the town centre and the marina to enhance the town's potential as an attractive and sustainable place to live, work and visit.**
- **The Kingscourt Regeneration Project, led by Cavan County Council, which will further prepare plans for the transformation of the centre of town through redeveloping derelict sites.**

The Minister continued:

"The projects announced today and the projects already approved for funding under the Fund will continue to make a significant and tangible contribution to economic recovery in rural Ireland over the months ahead. This Fund has now made available over €161 million in funding for projects worth a combined total of €229 million.



This funding is supporting jobs in every sector within the construction industry, most particularly many companies, contractors and individuals who are themselves based in rural towns and villages. In turn, as these projects are delivered they will help support community development, enterprise development, town centre retail and activity and assist our tourism industry to rebound strongly."

The Minister concluded:

" The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund represents a long-term commitment to rural regeneration and development and will be vital in supporting rural communities in the years ahead.

" I recently announced a third call for Category 1 proposals under the Fund seeking, ambitious, shovel-ready projects which will support the drive for economic recovery and deliver sustainable regeneration and development in rural towns and villages. It is my hope that projects I announced today and the projects which will emerge from the new Category 1 call will contribute strongly to a revitalised rural economy ready to take advantage of the new opportunities emerging from this crisis."

The applications submitted under this call from the Fund were of a very high standard and it should be noted that if further funding becomes available over the coming months, additional projects submitted to this call may potentially be supported at a later date.

Further details of the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund are available on the Department of Rural and Community Development website at <https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/c77144-rural-regeneration-and-development-fund/>

Snap that

Life through the lens of Ireland's 18- to 25-year-olds

What objects or places have helped or inspired you? Are there things that may have held you back? Capture and tell the story of your generation through the lens of your smartphone.

How to share your story

- **Identify**

What place or object helps, inspires or hinders you? Is there an object that symbolises the people who shape your story? Think about an image that will creatively capture the essence of that.

- **Frame**

Draw people into your story with a photo that catches the eye and imagination. Try a different angle, a close-up, or use a filter.

- **Caption**

Your photo should tell the main story. A caption can help people understand the importance to you of the object or place in the image.

- **Send**

Submit your photo via **ria.ie** (maximum of five photos per person) so it can be part of the bigger picture.



Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann
Royal Irish Academy





AIC Scheme Autumn School on Cultural Diversity and Collaborative Practice

An initiative of The Arts Council's Artist in the Community Scheme (AIC) managed by CREATE, the national development agency for collaborative arts.

For a third year, Create and Counterpoints Arts are pleased to announce the School on Cultural Diversity and Collaborative Practice for up to 15 artists.

Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and social distancing, we are hosting the 2020 School in the Autumn and virtually over four days: 9th, 16th, 17th & 23rd October.



The new deadline for submissions: 31st August 2020 @ 5pm.



About the Autumn School

The concept of 'Cultural diversity' is often narrowly read through the lens of policy. It's a repeated term but what does 'cultural diversity' mean in practice: in people's intimate lives, in neighbourhoods and within communities of place and interest? How does the practice of cultural diversity resonate as an intersectional and dynamic part of everyday life?

How might the experience of 'cultural diversity' be enacted in the context of collaborative arts practice? How might 'cultural diversity' form an intrinsic part of the artistic, socially engaged process and act as a powerful driver for social change?

How might we understand the critical intersection of 'cultural diversity' and collaborative arts practice in the context of decolonisation and the urgency of global racial justice movements?

This autumn school is interdisciplinary both in curriculum and composition of participants, presenters and facilitators.



It will take the form of a four-day virtual residency enabling a 'think and do' collaborative approach, utilising creative workshops, critical and comparative case studies, one-to-one mentoring, international guest artists including curators, policymakers and activists.

Directed by: Dr Aine O'Brien - Co-Director / Co-Founder Counterpoints Art

Visiting artists and facilitators include:

- **Abdullah Al Kafri, Director Ettijahat Independent Culture**
- **Isabel Lima, Independent Artist and Director of The Gresham Horse Project**
- **Juan del Gado, Independent Artist and Co-Founder / Creative Producer, Qisenta**

Autumn School on Cultural Diversity and Collaborative Practice



Who should apply?

- **Any Artist based in the Republic of Ireland who is from a Black, Asian, or minority ethnic background including members of the Traveller community, migrants, refugees and people in need of international protection who are in a position to take up this opportunity, will be particularly welcomed.**
- **Emerging, mid-career and established artists, based in the Republic of Ireland who have a collaborative arts practice (working in any art form including architecture, circus, street art and spectacle, dance, film, literature, music, opera, theatre, visual arts and traditional arts).
Undergraduate students are ineligible to apply.**
- **Artists who are interested in exploring the questions outlined above alongside their individual and shared practice.**

Read more on our website

<https://www.create-ireland.ie> where you can also find video and text resources from the two previous Schools.

July 2020

Minister Ring announces innovative project to provide Broadband to disadvantaged students.

