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ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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Who We Are and What We Do

Foróige is a youth development organisation. We believe profoundly in the potential of every young person. Foróige is about young people and we will always put them first, building their confidence, competence and capabilities. You will find us in local communities right across Ireland where we engage adult volunteers and staff who support young people to lead happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives.

Founded in 1952, our experience in the area of youth development has enabled hundreds of thousands of young people and volunteers to engage in our clubs, projects and programmes. We work in friendly and safe environments in which young people can meet friends, develop their skills and confidence, and importantly, have fun.

We engage young people in a variety of youth work models which ensures that there is a Foróige experience to meet the needs of every young person who wishes to engage with us.

Clubs

Community based clubs for young people facilitated by adult volunteers

Mentoring

One to one mentoring provided by adult volunteers to young people

Projects

Community based youth projects for young people needing additional support facilitated by staff

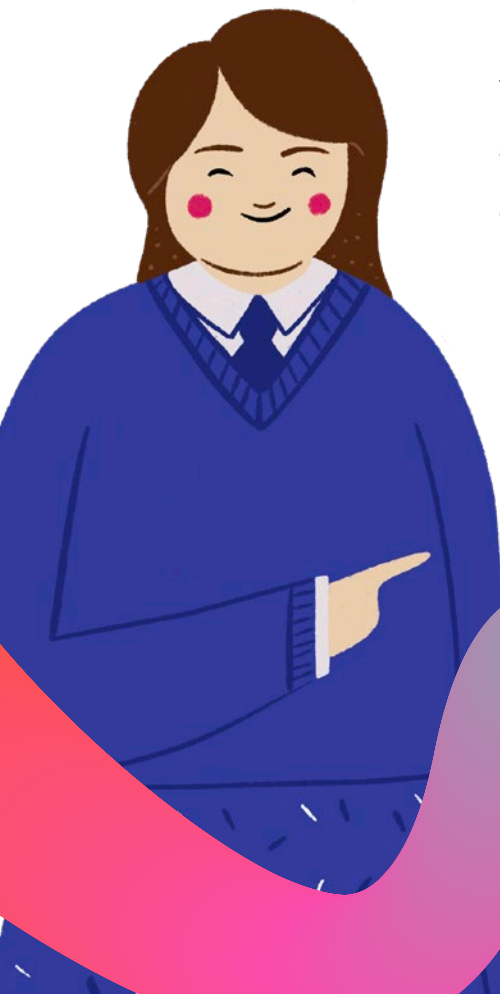
Programmes

Non-formal educational programmes enabling young people to develop a range of lifelong skills

Our Purpose

Foróige's purpose is to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their own development and in the development of society. We empower young people to develop their own abilities and attributes, to think for themselves, to make things happen and to contribute to their community and society. As a result, they develop greater self-confidence, self-reliance, resilience and greater capacity to take charge of their lives. Foróige's clubs, projects and programmes are designed to achieve our purpose, which is complementary to the formal education system.

Key features of Foróige's learning process are that young people have ownership of the process, they interact with real life situations, they learn by doing and they are actively involved in the community.



Our Core Values

Foróige's purpose is supported by the organisation's philosophy – our core values. These are built on the beliefs and values of our founders, volunteers, staff and young people over the past 71 years. These core values are lived by volunteers, young people and staff in their everyday interactions. In the broadest terms our philosophy can be summarised as follows:

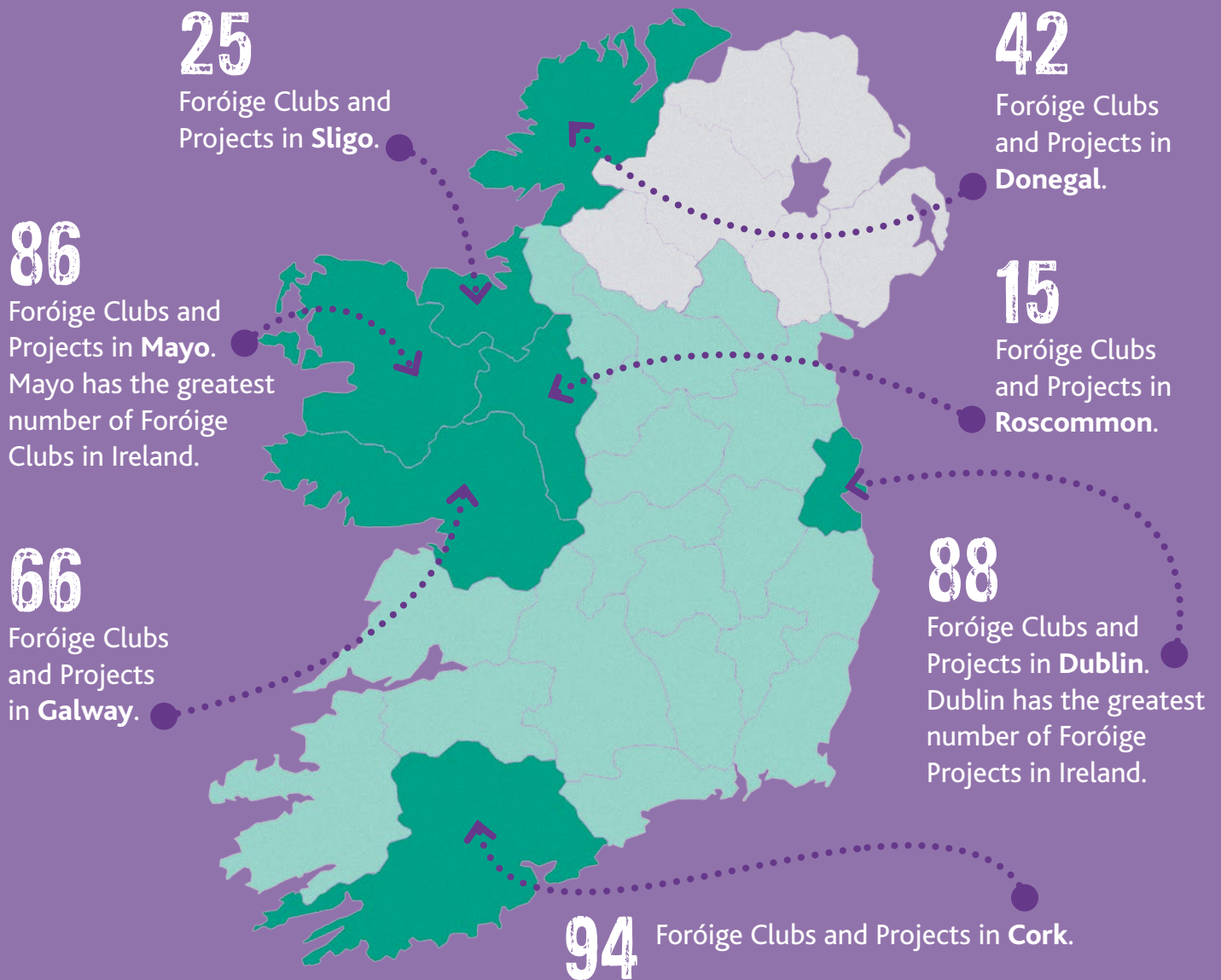


Where we work

Foróige primarily works in the Republic of Ireland and has partnerships and projects with organisations in Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

We have 596 Foróige Clubs and Projects in Ireland in both urban and rural areas. Some communities are fortunate to have both clubs and projects.

In addition, Foróige works in 249 schools across the country, including a significant number of DEIS schools.



Foróige operate **596** Foróige Clubs and Projects in the Republic of Ireland



A Message from the Chairperson

It is my great pleasure to provide this message to Foróige's Annual Report 2023, my first one as Chairperson of the organisation since I was elected in summer 2023. Let me begin by offering my thanks on behalf of Foróige to Barbara Daly, our previous Chairperson, who led the organisation during three very turbulent years with aplomb. Barbara has been a tireless advocate for young people and for the organisation in all her many years of service to Foróige.

In my first year at the helm, I have been greatly assured by the robustness of our governance and compliance structures. In 2023 once again Foróige was Triple Lock certified by the Charities Institute Ireland - demonstrating our compliance with the Charities Governance Code, the Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice under FRS102), and the Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public. This is fundamentally important for charities, not least an organisation as large as Foróige. Ensuring we are meeting and exceeding the highest standards in our governance means we can be confident in a strong foundation underpinning all the diverse work that we do.

2023 has been the first year where we can really say that a semblance of normality has returned to Foróige, where the direct impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic are fading from view. This is not to say that we do not continue to see longer-term consequences of our time under public health restrictions, particularly on young people and their mental and social wellbeing. Added to this has been considerable turmoil around the globe, with the ongoing wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East, as well as the spectre of the climate crisis affecting the still-rising cost of living. However, it is a testament to the indefatigable work of volunteers and staff all across the country that we have been able to rebuild our numbers, particularly of Foróige clubs which are once again at pre-pandemic levels. We have also seen encouraging increases in the numbers of young people and volunteers engaged with the organisation. I am so proud of our bouncebackability, and the resilience woven into Foróige's very core that has enabled us to recover so swiftly. We've worked hard for it.

Volunteers make up the bedrock on which youth work in Ireland is based. Ireland has one of the highest levels of engagement of young people in youth work because of adult volunteers who give freely of their time, energy, and expertise, and the benefits of this to young people and to communities are proven and extensive. Volunteers come from all walks of life and employment and willingly act as role models, guides, advisors, mentors and facilitators of non-formal education. They undergo rigorous recruitment and intensive training to do their job effectively, and bring life experience and skills that could never be paid for. Volunteer-led youth work is needed now more than ever - nowhere more so than in rural Ireland.

