



# The Inspiring Growth Fund

Building  
for a digital  
Future

The   
Community  
Foundation  
Northern Ireland

***“Philanthropy has never been more needed and it has the power to uplift, transform and inspire change.”***

Fozia Ifran

Civic Society Leader, Author of  
‘Transformative Philanthropy’



## Welcome

**A message from the Community Foundation's CEO, Róisín Wood.**

**The Inspiring Growth Fund** is a strategic collaboration between the business community and the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI).

Its mission is to empower grassroots organisations to adapt, thrive, and create lasting positive change for the individuals and communities they serve.

To achieve this we all must work to break down the digital divide.

The digital divide is real and it's holding back the community and voluntary sector, a vital employer and changemaker in our society.

From small nonprofits to grassroots initiatives, many vital organisations lack the digital tools, training, and infrastructure they need to serve effectively in today's world.

That's why we're launching the Inspiring Growth Fund, a targeted initiative to equip local changemakers with the digital resources they need to grow, connect, and innovate.

This proposal is an invite to be part of a movement, a movement that seeks to redefine the way we give, share and serve our local communities.

We're seeking visionary partners to help us fund this transformation.

Together, we can build a more resilient community and voluntary sector while reinforcing your company's leadership role in corporate responsibility.



***Róisín Wood***

Chief Executive Officer  
The Community  
Foundation for  
Northern Ireland



## The Digital Challenge

At the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, we empower local communities, and grassroots organisations with the tools and training they need to thrive.

This year, we're launching the **Inspiring Growth Fund** to bridge the digital divide in the community and voluntary sector and we invite your business to be part of this bold step forward.

Recent research by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland has found that many community organisations still struggle with accessing technology and skills to build for the future.

Many organisations surveyed highlighted challenges including:

- **Outdated or no technology**  
72% of charities find the cost of equipment and ongoing

maintenance a barrier to adopting a digital culture.

- **Limited access to digital tools**  
73% of charities need support in sourcing hardware and software.
- **Lack of training in platforms**  
41% of charities require training on cybersecurity and 47% on AI.
- **Inability to reach people online**  
37% of charities require training and support in social media management and 28% in website management.

This digital gap limits the capacity of community organisations to serve communities.

We want to change that by providing grants that give people the time to learn, share and access much needed resources to bridge that gap.

## Fund Goals

The aim of the Inspiring Growth Fund is to enable community organisations to strengthen their capabilities in several key areas:

- **Enhancing** skills and knowledge through training and digital literacy programmes for nonprofit staff and volunteers
- **Building** cyber security and tech support to ensure safe, sustainable systems
- **Ensuring** digital tools are accessible including software, hardware, AI and other necessary platforms
- **Website and communications support** for under-resourced groups

With digital skills lacking in the sector, it is important that those organisations delivering vital services are supported to access digital technology and avail of the opportunities the likes of AI may bring.

This capacity-building approach ensures that community organisations can adapt and thrive.

Not only will this process make organisations more sustainable but it will make a lasting impact on the individuals and communities they serve.



**22% of charities reported their organisation was struggling to adopt a digital culture. Funding was seen as the largest challenge to future proofing the voluntary and community sector**

## How Your Business Can Make an Impact

We know that the business community is keen to reach out to local charities.

It can be challenging, and time-consuming, to choose, and even harder to find small or niche charities, outside the mainstream.

We are inviting investors in the Inspiring Growth Fund to join us as we build a community of like-minded organisations, inspired and motivated to get behind small charities.

The Inspiring Growth Fund allows your business to be a visible leader in digital equity and innovation, meeting your CSR and ESG goals and creating measurable impact.

Through strengthened ties with community and voluntary sector networks you can align your brand with inclusive progress.

Below are examples of how you can make a real difference and have a long-term, meaningful impact on local communities.

| Donation Tier       | Impact                                                                                    | Recognition                             |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| £2,500              | Fund a small grant for one local organisation to identify gaps and develop an action plan | Social media shoutout and logo on site  |
| £10,000             | Sponsor one grantee for a full digital upskilling programme of activity                   | Logo on all materials and blog feature  |
| £25,000             | Become a lead sponsor of the Inspiring Growth Fund                                        | Co-branding on events and press release |
| Custom Partnerships | A more tailored fund opportunity to meet your CSR goals                                   | Let's make it meaningful and visible    |

We also welcome in-kind donations of software licenses, devices, or consulting hours from your team.

## Match Funding

At the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, we are in the unique position of being able to match your giving. For donations of £5,000 or over (dependent on fund availability) we will match that donation at a rate of 50% or £25,000.

| Donation Tier       | Match                                                |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| £5,000              | £2,500                                               |
| £10,000             | £5,000                                               |
| £25,000             | £12,500                                              |
| Custom Partnerships | 50% of donation, max £25,000, whichever is the lower |

## Next steps...

We'd love to connect for a 15-minute conversation to explore partnership opportunities.

Contact us at [giving@communityfoundationni.org](mailto:giving@communityfoundationni.org) or visit our [website](https://www.communityfoundationni.org) to learn more. Together, we can ensure no organisation is left behind in the digital age.





*"Your involvement will not only support impactful projects and initiatives but also enhance the overall vitality of our local economy and society. Together, we can champion meaningful growth and make a lasting difference in Northern Ireland."*

**John Hansen**  
National Chair / Institute of Directors



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