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Formally established in 2004 Philanthropy Ireland is the independent organisation providing a collective voice for philanthropy in Ireland. Our purpose is to advance knowledge, understanding and practice of philanthropy for social benefit.

We do this by engaging in 3 key pillars of activity:

- **Promotion** of the concept and value of philanthropy.
- Policy input to support the development of an enabling environment for philanthropy.
- Practice building capability in support of best practice in grant making.

Our membership comprises independent grant-making Trusts and Foundations, including private, corporate, family and community structures. Our members provide grants and investment funding to a broad spectrum of over 5000 causes and initiatives, in Ireland and overseas. In doing so, they make a significant contribution to Irish and global society.

As the independent representative body for grant makers, for more than 20 years, we have witnessed the value of philanthropy in enabling and supporting projects for social impact. Philanthropy can take risks, collaborate for innovation, support proofs of concept and respond swiftly.

Our goal is to advance philanthropy in Ireland by expanding the network of dedicated, strategic, and long-term donors who consistently contribute to meaningful causes. The insights presented here are informed by our collective knowledge and practice of philanthropy.



WHAT IS PHILANTHROPY?

Put simply, philanthropy is private giving for public benefit. It is a form of giving - usually in the form of grants or donations of money - that seeks to be planned, thoughtful and intentional in approach, taking account of those delivering social change and the communities they serve. It is a form of independent risk capital for the social sector that is agile, innovative, and brave, being strategic in its intent and purpose. It is not about the size of the grant or donation made, it is about the purpose, what it seeks to achieve.

WHO ENGAGES IN PHILANTHROPY

It is generally done by families, individuals, companies, or a combination of all, via private, corporate and community foundations, family trusts, and philanthropic intermediary organisations. It is collaborative in nature, working in partnership with stakeholders, including communities and/or government. Philanthropy takes many forms, such as providing transformative resources to individuals and organisations through gifts, grants, legacies, in-kind donations, and scholarships.

WHO BENEFITS?

It is likely that we have all benefited in some way from philanthropy. In relation to civil society needs - educational, community, health, children's rights, equality, older people, to name but a few - philanthropy has been a key contributor to advances in all these areas of Irish society in recent times. Historically many of our much-loved cultural institutions - Theatres, Libraries, Galleries, Botanic Gardens, RDS - are rooted in philanthropic support for their development. Indeed, the RDS, established in 1731, is one of the oldest philanthropic organisations in Europe and continues to support various arts, culture, and economic initiatives.



WHY IS PHILANTHROPY IMPORTANT?

There are direct benefits to those involved in initiatives receiving philanthropic funding, but as a society, we all benefit when issues of inclusiveness and equality are addressed. We face significant social challenges, and in an era of increasing uncertainty and change there will always be new needs emerging.

- Philanthropy can take risks that Government cannot. It can support causes that serve public good which government will not, cannot, or should not fund. It can provide scope for innovating and testing models of intervention, building an evidence base for change and embracing risk as a necessary element in achieving that change. For example, the Katharine Howard Foundation supported the development of The Nurture Programme, addressing infant health and well-being, supported system change within health and public sector services, including the HSE. The Programme was a philanthropic supported innovation, which is now mainstreamed as part of our public sector health service.
- Philanthropy can support new, fast, and innovative responses to social issues. It can provide early-stage funding, enabling Government to intervene later when data and an evidence base is available. If concepts are proven, Government can move to mainstream, scale, or advance innovation. For example, the One Foundation co-funded with Atlantic Philanthropies several new and emerging organisations in the migrant sector, supporting the development and testing of models that have subsequently become mainstream, as well as providing the data and evidence that specific policy changes were needed.
- Philanthropy can support a diverse and independent community and voluntary sector. Philanthropy, when funding innovations independent of government, can support civil society and play a significant role in a functioning democracy. A strong advocacy sector is vital to a democratic and open society. For example, early-stage funding provided in 2005 by The Atlantic Philanthropies in support of the Children's Rights Alliance, ultimately led to constitutional change to protect the interests of children in Ireland.



