

Minutes from meeting

Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Thank you to everyone who attended and input to the session. In attendance we had Rosie McDonagh who acted as chair from Community Foundation Ireland, Margaret Barry from Mount Street Trust Club, Marie Barrett from Smurfit Kappa Foundation and Clare Beavan from DWF Law. A number of members were unable to join us as they were attending the Mary Robinson Climate Conference. We look forward to hearing all about it at the next Network meeting!

Grant Makers Network Member Updates

The full member updates can be found [here](#). Some highlights include:

- Community Foundation Ireland are progressing some crucial thematic funding areas; Climate and Environment, Support for Ukraine and Combatting Extremism and Political Polarisation. A crucial point was made that funding for Ukrainian refugees is starting to dry up yet the need is increasing. There are twice as many refugees in Ireland in 2023 than in 2022. A key funding need is core costs for supporting organisations.
- Smurfit Kappa Foundation have implemented SmartSimple to support their grants management. They have also launched a new impact infographic on their website [here](#),
- Philanthropy Ireland have two new team members. They are also meeting with the Charity Regulator shortly to discuss key issues arising for grant makers.
- DWF Foundation are reviewing their next 3 year strategy and are currently putting together a training for grantees on 'Considering environment and sustainability when planning your project'.

Theme for Discussion: Process of Scoring Applications

A great discussion was held on different issues that arise for grant makers when processing applications. Unconscious bias was recognised as an issue that faces all grant makers. Some ideas to combat this issue included; clearly identifying criteria and definitions with all staff to mitigate personal opinions on areas such as 'sustainability'. Similarly scoping studies before grant rounds open to provide complete information on social issue areas. It was noted that unconscious bias can often arise during trustee discussion and decision making meetings.

Key Emerging Questions and Ideas

- Smurfit Kappa Foundation are looking for some key questions they should be asking as grant makers when reporting on their impact.
- A question regarding unlimited indemnity in the context of granting residual balances was brought up by DWF Foundation, who are looking for advice.
- Are there better scoring questions than can be asked that remove unconscious bias?
- National Centre for Family Philanthropy has provided a guide for uncovering unconscious bias when grant making [here](#).
- Philanthropy Ireland hosted a workshop on Unconscious Bias in 2020 that received great feedback, we can explore this again if there was interest from members.
- Providing timelines and key dates, including grant making for organisations can support the process of scoring applications and avoid frustrations.
- Providing a platform for grantees after the grant round to network and further engage in issue areas has been a great success for Mount Street Trust Club.
- Keep an eye on the level of rejected applications, if the level is high this could indicate a need to hone in on grant criteria.

The next Grant Makers Forum will take place on September 7th from 2-3.30pm, with lunch and networking available from 1pm. This will be an in-person event with hybrid facility available, Dublin city-center location, tbc.

Please email events@philanthropy.ie to register.