

Impact Programme

2025 IMPACT PROGRAMME APPLICANT GUIDE



applications@socialentrepreneurs.ie

socialentrepreneurs.ie



DCC

The National Call for Applications
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1. Introduction

Ireland faces complex social challenges that our current systems are struggling to solve. As a result, the most vulnerable and marginalised people in our society are often the most affected.

Since 2004, Social Entrepreneurs Ireland has been empowering high-potential, entrepreneur-led organisations to tackle these pressing issues and drive meaningful, lasting social change.

To date, we have supported over **600 social entrepreneurs across the island of Ireland** and we do this in two ways:

1. We identify individuals with unique insights and scalable solutions to social problems

2. We provide them with the funding, training, and connections needed to grow their impact

Our approach is built through a three-tiered approach: delivering one-to-one support, building organisational capacity, and developing powerful networks.

We work closely with social entrepreneurs at every stage of their journey, offering tailored mentorship, strategic guidance, and expert-led training to strengthen their organisations. Our support extends beyond funding—we help them build resilience, refine their leadership skills, and develop the tools needed to sustain and scale their impact.

Beyond individual support, we connect entrepreneurs to a thriving ecosystem of peers, alumni, pro bono experts, and sector leaders. By raising their profile through media, sector recognition, and speaking opportunities, we help social entrepreneurs gain credibility and amplify their impact.

Through this comprehensive approach, Social Entrepreneurs Ireland ensures that those tackling Ireland's biggest social challenges have the resources, skills, and networks they need to create lasting change.

We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds and we are committed to providing equal opportunities regardless of gender identity, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or religion.
(Equal Status Acts, 2000-2018).

"If you are trying to solve a problem in society but feel you do not have time, don't know enough, or are apprehensive to engage with a programme from Social Entrepreneurs Ireland then you're exactly the type of person who needs this. It is impossible to have all the answers. It is so fantastic to have people who are there just for you with a broad interest in trying to help you and expertise and contacts in every industry. Social Entrepreneurs Ireland's support can deepen your impact, can challenge you and bring you along the right path for the change you want to make."

**"Therese Coveney
CEO Together Academy
Impact Programme Awardee 2023**



2. The Impact Programme

The Impact Programme supports developing stage social entrepreneurs like you once you have piloted your solution, demonstrated impact, are ready to **strengthen your foundations** to ensure you thrive and **identify your route to scaling** (whether that be scaling out, scaling deep or scaling up) so you can have your greatest impact.

We are looking for 5 high potential social entrepreneur-led organisations to take part in our Impact Programme.

The programme provides targeted support and engagement through a series of activities: Discovery Sessions, Co-Design Days, Group Sessions and Individual Supports. These sessions are facilitated by members of our team and wider community including our supporters, fellow support organisations, partners, funders, sector expert consultants and alumni.

PROGRAMME GOALS

All activities are aligned with four overarching goals.



Stronger Organisations: Training, advice and support in areas related to improving your organisation's structure, operational capacity, solution delivery, financial capacity and impact measurement.



Impactful Voices: Communication skills in various forms enabling you to tell your story and engage more effectively with a range of stakeholders and audiences



Resilient Leaders: Leadership development to strengthen your resilience and adaptability.



Long-Lasting Social Change: Tackling the problem, not just delivering the solution including network building and collaborations within the eco-system.

TRUST-BASED FUNDING

Alongside this we will also provide you with €20,000 in unrestricted funding to invest in whichever part of the organisation you believe needs it most, trusting that you are the expert when it comes to your organisation.

Your Greatest Impact

We know that one of the greatest challenges for you at this stage is **identifying your individual route to scaling so that you can have your greatest impact.**

ROUTE TO SCALING

Our learnings from previous programmes and insights from research into transformation demonstrates that the process of identifying each individual route to scaling is complex and iterative and requires time, space, expertise and a willingness to dive deep.

The Impact Programme, with its combination of funding, coaching, peer support, expert guidance and high quality consultancy offers you a unique opportunity to, not just build your organisation, but also develop that clear understanding of the multiple pathways to scaling (out, deep or up) to help you identify where you can have your greatest impact.

The 2025 Impact Programme will be structured over three interconnected phases.

