## **Community Foundation** for Northern Ireland **Annual Report 2021–22**The QQQ The QQQ Community Foundation

# Welcome from Róisín

2021/22 was yet another extraordinary year. It's hard to remember a time where a global pandemic was not overshadowing our world - however it provided the Community Foundation and many others with a huge amount of learning. Looking back we are astounded by the commitment from our staff, grantees, partners and stakeholders, who have shown resilience and strength striving to connect people who care with causes that matter.

Our five year strategy, covering the period 2019 to 2024, set out our plans as a Foundation. We remain committed to being true to our values and to continually adapt to meet our community's needs. However due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic we undertook a strategic review a year earlier than planned, taking into account what we have learned. Agility and adaptiveness are now key to the entire sector.

This crisis has highlighted the huge value and importance of local philanthropy and community mobilisation. We continued to support those who give, providing access and avenues to ensure that their generosity reached those in need in the quickest time possible, with the maximum impact.

For our grantees, which number in their thousands, through listening and taking a flexible approach, we hope that we have provided support to these vital causes. We have an exciting and challenging programme of work ahead for 2022/23, including the continued delivery of three Department of Health Funds to support cancer, carers and mental health. We are also delighted to be working in partnership with Comic Relief and the Oak Foundation for a further 2 years to support local communities. We thank all of our funders and partners for their continued support in 2021/22 and we look forward to welcoming new donors and new grant applicants over the coming year.

#### Over the next year, we will:

- continue to connect people who care to causes that matter, working in partnership with our donors and funders. Building a strong culture we will live our values by listening to our stakeholders and communities and remain committed to "shifting the power" to those we fund whilst developing our work on equity, diversity and inclusion.
- develop our work around building the 'voice' of the Foundation in campaigning for the VCSE sector and the pressing issue of climate change. Through using different models of grant-making and support we will also adapt to what funders and grantees tell us they need, embed a flexible and more trusting approach to funding and support our staff to prioritise their health and wellbeing.

Róisín Wood CEO

"We need to challenge, campaign, engage and demand more for all the communities"

## "We must be a dynamic organisation capable of responding to seismic events"

I am delighted to be writing my first annual report as Chair of of the the Community Foundation for NI and to update you on the incredible and inspiring work supported by our team over the past year. I am also extremely proud to Chair an organisation which, for over 40 years, has been integral to the fabric and development of the VCSE sector. It is an outstanding organisation responding to community need and the changing dynamic of our region.

Words from our Chair

Thankfully, the world is emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, but this has had and will continue to have a profound impact on many people within our society. We, as a team needed to find new ways of working and responding and we must continue to be a dynamic organisation capable of responding to seismic events. The Foundation's team responded by partnering with the NI Department of Health to distribute over £8 million to 21 Cancer charities and over £15 million to 104 organisations through our cancer, carers and mental health funds.

I look forward to building on this partnership and others across the NI Executive to not only support projects but to drive systemic change in the key areas of health, poverty and climate action.

#### Other highlights this year include:

- The development of an All-Island Fund in collaboration with our colleagues at Community Foundation Ireland to encourage strong partnerships and a more engaged civic society.
- Tackling Digital Exclusion and the commissioning of our report "Wired Up" with Bytes which explores the digital needs of the VCSE sector.
- Continuing to strengthen community capacity building through programmes such as Civic Innovation and the Grassroot Leadership Programme.

I would also like to note my thanks to all of my fellow Trustees of the Foundation for their continued support, passion and wisdom during my first year as Chair. Particular thanks to Maeve Monaghan, who stepped down after six years as Chair and to Claire McGonigle and Glenn Bradley who stepped down from the board during the year. To our funders, partners, ambassadors and grantees, I hope this report inspires many of you to continue your work with the Foundation as we continue to build an equitable society together.