This is why the announcement of a ring-fenced fund for universal youth work in Budget 2024 was so promising. Albeit small, it is an indication that our message to Government about the essential value of volunteerism in youth work is cutting through. As such, I am hopeful that we can build on this in the coming years so that volunteer-led universal youth work grows to match the rightful emphasis on supporting young people who face particular disadvantage or challenges through targeted projects. It is Foróige's ambition that every young person in Ireland should be able to access youth work that speaks to their needs and interests. I hope that we are beginning to move closer to this goal.

In this critical year in Foróige's trajectory, it remains for me to thank all the people who make up Foróige in communities from Malin to Mizen. Thank you, first and foremost, to each and every young person who chooses Foróige every day - whether it's by coming to a village hall for their Foróige club, dropping into a youth café, meeting their mentor every week, or taking part in a Foróige programme. You are why we do what we do.

Thank you also to all the Foróige staff who show up day in and day out to make the magic happen, for your unending commitment to improving young people's lives. And finally, thank you to the thousands of volunteers - you are the backbone of this organisation and the heart of your communities. You carry the spirit of Foróige in all you do.

Is mise le meas,

Odhrán O'Mahony
CHAIRPERSON



A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

I am delighted to write this introduction to Foróige's Annual Report 2023 - my 20th in the job as CEO. Since I took the reins in 2003, the organisation has changed so much, and yet the fundamentals remain the same. As I reflect on our progress over this last year, I am reminded of a line much quoted by Mary Robinson and attributed to Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General to the United Nations - "you are never too young to lead, and never too old to learn." In many ways Foróige, as we empower young people to actively shape their destiny and support adult volunteers to give back to their community, thoroughly embodies this sentiment.

Ireland has one of the largest youth populations in Europe, with almost a third of the population aged under 24. It is therefore vital that we recognise the urgent stake that our young people have in Irish society. We have made great strides in this country over recent years to promote and embed the importance of youth voice and youth participation in decision-making, and in Foróige, this is part and parcel of who we are and it has been since our founding in 1952. Young people engage because they choose to, and they are empowered and supported to take the lead.

When it's done right, youth participation is meaningful and recognises that young people are not just the future, they are also the present. They are not simply 'beings in becoming' who deserve a say because they will inherit what we leave behind - their contributions are valuable and valued as citizens in the here and now. There is an ongoing review by the Electoral Commission into whether the voting age should be lowered to 16, and I hope we can follow the example of other countries in taking this progressive step to acknowledge the experience and opinions that young people can bring to the table. After all, young people are "never too young to lead."

Nowhere is this more evident than in the digital youth work that Foróige continues to pioneer. This year we launched an umbrella brand, Foróige Go - digital skills for what's now and next. Foróige Go encapsulates the breadth and depth of what we are doing in the digital space: from hard skills such as robotics, coding, animation and sound production, to softer skills like digital literacy, how to stay safe online, identifying mis- and dis-information, communication and empathy. Both skill sets, hard and soft, are essential for young people to develop the ability and confidence to navigate the digital world and be responsible digital citizens. I am immensely proud of all our staff who have embraced this work in a true display of learning by doing.

It is more important than ever that we work together, across Foróige, the youth sector, and Government, to make sure that young people have access to the support they need, whatever that may be. As adults, we must remember that we are "never too old to learn", and that we might do well to listen to what young people have to say. Our work in Foróige is fundamentally intergenerational in nature, bringing young people together with trusted adults. This is the glue that holds communities together and gives young people a sense of place, belonging, and pride in where they live.

Looking ahead, the future for Foróige and for young people in Ireland holds so much promise. I am excited to see what's in store.

Seán Campbell
FORÓIGE CEO

Legal and Administrative Information

Board Members

The following were members of the Board of Foróige at the date on which the financial statements were approved:

Odhrán O'Mahony - Chairperson
 AJ Tierney
 (Young Person Representative)
 Alan Prendergast
 Anthony Clinton
 Barbara Daly
 Ben Dempsey
 (Young Person Representative)
 Grace Gallagher
 Noel Kelly
 Patrick Ryan
 Paul Maher
 Róisín McGlone
 Sandra McIntyre
 Shane Fallon

Company Secretary

HBK Secretarial Services

Board Committees and Other Information

Finance Committee

Noel Kelly – Chair
 Mairead Eachthigheirn^{2,3}
 Michael McAteer^{2,3}
 Ash Kennedy^{1,3}
 Sean Kavanagh²
 Amina Costello²

Audit & Risk

Odhrán O'Mahony – Chair
 Alan Prendergast
 Eoin Forkan¹
 Dearbhaile McMahon
 Callum Scott²
 Ash Kennedy²
 Orna O'Brien^{1,3}

Governance & Nominations

Sandra McIntyre – Chair
 Catriona Fingleton
 Shane Fallon
 Leo Galvin²
 Kara Curtin²

Human Resources & Remuneration

Róisín McGlone – Chair
 Laura Duncan
 Paul Maher
 Sandra McIntyre
 Sarah McCormack²
 Mia Ryan²

Banker

AIB, Naas Rd, Dublin 22

Solicitors

Beauchamps, Riverside Two
 Sir John Rogersons Quay, Dublin 2

Auditor

Mazars, Block 3 Harcourt Centre
 Harcourt Road, Dublin 2

Registered Office

Block 12D, Joyce Way
 Park West, Dublin 12

Senior Management Team

Seán Campbell
Chief Executive Officer

John Cahill
Assistant CEO & Director of Operations⁴

Claire Gavigan
Area Manager - North West

Declan O'Leary
Area Manager - Cork

Karen Hannify
Director of Marketing, Communications and External Relations

Miriam Ryan
Director of Targeted Services and Safeguarding

Rachael Murphy
Director of Support Services

Sarah Haslam
Director of Programmes and Research

Siobhan McCormack
Director of Finance

Company Registration number
 (CRO) : 552248
 Registered Charity number
 (CRA) : 20007812
 Charitable Status number
 (CHY) : 5359

¹ Retired from the Committee May 2023

² Joined the Committee September 2023

³ Member of National Council, not a Board Member

⁴ Retired February 2023

Report of the Board

The Board of Foróige presents its report and consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2023.

2023 Focus

Throughout 2023 the Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028 was developed and refined. It was signed off by the Board in November 2023. While the Strategic Plan was in development, the primary focus for 2023, as set out in the Annual Report 2022, was to ensure that we maintain the services provided by Foróige, and, where possible, increase the number of young people involved in Foróige, the number of projects operated by Foróige and the number of staff and volunteers engaged with Foróige.

We pursued a number of complimentary, interwoven strategies and activities to achieve this aim.

Summary of Activities and Achievements 2023

Foróige achieved the goal to maintain and, where possible, to increase the numbers of young people, volunteers and staff engaged with the organisation.

Foróige provides a range of youth work interventions which incorporate a breadth of practices, aims, and approaches, while remaining true to its core principles of voluntary participation, empowerment, non-formal education, and being young person centred.

The driving philosophy that encapsulates our youth work is that of **progressive universalism**. This has been defined by the Department of Health as "a perspective that combines universalism with the targeting of resources on those that have special needs for support or protection; in other words, help to all and extra help for those who need it most."¹ This means that Foróige strives to ensure that youth work is accessible to all young people on a universal basis. It also maintains a focus on prevention and early intervention, aiming to tackle the causes rather than the symptoms of disadvantage particularly for those young people from disadvantaged and isolated communities. Foróige also provides a range of targeted services for those who need them most.



¹ Department of Health and Children (2007), The Agenda for Children's Services: A Policy Handbook

Universal Youth Work

Universal Youth Work is defined as "youth work initiatives, interventions and programmes providing personal and social development activities that are, in principle, available to all young people and are not targeted at specific participants or needs".²

Foróige's universal youth work offering includes:

**Volunteer-Led
Clubs**

Mentoring

**Non-Formal
Education
Programmes**



² Brady, B., Silke, C., and Shaw, A. (2022) A Rapid Review of the Benefits and Outcomes of Universal Youth Work. Galway: UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, University of Galway.

Volunteer-Led Clubs

Foróige Clubs, Foróige Juniors, Foróige Interest Groups and Foróige Cork Youth Clubs are at the heart of the organisation. These various types of clubs for young people are based on the needs of local communities.

The clubs are a partnership between the young people (members) and adult volunteers (leaders). They facilitate the democratic participation of young people in the club structures and enable young people to 'learn by doing'. A unique feature of Foróige Clubs is the Club Committee. Young people elect members, aged 12 – 18, to form a Club Committee (Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Communications Officer). The Committee is supported by the adult volunteers. Operating an effective committee is a lifelong skill and hugely beneficial to young people.

Our Clubs are 'universal', that is, they are open and available to all young people living in the area that they operate. Since 2021, our Clubs have been building back after a nearly two-year hiatus due to COVID-19.

When Clubs closed in March 2020 we had 438 Clubs operating. Clubs were allowed to fully re-open in February 2022. Thanks to the unstinting effort of volunteers and staff, in 2023 there were **435 Clubs** open and operating, representing a **30% increase on 2022**. This is an incredible achievement and demonstrates both the need and the desire of young people, volunteers and communities for universal youth work that provides developmental opportunities and a community based, safe place for young people to socialise.

In total there were **10,822** young people and **4,266** adult volunteers involved in our Clubs in 2023.

Clubs engaged in a variety of programmes and activities throughout 2023. Training was provided for volunteers and young people in Clubs to assist them in their youth work roles.

Clubs In Numbers

► In 2023 there were **435** volunteer-led Clubs in operation in Foróige:

- **321** Foróige Clubs
- **43** Foróige Juniors
- **60** Foróige Interest Groups
- **11** Foróige Cork Youth Clubs

This variety of club type offered ensures that Foróige is able to provide options suitable for different age groups and young people with different interests. The median number of members per club is 20 and the median number of leaders per club is 6.