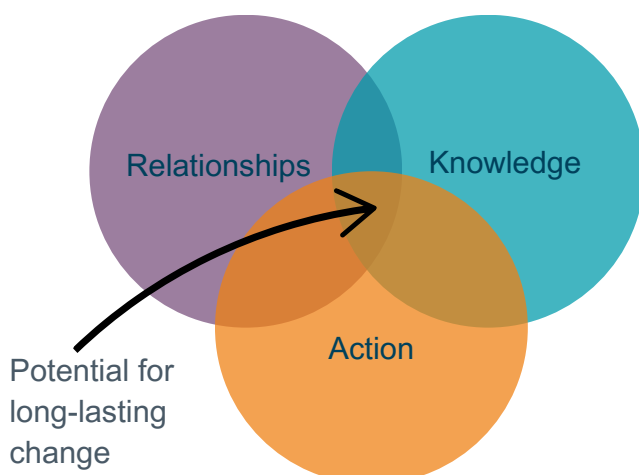
The first phase focuses on building **relationships**. These relationships include with: the SEI team, your peers, the wider community and with yourself as you take that deep dive into your own story, values, critical success factors, strengths and vision.

The second phase will focus on enhancing your knowledge and skills. This will include introducing you to new ideas and theories around the potential routes to scaling alongside increasing your competence in various required areas such as HR and finances.

The third phase allows you to translate your learnings into action by creating tangible pieces of work, such as three-year plans and marketing strategies, either autonomously or with consultants/advisors.

The programme also gives you the opportunity to explore options, experiment, learn and refine your social impact model.

It is this combination of Relationships, Knowledge and Action that we believe can bring about long-lasting change.



We were never meant to do this alone

At Social Entrepreneurs Ireland, we understand the exciting yet challenging and sometimes lonely journey of a social entrepreneur.

Often, the initial stages of this journey demand your passion, creativity and bravery to take those difficult and crucial first steps. However, for social entrepreneurs at the Impact Programme stage, we recognise the need to develop and lean on other strengths such as strategic visioning, systems thinking, leadership and collaboration.

At the developing stage you may often be expanding your team, building your board, managing partnership relationships, advocating, lobbying and stepping beyond the role of founder to CEO.

All of these exciting steps to growth bring a myriad of challenges. Challenges that can sometimes be difficult to share with friends, family or your team as they are often unique to the journey of a social entrepreneur and the difficult balance between social and commercial goals.

The peer support we provide as part of the Impact Programme is crucial to its success. The focus on connections and relationships is important at every step of the process, from the Selection Workshops to the Discovery sessions, the Co-Design Days, the group coaching sessions and the multiple opportunities to learn with and from each other.

We are looking for people who both have a brilliant solution with the potential to bring about real impact and also have the capability, desire and willingness to connect and support others on the journey.

“As a recipient of Social Entrepreneurs Ireland’s support, my achievements have been significantly amplified in ways I could not have accomplished otherwise. The inclusion in a new peer group has provided invaluable support and training, fostering an environment where collaboration and shared learning thrive.”

**Susan Adams, Founder and CEO,
Education for Sustainability,
Impact Programme Awardee 2023**





3. Selection Timeline

Open Applications: 31st March - 1st May 2025 (deadline extended)

You can apply to the Impact Programme by filling in an online application form. Details on how to apply are outlined in the section 'How to Apply'.

Selection for Assessment Workshops: 24th May 2025

Once applications close we will conduct a comprehensive review of all applications to select the 30 applicants to attend our Assessment Workshops.

Assessment Workshop: 6th June 2025, from 10am to 4pm, Dublin, in-person

If you are selected for the second round you will be invited to attend the in-person Assessment Workshop. These workshops are designed to allow the review team to learn more about you through a day of individual and group exercises, while also giving you an opportunity to connect with other social entrepreneurs and build your community of support.

Selection for Final Interview: 11th June 2025

We will contact you on the 11th June to let you know whether you have been selected for the next stage.

Final Interview: 20th June 2025, Dublin, in-person

Following the Assessment Workshops, 15 applicants will be invited to submit further information and take part in an in-person interview which will take place on the 20th June in Dublin.

Impact Programme Awardee Selection: w/c 7th July 2025

Applicants will be informed of the final outcome of the selection process in early July.

Impact Programme Launch: 10th September 2025, Dublin, in-person

If you are selected to the programme you will be invited to take part in the Impact Programme Launch event in Dublin on the 10th September.

4. Our Evaluation Criteria

Throughout the application process, we aim to understand your story, delving into your understanding of the social or environmental issue, the evolution of your solution, plans for the growth of your organisation, your team and your impact and your long-term vision for an Ireland where the problem you are tackling has been solved or significantly changed in some way. The Evaluation Criteria we use are set out below.