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Adrian Johnston CHAIR

# **Our Foundation at a glance**

We are a local grant-making charitable trust that connects people who care with causes that matter. Matching generous people with important community causes, every year we award grants and facilitate innovative programmes for hundreds of community groups in Northern Ireland through funds set up by and investments made by our donors.

In a society where everyone can prosper and live in peace, we continue to encourage and support those who want to give and empower the local community to effect change. We have a wealth of experience supporting bespoke giving, providing philanthropic advice, and we're a trusted, secure means through which donors choose how, when and where to give.

Through this approach we strive to help communities in need, drive social change and change lives through impactful grantmaking and delivering innovative programmes.

#### Values

We seek to make a difference by being...

#### Generous

We encourage generosity in everything we do; we look out for each other; we deal with everyone with compassion, empathy and understanding. We are flexible in how we work with staff, donors and grantees.

#### Thriving

We see the potential within both our staff and the communities we work in and are committed to helping both reach their full potential.

#### Together

We will only make the change we want to see together. We value participation, working with others and bringing people together.

# **Strategic priorities**

We continued to focus on our five strategic priorities:

#### Thriving after the conflict

We recognise that some communities still face challenges in a post conflict society yet have a will to thrive. The Community Foundation works to support groups, leaders and potential leaders in those communities to make that happen.

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#### Growing Community Voice

Everyone has the right to participate in the decisions that affect their lives and shape the society they live in. We support civil society and organsiations, amplifying their voice as they push for change and delivery for their communities at all levels.

Building Sustainable Communities We are working towards a stronger, resilient and sustainable community sector equipped to face the challenges of tomorrow. We do this by unlocking resources and skills, piloting innovative approaches, developing partnerships and encouraging entrepreneurial mindsets.

#### Inspire and Encourage Generosity

Working with funders we support and guide strategic giving in Northern Ireland. We connect networks research, convene, inspire and support people and organisations to ensure funding reaches the causes and places that matter and where it is needed most.

#### Supporting People on the Edges

Each and every person within our society has the right to be included. We will continue to support communities including refugees and asylum seekers, our LGBTQIA+ community, and the Travelling community and help to build capacity in partnership.

# Meet our team of fantastic and dedicated staff and board

We are lucky to have a fantastic team of staff across the organisation, who are passionate about making a difference to local people in Northern Ireland. We regularly see examples of our staff 'living' our values of Generous, Thriving and Together. Over the past year, we have continued to focus on these values and embed them in our culture.

The growth and success of the Community Foundation is due in no small part to the knowledge and dedication of our Trustees, past and present. Their commitment and contribution has been a key element in our journey and they continued to guide us and enhance our work during the year.

Adrian Johnston



**Ciaran Moynagh** 



David McCurley



**Glenn Bradley** 



**Shelley Martin** 



**Our Trustees** 

David Gavaghan



Meave Monaghan



Jane Wilde



John Gordon



Mary McKee



Suzanne Lagan



**Claire McGonigle** 

Sophie Long (No picture available)

# Our staff team





Dawn Shackels



Claire O'Kane



Gemma McCaughley







Marion Hegarty



Carolyn McLoone



Fiona O'Toole



Helen Craig





Janice Boyd





Shauna Kelpie



Kirsty McMullen



Orla Black

Lois Kilpatrick



Nikkie Bell



Sinead Brennan

Karina Pieterson



Ciara Lavery



FY April 2021 and March 2022

# Our grant making

We received a high number of applications to our funds, with 1679 applications this financial year, 395 of which were from new applicants.

## We awarded 912 grants totalling

Our average grant was

#### **Our grants benefited**

# £28,904,245 £31,691.06 836,085<sub>people</sub>

Our average grant and grant making increased significantly this year, due to funding received from the Department of Health for three new Health Funds, supporting cancer charities, carers and mental health organisations.

