



Laois Public Participation Network

March 2022 Newsletter

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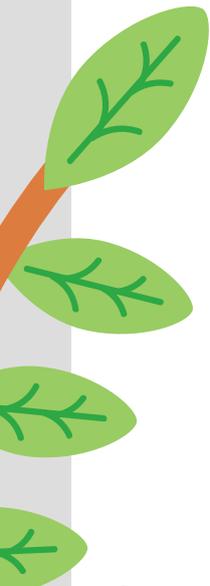
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Laois PPN Event: Leader Funding Information Session



Laois PPN hosted an online Info Session on Leader Funding to PPN Member Groups workshop to PPN Members on Wednesday 9th March. The Information Session on Leader Funding was presented by Jenny Collier, Laois Partnership and was followed by a Q&A session on Leader Funding for participants at the end. The Laois PPN event was fully booked with positive feedback from attendees.

Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said

“The info session on Leader Funding provided a wonderful opportunity for Community Groups across Laois to learn on how they can access and benefit from Leader funding. Over €1 Million euro has been made available to Laois for enterprise and community projects. Leader funding will benefit a wide variety of Community Groups across the County”



'Laois Partnership Company is currently implementing the LEADER Transitional Budget 2021-2022 and the EURI Budget 2021-2022 on behalf of Laois LCDC.



We are currently accepting expressions of interest from community groups and from formalised voluntary committees for grant aid assistance under the general themes of

- **Rural Enterprise**
- **Social Inclusion**
- **Rural Environment**

There is no deadline of the receipt of applications, but we must have the budget allocated prior to the 31/12/2022. For this reason, our budget is allocated on a first come first serve basis.

Applications can be submitted and evaluated for grant approval for:

- **Capital projects e.g., refurbishment of community centre/purchase of equipment/ landscaping**
- **Analysis and Development e.g., feasibility studies/environmental assessments/development of strategic plans**
- **Training that does not form part of the normal education system or is not part of the national QQI level awards e.g., removal of invasive species from riverbanks/coding**

Please contact Project Officer Jenny Collier to discuss your project idea and the application procedure.'

Jenny Collier, Laois Partnership

**E-mail: jennycollier@laoispartnership.ie
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Laois PPN County Plenary

Laois PPN are required to hold two County Plenaries a year. Laois PPN held our first County Plenary of 2022 for our member groups on Tuesday 22nd March. This was an online event, which was chaired by Laois PPN Secretariat Member, John Oxley.

Laois PPN had the following items to be ratified at the County Plenary

- Laois PPN Workplan 2022
- Budget 2022
- Amendment to Laois PPN Constitution
- Online Elections of Nina Horan to Laois PPN Secretariat

To promote local businesses in a positive way, Laois PPN held a raffle for three €100 Laois Gift Cards.

Congratulations to the following winners:

- Orla Cahill - Bluestars Basketball Club,
- Kevin O'Sullivan - Coolrain Tidy Towns
- Eugene O'Brien - GIY Abbeyleix Community Garden

Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said *'Laois PPN were delighted with the attendance at our first County Plenary of 2022 which included groups from all three Pillars - Community & Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environmental and across all 3 Municipal Districts. I wish to congratulate the winners of our Laois Gift Cards raffle. Laois PPN look forward to supporting our Member Groups throughout 2022.'*



Emily Nelson of The Wheel was the guest speaker at the County Plenary. She gave a presentation on EU Funding Opportunities for Community Groups. The presentation included on how EU funding works, EU funding opportunities and Access Europe.



Emily Nelson of The Wheel said 'Reaching out to communities is an important aspect of our EU Engage project, funded by the European Commission, and it was wonderful to have the opportunity to connect with so many of Laois PPN's members, discuss EU engagement opportunities, and hear about their important work. To learn more about how your organisation can benefit from EU funding opportunities, contact our European Programmes team at europe@wheel.ie or visit our website at www.accesseurope.ie.'



New Area Rep for the Borris-in-Ossory/Mountmellick MD

Nina Horan was elected as Area Rep for the Borris-in-Ossory/Mountmellick MD to the Laois PPN Secretariat.

Nina Horan is from Mountmellick and she is a founding member of Yarnbombing Mountmellick, and a committee member of Mountmellick Community Arts Centre, and Mountmellick Christmas Tree.