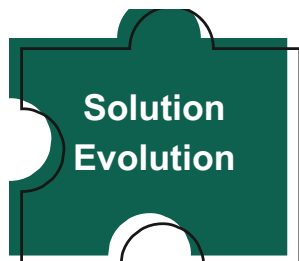
1. Spirit of a Social Entrepreneur

Tell us your story—what drives you to create social or environmental change? We're looking for passionate, determined leaders with a clear vision for their solution. Share why you're the right person to lead this initiative and make a lasting impact.



2. Solution Fit

A strong solution starts with a deep understanding of the problem. We want to see a clear grasp of both the broader issue and the specific challenge you're addressing, including the affected group(s) and the barriers they face. Your solution should outline a clear plan to tackle these obstacles effectively.



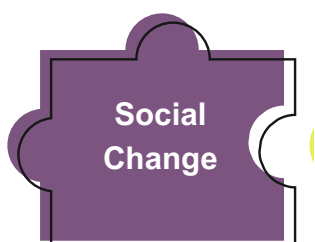
3. Solution Evolution

Tell us how your solution has developed over time. We're particularly interested in how you've adapted based on feedback and lessons learned, demonstrating your ability to refine and improve. Share your team's growth, the impact you've made, and how you've assessed changes at each stage.



4. Steps to Growth

This section focuses on practical expansion plans. We want to know how you intend to scale, what resources you need, your financial model, and how you'll ensure long-term sustainability.



5. Social Change

Describe your vision for lasting change in Ireland if your problem were solved. How does your solution improve or complement existing efforts? We also want to understand your collaborations with stakeholders and how broader shifts in behaviour, culture, policies, or institutions might drive systemic impact.

How we Use our Evaluation Criteria

At each stage of the Selection process we focus on different Evaluation Criteria - as set out below.

At every stage we also assess your overall fit and readiness for the programme, your commitment to bringing about change, to engaging with SEI and your fellow social entrepreneurs and your willingness to make best use of the programme's supports.

APPLICATION

At the application stage we will focus primarily on your solution, how it evolved and the extent to which you can demonstrate that it is addressing the problem you have identified. Our emphasis on 'solution fit' stems from the belief that you cannot have a viable solution without an in-depth understanding of the problem.



ASSESSMENT WORKSHOPS

During the workshops we will focus on your fit for the programme including your willingness and curiosity to dive deep and your collaborative skills that allow you to work with others.



FINAL INTERVIEW

The interviews are our opportunity to explore your vision for the future - both for your organisation and how you envision its growth but also your broader vision for bringing about social change.



5. Selection Preparation

BEFORE YOU APPLY

1. Learn About the Impact Programme

Before applying, **review this guide and explore our website** to fully understand the Impact Programme, including the **time commitment** involved. Participation in selection events and the programme itself is **mandatory**, so ensure you're ready to engage fully.

2. Check Your Eligibility

Verify that you meet the eligibility criteria outlined in this guide. You can also learn more about who we support through the Impact Programme by visiting our website.

3. Take Your Time with the Application

Give yourself plenty of time to complete your application before the deadline on 28th April 2025 (**midnight**). Our online system allows you to **save your progress and return to it later**. Once you sign up and save your application for the first time, **all changes will be saved automatically**.

💡**Tip:** Before submitting, we strongly recommend **seeking feedback from a friend, colleague, or mentor**. A fresh perspective can help strengthen your application.

4. Attend Our National Call Information Event – 8th April 2025 (*not mandatory*)

Join us to find out if the Impact Programme is right for you! This session will cover:

- Eligibility criteria and what stage of development is best suited for the programme.
- The types of support offered to help social entrepreneurs grow.
- Insights from current participants on how the programme has helped them scale their impact.

💡**Can't attend live?** A recording will be available on our website after the event. Follow us on social media for updates and registration details.



What supports does Social Entrepreneurs Ireland offer to help with the application process?

Information Session - Tuesday, 8th April at 1pm

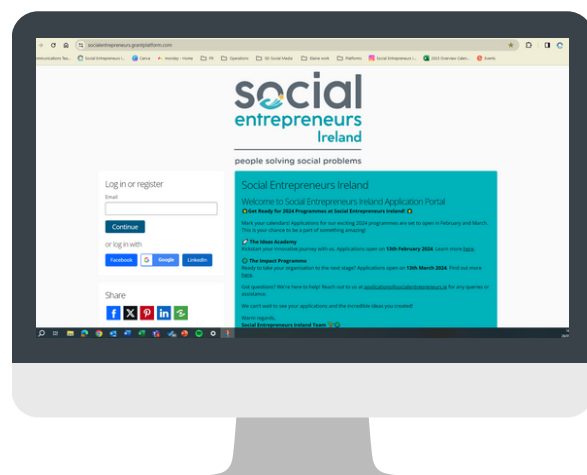
6. How to Apply

All applications must be submitted online using our online application form.