► There were **10,822 young people** involved in Foróige clubs in 2023 and **4,266 adult volunteers**. This means that the ratio of leaders to young people is 2.5:1. This ensures that Foróige clubs are not only meeting but exceeding the required ratios for best practice in child safeguarding, and this also contributes to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of young people involved in Foróige clubs.





Helping young people who are dealing with challenging circumstances to feel supported and empowered to be their best self.

Youth work also enables young people to develop social networks and acts as an effective early intervention for mental health, drug and alcohol misuse, obesity and healthy living.

Volunteers are a vital part of the successful provision of youth work in Ireland. They bring life experience and skills that could never be paid for. Volunteers come from all walks of life and employment and willingly act as role models, guides, advisors and mentors and facilitators of non formal education. They also provide the backbone of the governance of youth services at local and National level.

Giving something back to my community.

Making the transition from childhood to adulthood is becoming ever more complex for young people and the desire and willingness of adult volunteers from their communities to assist them on this journey is highly commendable. In addition, there are strict regulatory requirements for being a volunteer working with young people in a community. Safeguarding of young people will always be the main priority of Foróige and therefore there is a rigorous recruitment and selection policy for Club Volunteers supplemented by ongoing training and support. Club Volunteers need the support of professional staff to enable them to succeed in their youth work roles.

About Our Club Volunteers

Foróige Clubs have a strong track record in attracting adult volunteers from communities to form Foróige Clubs. In 2023 the number of adult volunteers giving their time to either develop a Foróige Club in their community or assist with an existing club increased by 61% to 4,266.

In 2023, the majority of Club Volunteers identified as female and approximately 70% are aged 40 – 59. When asked, Club Volunteers identified that working with young people, being involved in their community and feeling like they are part of something are the motivating factors for volunteering with Foróige.

Ensuring young people are visible in a positive way in the community.

Club Volunteers identified similar benefits from being involved in Foróige – they feel like they are part of their community, they develop youth work skills and also teamwork skills.

Volunteer-led youth work is the bedrock on which youth work in Ireland is based and it is needed now more than ever. Some of the skills developed through it are the very ones identified by many studies as those most needed to ensure success in college, work and all aspects of community and family living. These skills include critical thinking, communication, confidence, goal-setting, planning, creative problem solving, empathy and resilience.

Providing a safe space for everyone to just let go and be themselves, I love hearing the laughter!

Recruitment

In 2023, Foróige recruited **over 1,300 new adult volunteers** to develop or assist Foróige Clubs throughout the country. Volunteers apply to the organisation, provide references, undergo Garda Vetting, and complete Starting Out in Foróige training and also Child Protection Awareness Programme training. The process of recruitment and training is carried out by Foróige staff in partnership with existing Club Volunteers.

Training

Foróige staff provide a wide range of training to Club Volunteers based on their needs and interests and the needs and interests of young people. This includes:

- ▶ Club structures - how to operate a Club Committee and how to support young people operating a Club Committee
- ▶ Specific topics identified by Club Volunteers such as safeTALK (mental health awareness), Managing Challenging Behaviour, developing programmes with young people and personal effectiveness
- ▶ Implementing and facilitating Foróige programmes such as Foróige's Leadership for Life Programme, Youth Citizenship Programme and Be Healthy Be Happy
- ▶ How to use and get the most out of the online Club Management System

Over 200 training courses were offered to Club Volunteers in 2023 and **over 2,000 volunteers** availed of training opportunities.

Support

Club Volunteers were supported in 2023 on a wide variety of topics including: applying for and managing grants, organising inter-club events, dealing with specific challenges in the clubs, recruiting additional members, advice on suitable activities, insurance and other administrative topics.

District Councils

In addition to the support provided by Foróige staff, Club Volunteers have the opportunity to become part of a District Council. District Councils are usually organised on a county basis and meet monthly to exchange ideas and organise inter-club events for the county. There were **22 District Councils** operating in 2023.

Highlights & Impact 2023

- ▶ Foróige Clubs operated in **327 communities** throughout Ireland. There are Foróige Clubs in every county in Ireland. Mayo, Galway and Cork continue to have the highest numbers of Foróige Clubs, members and leaders.
- ▶ In 2023, Foróige held our **National Volunteer Conference** in Co. Carlow. The theme was Empowering Young People and the keynote address was by Dr. Bernadine Brady from the University of

Galway on the topic of the benefits of universal youth work. Over **160 people** from clubs, mentoring, programmes and projects attended the weekend Conference. It was identified as an important affirmation of volunteers' contribution to the development of young people.

- ▶ In July, over **2,300 young people** attended **Amplified music festival** in Co. Mayo. This is the only volunteer-organised youth music festival of its kind. It was a huge success and young people attending enjoyed DJs, bands, silent disco, fairground attractions and more. Young people are involved in influencing the organisation of the event and report that it is a significant milestone for them in Foróige to be involved at this level.
- ▶ Foróige contributed to the consultation regarding the development of questions related to volunteering to be included in Census 2027.
- ▶ In January, Foróige consulted with Volunteers regarding the development of the new Strategic Plan. Over 1,000 Volunteers responded to the consultation and their opinions have informed the new Strategic Plan.
- ▶ Foróige has been fully engaged in and contributing to the reform of the Youth Service Grant Scheme with the intention of ensuring the youth work organisations supporting universal and volunteer-led youth work continue to be fully recognised and supported by the Government. A formal submission outlining Foróige's vision for youth work was made to the Department of Children, Equality, Integration, Disability and Youth in 2023 and a meeting was held with key officials to discuss it.
- ▶ There was a focus in 2023 on supporting Club Committees. Videos and resources were developed to enable Club Volunteers to support the committee structure in their club and also to enable young people to carry out their committee roles effectively.
- ▶ Foróige launched a new Banking and Financial Management resource for Clubs in October. The purpose of the resource is to assist Club Volunteers in choosing a financial institution to meet their needs, provide information on how to administer the Club's financial affairs, and establish good financial procedures.
- ▶ Clubs participated in **10 Regional Showcases** throughout the country in October. These showcases highlighted Clubs' involvement in Foróige's Citizenship Programme and brought together clubs, mentoring, programmes and projects to celebrate the full diversity of Foróige in each region.

Mentoring

Foróige provides a range of mentoring models and initiatives. In its simplest form, mentoring involves matching a young person with a caring adult, who meet weekly for an hour or two and take part in activities that they both enjoy. Through these meetings an appropriate friendship is formed that supports the development of the young person.

Many of Foróige's mentoring models are universally available to young people but there are some that are targeted to young people with specific needs. Mentoring is a prime example of how volunteers can be involved in leading both universal and targeted youth work interventions.

Like Volunteer-Led Clubs and Foróige Programmes, there has been an increase in the number of young people and adult volunteers engaged in mentoring in 2023 with 3,167 matches supported. Adult volunteers who are interested in becoming a mentor undergo a rigorous recruitment and selection process to ensure that young people they are matched with are protected from harm.

Recruitment Campaign 2023

In 2023, the partnership between Toyota Ireland and the Big Brother Big Sister Programme continued. The aim of the partnership was to increase volunteer numbers for the

programme across the country, so that more young people could be matched with a mentor. This campaign focused on local and national radio aiming to spread awareness of the Big Brother Big Sister Programme and recruit more volunteers. There were **over 900 expressions of interest** resulting from the campaign between September and December 2023.

The Big Brother Big Sister Programme

The Big Brother Big Sister Programme (BBBS) is a community based mentoring programme which has been providing mentoring support to young people in Ireland since 2001. Young people may be referred by other support services or the family may enquire directly. An assessment process is completed with each young person and their family to ensure the programme will meet their needs and to identify the goals of their involvement. A compatible adult mentor is then selected to be matched to the young person. Matches meet once a week for an initial one year period and are supported by a staff member for the duration of their involvement in the programme.

There were **508 community based Big Brother Big Sister matches** in 2023.

School Based Mentoring

Foróige operates a school based mentoring programme. The school mentoring programme provides support to young people in their first year in secondary school by matching them with Senior Cycle students. They meet once a week over the course of the academic year and participate in games and sports in the school.

The school programme is manualised and uses similar processes of recruitment, training and supervision as the community programme. It is provided by school staff who are trained and supported by Foróige staff.

In 2023, **44 schools** participated in Foróige's school based mentoring programme facilitating **2,524 matches**.





It was a great day and I am very thankful for having had the chance to participate. The young person I mentor and I are a very new match and only just starting to get to know each other. She was probably thrown in the deep end in terms of social interaction but I think it was definitely the right thing for us to go. I know she was way out of her comfort zone to start with but she did brilliant, I feel that the day allowed me to show her how I can support her. Also, it probably gave her a much better understanding of what Foróige mentoring is about. Seeing other matches and meeting young people involved in the Big Brother Big Sister programme from the county definitely helped her confidence.

Third Level Mentoring

In addition to school based mentoring, Foróige offers third level/college based mentoring. It supports first year students to settle into college. This is an innovative approach that aims to support student retention on their course of study by empowering them to access a more connected college experience through the creation of supportive mentoring friendships in their campus. Mentors are employees of the college and work in roles such as administration, academia and student support. Mentors and the young people they are matched with meet up once a month during the academic year on campus grounds or via video call.

In 2023, the programme operated in ATU Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Letterkenny, University of Galway, SETU Waterford and UCC, and facilitated **123 matches**.

MentorMe

MentorMe is a new model of mentoring where a young person is empowered to identify a mentor from within their social circle to support them with a particular challenge. Staff guide the mentor and the young person throughout the process. This model is in line with Tusla's 'Signs of Safety' approach, where you look within your own network as a first step for your support.

In 2023, **12 MentorMe matches** were established and supported.