• Philanthropy can support Government initiatives and collaborate on the advancement of key issues of concern. It can catalyse and challenge current spending, creating potential for additional investment in the not-for-profit sector. For example, the Vodafone Foundation HiDigital project, focused on older people and digital skills, investing €2m over five years in this area of need, which is complementary and aligned to current government programmes and plans supporting the development of digital skills for over 65's.

These examples provide a snapshot of what is being achieved. Further Case Studies can be found in **APPENDIX 1: PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION**



MEASURING PHILANTHROPY

There is no single measure that precisely captures the overall scale and scope of philanthropic giving in Ireland, as research tends to cover charitable giving to all notfor-profits. Charitable giving to all not-for-profit organisations in Ireland was estimated at €1.7bn in 2020[1]. Of this, almost €80m [2] is approximated as being from philanthropy. This is likely an underestimation, as much of individual philanthropic giving is done in private.

Structured, institutional philanthropy is underdeveloped in Ireland. In relation to the number of active grant-making trusts, Ireland lags significantly by comparison to other countries, estimated at 30 times lower than the European average. More recent figures point to 159 registered Irish entities dedicated to philanthropy, most of which are small in scale, and some of which are not actively grant-making. By comparison, in Norway, most closely aligned in population, there are 7,612 philanthropic entities. Community projects in the UK have access to 8,000 grant-making trusts, a vital source of funding for community projects and social impact.

Giving by way of legacies and bequests in Ireland, another source of philanthropic giving, is modest. 2023 research by the Community Foundation Ireland identifies legacies and bequests are increasing by up to 17% per year albeit from a low base. With an estimated inter-generational wealth exchange of €9 Billion annually, the same research identifies that benefits from legacies for communities could double to over €300m with increased awareness and incentives [3].

^{1. &#}x27;Analysis and Insights on Funding of the Non-Profit Sector in 2020', Giving Ireland 2022

^{2. &#}x27;Philanthropic and Charitable Giving in Ireland 2021', Benefacts 2021

^{3. &#}x27;Legacies for Good', Community Foundation Ireland 2023



NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY POLICY

The publication in June of a Draft National Policy for Philanthropy by Minister of State Joe O'Brien is a significant and very welcome development. We congratulate the Minister and the departmental team on taking this step. We understand submissions are under consideration by the Department to inform a final draft for adoption by government before year end.

The adoption by government of a National Philanthropy Policy will represent a key milestone to shape philanthropy in Ireland for the next five years. The policy will inform, and shape efforts to deliver meaningful strategic impact and help build a sustainable model of philanthropy in Ireland for the benefit of society and for future generations.

We know there is capacity to grow philanthropy and through this to benefit more communities. Policy provides a framework for action for philanthropists, beneficiaries, and government to work more collaboratively and effectively and put in place an environment to encourage planned giving.

If coupled with simple measures of support, we believe real impact can be made for social benefit. Signals matter. Acknowledgement that philanthropy has a valuable role to play in supporting social issues from which we all benefit is important. Philanthropy, alongside government and wider civil society, has a valuable role in promoting and developing respect for human dignity, human rights, a caring and inclusive society, and a progressive society, leaving no one behind. Philanthropy is not a substitute for public service provision. It is not intended to and should not reduce existing levels of Exchequer funding.



THE OPERATING GOVERNMENT

With the upcoming publication of National Policy for Philanthropy, we believe it is timely for the Department of Finance to undertake the development and publication of a white paper on the fiscal framework for philanthropic giving in Ireland, examining tax changes. Fiscal measures to stimulate philanthropy are the subject of debate not just in Ireland but globally, as referenced in the OECD report[4].

It is 10 years since the last significant change to fiscal measures, when the Charitable Donations Scheme was introduced to simplify the administration of the tax relief on donations. This had been recommended by the Forum on Philanthropy and Fundraising. At that time the Forum raised its concern that taking the taxable benefit from the donor and giving it to the charity in all cases may adversely impact the number and level of larger donations. To offset this, it recommended a separate scheme to encourage major gift philanthropy to be established. This has not happened.