## Our funding breakdown

£10,112,127 £18,152,258

**£139,554** awarded to connect people with

access to local services

awarded to connect people with the arts, culture and heritage

£213,282

awarded to improve life skills, education, employability and enterprise

awarded to promote the reduction of isolation and disadvantage and

awarded to advance people's physical and mental health, wellbeing

£265,694 £21,330

awarded to maximise the ability to strngthen community cohesion and build social capacity

awarded to transform access to, and engagement with, the environment and public spaces

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# **Building sustainable communities**



Building sustainable communities at the Community Foundation means bringing resources, skills and innovative approaches to enable a resilient and vibrant community sector. During Covid we saw how some communities struggled. Using the learning from our work during Covid, and listening to our stakeholders, we were able to build on this work in 21/22.

#### **Highlights include**

- In partnership with Bank of Ireland we awarded 51 organisations a grant to enable active participation of communities in decision-making and involvement in making their community a better place to live.
- We established a Climate Justice Group to develop a draft climate justice action plan placing this at the heart of the Foundation. Training was undertaken to enhance learning and understanding of the issues that relate to grass-roots work in this area.
- Supporting a review of the delivery mechanisms of the Rural Development Programme which seeks to influence government on how any new mechanism is rolled out in a post-Brexit environment. The final report, carried out by Rural Community Network was launched in March.

"Using the learning from our work during Covid, and listening to our stakeholders, we were able to build on this work in 21/22 "

### Acorn Farm - Empowering communities to be more selfsufficient

250 families have been taking part in a programme designed to help communities living in the North West reduce their carbon footprint.

The Kivlehan's are just one of the families participating in the I Can Grow project.

"We've enjoyed getting some tips from the horticulturalist which I've passed onto friends. It's lovely being able to lift something from your back garden and bring it into the kitchen to cook for dinner.

"We have to take care of our community and 'I can grow' is empowering us to be more self-sufficient while cutting out all the pollution involved in transporting food."

## **Empowering Change with Comic Relief**

Recognising the importance of local community organisations, we partnered with Comic Relief. The funding was to support issues including children surviving and thriving, global health matters, a safe place to be and fighting for gender justice.

One of the beneficiaries of the programme, Crisis Cafe CIC, created a safe and welcoming place for young people who find themselves in crisis or in need of mental health support. The team empowers young people to seek help with a range of early intervention services to support them.





## Growing community voice



The voice of civic society is key to a healthy democracy and with few opportunities for people to influence decisions that effect their lives, at the Foundation we support communities to find and use their voice.

#### What we did:

- We convened three teams of people with lived experience to participate in creative problem solving workshops in relation to female homelessness, Homelessness affecting asylum seekers and refugees and early intervention solutions. This programme, in partnership with the Oak Foundation, will continue and develop in 2022/23
- Covid restrictions highlighted digital divides and digital poverty within society and within the voluntary and community sector. Funding from Comic Relief enabled us to commission research into digital needs and digital inclusion in NI which in 2022/23 will inform and support our strategic response and planning future developments of digital programmes
- Our Civic Innovation programme puts people at the center of decision making and in partnership with Esme Fairburn and Paul Hamlyn Foundation, seven innovation projects continued to enable democratic change. Citizens panels, digital engagement, participatory budgeting and co-designed solutions ensured power was shifted to communities within

education, climate change, community planning, peace building and Irish language right. Highlights of the programme included the development of a Future Schools toolkit by IEF which will support schools to involve communities around decision making on school reform, Garvagh People's Forest delivered a participatory budgeting approach enhancing community involvement in local decision making and Hollywood Transition Town with a Growing Food, Growing Community Project, encouraging food sustainability.

"Funding from Comic Relief enabled us to commission research into digital needs and Digital Inclusion in NI"

# £8.8m allocated towards mental health support

We listened to our grantee network and those with lived experience which helped us to shape our grant making. A need for more mental health support for all ages was highlighted.