Site-Based Mentoring

A new site-based mentoring programme officer role commenced in August 2023. The role is based in the new Foróige Dublin City South premises at Christchurch, Dublin 8, and is focused on developing and piloting a number of site-based group mentoring programmes for young people in the area. The programme will be rolled out in 2024.

Highlights & Impact 2023

- ▶ In 2023, Foróige mentoring initiatives expanded to cover Clare, Limerick, Kerry, Wexford and Carlow, with funding through the HSE. Staff in these counties have commenced processing young people and volunteers and making new matches in the programme. This expansion extends Foróige's mentoring programme to **all 26 counties** in Ireland.
- ▶ **70 mentoring matches** from counties around Ireland took part in a fun-filled day of activities, challenges and adventures in Wildlands, Galway in May 2023. Activities included Celtic Challenge Rooms, Ninja Obstacle Course, Fun Walls, Zip and Trek, Bushcraft, art and craft.
- ▶ An Irish delegation, including Mary Lynch, Foróige Mentoring Manager, attended a European mentoring event in Brussels in November hosted as part of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The purpose of the event was to connect mentoring organisations, academic institutions, businesses, policy and decision-makers throughout Europe to include mentoring as a strategy to overcome the European Union's most pressing challenges, centred on education, employment, and the integration of migrants into society. Additionally, the Irish delegation met with MEP Maria Walsh to discuss the power and impact of mentoring with a particular focus on social inclusion.
- ▶ New research commenced in 2023 on two mentoring programmes in Foróige, namely MentorMe and Third Level Mentoring. The research is being conducted by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at the University of Galway. The literature review for MentorMe was completed in 2023 and the field research will be carried out in 2024. Research on the impact and effectiveness of Third Level Mentoring was carried out in 2023 and will be published in early 2024.



Foróige Programmes

Foróige has developed a number of innovative non-formal education programmes aimed at developing and enhancing young people's skills.

These programmes enable young people to involve themselves in their own development, learning by doing and focusing on the areas they choose to develop based on their needs and interests. Foróige programmes cover a wide range of skills and topics and utilise a variety of learning methodologies.

Our programmes are developed based on the needs and interests of young people, with their input into the content and design. While Foróige does not have a formal curriculum, these programmes are utilised by staff and volunteers in all our models of youth work to ensure the progressive learning and development of young people on a needs-led basis.

Foróige Programmes are made available to young people by training staff, volunteers and others external to Foróige to facilitate the programmes. This has the effect of ensuring that Foróige programmes are available to as many young people as possible and also promotes Foróige's work to others outside the organisation such as the formal education system, sports clubs and other youth serving agencies.

Citizenship

Foróige's Citizenship Programme is at the core of all of our work. The programme empowers young people to use their talents and initiative to make a positive difference to the world around them. It involves young people researching the needs of their community, organising practical action in response, evaluating the effectiveness of their work and reflecting on what they're learning along the way.

In 2023, a series of **10 Regional Showcases** were held, celebrating Citizenship projects from Clubs, Projects and Mentoring Matches that had taken place throughout the year.

Projects included community clean ups, raising awareness and funds for homeless charities, murals, promoting the location of defibrillators, highlighting issues faced for those with disabilities, and many others.

The showcases proved to be a huge success, highlighting the ability and desire of young people to make a positive difference in their communities.

REGIONAL SHOWCASES

- South Dublin
- North Dublin
- East Region
- Laois/ Kilkenny/ Carlow/ Wicklow
- South Region
- Cork
- Mayo
- Midlands Region
- Galway
- Donegal

- ▶ The **Cork Regional Showcase**, hosted by Spraoi i Nadúir Foróige Club in Bishopstown, featured indoor displays as well as an outdoor 'walkabout' in the area looking at the community projects completed by young people including a mural, totem poles with an environmental theme and the planting of 150 Alder trees. The event was attended by the Tánaiste, Micheál Martin, who took the time to meet the young people involved and to make a presentation to each Foróige group.
- ▶ The **South Dublin Foróige Community Spirit Awards 2023** recognised a wide variety of community citizenship projects, including a bake sale organised by young people to raise money for care packages for homeless families, and a project highlighting the lack of accessibility for wheelchair users and older people to enjoy local amenities. The overall winners on the night were Whitechurch Juniors Foróige Club, whose project involved a major fundraising initiative and awareness campaign over a six week period to purchase a defibrillator case for their area - the defibrillator is now mounted in the local community centre and is easily accessible for all.
- ▶ Foróige and Alone commenced work in 2023 to develop an **intergenerational project** that is focused on establishing meaningful connections between young people and older people in local communities. The programme will assist in tackling social isolation and loneliness in older people, and aims to improve community connectedness and overall well-being for participants. It will also provide opportunities for young people to learn from a more experienced older

person, in a safe and positive environment, as well as allowing young people to 'reverse mentor' older people in the community. The programme will expand Foróige's youth offering to include intergenerational work in school, community and club settings. Initial development work has taken place, with the pilot due to commence in 2024.

Leadership For Life

The development of young people as leaders in their communities cuts to the essence of Foróige's work. Foróige's Leadership for Life programme enables young people aged 15-18 to develop the skills and qualities necessary to be effective leaders, as well as challenging them to use these skills to improve society. Young people learn the key concepts of leadership and gain valuable skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, critical thinking and self-awareness.

Foróige's Leadership for Life Programme is a unique youth work programme as it is accredited by both the University of Galway and Queen's University Belfast. On completion of all three modules of the programme, young people graduate with a Foundation Certificate in Youth Leadership and Community Action, with associated academic credits that go towards a third level qualification.

Young people engage in the Leadership for Life Programme in a variety of different ways. Within Foróige, the programme is run through clubs and projects, facilitated both by staff and volunteers. The programme is also operated in partnership with the GAA (Dermot Earley Youth Leadership Initiative), provided in schools by teachers trained as facilitators, through our dedicated LGBTI+ Leadership Programme, and internationally through partnerships in the US and Zambia.

- ▶ In 2023, **3,317 young people** participated in the Leadership for Life Programme across all platforms.
- ▶ **140 adults** were trained as new facilitators in the Leadership for Life Programme. This included 41 Foróige Volunteers and Staff, 60 from other external organisations and 39 from the GAA as part of the Dermot Earley Youth Leadership Initiative.
- ▶ The **Dermot Earley Youth Leadership Initiative (DEYLI)** is a partnership between Foróige and the GAA. The programme was run in 13 GAA clubs with a total of **214 young people** beginning the programme in 2023. Participants learn leadership skills that will benefit them both on and off the pitch. In June 2023 hundreds of participants joined their parents and facilitators for a recognition event in Croke Park. Both young people and facilitators spoke about the impact of the programme on them and their clubs.





- ▶ Foróige have established a **partnership with Queen's University Belfast and R-CITY**, a youth organisation based in Belfast, to run the Leadership for Life programme with young people across communities in the Shankill and Ardoyne. Excitingly, Queen's will accredit the programme, so that young people who complete all 3 modules can achieve a qualification and CAT points which they can put towards future study.
- ▶ In 2023 with support from the LGBTI+ Community Services Fund administered by DCEDIY, a group of young people from the LGBTQIA+ community completed Module 2 of the **LGBTI+ Leadership for Life programme**. The group began online and started to work on their research projects, before coming together in Maynooth University for an in-person residential where they continued their work and presented their findings. Some of the projects they worked on included trans healthcare, mental health of LGBTQIA+ young people, and signposting of local and national supports for LGBTQIA+ young people. The young people have continued to connect as a group and many are now working towards their Module 3 Community Action projects.
- ▶ In March 2023, Bryan Gavin (TLD Manager) and Barbara Daly (Foróige Volunteer and Leadership for Life Facilitator) travelled to **Northern Zambia** to train teachers and community workers in the Foróige Leadership for Life programme. Training was provided to 24 facilitators from schools, orphanages, church groups and other community organisations in the Copperbelt region of Zambia. While there, they facilitated Module 2 of the Leadership for Life programme with a group of 20 students from Nsobe Community School. The group had completed Module 1 of the programme with facilitators who travelled to Nsobe from Cuala GAA Club in Dalkey the previous year. The students have already started to use their leadership skills to make a difference to their community and have established a youth group, started a school recycling campaign, promoted health and wellbeing for young women, developed a drug awareness campaign, and established a youth choir for the local church.
- ▶ Foróige's **Leadership for Life Conference** was held in Maynooth University in July. Numbers attending were back to pre-pandemic levels with **over 250 young people** attending over five days. They each completed a module of the Leadership for Life programme, heard from inspirational speakers including Ashwin Chacko, Norah Patten, and Jack Kavanagh, and got involved in lots of fun social activities. The 2023 Conference also saw our largest number of international delegates with 69 young people travelling from the US to take part. We had students from All Hallows High School, Maria Regina High School, Archbishop Stepinac High School, 4-H youth organisation, the Aisling Irish Community Center, and for the first time, members from Yonkers Foróige Club.
- ▶ In November 2023, **372 young people** graduated from the Leadership for Life programme in the University of Galway. During the conferring ceremony, Dr. Pól O'Dochartaigh, Deputy President of University of Galway, congratulated the young people for their achievement and recognised their dedication to learning and personal development.

The Foróige Leadership for Life programme has brought a new perspective and energy to the students of the school. The programme gives the young people the chance to be curious, to learn from each other and to see that they are the next generation of leaders for our country. The impact the programme has already had on our school community has been amazing.

Fiona Tomlinson,
Nsobe Community School, Zambia

Foróige Go

Digital youth work has been part of Foróige for over 20 years. Foróige's digital youth work takes many forms under the umbrella brand of Foróige Go - digital skills for what's now and next.