A 2018 review of the impact of the tax change Introduced suggests the concern as voiced at the time, was justified [5] noting it did not have the desired impact on giving. The government report of 2021 stated that "Taxation policy was highlighted in our consultations as a factor influencing the motivation for philanthropy" [6]. The need for an enabling environment for the growth of philanthropy is further noted in the Global Philanthropy Environment Index 2022 [7]. Recent independent research commissioned by Philanthropy Ireland, indicates that 66% of those aged 55+ agree that the tax system should include incentives for individuals who give to charity, with 18% saying they don't know. There is scope for change.



THE OPERATING GOVERNMENT

Now is the time to undertake an integrated, holistic analysis of measures that could be activated to provide strategic support for the quantifiable growth of philanthropy in support of projects in the public interest, impacting social needs. By addressing fiscal barriers to philanthropy through an examination of diverse policy, regulatory, and legislative issues, a White Paper would aim to develop actionable fiscal measures and policy levers that could encourage more substantial and sustained philanthropic contributions.

Regulatory compliance is core to the work of all grant-making organisations. Grant-making involves alignment to mission and charitable objectives, and brings additional oversight such as formalised assessment processes, reporting through key performance indicators and relationship management. While grant-making entities are registered as charities, they are somewhat different to operating charities. Collaboration on understanding these differences and agreement on how they can be managed is vital to support the work of grant-makers, to grow grant-making and to properly effect the ambition of a National Philanthropy Policy.

^{4.} Taxation and Philanthropy', 2020, OECD

^{5. &#}x27;The Impact of the 2013 Tax Change in Treatment of Charitable Donations', December 2018, BDO

^{6. &#}x27;The Landscape of Philanthropic Giving', November 2021, Indecon

^{7.} A global report prepared by more than 100 country-level experts who have assessed the environment for philanthropy in 91 countries and economies, including Ireland, examining the incentives and barriers to giving https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/handle/1805/28098



We believe there is scope to do more philanthropy. However, building robust data is vital, as this will increase public trust in philanthropy and encourage more philanthropists.

Data collection is fundamental for the operation, development, and growth of philanthropy in Ireland. The collection and provision of timely, accurate and in-depth data on philanthropy and the wider non-profit sector is an essential element of infrastructural support for government, donors, and the broader philanthropic community.

Trusted data, research and analysis about philanthropy, the wider voluntary sector, and the individual organisations in it, is essential in supporting key decisions on allocation of philanthropic funds to ensure integrity in decision-making. The work previously undertaken by **Benefacts legacy** and the ongoing research from the **Centre of Philanthropy at the University of Kent**, are examples of employing open data-driven approaches for measurable community impact.

A positive culture of philanthropy is dependent on trust and transparency with access to reliable information. International evidence points to credible publicly available data being a key factor in building the confidence of philanthropists to allocate funding and to increase their strategic contributions [8].

Activation of measures to undertake an annual or bi-annual comprehensive survey of the scale of philanthropic giving in Ireland by the Central Statistics Office would aid the sector. The census holds significant importance for philanthropy as it provides a comprehensive and accurate demographic and socioeconomic understanding of populations to inform decisions supporting the ongoing development of philanthropy. Robust data informs philanthropic organisations about the needs and challenges within communities, aiding the targeted allocation of resources to create more impactful and tailored initiatives in support of key social issues.



Trusted open data source(s), data that anyone can access, use, and share, is key to providing crucial analytical insights fundamental to any policy planning. Trend data for improved policy making, and greater transparency and public accountability for government, philanthropies, and charities alike is an essential investment [9]. Effective measurement is a vital element for driving positive change.

^{8. &#}x27;The Landscape of Philanthropic Giving', November 2021, Indecon

^{9.} Using Data for Action and for Impact Summer 2016', Stand Social Innovation Review



Other community finance measures can and do work in partnership with philanthropy. This includes bridging finance, mostly used by community organisations to unlock the retrospective nature of many statutory grants such as those from the Sports Capital, LEADER, and SEAI to name but a few. Such loans have proved vital for many community projects to get started.