Across Northern Ireland, 30 projects received funding to support work within mental health and wellbeing as part of funding released through Department of Health Mental Health Support Fund. The groups awarded the funding will provide services including counselling provision and support services, expanding peer support networks and providing trauma support programmes. The projects are aimed at a wide range of ages from children through to older people.



#### Housing and Homelessness challenges identified

Individuals with lived experience of housing issues and homelessness have identified 13 priority challenges that are not being adequately addressed by existing services, policies or legislation in Northern Ireland.

The challenges will now be used to inspire the development of innovative projects as part of a new grants programme being delivered by The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland.



## Thriving after the conflict



During the year we continued to work with communities, people and families affected by the conflict and those within our community who are actively working for change and addressing legacy issues.

In partnership with International Fund for Ireland, our work under the Peace Impact Programme, supports community groups and organisations in areas where tensions remain high at times and where there has been limited 'peace dividends'.

Launched in 2012, the Peace Impact Programme focuses in areas where peace building engagement has been low and in some cases nonexistent.

It is designed to deliver positive community transformation through sensitive interventions led by grassroots community organisations. Funded projects operate in areas that suffer from high levels of economic and social deprivation and where major challenges remain around paramilitaries exerting coercive control.

The Peace Impact Programme increases engagement through a range of activities around cultural identity, education and skills development. This enables communities to build resilience and navigate their way through more challenging issues such as parades, paramilitary gatekeeping, flags and bonfires. Over the course of 2021/22 some 18 projects were supported. Our Grassroots Leadership Programme continues to go from strength to strength supporting individuals emerging as community leaders with 14 people from across Northern Ireland engaged in the programme in 21/22.

Further highlights in the year included:

- Supporting a major conference on 'Envisioning the Future' with the North West Cultural Partnership
- Working with the Foundations for Peace Network, we began devising a 5 x 1 hour taster course with the Open University on conflict.

"The Peace Impact Programme supports community groups and organisations in areas where tensions remain high "

#### **Peace Impact Programme\***

A partnership between Bready and District Ulster Scots Development Association, and led by North West Cultural Partnership is going from strength to strength.

Derek, Bready and District Ulster Scots Development Association explains: "We had some tensions on the ground among young people but it has a lot to do with frustrations around Covid and the fact that nothing was happening for a year.

"We wanted to defuse the situation long before it got out of control. Our work involved going into communities talking about the Northern Ireland Protocol and Brexit and dispelling some of the myths about this. This also involved talking to government departments and we had meetings with senior government officials on attitudes around the Northern Ireland Protocol and language being spoken by politicians."

\*Funded through International Fund For Ireland.



## Building Leaders, Building Peace: A Grassroots Leadership Programme

For the third year running this programme opened for applications. Alan, a past participant of the programme, joined as the voluntary chairperson of a Protestant/ Unionist/Loyalist (PUL) community organisation, often viewed in very negative terms due to past events. The programme supported Alan to identify areas of change and ways to help address the needs of local people.

Through mentoring and learnings gained from a Leadership and Management qualification, gaps in representation from the PUL community was identified. This has been rectified with new members now on board and a new three-year strategy in the making which will be more representative of the needs of the PUL community. The organisation's cross community work will be more effective and representative as a direct result.



## Inspiring and encouraging generosity



We continue to encourage more and better philanthropy and to work in partnership with a range of funders and donors to support local communities.

Launching 12 new funds, we distributed over £28.5m in funding to voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises in 21/22 benefiting over 800,000 people. This year exciting new opportunities presented themselves as we progressed our partnerships, networks and match funding opportunities.

Highlights included:

- New endowment and revenue fund income for the community and voluntary sector, including £30m to support cancer, mental health and carers in NI over the next three years.
- A welcome return to face to face events and regular Seeing is Believing visits.
- We launched a new Match Fund for Gifts in Wills in partnership with the Law Society and have to date received over £500,000 in pledges towards key areas of need across the voluntary sector.
- The first All-Island Fund in partnership with funders and Community Foundation Ireland launched with 30 partnerships funded in the first round.