Foróige Go was launched in 2023 to capture the breadth and diversity of our digital youth work. It encompasses 5 strands:

- ▶ **GoBuild:** practical tech skills programmes such as coding, robotics, and engineering, supporting young people to get into the nuts and bolts of digital creation
- ▶ **GoLevelUp:** our creative digital skills and innovation programme, exploring animation, digital storyboarding, and design, and introduces young people to digital literacy and digital citizenship
- ▶ **GoSonic:** programmes focused on digital audio production, music creation, and podcasting, through the lens of empathy education
- ▶ **GoVirtual:** engaging young people in youth work in immersive online spaces, alongside digital engagement of young people in online clubs and e-mentoring
- ▶ **GoSafely:** helping young people to navigate online spaces in a safe manner, as well as social media good practice and safety guidelines

All of our digital youth work programmes are designed to facilitate young people to grow their empathy, critical thinking, and digital citizenship. These skills are essential not just to young people's engagement with digital technologies, but also in their day-to-day lives and relationships, supporting their personal and social development, their values, and their ability to connect with others positively.

- ▶ Minister Norma Foley visited the Foróige Balbriggan Digital Youth Hub and met young people engaged with Foróige's digital youth work programmes, Leadership for Life, and NFTE - later in the year, the Secretary General of the Department of Education, Bernie McNally, also visited Balbriggan, accompanied by senior officials from the Department.
- ▶ GoVirtual goes from strength to strength, **over 750 young people** across 80 GoVirtual sites, 700 VR headsets, and 150 staff members trained in 2023. 16 volunteers are using/have used VR in their youth work practices across BBBS e-mentoring, Clubs, Projects, Comhairle and GoVirtual specific Pilots. GoVirtual facilitated 1 DCU student on placement from Science & Health Communications.
- ▶ The Digital Youth Work team took part in the annual Galway Science and Technology Festival Exhibition

Day, with over 23,000 people in attendance, running workshops on Virtual Reality, engineering, animation, and music production. At the event, Foróige Erris UBU won the Comedy Award and Foróige Eastside Youth Service in Galway won the Science in Real Life Award.

- ▶ In 2023 Foróige's **SoundSurfers** music and empathy programme was piloted in virtual reality, particularly focused on isolated young people in the care system.
- ▶ In February, 2 staff attended the **European Digital Youth Work conference** entitled "Exploring new, appealing, inclusive and engaging practices for online services in digital youth work" organised through Erasmus+, where they presented on Foróige's digital youth work.
- ▶ As part of the 'Digital Libraries' initiative in partnership with the Department of Rural and Community Development, Foróige projects and clubs are using library spaces across Ireland to facilitate digital youth work. There are **16 library sites** around the country piloting the programme and training is available to Foróige staff, volunteers, and library staff in a number of Foróige digital programmes. We hosted a series of Digital Library Showcases where **over 600 young people, parents and youth workers** had an opportunity to try out the equipment and find out more about digital youth work. There was a great response to these events, including from young people who had not engaged with youth work previously, young people from new communities, and young people with learning difficulties.

Climate Justice

Foróige's Climate Justice Programme continued to build on the work conducted over the last number of years. Foróige clubs and services got involved in a variety of climate and environmental projects which culminated in a series of Regional Showcases throughout the country. These showcases provided young people the opportunity to present their projects to their peers and other invited guests. The events were a very positive experience for all involved and demonstrated the great work being done by young people to tackle the climate crisis.

The **ECollective**, Foróige's Climate Justice Youth Advocacy Group, continued to meet regularly. In 2023 they focused on a campaign to recruit new members into the ECollective. In November, two members of the group, Orna O'Brien and Finlay Thomson presented on the ECollective's journey to date at the **Showcase on Climate Action in the Community and Voluntary Sector**, hosted by the Department of Community and Rural Development.

Climate justice training workshops were delivered to **over 100 volunteers** in Foróige in 2023. The focus of these workshops was to provide guidance, information and ideas to volunteers on climate related initiatives and activities they can do with young people in their clubs and projects.

This will further embed climate awareness and action across the organisation.

The '**Generation Glas: A Network of Young Sustainable Champions**' project in partnership with BiOrbic Bioeconomy Research Centre in University College Dublin commenced in spring 2023 and will run for 24 months, funded by the Science Foundation Ireland Discover Programme. In the first phase, **13 young people** from 3 UBU projects in Cork took part in a summer residential on the UCD campus as well as online workshops during the autumn, helping them to build the skills to become knowledgeable, confident ambassadors for sustainability.

REAL U - Foróige's Relationships and Sexuality Programme

Following a comprehensive review of the REAL U programme in 2022, this year saw a continued demand for facilitator training. Training was offered both online and in person for Foróige staff, volunteers and external organisations, including a focus on refresher training to bring existing facilitators up to date with the revised programme - a total of **148 training places** were availed of.

The RSE Capacity Building workshops on Consent and Gender & Sexuality continued to be available for trained facilitators. These workshops are proving very beneficial for facilitators as these were both topics that facilitators felt they would like more information on. Facilitators feel more confident in facilitating discussions on these topics having attended the workshops.

Follow-up edits to the REAL U programme were made based on feedback from facilitators, including the creation of additional facilitator notes and updates to the material on relevant legislation and sexual health promotion. An informal needs assessment was also undertaken by reviewing training evaluations and closing circles, which identified a further need to explore a general RSE capacity building for trained facilitators and to incorporate a further input on contraception, protections, STIs and HIV. This will form part of the programme work plan for 2024.

Foróige continues to support external campaigns and statutory processes related to relationships and sexuality education, including sitting on the Advisory Group for the We-Consent campaign operated by Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, where we contribute expertise in relation to engaging young people.

Ready Steady Life

In 2023, training was offered for the first time in Foróige's newest manualised programme, Ready, Steady, Life. This is a fantastic resource for youth workers working with young people who are nearing adulthood or in the early stages of adulthood and want to become more independent. The programme is for all young people aged 16+ and covers areas such as personal development, education and training, career progression, finance management, housing responsibilities, communication skills, confidence in accessing public services, mental and physical wellbeing, nutrition and cooking skills. The feedback from the training to date has been very positive with youth workers recognising the importance of programmes like Ready Steady Life for those young people that are beginning to navigate independent living.



NFTE

The Foróige NFTE programme is a youth entrepreneurship education and development programme. It is provided by Foróige in Ireland and is affiliated to NFTE International. The NFTE programme has been adapted by Foróige for use in an Irish context, in particular with young people experiencing disadvantage in their lives.

The Foróige NFTE programme changes the lives of young people by enabling them to develop core skills in business and enterprise, and in doing so, helping them to unlock their individual talents and potential.

In the main, young people engaging in the programme have experienced social or educational disadvantage in their lives. The NFTE programme is currently delivered in 25 counties across Ireland.

- ▶ In 2023, **6,500 young people** participated in the programme, supported by **over 280 trained teachers, youth workers and volunteers**.
- ▶ A new NFTE initiative was developed in 2023, the **NFTE Mentoring Programme**, where young people are matched with industry professionals who can support their development as young entrepreneurs.
- ▶ In March the Department of Rural and Community Development was awarded an **'Excellence Through Collaboration' Award** at the Civil Service Excellence Awards for the development of the Social Enterprise module, in partnership with the Foróige NFTE Programme.
- ▶ The **NFTE National Awards** were held in Richmond Barracks in May, the culmination of 186 local competitions and 30 regional finals. 27 businesses made it to the National Finals.
 - Foróige NFTE Youth Entrepreneur of the Year went to **Simply Soap**, comprised of Aimee Hegarty, Abbie Boyle and Aoife Smith from St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs, Co. Donegal.
 - Sarah Hegarty from Grange School, Co. Sligo won 'Best Innovation' for her business 'Girls in the Game'.
 - Patricia Poprawa, Marta Pazlinska and Tia Cooper from Scoil Mhuire, Buncrana, Co. Donegal won 'Best Social Enterprise' for their business 'Lil Phil's'.
 - Jack Lafferty from Co. Donegal won a Special Recognition Award for his business 'Jolly Socks'.
- ▶ September 2023 saw **8 groups of young people** from NFTE travel to Austria to compete in the **European YouthStart Entrepreneurship Awards** and represent Ireland. The Foróige delegation came home with a Silver and two Bronze Awards:
 - Shauna O Keeffe and David Peskett from Castleisland Community College, Co. Kerry, won a Silver in the 'Ideas' category with their business Bright Minds - a mobile application enabling students to communicate with a teacher confidentially during a lesson.
 - Livvy Curran, Millie McCourt and Lucy van Ruiven from Mulroy College in Co. Donegal received Bronze in the category 'We Grow Together' for their book "The Hidden Me", an activity book to educate children on hidden disabilities.
 - Aimee Hegarty, Abbie Boyle and Aoife Smith from St Catherine's Vocational School in Co. Donegal received Bronze in the category 'Real Market Challenge' with their company 'Simply Soap' - specialising in handmade soap using ingredients from their local area.
- ▶ NFTE ended the year with a group travelling to New York for the second annual **World Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge**. NFTE young people Tempy Maureen Stock, Meadhbh Honora Sammon, Aoife O Shea and Elaine Grace McSweeney from Coláiste Pobail Bheanntaí, co-founders of 'Clear Cut Jewellery', represented Ireland at the international event.

Targeted Services

In addition to universal youth work, Foróige operates a range of Targeted Services for young people. The aim of targeted youth work services is to provide education, training and development programmes directly by professional youth workers, sometimes in partnership with adult volunteers, to young people who are particularly disadvantaged, at risk or marginalised or with a specific focus.