In many cases bridging loans follow grants to organisations who may have no sustainable income streams. With this in mind, and thanks to WDC and Community Finance Ireland, volunteer led groups no longer need to pay arrangement fees to access bridging finance across the state.

Whilst bridging finance is deemed a necessary tool to allow voluntary bodies access many grant supports, there are ways in which this process can be improved, for example:

- Standardise the mandating of all state grants directly to the leader where a bridging facility is required by a voluntary led group.
- Ensure all state funded grant programmes, where appropriate, **clearly highlight the** fact that the support is retrospective in nature.
- Review the timeframes associated with grant disbursals, after the submission of all necessary documentation to the grant funder.
- Ensure the opportunity exists for grant recipients across all state grant programmes to make timely and partial grant claim throughout a projects development phase.

Philanthropy always seeks to work in collaboration with all other financing mechanisms open to community organisations. For more information, please see **APPENDIX 2: COMMUNITY FINANCE**.

Ireland, like many other countries, faces various societal challenges: poverty, inequality, healthcare disparities, educational gaps, and environmental issues, among others. Resources, expertise, and innovative solutions are needed to tackle them effectively. The time is now to galvanise all efforts and opportunities – private and public - to address these needs. Philanthropy can play a key supporting role.

This is an important time of both opportunity and challenge. The development of government policy for the advancement of philanthropy in Ireland has been a key ambition of stakeholders across the philanthropic community for a long time. So much more can be achieved in giving if it is backed by strategic policy support that provides a framework for philanthropy, beneficiaries, and government, to work more collaboratively and effectively and put in place an environment to encourage planned giving. We can all benefit.

To achieve this, we invite this Committee to assist by:

- 1. **Supporting the adoption of the National Philanthropy Policy** by government thereby acknowledging the role of philanthropy in support of civil society and local communities.
- 2. Providing an enabling environment, **supporting our proposal for a white paper to review fiscal measures** that could support the growth of philanthropy.

Our ambition is for an active, vibrant philanthropic sector and culture in Ireland. A sector comprised of various models of philanthropy, responding creatively to the many needs of the range of worthy causes. A sector working in partnership and co-operation, maximising the contribution to civil society. A sector which is recognised, understood, and valued. A sector that is positively impacting our communities and delivering social benefit.



EXOSKELETON PROGRAM

Community Foundation Ireland granted the Educational Trust of Dublin City University, €150,000 for education and research for The Exoskeleton program[i].

The Exoskeleton program is a service led by physiotherapists, offering individuals with reduced mobility due to paralysis access to the Ekso Bionics exoskeleton, known as the Ekso GT. This program facilitates supported walking sessions guided by experienced handlers, with a team boasting over a decade of expertise in the fields of neuro-rehabilitation and robotics.

The program is designed to provide individuals with spinal cord injuries, stroke, multiple sclerosis, and other neurological conditions the benefits of exoskeleton-assisted walking. Its primary goal is to conduct research on optimising exoskeleton use for maximal user benefits. While providing community-dwelling individuals with limited mobility access to extended rehabilitation opportunities, the program aims to contribute to this evolving field[ii].

It envisions a future where robotic applications for this population are commonplace, allowing children who are suffering from conditions such as Spina Bifida or spinal muscular atrophy, which cause scoliosis[iii] and seeks to establish DCU as a centre of excellence in this field.



MYMIND - MENTAL HEALTH INNOVATION

MyMind is at the forefront of mental health innovation in Ireland, being the first and largest blended model of mental health care in the country. Their mission is to empower individuals and communities to take care of their mental health by providing high-quality, affordable, and accessible professional mental health services.

MyMind is a prime example of being the recipient of multiple grants from philanthropic sources; Social Entrepreneurs Ireland, The Ireland Funds, Irish Youth Foundation, Rethink Ireland [iv], and Community Foundation Ireland [v] have all contributed to this innovative approach.