Mr Michael Ring TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development, launched an exploratory initiative in partnership with Microsoft Ireland and the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) that will seek to deliver free broadband to second level students from disadvantaged backgrounds for the duration of their senior cycle.

The initiative will look to use the existing high-speed broadband connection in five public libraries across five counties (Carlow, Donegal, Kilkenny, Mayo and Waterford), to deploy Microsoft's cutting-edge Rural Airband technology to enable broadband to be delivered to up to 200 households - roughly 40 per county - which do not have good internet access.

The trial initiative will be targeted primarily at students in Delivering Equality of Opportunities (DEIS) schools.

Announcing the initiative, Minister Ring said:

"This initiative is an example of the kind of innovative solutions that can be explored when Government, Local Government and Industry work collaboratively to address connectivity and other barriers experienced by disadvantaged communities across rural Ireland.

"Under this initiative, my Department has partnered with Microsoft Ireland, Local Government and others, to ensure that many students for whom vital internet services is unavailable in the home have the opportunity to compete on a level digital playing field and succeed.

"This pilot initiative will use the public library network to deploy Microsoft Airband Technology in under-served areas, in order to address connectivity barriers experienced by Leaving Certificate cycle students. In drawing on the existing high-speed broadband connection of libraries, the initiative offers an opportunity to target individuals for whom internet service is currently unavailable in the home.

"This initiative will seek to offer more students the opportunity to avail of a range of distance learning activities, such as online learning and virtual classrooms, which are becoming an integral part of education provision in an increasingly digital age."

Welcoming the initiative, Microsoft Ireland Managing Director, Cathriona Hallahan said:

"As Ireland increasingly becomes a digital society it is critically important that no citizen and no community is left behind. Connectivity is central to ensuring equal access and equal opportunity for all and that is why we are delighted to partner with the Government to use our innovative TV White Space solution to help senior cycle students in rural communities get access to learning resources. Over 20 years ago, Microsoft worked with Local Government to bring internet access to libraries in Ireland for the first time. This opened up the world to library users throughout the country and we are delighted that this initiative again leverages the strength of the library network and are confident that this pilot with the LGMA will prove to be equally as transformative."

"With so much focus on connectivity at a European level, and with particular challenges facing rural communities, I am delighted that Ireland is taking a leadership position on connectivity challenges, which I know will be a top priority at EU level in the coming years."

The Airband initiative will supplement existing supports to address broadband connectivity deficits, by exploring the capacity to use the local library network as a conduit for household connectivity for the first time. This initiative will be reviewed on a 6-monthly basis, and learning from the pilot will help the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Local Government Management Agency to determine the effectiveness and potential scalability of using Airband as a connectivity solution for households with students in particularly hard to reach locations.

Tom Enright, Chief Executive of Wexford Co. Council and Chair of the Libraries Development Committee said:

"Libraries are all about access and equality so we're delighted to work with Microsoft Ireland, schools and families on this project that will test a new way of providing much-needed reliable broadband to students as they prepare for their senior cycle. This initiative really demonstrates the reach and impact libraries can have, finding new ways to do things, breaking down barriers, and delivering equality of opportunity. We hope to learn from this pilot project to deliver more interventions to support students and others in future."



Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, has announced details of the first €2.8 million in funding approvals from her Department to help rural towns and villages to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This first tranche of funding announced under the enhanced Town and Village Renewal Scheme recognises the need to support rural businesses and communities to rebuild in response to COVID-19.

A total of €107,500 has been awarded to Laois under the 2020 Town and Village Renewal Scheme. Four Laois Towns will benefit.

- **Abbeyleix**



- **Erect a semi-permanent modular canopy structure between the existing Library and the Fountain within Market Square - €40,000**

Three towns will receive funding for "Modification and Enhancement of the public realm to help comply with social distancing and encourage increased footfall"

- **Mountmellick - €22,500**



- **Mountrath - €22,500**



- **Portarlinton - €22,500**



To read the press release in full, go to:

<https://bit.ly/2EGLxaa>

July 2020



Local Authority Funding and Grants Workshop

Laois PPN recently held an online workshop based on Local Authority Funding and Grants for their member groups. There was a high level of interest in the workshop and the session was booked out immediately.

The workshop was held on Monday 27th July 2020. The workshop was facilitated by Caroline Egan of Cramden Tech Ltd who has over 10 years of experience delivering these types of workshops and the two-hour workshop was delivered via ZOOM.

Due to the high demand of interest, a second workshop is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 5th August 2020 at 7.30pm. This session has also been booked out.

These workshops were Free to Laois PPN members.





July 2020

CONTACT US

While our office is closed to the public, we are still working hard behind the scenes.

You can contact Dan or Ailish by

Email:



ppn@laoiscoco.ie

Phone:

086 035 2107 - Dan



Postal Address:



**Laois Public Participation Network,
JFL Avenue, Lyster Square,
Portlaoise, Co. Laois**

If your group has anything they would like us to include in our newsletter, please contact us.

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