In 2023, there were **161³ active Foróige operated youth projects involving 15,952 participants**. These include:

- ▶ **60 Youth and Community Projects** which provide out of school support for young people. These projects identify and engage young people from the communities in which they operate to enable them to develop skills that will help them reach their full potential and to support them during their transition from childhood to adulthood. Foróige's youth and community projects include UBU Your Place Your Space projects, which are funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, as well as community-based youth projects funded from other sources.
- ▶ **44 projects** funded by the Department of Justice in partnership with An Garda Síochána. These Youth Diversion Projects (YDP) are local community-based projects which aim to help young people move away from behaving in a way that might get them or their friends into trouble with the law. They help young people develop their sense of community and their social skills through different activities.
- ▶ **25 projects** aimed at working with young people and supporting their families, mainly in partnership with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. These projects engage in a wide variety of initiatives including involving young people in educational activities and working with their parents, guardians and families to enable them to achieve the identified outcomes for their children.
- ▶ **10 projects** specifically aimed at drug education for young people, their parents and the communities in which they are based.

- ▶ **12 Youth Participation projects** that enable young people to have a voice in decisions that impact on their lives.
- ▶ **6 School Completion Projects**, operated in partnership with Local Management Committees and aimed at increasing young people's retention in the formal education system.
- ▶ **3 Health & Wellbeing projects** providing a holistic approach to young people's health and wellbeing.
- ▶ **2 projects** aimed at enhancing young people's employability.
- ▶ **2 projects** with a specific programmatic focus – one in Kilkenny that supports young people to engage in Foróige's Be Healthy, Be Happy Programme and one national programme focused on Climate Justice, which is led by a group of 17 young people who identify the needs and advise on specific aspects of the programme.

All Foróige operated projects are based on an analysis of the needs and interests of young people. Programmes and activities are developed based on this and, where appropriate, Foróige Programmes are utilised.

In 2023, Foróige was successful in developing **18 new youth projects** in addition to significant expansion of the Youth Diversion Projects.

³ Due to changes in funding a number of youth projects have been amalgamated thus reducing the overall number of projects since 2022 while increasing the number of young people involved.



Highlights & Impact 2023

- ▶ Foróige Sligo commissioned and published a **new research report, 'What's the Panic About Vaping?'**, designed in collaboration with young people to explore attitudes to vaping among young people and staff in youth-facing roles. The report consulted with 1,000 young people across Sligo and Leitrim on their habits and perceptions of vaping, and was officially launched by Deputy Frank Feighan TD in the CRIB in Sligo Town. The findings received significant coverage in a wide range of national and local media, including Newstalk, the Irish Times, the Irish Independent, and the Irish Farmers' Journal, as well as being referenced in the Seanad by Senator Malcolm Byrne.
- ▶ A number of projects ran specific initiatives to engage **young people from Ukraine**. For example, in Youghal there is a drop-in youth café, a group from Waterford travelled to Dublin to see Brian Friel's *Translations* performed by a Ukrainian theatre company, and in Athlone the Gateway project organised a culture night involving young people from Ireland, Poland and Ukraine.
- ▶ In Sligo there was a programme for young women run during the summer with a focus on integration. A range of nationalities were involved. **Over 20 young people** aged 15-18 took part in weekly workshops including arts and crafts, cooking and life skills, sports and adventure activities.
- ▶ In West Waterford the project established a **Family Support Clinic** where parents could gather and engage in Art Therapy.

I was afraid to talk to people, Foróige was like connecting to civilisation. Everyone talks so nice to you, asks how you are, how you feel about everything, they care about you as a person.

- ▶ Young people from Birr created and presented a piece of art during **Birr Vintage Week**. They worked alongside a local artist to design a mosaic representing "what vintage week meant to them". They transformed a space within their community so people could spend time there and enjoy the mosaic. The Sub Project members wanted to give back to their community, by having something in the community that represented them while also portraying the history of vintage week. This project strengthened the young people's sense of identity within the community, their self-efficacy and self-confidence. Through working together as a team

from the initial steps to the final product, social, emotional, cognitive and behavioural competencies have been enhanced on an individual and group level.

We wanted to do the walk so we could raise money to get the windows fixed in our community centre. We wanted to make the Centre safe so if someone was near they wouldn't be hurt by the broken glass.

- ▶ BOOST YDP in Tallaght headed to Glendalough in Wicklow on a **sponsored walk** to raise money to cover the cost of repairing the windows in the Tallaght community centre, which were the target of vandalism. Two young people came up with the idea and encouraged their friends to take part in the walk and contribute to the fundraising. The group of 10 young people raised €285 in total towards the cost of the windows.
- ▶ The **Computer Clubhouse in Blanchardstown** was refurbished in 2023. Roderic O'Gorman, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth re-launched the space at a special celebration event in December 2023. A short video created by young people who attend the Clubhouse was used in Foróige's Christmas social media communications.
- ▶ Two young people from Mayo living in foster care went on an **Erasmus+ Partnership Building Activity week** in Finland. These young people are now leading a group of other young people to work with their European partners planning a youth exchange in 2024.
- ▶ Young people from Gort built a large swan puppet from willow with its wings painted in the Pride flag - participating and winning **Gort's St. Patrick's Day Parade**, which also included young people performing circus skills and a samba drumming band.
- ▶ The Foróige CABLE Project won the **Best Not for Profit Award** at the Drogheda and District Chamber Business Awards, in recognition of the excellent work done by staff and volunteers in the community in Drogheda.



- ▶ Young people from Sligo participated in a **cross border residential trip** where young people got the opportunity to improve on awareness of self, others and respect for diversity, while building connections with other young people from Northern Ireland through shared learning and equality.
- ▶ In July, six young people from UBU projects in Glanmire, Mahon, and Mayfield in Cork took part in an **international exchange to Hong Kong**, where they met with young people, got to experience life as a Hong Kong local, and gave a presentation on 'Irish Youth Activism' to Governmental officials. They are looking forward to hosting their Hong Kong counterparts in Cork in 2024!
- ▶ **Kerry West Iveragh UBU project** launched a new, internationally-focused programme for art, craft and ecology education group "A Place for Us" in collaboration with Asana International School in India.

Youth Participation

- ▶ Foróige, in partnership with Youth Work Ireland, continued to operate the **National Participation Office** on behalf of DCEDIY which supports the operation of Comhairle na nÓg, the National Youth Assembly of Ireland, and other youth participation initiatives throughout the country.
- ▶ Foróige is contracted by 10 different county councils to directly facilitate and support the operation of **Comhairle na nÓg** in that county.
- ▶ In 2023, Foróige operated **Hub na nÓg**, the centre of excellence on child and youth participation, on behalf of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY). The Hub supports government departments, state agencies and non-government organisations to give children and young people a voice in decisions that affect their lives, with a particular focus on seldom heard children and young people. The Hub delivers training and development for statutory and non-government organisations and develops and disseminates good practice.
- ▶ In January, a survey was disseminated across the Foróige network for young people involved with Foróige to complete. **2,436** responses were received from that survey, and the input from young people formed the discussion topics for the Regional Conferences and Youth Participation Seminars that took place soon after.
- ▶ **17** Regional Conferences and Regional Youth Participation Seminars took place for young people in Foróige between January and February in which **683 young people** participated in sharing their views on the topics of importance to them and their peers.
- ▶ At Foróige's Regional Conferences and Regional Youth Participation Seminars, **63 young people** were elected to Foróige's Reference Panel. The Reference Panel met twice in 2023 over two weekends. They discussed how Foróige can contribute to promoting positive mental health, the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan, identification of areas for improvement for Youth Participation in Foróige, the development of a 'Welcome to Foróige' pack for new members, and the Foróige Against Bullying (FAB) programme.
- ▶ **16 young people** were elected onto the National Council of Foróige. This group was constituted as a Youth Sub-Committee and met regularly to progress the work of the Reference Panel and advise the Foróige Board on young people's concerns and issues.
- ▶ **2 young people**, Ben Dempsey and AJ Tierney, were elected as youth observers to the Board of Foróige. This is to ensure that young people's voices are represented at the highest levels of governance in the organisation.
- ▶ **56 staff** were trained to implement the Everyday Spaces Checklist for Youth Participation in Decision-Making, developed by Hub na nÓg. The roll-out of this training will continue across the organisation in 2024.
- ▶ In 2023, Foróige continued its work as part of a consortium of organisations on the European Commission funded project 'Building Children's Futures - Using Children's Rights to Recover from the Global Pandemic'. This two-year project is led by the Children's Rights Alliance in partnership with DCEDIY, Tusla, Eurochild, the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at the University of Galway, and Foróige. Foróige convened the youth participation elements of this project, in particular facilitating a Children and Young People's Advisory Group to ensure that children and young people shape all critical aspects of the project, including developing consultation questions, reviewing the research methodology and findings, and co-designing the child rights-based recommendations for post-COVID-19 response.



Measuring Success and Learning from Programmes

Foróige believes in the importance of measuring the impact and effectiveness of its projects and programmes. Throughout the organisation we adopt a 'learning by doing' approach. All staff are trained in evaluation methods and evaluation is built into how we do the work. Programmes and activities are planned using logic models – this enables staff, volunteers and young people to identify the desired short, medium and long-term outcomes. This method of planning ensures that we can identify in advance the desired outcomes and after the programme or activity evaluate where we are at in relation to that.

We extend this method of planning and evaluation across all aspects of the organisation to ensure that all systems and processes are effective and efficient.

Where possible Foróige partners with academic institutions such as the University of Galway, Penn State University and Queen's University Belfast to conduct research into particular issues or develop programmes. This research and other relevant evaluations are widely disseminated throughout the organisation.

Within the resources available, Foróige endeavours to ensure that successes and failures are captured. However, large scale evaluations and data capture systems are resource intensive and unfortunately, Foróige does not have the resources (both human and financial) to invest in evaluation and measurement to the extent that we desire. This continues to be a priority for the organisation when seeking new funding and partnerships.