Please access socialentrepreneurs.grantplatform.com to login/register and create your application. You can find all the details you need to enter the application process on our website at socialentrepreneurs.ie.

You will be asked to create a profile and login details, you can then log into your application at any time during the selection process period (31st March to 28th April 2025). **Please note:** we have created video guides to help you register and login - see links below.

1. [How to Register on Good Grants](#)
2. [How to Apply on Good Grants](#)



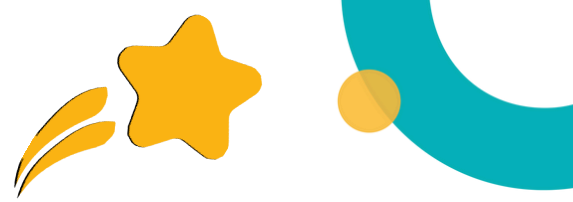
After submission you will not be able to amend your application, so please ensure you have reviewed your work carefully before submission.



Please check out the [Frequently Asked Questions section on our website](#) for any queries on the programme or the application process.

If you have a problem with your application or a specific question not answered in this guide, you can email applications@socialentrepreneurs.ie or call 01-685-3919 and we will do our best to answer you.

Before going into the actual application questions, you will have the option to submit your responses in written form or as voice recordings. This choice, designed to make the application process more accessible, will apply to all questions and cannot be changed once you begin. You will need to choose the format that best allows you to express your ideas clearly.



7. Eligibility Criteria

YOU AND YOUR ORGANISATION

- You are 18 years or over
- You have identified a social or environmental issue and developed an effective solution to address it
- The primary activities of your organisation are based in Ireland
- Your project/organisation is legally incorporated, registered with a recognised legal structure or as a sole trader
- You are the founder or co-founder of this idea or organisation
- You have been actively delivering your solution (either as a sole trader or legally incorporated) for 12 months or more
- You have concrete evidence demonstrating the measurable impact of your organisation on your target beneficiaries/audience
- Your current time commitment to your project/organisation is either part-time or full-time
- You are aiming to significantly grow or scale your organisation in the next 3 years

YOUR TIME COMMITMENT AND EXPECTATIONS WITH THE IMPACT PROGRAMME

- You have read the expectations of the programme and agree to the commitment as outlined in the Impact Programme Applicant Guide
- You are able to commit to working a minimum of 20 hours a week on your project/organisation for at least the duration of the Programme
- You are able to commit to engaging with the Programme for the equivalent of 2 to 4 days per month (including approximately one full day in-person workshop, online groups sessions, individual check-ins and bespoke individual supports)
- You are able to commit to attending mandatory Selection Process events outlined in the Applicant Guide

8. Programme Launch

PRE-PROGRAMME

Site visit: Once final decisions have been made, the Programme Manager will schedule a half-day site visit with you in September 2025. These site visits are an opportunity for us to learn more about how you work, meet your team, meet some of your beneficiaries (if appropriate) and explore your needs and goals in more detail.

Co-design Day - 10th September: All awardees will participate in a co-design session to identify shared needs, collaborate on group session formats, and collectively map out the programme's structure.

PROGRAMME LAUNCH

10th September 2025

All awardees are also required to attend the official Impact Programme launch event which will coincide with the Co-Design Day on the 10th September.

This event will provide an opportunity for our network of supporters and alumni to hear from the awardees and learn more about your initiatives. You will be expected to give a brief presentation about the problem you are addressing, your solution, and your aspirations for the programme.

As part of the launch, we will publish a series of press releases featuring photos of the awardees. These press releases are an opportunity for us to showcase the work of you and your organisation and the reasons why you have been selected to be on the programme. As such your presence at a photoshoot will be necessary, which we will strive to arrange on the same day as the launch event.



Miriam Spollen
Connection Arts Centre
The Impact Programme 2024/25



Rosemary Kunene
Dignity Partnership
The Impact Programme 2024/25

9. Programme Structure

Throughout the nine-month programme duration (September 2025 - May 2026) you will be expected to commit to the following activities:



INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS

Monthly calls with the Programme Manager - an opportunity to review needs, goals and progress. Days and times to be agreed based on your individual schedule.

