

## PMC 17 June 2019 - Agenda Item 13

### Communications Update

The ESF MA seeks the opinion of the PMC on the Information and Communication activities and measures for 2019.

#### AONTAS STAR Awards

The STAR Awards (Showcasing Teamwork, Awarding Recognition) celebrates the positive contribution that adult learning initiatives make to adult learners, local communities and wider society. This year the ESF sponsored a Special Recognition Award for ESF co-funded projects. The Awards were a unique opportunity for ESF to gain nationwide visibility and presence with a wide ranging audience of learners, communities, organisations and the media.

This year's STAR Award categories were:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Third Level Access and Engagement
- Social Inclusion
- Sustainable Employment

Six ESF co-funded projects were shortlisted across the categories. These projects were:

Category	Project	ESF Activity
Social Inclusion	The Dillon's Cross Project, Cork ETB	Back to Education Initiative
Social Inclusion	The New Futures Project, One Family	Gender Equality
Sustainable Employment	Healthcare Opportunities for Women, Ballyhoura Development CLG	Gender Equality
Sustainable Employment	Your Time to Shine, Dublin North West Area Partnership	SICAP
Sustainable Employment	WISE Project, People First	Gender Equality
Third Level Access and Engagement	Preparation for College programme, South Dublin County Partnership and IT Tallaght	SICAP

The WISE Project won the STAR Award for Sustainable Employment and the New Futures Project was awarded the Special Recognition Award for an ESF co-funded project.

#### AONTAS FET Learner Forum

The fourth annual National FET Learner Forum event was held on Tuesday, 9th April 2019 and was attended by almost 100 FET learners from across the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in Ireland. The event provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the work of the ESF and to hear stories of learners who are benefiting from the support of the ESF.

#### Europe in My Region 2019

The European Commission's 'Europe in My Region' campaign aims to highlight the work that projects across Europe are doing with the help of EU funding.

On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019, the ESF MA wrote to ESF bodies to provide details about the 2019 campaign and to request information about any events including open days, information days, awards ceremonies or launches that could be included on the interactive map for the campaign on the Commission's website. There are currently 44 ESF related events on the map. As the campaign runs all year, the ESF MA continues to welcome additional events for inclusion. We also to continue to encourage the use of the hashtag **#EUinmyRegion** when using social media to promote ESF co-funded projects.

The Commission are organising a range of activities for this year's campaign including:

- Free customised promotional postcards.
- The filming of 5 events in 5 different countries.
- A story telling competition.
- The production of short case study video clips for projects that can provide project footage and photos.
- A quiz/online game, further details to be announced.

Youthreach Blanchardstown is celebrating its 30 year anniversary with an open day on 30<sup>th</sup> May and the ESF MA is delighted to announce that the Commission selected this event to film. Students and staff took visitors on a tour of the centre meeting current and past students displaying their projects and discussing their achievements.

### **EU Road Trip Project is coming to Ireland**

The Commission's Road Trip Project is an initiative to engage with young audiences (18-24 years) through a series of road trip experiences. This year during September, 8 participants will embark on two simultaneous routes (4 per route) across the EU. The ultimate ambition of the Road Trip Project is to contribute to (re)connecting young Europeans with the European Union, by inspiring a sense of belonging and an appreciation of being a young European today. The participants will experience first-hand what the EU is about and what's in it for them, and they will share their adventures with their peers on social media.

One of the routes will commence in Ireland and the participants will visit a range of EU co-funded projects within the Border, Midland and Western Region and the Southern and Eastern Region. The ESIF National Communications Committee is liaising with the Commission on the visit.

Further information on last year's Road Trip can be found here: <https://roadtripproject.eu/>

### **Events**

The ESF MA endeavours to support ESF related events, as set out in the ESF Information and Communication Event Policy. Attendance by the ESF MA at events is determined by staff availability and is dependent on the current priorities of the ESF & EGF Policy and Operations Unit. In general the ESF MA will prioritise events that have a national or regional reach but may attend more localised events where appropriate. To date in 2019, the ESF MA has attended the following events in an Information and Communication capacity:

Date	Event	Location	Approx. Attendees
23/01/2019	DETB FET FAIR	Radisson Hotel, Donegal	1,000
31/01/2019	WALK REAL Ability Programme Launch	Airfield Estate, Dundrum	60
28/02/2019	WISE Conference	Radisson Hotel, Donegal	90
27/02/2019	GRETB Awards Ceremony	The Abbey Hotel, Roscommon	180
09/04/2019	LCETB FET Fair	LCETB, O'Connell Ave	120
15/04/2019	Step Ahead Ability Programme Photocall	CHQ Building, IFSC	18
17/04/2019	CDETb Youthreach Spring Craft Competition Awards Ceremony	CDETb, Ballymun	100
15/05/2019	Step Ahead Ability Programme Launch	Carlton Hotel, Blanchardstown	40
8/05/2019	Launch of CIT's 'Access: The Student Voice'	Cork Institute of Technology	50
09/05/2019	LMETB FET Fair	Drogheda, Dundalk & Navan	Awaiting final figure
30/05/2019	Blanchardstown Youthreach Open Day	Blanchardstown, Dublin 15	50

### List of Operations

In accordance with Article 115(2) and Annex XII of the Common Provisions Regulation 1303/2013 (CPR) the ESF MA continues to maintain a List of Operations on its website. This list was last updated in February 2019.

### Major Event

In accordance with Annex XII of the CPR, each year the MA or Member State will organise one major information activity. This year the MA, in conjunction with the Member State (DPER), will have a stand in the European Commission Representation in Ireland's marquee at the National Ploughing Championships (17-19 September, Co. Carlow). General attendance at the National Ploughing Championships is approximately 80,000 per day and therefore the event provides an opportunity to publicise the PEIL Operational Programme to the general public.

### European Awards

The REGIOSTARS are Europe's awards for the most innovative, regional projects. Every year, the European Commission awards EU-funded projects, which demonstrate excellence and new approaches in regional development. ESF co-funded projects from both the 2007-2013 and the 2014-2020 period are eligible to enter; once they fall within the relevant categories.

The ESF MA endorsed four projects for submission under Category 3 - Combatting inequalities and poverty. The projects submitted were:

1. Ballyhoura Community Toolkit – SICAP
2. EPIC – Integration and Employment of Migrants
3. WISE – Gender Equality
4. Wexford Women Working – Gender Equality

In March, the Commission launched a call for ESF projects for this year's 'European funding for excellence in Vocational Education and Training (VET)' Award. The theme is 'VET and digitalisation and technological change'. This call was circulated to all ESF IBs and Beneficiaries. The ESF MA put forward one nomination for the VET Award. The application was submitted by GetReSkilled which is a Springboard+ course.

### **ESF Newsletter and Calendar**

Each year the ESF MA produces a newsletter and a calendar to promote the work of Operations that are co-funded by the ESF/YEI. The newsletter and calendar offer a wide audience an insight in to how the ESF is investing in people in Ireland and the work that takes place at project level. The ESF MA will be contacting IBs, Beneficiaries and Project Implementers in the coming weeks requesting material for inclusion.

### **ESF Merchandise**

Due to a significant increase in the number of projects liaising with the ESF MA in relation to events and merchandise, the ESF MA published a Request for Tender for the supply of branded promotional merchandise in March 2019 and are currently liaising with the successful Tenderers.

### **ESF Website and Twitter**

The ESF MA intends to continue its work on updating and developing the ESF website, [www.esf.ie](http://www.esf.ie). This work will include reviewing and updating existing content; maintaining an up-to-date list of Operations; and exploring the scope to commission video and/or infographic content for the website. The websites content has now been translated and the ESF MA are working to populate the website to reflect this.

The ESF MA will also continue to actively manage the @ESF\_Ireland Twitter account and to promote it as widely as possible.

### **Coordination**

The ESF MA will continue to actively participate in INIO meetings and National ESIF Communications Committee meetings and to explore the potential for co-ordination/collaboration, where possible.

Meetings are planned with the EMFF and the EAFRD. It is planned to meet with a number of Government Departments to ensure a unified approach to communicating the ESI Funds.

### **Compliance**

The ESF MA has completed its website compliance checks and has written to the ESF bodies concerned regarding the findings. An update will be provided at the PMC Meeting.

### **Support Role**

The ESF MA is available to provide support, guidance and training to ESF bodies and will continue to inform on any changes to ESF information and communication requirements.

**June 2019**