A former Post Primary Teacher, Nina returned to education in 2018 following early retirement. She studied for an MSc in Innovation in Maynooth University and is a devotee of lifelong learning.



Nina Horan said 'I am a true believer in the power of voluntary community action and civic participation. I sum up my position in this way: Be constructive in your criticism of where you live, be the change you wish to see, and bloom where you are planted.'

Bright flower sculptures pop up on Portlaoise roundabout

Giant metal sculptures of pink and blue flowers have popped up on a Portlaoise roundabout in Market Square, as part of a bigger makeover.

The distinctive clock at the roundabout has recently undergone repairs. Three more Portlaoise roundabouts are set to be revitalised for biodiversity this year, at the Garda Station, James Fintan Lalor Avenue and Fr Browne Avenue.

The floral makeover is a shared initiative between Laois County Council's heritage, business and roads departments, Portlaoise Tidy Towns and the Downtown Portlaoise business group.



Gerry Browne of Portlaoise Tidy Towns said 'Some years ago, Downtown Portlaoise placed a lovely convertible Beetle on the Market Square Roundabout, to create an atmosphere in Portlaoise for the Electric Picnic. This got a fantastic local positive reaction and so it got us thinking that maybe we should work towards a permanent feature for this spot. Unfortunately, the Beetle is not weather proof. Downtown Portlaoise in association with the Town Team, sourced funding and went about creating a happy, uplifting feature by choosing colourful flowers, like what were on the body of the Beetle. These metal flowers are the creation of Jack Wilde who designed something similar in Kilkenny. These flowers also tie into the Town Team and Tidy Town vision of creating 'A Town in a Garden'.

Following on from that, Tidy Towns Portlaoise have a plan to plant the roundabouts in Portlaoise with lots of pollinator style planting. It was then decided to plant these under the metal flowers for great effect. Added to this is a lighting plan which is now installed. The lights can be changed to green for St Patricks Day or red for Valentines Day. This whole project is a great example of how all interested bodies can work together to create something beautiful and exciting for everyone to enjoy. We now hope to move onto the next roundabout and create something just as beautiful. '



Paul Brennan & Gerry Browne

Laois Sports Partnership launch their 5th Strategic Plan



Anne Marie Kirrane, Healthy Ireland Laois; Caroline Myers, Laois Sports Partnership co-ordinator; Dan Bergin, Laois PPN; Eibhlin Smith, chairperson Laois Sports Partnership & Laois PPN Rep; Donal Brennan, director of services Laois County Council; Dr Una May, chief executive Sport Ireland; Sean Quinn, general manager Laois Leisure and Diane Seale, Laois PPN.

Picture: Alf Harvey

Laois Sports Partnership launched their fifth Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2027 at BloomHQ in Mountrath.

Dan Bergin and Diane Seale representatives of Laois PPN were delighted to attend the launch on Thursday, March 24th. Also in attendance were representatives from Laois Sports Partnership, Laois County Council, Sports Ireland, clubs and sports people who took a tour to see the activities in the centre's new sports hub.

Laois Sports Partnership's aims to have "everybody active in Laois" by 2027.

The new plan has been developed around five thematic themes; Active People, Active Places, Active Partnerships, Active Promotion, Active Governance.

These have been identified and refined to address challenge, barriers and gaps in existing provision which are aligned to other policy documents such as the National Sports Plan, Sport Ireland Statement of Strategy, National Physical Activity Plan, Sport Ireland Participation Plan, Healthy Ireland Framework for improved health and wellbeing, Laois County Council Development Plan and Laois County Council Local Economic and Community Plan.

These themes define the type and nature of work that Laois Sports Partnership are engaged in. Each theme is expanded through a strategic aim along with a series of key objectives. Each objective has action areas and key performance indicators which will form the Annual Operational Plans.



*Laois Sports Partnership board members and staff and development officers with Dr Una May, chief executive Sport Ireland and Louise Burke, Sport Ireland.
Picture: Alf Harvey*

Caroline Myers, Chief Operations Manager of Laois Sports Partnership said *“Over the 21 years we have provided 689 programmes to over 90,000 people, and 190 training courses to 3,000 participants.*



Eibhlin Smith, Laois PPN Rep & Chairperson of Laois Sports Partnership speaking at the launch.

Picture: Alf Harvey.

Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said 'Laois PPN were delighted to attend the launch of Laois Sports Partnership's Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2027 at Bloom HQ, Mountrath. Laois Sports Partnership's aim to have everybody active in Laois by 2027 is to be commended. I wish to thank Laois PPN Reps, Marian Condren and Eibhlin Smith who is the current Chair of Laois Sports Partnership for their work. Laois PPN wish all involved in Laois Sports Partnership every success for the future.'



New partnership announced between the national Connected Hubs network and Zoom

The Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, recently announced a new partnership between the national Connected Hubs network and the global peer-to-peer and online collaboration platform Zoom.

Minister Humphreys also announced €5 million in funding, through the Connected Hubs 2022 Call, which will be used to build capacity and improve existing Remote Working facilities.

The partnership with Zoom will provide best-in-class online services to members of the national Connected Hubs network: remote and co-working spaces across Ireland.

Paddy Buggy, Manager of the Webmill said 'As part of the Connected Hubs network we in the Webmill digital hub, based in Mountmellick, welcome this partnership with Zoom. This partnership will provide more best in-class services to our clients and bridge the gap between international trade and local businesses. Facilities like the Webmill allows people to work local, increase their networking, reduce their carbon footprint and achieve a greater work life balance'



Laois Covid-19 pandemic Ceremony of Remembrance and Reflection

Laois County Council hosted a Ceremony of Remembrance and Reflection on Sunday, March 20 at Fitzmaurice Place, Portlaoise to remember those that lost their lives during the Covid-19 pandemic and to pay tribute to those who contributed to how we faced and are facing the challenges arising from same.

The service was attended by local state agencies, public representatives and others. Laois PPN was represented by Secretariat Member, Paddy Buggy.



COVID-19 Volunteer Recognition



Do you know someone who volunteered in response to COVID-19?

The Department of Rural and Community Development have launched the Volunteer Ireland nomination web portal which will accept nominations from relevant organisations of volunteers who have made a contribution to their community during the pandemic. Selected volunteers will then be invited to attend events in their County during national volunteer week. In line with the National Volunteering Strategy, the events will help to promote and highlight the unique value and contribution of volunteers to Irish society, they will also provide an opportunity for Government to acknowledge how important volunteering is to the well-being of our communities.

To nominate a volunteer:

www.volunteer.ie/about-us/covid-19-volunteer-recognition/

Closing date for nominations 13th April 2022



Funding Opportunity: CLÁR Funding 2022

CLÁR (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) is a targeted investment programme for rural areas that aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects in rural areas that have experienced significant levels of de-population. The funding works in conjunction with local/Agency and other Departmental funding programmes and on the basis of locally identified priorities.

The 2022 CLÁR programme will be delivered through three separate Measures as follows:

- **Measure 1: Developing Community Facilities & Amenities**
Deadline: Monday 11th April 2022, 5:00pm
- **Measure 2: Mobility, Cancer Care and Community First Responders Transport**
Deadline: Friday 8th April 2022
- **Measure 3: 'Our Islands'**
Deadline: Friday 6th May 2022

For further details and links for the application forms visit:

<https://laois.ie/departments/community/clar-funding-2020/>



Funding Opportunity: Music Capital Scheme



The Music Capital scheme, which comprises of three different awards, supports the purchase of musical instruments and is designed to respond to a broad range of capital needs within the music sector in Ireland.

The three awards available are outlined below; please note which awards are most relevant to your organisation:

- Music Capital Scheme - Award 1 supports the purchase of musical instruments by non-professional performing groups.
- Music Capital Scheme - Award 2 supports the purchase of musical instruments by individual established professional performing musicians.
- Music Capital Scheme - Award 3 supports the purchase of musical instruments by individual emerging professional performing musicians.

For more information visit the Music Network website:
www.musicnetwork.ie/instrument-hub/music-capital-scheme

Applications Deadline: Thursday 21st April 2022, 2:00pm



SOSAD Ireland

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR

SOSAD Laois Open Day

APRIL
22 | 11AM - 4PM

AT SOSAD LAOIS OFFICE

Shamrock House, Abbeyleix Road
Portlaoise, R32 AH51

ON THE DAY, THERE WILL BE:

- Ribbon cutting
- Stone painting
- Mindfulness
- Tea & Coffee
- Talks & More



Scan the QR Code to go
to our website or go to
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Contact Us

The Laois Public Participation Network (PPN) Office is open Monday to Friday by appointment only.

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