Individual supports - based on your needs and goals we will identify individual supports such as mentoring, advice and consultancy with expertise from within the SEI team and wider SEI community of supporters and alumni.



GROUP SESSIONS

Group supports - these sessions may take the form of online and in-person training sessions, workshops or expert panel discussions and will be determined based on the overlapping needs of the group identified during the Co-Design Day. Approximately one full-day in-person session per month plus other online/in-person sessions.

Work Discussion Groups - an opportunity for reflection, listening and sharing within a confidential group space. These will take place online.

PROGRAMME CLOSE

To celebrate the awardees who took part in the programme we will bring together our team, supporters and alumni for an evening Closing Event in May/June 2026 (Date TBC). During this event, you will be expected to briefly share your learnings and experiences from the programme.

10. What we expect from you

At Social Entrepreneurs Ireland, we dedicate significant time and resources to providing a transformative experience for all participants in the Impact Programme. Like any learning journey, the more you invest in the programme, the more you will gain. Our goal is to help you unlock your full potential and drive meaningful social change.

- **Full participation** – Engage fully in all programme activities and events.
- **Openness and curiosity** – Be willing to reflect deeply on your leadership, vision, and the future of your organisation.
- **Exploring new directions** – Embrace opportunities to shape your impact and consider what long-term social change looks like.
- **Knowledge-sharing** – Actively contribute to discussions, share experiences, and learn from fellow participants.
- **Surveys & Feedback** – Complete key surveys (pre-programme, mid-programme, and post-programme) to help us tailor support and measure impact.

By committing to these elements, you'll maximise your experience, build strong connections, and gain the tools to scale your impact effectively.



Michelle O'Toole
HUGS@Home
The Impact Programme 2024/25



Michael Ledden
PsyCare Ireland
The Impact Programme 2024/25



Scott Bryan & Caitriona Kenny
Community Roots
The Impact Programme 2024/25



11. Application Questions

SOLUTION FIT

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

1. Describe the social or environmental problem you are trying to address.

Please focus on the description of the broad problem, providing detailed information on the nature of the problem and its root causes. Provide data or evidence to illustrate the extent and severity of the problem as possible. *(250 words)*

2. Identify the primary target population affected by this problem and how the problem is affecting them. Describe their situation, challenges, and any specific hardships they face as a consequence of the problem. *(150 words)*

3. Outline the key obstacles that are preventing this problem from being solved in Ireland today. *(100 words)*

YOUR SOLUTION

4. Describe the solution you have developed to address the problem. Please provide a detailed description of the solution and its key components. *(200 words)*

5. Which specific aspect of the problem is the solution addressing? Please explain why this particular aspect is critical to solve and how your solution effectively targets it. *(150 words)*

YOUR IMPACT

6. Explain the expected changes the target population/beneficiaries/environmental markers experience after and as a consequence of receiving your solution. *(300 words)*

SOLUTION EVOLUTION

7. How many times have you implemented your solution? Please include the pilots in your answer (Examples: 12 months, 1 year, 3 cycles of 6 months each, etc.)

If the solution has a specific cycle with a clear starting and end point, tell us how many times you have implemented that cycle. If the solution can't be defined under a cycle, tell us how many years or months you have implemented the solution. *(15 words)*

8. Tell us about what you have learned and any interesting or big changes you have implemented in your solution since your organisation started. *(300 words)*

11. Application Questions

SOLUTION EVOLUTION

9. Please list all the different categories of beneficiaries you work with (e.g., students, adults, children, communities affected by violence, etc.) **or key metrics you use to measure your impact if you don't work with beneficiaries** (e.g., tons of CO2 eq reduced, food redistributed, houses built, etc.) and provide the number of individuals or the associated metric at each category for the last two years and the cumulative total since your organisation started (from January to December).

If you don't know the exact figure, please provide your best estimate. If you have been operating for less than 2 years please just add N/A for Year 1 and the data for Year 2. *(Table)*

10. When is the end of the financial year for your organisation? *(Picklist)*

11. What was your annual income for each of the last 2 two financial years? Please list all sources of income (personal finances, traded income, grants, donations, loans, etc.) and the value of each year.

If you don't know the exact figure, please provide your best estimate. If you have been trading for less than 2 years please write N/A for Year 1 and just provide figures for Year 2. *(Table)*

SPIRIT OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

12. What motivates you to solve this social or environmental problem? How do your personal, professional, voluntary or educational experiences, as well as your strengths, motivate you and make you the right person to drive this change? *(200 words)*



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