Integrated Services

Foróige has a number of services that work across the organisation to the benefit of Foróige, its staff, volunteers and young people.

Foróige operates a shared services model, i.e. centralising services such as Public Engagement, Funding, Finance, Audit and Risk, Governance, Human Resources, IT, Training, Learning and Development, Marketing and Communications, Child Safeguarding, Data Protection. Projects contribute to the resourcing of these services enabling all to receive a professional, cost-effective service. Some achievements in 2023 include:

Public Engagement

- ▶ The Foróige homepage continues to be the main entry point for all public engagement. Social media campaigns, media and Foróige Staff Portal calls-to-action direct users to foróige.ie.
- ▶ Foróige.ie had **330,719 page views** in 2023 which constitutes a 6% increase year on year, and the most popular sections of the website continue to be the news section followed by the Foróige careers hub.
- ▶ In 2023 Foróige was presented with the **Public Sector Magazine Award** for excellence in the Provision of Youth Services Category.
- ▶ Foróige is represented on a variety of networks and organisations that contribute to the promotion of youth work nationally, e.g. The National Children's and Young People's Advisory Council, National Youth Council of Ireland, Children's Rights Alliance, Prevention and Early Intervention Network, Children and Young People's Services Committees, Public Participation Networks and local and regional drug and alcohol task forces.

Child Safeguarding

Child safeguarding and protection is of paramount importance in Foróige. An internal management working group led by the Director of Targeted Services and Safeguarding ensures that the organisation is fully compliant with *Children First 2015* and all other relevant legislation. Work on the review and amendment of Foróige's Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Protection and Welfare Policy and Procedures was completed in 2023.

While there was a welcome return to in-person youth work in 2022, it is evident that online youth engagement will be an ongoing feature of youth work, especially in engaging hard-to-reach young people. Therefore in 2023, the adaptation of guidance and supports for safe online working continued to be prioritised. Specific guidelines relating to online work (through Virtual Reality) were developed and implemented in 2023. DCEDIY continued to fund Foróige to develop and roll out a programme called "Connect Safely", a comprehensive youth work programme for young people that aims to increase the safe engagement of young people in online activity and interaction, both within youth work settings and their personal lives continued to be implemented.

Training, Learning and Development

- ▶ Training, Learning and Development provided a total of **2,485 training places** in 2023: 1,611 training places to Foróige staff and volunteers and, 874 training places to other organisations. In addition to this there were another 2,116 training places made available by other Foróige staff to volunteers in Foróige in 2023.
- ▶ **59 training courses** were provided on topics to meet the training, learning and development needs of staff. In addition to a comprehensive Induction training programme for staff, courses available included Motivational Interviewing, Brief Intervention, Youth Participation, Employability Skills.
- ▶ Foróige's Training, Learning & Development function continued to run the majority of its training successfully online. Online training is continually evaluated and updated to ensure participants receive a high level of training and quality outcomes.

- ▶ In person training continues to be facilitated for our suite of staff induction training. This ensures staff joining the organisation have the opportunity to come together in person to meet their peers and learn about Foróige and its work. In person training also continued to be offered for REAL U. Training in some of the Foróige Go programmes was also offered to staff and externals in various regions throughout the country.
- ▶ Foróige continues to involve participants in self directed training using the **Moodle** platform. This forms part of the blended learning approach for Foróige's Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs (TAD) Policy and Guidelines, Needs Assessment, Planning and Curriculum Design for staff induction and REAL U Programme facilitator training.
- ▶ Feedback across all programme training and delivery methods has been extremely positive, with participants enjoying the blended learning approach. New staff joining the organisation enjoy the opportunity to begin their Induction training in person as they get to meet other staff that are also starting their roles as well as gain knowledge and information from the experienced Foróige staff that facilitate the training. The online training still continues to be well received with participants enjoying the interactive nature and variety of methodologies that online programmes can offer. All training is continuously reviewed and evaluated to ensure participants are getting the most from the training they attend.
- ▶ Foróige is committed to building a high-performance culture that encourages staff to enhance skills relevant to their role and which are aligned to the overall purpose of the organisation. We are also committed to ensuring staff develop their capabilities to meet the future needs of their employment. To progress this, in 2023 Foróige commenced a Learning Needs Analysis with Foróige staff that have two or more years of service. The feedback and information from this will influence a range of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities and initiatives for staff which will enhance their knowledge, skills and competence.

Human Resources

In 2023 Foróige provided a comprehensive HR service to management and staff. It provides advice and support on all areas of HR including recruitment and selection and compliance with HR legislation. Recruitment proved to be extremely challenging again in 2023, mirroring the challenges across the sector. To address this issue, internal working groups have been established to identify areas for improvement, cost effective alternative recruitment channels and more efficient use of online systems.

There has been a 6% increase in recruitment since 2022. Despite a hit rate (percentage of roles successfully filled) of 75% (down from 83% in 2022) it is taking more time to fill these positions. In total, there were **133 new staff members** in 2023.

There were **589 employees** in Foróige on 31st December 2023. This is an 8.5% increase in staff numbers since 2022.

Data Protection

All staff receive Data Protection training as part of their Induction Training. There were no data breaches or significant data incidents in 2023.

IT

All staff are equipped with secure, encrypted smartphones and laptops. Foróige uses the cloud based Google Workspace for all document storage and all financial and HR systems are cloud based. This ensured that all staff were equipped to work from home. The use of Google Chat and Meet for online collaboration and meetings, enabled all staff to remain in contact with one another and their line managers.

Salesforce is one of our most important applications, enabling staff and volunteers to have their relevant information at their fingertips. It removes the need for paper-based record keeping and multiple copies of documents, thus reducing the risk of data breaches. Developments continued in 2023: working with our partner WiPro, we launched major improvements to YDPs, Family Support and other small scale improvements. All active projects now have full access to the system.

Marketing and Communications

We have continued to grow and nurture our social media audience across all platforms, most specifically with young people across Instagram and TikTok. With a special focus on highlighting local stories on our national pages, we've succeeded in growing substantially across all channels. As always, we cater our messaging and voice to the audience of focus for each channel: parents and volunteers on Facebook, to professionals and policy makers on LinkedIn, with young people our prime focus on Instagram and TikTok.

- ▶ On X (formerly Twitter) Foróige has increased our follow count by 1% to **12,790**.
- ▶ On Instagram Foróige has increased our follow count by 13% to **6,767**.
- ▶ On LinkedIn Foróige has grown our follow count by 14% to **6,530**.

In a continued environment of Facebook audiences dwindling across the industry, our strategy to maintain our audience has succeeded by keeping our page follower count at 109k and we still remain the largest youth organisation in Ireland on the platform.

In 2023 the nationwide Big Brother Big Sister volunteer recruitment campaign in partnership with Toyota Ireland was run again across TV, radio and social media. The campaign was recognised with a Silver Award in the competitive 'Best Medium/Small Media Campaign' category at the **2023 Media Awards**.

Foróige also maintains engagement with the media. In 2023, our focus was on ensuring that young people's voices, opinions, concerns and ideas were heard and were part of the national conversation. In addition, we focused on leveraging a number of national events dotted throughout the year to highlight the positive impact Foróige has on young people and communities.

Governance

Foróige is fully compliant with the **Charities Governance Code**. The governance of Foróige is drawn from all sections of the organisation to ensure there is appropriate representation. Compliance with the Code is reviewed annually and records maintained of developments and improvements that may be required.

In 2023 the Board operated two sub-groups: the **Youth Sub-Group** (consisting of 16 young people elected to advise and guide on the direction of Foróige) and the **Volunteer Sub-Group** (to advise on matters specifically relating to volunteers).

Foróige has a **Staff Council** – a method to ensure that staff can engage directly with the Board of Foróige. The Staff Council consists of representatives from all sections of the organisation and they develop initiatives such as the Staff Engagement Survey, policy development and staff recognition.

Policy and Political Engagement

In 2023 Foróige continued to engage with politicians, policy-makers, and other public officials, seeking to create awareness, understanding of and support for our work as an organisation – with a particular focus on the vital role of volunteer-led youth work in local communities.

Our guiding principles in this work are to build support for youth work and raise awareness of the wide-ranging benefits that it confers on young people who engage with it. We believe that all young people who want to access youth work should be able to do so. We also advocate for young people to be actively involved in and have opportunities to meaningfully influence the decisions that affect them.

- ▶ Foróige produced a number of **policy position papers and submissions to Government** consultations on policies and initiatives relevant to young people and fundamental to the work of the organisation. These included submissions on:

- The Action Plan on Youth Services
- The draft specification of the Senior Cycle Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum
- The National Philanthropy Policy
- The National Hub Strategy



- ▶ Foróige also developed a broad-ranging position paper for the youth work ecosystem in Ireland, capturing key challenges and opportunities as well as proposing a model of service provision which we feel can strengthen the sector and enable more young people across Ireland to reap the benefits of youth work.
- ▶ In 2023, we coordinated a nationwide campaign led by Foróige staff and volunteers to raise political awareness of the importance of youth work and the need for increased funding to the sector. We produced and circulated a comprehensive **pre-Budget submission**, as well as engaging **59 TDs and Senators** across 22 constituencies. Our key ask was for a transformative investment in youth work, with a focus on universal youth work. Although the overall increase for youth work in Budget 2024 was modest, we were glad to see a ring-fenced fund announced specifically for volunteer-led youth work for the first time.
- ▶ Since then, we have begun a programme of concerted engagement with Parliamentary Parties and their decision-making bodies, including the Ard Fheiseanna and National Conventions.
- ▶ Beyond this, Ministers, TDs, Senators, local councillors and other public officials engaged with a variety of Foróige events and services across the country. Highlights included:
 - In March, Foróige Tyrrelstown in North Dublin was officially launched by then Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, who applauded the role of staff and volunteers who support young people and the community.
 - Minister Dara Calleary made an appearance at Foróige's Amplified music festival, an entirely volunteer-organised event where young people can experience their first festival experience in a safe and supported environment.
 - Minister Roderic O'Gorman presided over the official launch of Foróige South Sligo UBU.
- ▶ Notably, young people from across Foróige were invited to engage with politicians and policy makers in a variety of ways across 2023. Highlights include representation on the Shared Island Youth Forum run by the Department of An Taoiseach, a young person speaking at the Irish Coalition to End Youth Homelessness Conference, and a presentation by two ECOLlective members at the Department of Rural and Community Development Showcase on Climate Action in the Community and Voluntary Sector.