MyMind is dedicated to bridging the gap between public and private mental health services. Through a commitment to ensuring equality, fairness, and compassion for all, regardless of factors such as ethnic or social background, religion, health, gender identity, or politics. The organisation operates with honesty, reliability, and transparency in the pursuit of its vision, mission, and values when engaging with stakeholders.

As a social enterprise, MyMind is driven by a commitment to deliver outcomes that benefit the community.



MYMIND - MENTAL HEALTH INNOVATION CONTINUED

In 2022, they reported significant engagement and growth in their services:

- 42,568 appointments were conducted, with 28,812 of them being video or phone consultations.
- They served 6,315 clients, marking a 6% growth compared to the previous year.
- Delivered counselling, psychotherapy and psychological support services in 20 different languages, online and in-person [vi].

In 2023, MyMind continued to expand and improve their services, achieving the following:

- 29,000 appointments were scheduled, with 17,926 of them being video or phone consultations.
- They provided support to 4,972 clients, showing a 6% growth compared to 2022 [vii].



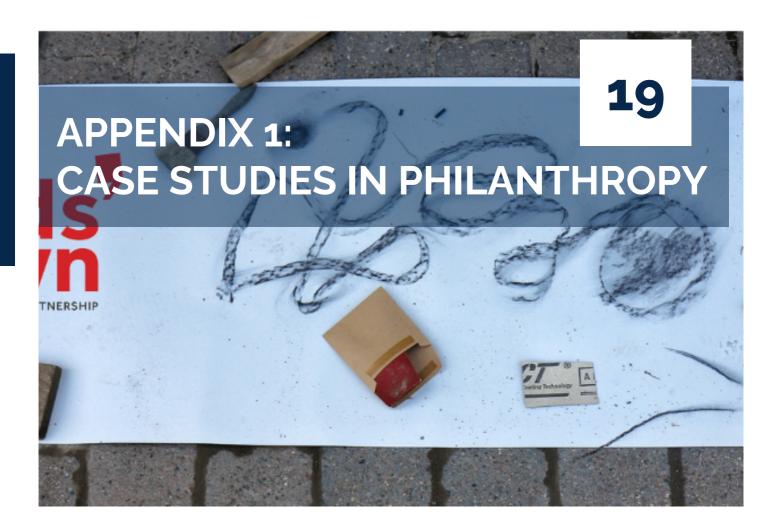
KIDS OWN PUBLISHING PARTNER

founded in 1997 by Simon Spain and Victoria Ryle in Sligo, Kids Own Publishing is Ireland's sole dedicated publisher of children's books, emphasizing the importance of children's right to culture and artistic expression.

Their mission revolves around connecting children with professional artists and publishing the creative work they produce, giving children's artwork and writing a prominent place in mainstream culture. This organisation is driven by a commitment to social justice, engaging with diverse cultural groups and marginalized children and families in various projects.

The vision of Kids' Own extends to envisioning a society where children are recognized as equal and active cultural citizens, and it seeks to empower children as experts in their own lives and catalysts for positive change [viii].

The "Our Lives, Our Voices" project is an innovative children's publishing endeavour that places children from Traveller and Roma communities at the forefront of representing their own identities. This initiative is firmly rooted in the belief that including children's voices is essential in the ongoing efforts to reduce inequality. It harnesses the power of creativity to provide children with a safe, joyful, and empowering platform to express themselves and be heard.

