

# SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND IRELAND LAUNCHES A NEW APPROACH TO PHILANTHROPY

Sustaining Great Ideas in Ireland with help from The Ireland Funds

BY DEIRDRE MORTELL, CEO OF SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND IRELAND



The very first Animate Awardees Seán Peters of Save a Selfie, Dara Connolly of ReCreate, Majella Murphy & Colette Ryan of CareBright & Rónán Ó Dálaigh of Thriftify

An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny TD launched Social Innovation Fund Ireland (SIFI), an Ireland Funds grantee, on 27th January 2016 in Dublin. Its motto "sustaining great ideas" speaks to the innovation embedded in this new initiative to back innovative solutions to Ireland's critical social issues and stimulate philanthropy.



### FIRST FOUR AWARD-WINNING SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, TD announced the first four Award winners, a diverse group that represent the range and quality of innovative solutions to critical social issues that can be found in Ireland. They are:

- Recreate – Creativity through re-use at its Warehouse of Wonders. They are also an Ireland Funds' grantee
- Thriftify – A Tech start-up with a difference and a semi-finalist in the 2016 Ireland Funds Business Plan Competition
- Carebright – Creating positive living with dementia in rural Ireland
- Save a Selfie – A ground breaking lifesaving app

Each award winner, which are all at early stages, secured a grant of up to €10,000 plus the equivalent in non-financial supports, and entered Ireland's first Non Profit Accelerator program for 4 months from January to April 2016. The program aimed to achieve 3 things – exit with a clear plan and priorities, with greater access to funds, and with greater access to networks.

The program closed with a Showcase event, hosted jointly by SIFI and Philanthropy Ireland, to an invited audience on 18th May 2016 in Dublin, which was also livestreamed internationally. Awardees each did a 5 minute pitch outlining their project, and what it needs to get to the next stage. Guests were invited to pledge funds, meetings or pro bono services to back the projects as they exit the program.

### DEMONSTRATING A NEW APPROACH TO CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY IN IRELAND THROUGH THINKTECH, IDEAS FOR A BETTER IRELAND

Launched in June 2016, THINKTECH is a €1 million fund to support and grow ideas for a better Ireland, seeking proposals that impact lives and touch hearts. Created by Social Innovation Fund Ireland with €500,000 grant support from Google.org, matched by the Irish Government, THINKTECH challenge identifies ideas developed by social enterprises and non-profits that use technology and innovation to create opportunities for everyone in Ireland.

Successful THINKTECH participants enter a five month program with Social Innovation Fund Ireland with support from Google.org and will receive both financial and non-financial support to make their vision a reality. The winning 3 or 4 projects will win up to €200,000 in grants support and mentoring as well as a package of Google supports. Winners will be announced in winter 2016.

### SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND IRELAND INCLUDED IN PROGRAM FOR GOVERNMENT

Just as the first SIFI program was concluding, the program for Government 2016, was published in May 2016, naming Social Innovation Fund Ireland for scale up from a challenge fund of up to €5 million to up to €50 million during the lifetime of the Government, providing top level endorsement for this innovative approach.

We look forward to supporting innovative solutions to critical social issues in Ireland to grow & spread, using world class standards of innovation & support, and bringing together philanthropy, Government, and innovation to give Ireland the world's best ecosystem for supporting social innovation.



What's Your



GRANTS FROM THE IRELAND FUNDS UNDER THEIR PROMOTING PHILANTHROPY PROGRAM HAVE SUPPORTED HIGH QUALITY EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS BY SIFI, INCLUDING THE LAUNCH AND SHOWCASE EVENT, WITH THE AIM OF SHOWCASING THIS NEW MODEL OF FUNDRAISING AND PHILANTHROPY. THE IRELAND FUNDS VICE PRESIDENT CAITRIONA FOTTRELL SITS ON THE BOARD OF SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND IRELAND.

Fionnuala Meehan SMB Sales Director EMEA, Google Ireland, Jacqueline Fuller Director of Google.org & Deirdre Mortell, CEO of Social Innovation Fund Ireland at the launch of THINKTECH in June, 2016.

SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND IRELAND OFFERS THREE KEY PROGRAM OFFERINGS:

• **ANIMATE**—It is an offering for early stage projects that are innovative solutions to a critical social issue in Ireland. Winners of this award receive tailored supports and a cash award of up to €10,000

• **INNOVATION CHALLENGE**—This is an offering to companies for a co-branded Innovation Challenge that centers on seeking solutions to a critical social issue aligned with their brand. Every Euro donated by the company is matched by a Euro from the Irish Government, doubling the impact of their funds

• **GROWTH PROGRAM**—This program is for more established projects and provides a fund of substantial size to allow these projects to scale and reach their potential. This fund is currently being raised and is expected to open in late 2016/early 2017