- The Ultach Trust closed and was revitalised under the Community Foundation, making its first awards towards the use and promotion of the Irish language in 2021.
- Using social platforms, broadcast and print media to raise awareness and engage with communities we were pleased to see as increase in reach, engagement and followers across all our platforms.
- In partnership with Department of Communities and the Institute of Directors, we awarded the second Philanthropist of the Year award to Dr Terry Cross.
- We were pleased to complete our successful Philanthropy Capacity Building programme in partnership with local philanthropists and the Department for Communities. This work will support the development of learning tools and resources in the coming months.

### **Community Foundation announces** match funding for Gifts in Wills

The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland launched an innovative new match funding initiative to support giving to local communities through charitable gifts in Wills. The 'Gifts in Wills' match fund matches charitable gifts at 50%, up to a maximum of £50,000.

We've developed this new initiative, the first of its kind in NI, in consultation with professional advisors and in support of financial and estate planning. The match funding initiative means that the impact of legacies or 'Gifts in Wills', to support local causes and places, will be significantly increased.

### All-Island Fund issues £350,000 in grants to thirty cross border community partnerships

Thirty cross border community partnerships including clean air initiatives, sanctuaries for refugees and migrants, women's rights and a ban on LGBTI+ conversion therapy are being supported by grants from a new All-Island Community Fund.

Launched by The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland in partnership with The Community Foundation Ireland, the funding will strengthen the voice of communities across north and south.





## Supporting people on the edges



As a society we are growing and Northern Ireland is a changing place. This has many benefits but it also brings with it new challenges. Refugees and asylum seekers, Travellers and members of our LGBTQIA+ continue to face discrimination and exclusion.

We aim to build an inclusive, diverse and equitable society where everyone has their rights and entitlements protected, enshrined and respected.

Highlights included:

- The Comic Relief Social Change Projects were developed and approved, including investment in two progammes that have a focus on people who are considering and/or are going through a transgender transition process.
- As part of our commitment to working with the most disadvantaged people in NI, and becoming a more diverse and inclusive organisation, we developed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan which involved input from Trustees, staff, people with lived experience and external advisors.

Our staff undertook training to broaden their knowledge and understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion, including sexual orientation and gender awareness and racism and discrimination.

"Our staff undertook training to broaden their knowledge and understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion "

# Integrating asylum seekers into elite sports

Our economy is about people living, working and thriving together. Building a fair economy or society is impossible if people are excluded from taking part.

Ethnic Minority Sports Organisation Northern Ireland has been funded through the Social Justice Awards to support a new advocacy campaign.

It is raising awareness of the limitations of the current system but seeking change to treat asylum seekers in our community fairly, equitably and justly. It is currenently excluding them from playing sport professionally because of their status is discriminatory, even as volunteers.

# Over £9,000 of funding awarded to address digital poverty

The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland is delighted to announce the first round of funding awards with their new partner, full fibre broadband provider, Fibrus Networks Ltd.

The Fibrus Community Fund, round one has supported 9 community organisations awarding £9,725, including Maghera Cross Community Link who will use the award to fund the purchase of hard drives and laptops to prevent disadvantaged young people from falling further behind in their studies.





## Our people and finances



The Operations Team continued to support the work of the Foundation by providing human resources, financial management and governance functions.

We are lucky to have a fantastic team of staff across the organisation who are passionate about making a difference to local people in Northern Ireland.

We regularly see examples of our staff 'living' our values of Generous, Thriving and Together.

Over the past year, we have continued to focus on these values and embed them in our culture.

We support a culture of workplace wellbeing and encourage our staff to have a positive work/life balance and to prioritise their health and wellbeing.

Our staff team has grown over the past year and we are delighted to have recruited new staff to work alongside our existing staff, to provide the best service possible to grantees, donors and communities in Northern Ireland.

This has also included the promotion and development of existing staff into roles with greater responsibilities.