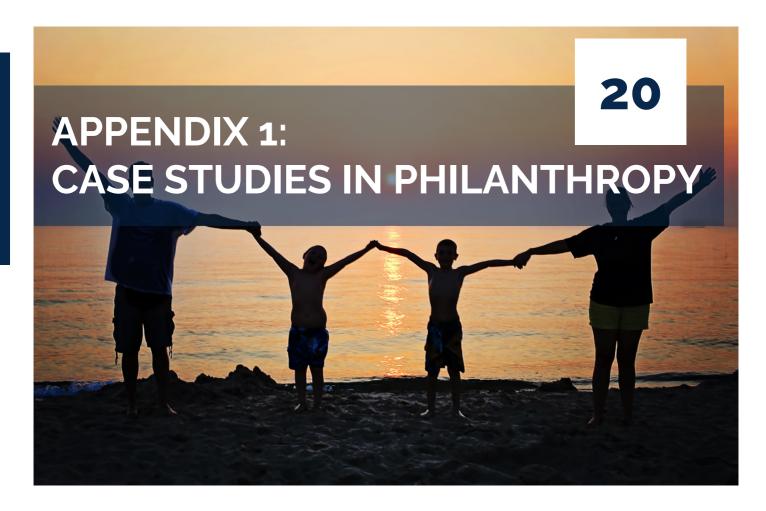


KIDS OWN PUBLISHING PARTNER CONTINUED

Through weekly meetings and collaborative efforts guided by Associate Artists Francesca Hutchinson and Danny Brennan, with mentorship from Mary Branley, these young participants have embarked on a creative journey. They have utilized a diverse range of art materials to engage in a comprehensive creative process aimed at crafting a child-authored, non-fiction book that beautifully celebrates their unique lives and experiences.

During challenging pandemic circumstances that have made forming new relationships and communities a daunting task, this project stands as an exceptional opportunity. It has enabled meaningful conversations and collaborative work with these young individuals, effectively fostering the creation of a fresh and vibrant creative community[ix].

Supported by funding from The Community Foundation of Ireland €74,350.00[x], Kids' Own has been able to collaborate closely with the Irish Traveller Movement and the Yellow Flag Programme in bringing this project to life. Additionally, the project benefits from the expertise of researchers Tamsin Cavaliero and Susan McDonnell, who will assess the impact of the initiative on its participants, with a particular focus on a rights-based perspective. Their research will also explore the broader influence of the book and associated resources on a larger group of children in the future.

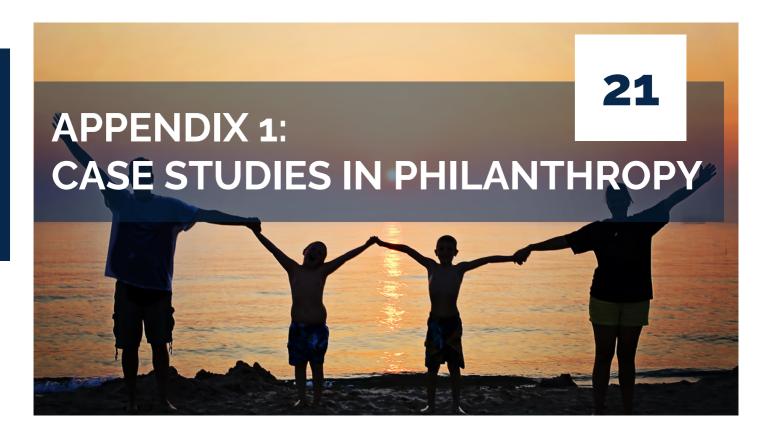


ARCHWAYS

Archways is a national organization that has been making a significant impact on the lives of children and families since its establishment in 2006. They have developed a range of evidence-based programs aimed at providing solutions for children and families facing various challenges. One of their flagship initiatives is the Incredible Years suite of programs, which targets children aged 4-8 with emotional, social, and behavioural difficulties. These programs involve training teachers to support children in the classroom and facilitators to work with parents. The impact of the **Incredible Years program** is noteworthy, with over 6,000 children benefiting from the expertise of 303 trained teachers.

In addition, Archways also runs the **Mentoring for Achievement Programme (MAP)**, which focuses on engaging students aged 10 to 16 who may face personal obstacles that hinder their learning. This initiative has expanded to include an afterschool program in North Dublin City, promoting positive peer groups and role models in music, sports, and the arts.

Furthermore, Archways has recognized the growing challenges young people face, particularly related to anxiety due to COVID-19 measures. In response, they have developed the **Building Up program**, designed to help parents and teachers support the well-being of vulnerable young people. Workshops under this program have been conducted in various locations, including Cork, Wexford, Kilkenny, and Dublin.



ARCHWAYS CONTINUED

One of the critical supporters of Archways' impactful work is basis.point, which has provided essential funding over the years. Their contributions have allowed Archways to expand their reach and make a substantial difference in disadvantaged areas across Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Kilkenny, and Wexford. The cumulative funding of €788,000 has enabled the organization to implement these vital programs.

Basis.point Funding:

- 2014 / 2016 €43,000 in Dublin for the Incredible Years (IY) programme.
- 2017 / 2018 €165,000 in Dublin, Cork and Limerick for the IY and MAP programmes.
- 2019 / 2021 €308,500 in Dublin Cork, Limerick, Kilkenny and Wexford
- 2020 €9,600
- 2021 €228,700

The impact of which translates to:

- 303 teachers within the area will be trained in proactive management skills benefiting some 6000 children.
- 76 local agency facilitators will be trained to deliver the parent programme enabling conservatively 203 parents from the school catchment to avail of the parenting provision [xi].



SMALL FOUNDATION

The Small Foundation established in 2007 and based in Dublin, is committed to addressing poverty and promoting sustainable development, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. At its core, the foundation's primary mission revolves around supporting organizations and initiatives that demonstrably contribute to poverty reduction and economic development. They are known for their active involvement in areas related to agriculture, rural development, and improving access to finance.

One distinguishing feature of the Small Foundation is its significant emphasis on impact investing. Impact investing is the practice of making investments that not only aim for financial returns but also strive to create positive social and environmental outcomes. This commitment to impact investing underscores the foundation's dedication to fostering meaningful, tangible change in the communities they serve.

Collaboration is a key pillar of the Small Foundation's approach. They frequently partner with other philanthropic organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and development agencies. These partnerships serve to pool resources, share expertise, and amplify the impact of their initiatives, ultimately contributing to more comprehensive and effective solutions to the challenges of poverty and sustainable development [xii].



SMALL FOUNDATION CONTINUED

They are actively engaged in supporting smallholder agriculture, the EFAfrica Group (EFAG) is an East African group operating with Tanzanian and Kenyan finance companies that specialise in serving MSMEs and farmers with equipment loans that are critical to their ability to develop and scale. Small Foundation provided seed funding for the development of EFAG, which brought \$12 million from equity investors and was critical to financing EFAG's Tanzania operation during the pandemic, as well as its expansion into Kenya. This built on our prior engagement with Equity for Tanzania (EFTA), EFAG's first initiative [xiii].

Other areas of promotion include financial inclusion, advancing renewable energy solutions, and improving access to clean water, among other vital endeavours. This broad scope reflects their holistic approach to addressing poverty and its multifaceted causes.

In 2022 alone:

- The Small Foundation disbursed funding of €3.9M to 19 partners, through grants and social investments.
- This funding went to 4 direct investments; 10 network partners; 2 partners providing support to networks; and 3 research projects.
- By the end of 2022 the Foundations fund and accelerator partners had investments in 220 African SMEs.
- The foundation also approved additional funding of €4.7m to partners in 2022 [xiv].

APPENDIX 1 REFERENCES

- [i] Community Foundation Ireland Grantee List
- [iii] Breaking News.ie Irish children in wheelchairs may experience walking again in new robotic suit
 - [iv] MyMind Annual Report 2022

[ii] DCU – Exoskeleton Programme

- [v] Community Foundation Ireland Grantee List
- [vi] MyMind Annual Report 2022
- [vii] MyMind.org
- [viii] Kids Own Publishing Partner
- [ix] Kids Own Publishing Partner Our Lives, Our Voices
- [x] Community Foundation Ireland Grantee List
- [xi] Basis.Point Archways
- [xii] Small Foundation Our 2022 Impact Report
- [xiii] Small Foundation Efafrica Group
- [xiv] Small Foundation Our 2022 Impact Report



Further information on the work of Community Finance Ireland can be found here:

- Republic of Ireland Brochure 2023
- Social Value Analysis of Community Finance Ireland
- Community Finance Ireland Annual Report 2022

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