The Operations Team manages all the income and expenditure across the organisation and this increased significantly in the past year as a result of the Health Funds supported by the Department of Health. A summary of the income and expenditure for the year is shown on the next page.

"We regularly see examples of our staff 'living' our values of Generous, Thriving and Together "

# **Our finances**

	£	%
Donations	£2,226,261	6%
Funding Received THE HEART OF	£34,845,954	93%
	(includes £31 million for the Healt	h Funds)
Investment Income	£424,285	1%
Total Income	£37,496,500	
-		
Expenditure	£	%
Grants	£11,531,287	86.8%
Programme Development & Support	£1,524,918	11.5%
Fundraising & Communications	£210,764	1.6%
Governance	£11,944	0.1%
Total Funanditure	C12 279 012	
Total Expenditure	£13,278,913	

In addition to our revenue funds, we also have a number of endowment funds which are invested to provide a return for making grants annually on a long term basis. We have been committed to an ethical investment policy for many years and continue to review this regularly to ensure that it meets our vision and mission, and helps us to deliver our strategy.

# Our funds, funders and supporters

Accelerator Programme & Match Fund	Comic Relief	Energia Crighshane Community Benefit Fund
Acorn Climate Action Fund	Community Arts Fund	Energia Longmountain Community Benefit Fund
Acorn Fund Giving Circle	Community Foundation Ireland	Energia Rathsherry Community Benefit Fund
Acorn MAN Fund	Corby Knowe Community Benefit Fund	Energia Thornog Community Benefit Fund
All-Island Fund	Cregganconroe Community Benefit Fund	Energia Tyrone 3 Wind Farms Community Benefit
Ann McGeeney Trust	David Cross Reconciliation Fund	Fund
ARN Foundation	David Ervine Revenue Fund	Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
Ballygrainey Fund	Department for Communities	Evishagaran & Craiggore Wind Farm Fund
Bank of Ireland Community Giving Fund	Department of Health	Fibrus Fund
BC&P Fund	Department of Health Cancer Charities Support Fund	Fulton Fund for Destitute Asylum Seekers
Brockaghboy Community Benefit Fund	Department of Health Carers Support Fund	Garfield Weston Foundation
Business Eye Fund	Department of Health Mental Health Support Fund	Gills Charity Fund
Carnhill Community Benefit Fund	Dunbeg Community Benefit Fund	Give Inc Giving Circle
Circle of Change	Dungannon Community Trust	Hobson Fund
Civic Innovation & Grassroots Leadership Programme	Dungannon Development Association	Human Rights Revenue Fund
Cloonty Community Benefit Fund	Dunmore Community Benefit Fund	IFA Foundation

## **Inishative Community Benefit Fund** International Fund for Ireland Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust Kate Lagan NI Foundation Keadue Fund Kingsbridge Foundation Made by Sport - Clubs in Crisis McCall Fund **Meliora** Trust Mike Fulton Fund Monnaboy Community Benefit Fund National Lottery Community Fund Nationwide Community Fund Nationwide Foundation **New Voices Programme**

**Noah Donohoe Foundation** 

## **Oak Foundation** Oak Housing & Homelessness Innovation Programme **Older People's Fund One Small Step Fund Paul Hamlyn Foundation** Peace Impact Programme Pears Community Space Fund Porticus PWC Foundation Payroll Giving Fund **Red Cross FRIS Fund RTE Toy Show Appeal** Sigrid Rausing Trust Sir George Earle Benevolent Fund SL7 Fund Social Justice Grants

#### Tampon Tax Fund

**Telecommunity Fund** 

Thomas Devlin Fund

Ulster Bank Sir George Quigley Award

Ulster People's College

**Ultach Fund** 

Wesleyan Foundation

Wesleyan Fund

Women's Fund Giving Circle

**Staff Trustee Fund** 

# Annual Report

2021-2022

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Connecting people who care with causes that matter