- ▶ July 2023 also saw a unique event in Foróige's history, when we were invited by the Ceann Comhairle, Seán Ó Feargháil, to host a Digital Youth Showcase in Leinster House. Almost 80 members of both Houses of the Oireachtas engaged with young people from around the country who demonstrated youth work in virtual reality, coding, robotics, engineering, artificial intelligence and much more. This remarkable occasion was a first in allowing us to bring youth work directly into the halls of Leinster House, and we are grateful to the Oireachtas members and staff for their warm welcome.

Funding

Foróige successfully secured funding from a variety of sources for new and ongoing initiatives. These include:

- ▶ The Tomar Trust have provided significant investment in Foróige's Leadership for Life programme, to help us meet increasing demand for the programme and engage 7,000 young people over the next 2 years.
- ▶ The Lakeside Fund have funded a new post to bring Foróige's youth mentoring programme to Kerry, to be run both through the community and in schools.
- ▶ The McHugh Family Fund, through the Community Foundation for Ireland, invested in the high end refurbishment and fit out of a digital youth hub in our new premises in Dublin City South..
- ▶ Accenture Ireland provided a new round of funding and support to Foróige to further develop and expand the LevelUp programme in 2023, including the development of the third module (LevelUp 3.0).
- ▶ HSBC through basis.point provided a grant for promotional signage in four Foróige spaces in Dublin: Dublin City South, Thomas Street, Inchicore and Ballyfermot.
- ▶ The European Commission's Erasmus+ programme has funded a collaborative learning project between Foróige and HUMAK University of Applied Sciences, Finland, focused on sharing best practices in relation to digital youth work which will take place in 2024.
- ▶ Creative Ireland through the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, the Gaeltacht, Sport and Media has funded the City Instincts project, located in Foróige's new Dublin City South premises in Christchurch, Dublin 8.
- ▶ Foróige is part of Amplify, a consortium of organisations North and South that submitted a successful bid through the PEACEPLUS funding programme managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), to deliver significant cross-border initiatives that will support peace and prosperity over the coming years.

Challenges in 2023

While Foróige had numerous successes and highlights throughout 2023, the organisation also faced a number of challenges.

Universal Youth Work

Universal volunteer-led youth work urgently requires an investment of funding to ensure that all young people who want to can access youth work and are supported by fully trained adult volunteers, who in turn are supported by professional staff.

It is acknowledged that young people experiencing specific disadvantages require support but there is a challenge that this focus diverts from the supports that all young people require to successfully transition from childhood to adulthood.

Organisation Supports

It is increasingly challenging to ensure that Foróige receives the funding required to operate a fully compliant organisation. Funding organisations can struggle to realise the full cost of employing and supporting professional youth work staff. Currently Foróige charges an Operational Support Charge to projects - see page 64. Increasingly, there is a difficulty in charging this fee which presents a challenge as Foróige is dependent on this income to provide a professional support service to staff and funding organisations.

As an organisation, Foróige prides itself on being professional and carrying out our work to best practice standards. In order for this to continue it is imperative that the operation of Foróige is supported by professional support services including: Finance; Marketing and Communications; HR; IT; Training, Learning and Development; Volunteer Development and Compliance. These are critical to the achievement of our positive work with young people, volunteers and communities and it is vital that funders continue to invest in these as core to the continued operation of a successful organisation.

Staff Recruitment and Remuneration

Staff recruitment is an increasing challenge. As Ireland is at full employment levels, the recruitment of new staff is a challenge mirrored across the community and voluntary sector. Salaries in the sector were impacted during the recession and it has taken significant time to restore

them to pre-recession levels and maintain a competitive advantage. The 2023 WRC ruling regarding Section 39 organisations was welcomed by Foróige. However, to date, this has not been reflected by all funders. This presents a challenge to Foróige as we endeavour to ensure that there is consistency across the organisation regarding staff remuneration.

Compliance

There has been a significant increase in the number and complexity of compliance and reporting requirements over the last number of years. While we welcome and embrace the increased transparency across the sector, there is a need to ensure that the funding is available to enable us to continue to provide quality supports to our Board, funders, young people, volunteers, management and staff.

Changing Focus of Youth Work

Youth work in Ireland is undergoing significant change with an ever increasing emphasis on targeted services for young people that are most at-risk. Legislation such as Children First and the Data Protection Acts place additional training and administration requirements on the organisation and its staff. Foróige keeps abreast of all change, contributes to consultations and engages in a meaningful way with Government and funders to assist in shaping the policy environment.

The Youth Services Grant Scheme is also under review. Foróige has engaged in all consultations regarding this review and the development of a new scheme to replace it and welcomes the work done to date by DCEDIY in relation to it, particularly the focus on universal youth work.

Complexity

Managing the increasing complexity of the issues presenting to young people and families is challenging. The availability of appropriate services is dependent on location. The increase in concerns regarding young people's mental health and the lack of appropriate services poses a problem for our work. As a result, maintaining the boundaries of the role of youth work is increasingly difficult.

Longer Term Strategy and Objectives

Foróige focused on developing a new Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028 during 2023. There was extensive consultation with young people, volunteers, staff, management and the Board. The new plan was signed off by the Board in November 2023.

The plan sets out Foróige's 10 year vision, strategic choices, Key Areas of Focus and objectives/ actions specific to each Key Area of Focus.

The key areas of focus and specific objectives over the next five years are:

Be the youth work organisation of choice for young people, volunteers, communities and funders

Critical to Foróige's success is that Foróige is the first choice for young people, volunteers, communities and funders for youth work provision. It is intended that young people, volunteers and communities when considering engagement in youth work or youth related activities choose Foróige. Foróige is uniquely positioned to provide a service to young people, volunteers and communities no matter where they are based due to the variety of youth work offerings that Foróige has.

In a similar manner, when funders – state, philanthropic or corporate – choose to engage with youth or youth provision, Foróige is their first choice.

Objectives

- ▶ Foróige is available and accessible to young people and communities through a wide variety of youth work interventions
- ▶ Foróige programmes, activities and events meet the needs and interests of young people
- ▶ Young people and volunteers are influencing organisational decisions that affect them
- ▶ Volunteers are recognised, valued and supported in their roles
- ▶ Foróige provides needs-led, evidence-based, value for money youth work

Provide quality, relevant youth work provision

Foróige intends to build on our foundation and reputation as the provider of quality, relevant youth work services. Fundamental to the provision of quality, relevant youth work is having the right people, in the right roles, at the right time.

The recruitment of both staff and volunteers is therefore vital to this key area of focus to ensure that those that engage directly with young people and volunteers are aligned to Foróige's purpose and philosophy. Further, retention of staff and volunteers is of importance due to the significance of a relationship between an adult and a young person in a youth work context.

Ensuring that staff and volunteers have access to, and avail of, high quality, progressive training that enables them to be effective in their youth work roles further ensures the provision of high quality, relevant youth work.

Foróige recognises the importance of quality standards and independent evaluation as a mechanism to benchmark youth work and ensure consistency of outcomes across the variety of youth work interventions provided by Foróige.

Objectives

- ▶ Comprehensive and competitive recruitment strategies are in place for staff and volunteers
- ▶ Staff and volunteer retention rates are favourable and comparable to others in the sector
- ▶ Foróige staff and volunteers are enabled to be effective in their youth work roles
- ▶ Foróige clubs, projects, education programmes and support services are compliant with quality standards
- ▶ Foróige clubs, programme, education programmes and youth work models are independently evaluated and evidence-based

Enhance the complementarity between Foróige's work and the formal education system

The critical role of education in a young person's development is recognised and acknowledged in legislation, policy and frameworks. However, post-pandemic, schools are experiencing a multitude of challenges including staff shortages, facilities, student behaviour (e.g. school refusal) and other issues that are impacting on the lives and educational attainment of young people, particularly those young people experiencing additional challenges, external to the formal education system in their lives. This is impacting at all levels from primary to third level where the retention rates of students beyond their first year is of significant concern.

Foróige provides a wide range of non-formal education programmes for young people that complement and enhance the formal education of young people and contributes to their overall development both personal and academic.

Foróige is ideally placed to work alongside other agencies to support young peoples' retention in the formal education system and to support schools to implement Foróige's non-formal education programmes that will enhance school engagement and attendance.

It is not Foróige's intention to take on the roles assigned to other state agencies but rather, to explore and promote how Foróige's work can support them to achieve their desired outcomes.

There is a need for a parity of esteem between formal and non-formal education which would enhance young people's experience of education and support them to achieve their goals. Further, should non-formal education programmes methodologies and outcomes be recognised on a par with formal education, it will increase the attractiveness of youth work as a career and thus enhance Foróige's recruitment and retention.

Objectives

- ▶ Foróige programmes are available through the formal education system
- ▶ The outcomes and value of Foróige programmes and Foróige's non-formal education initiatives are recognised at a policy level by the formal education system.

Organisation structures are fit for purpose

Foróige has grown organically and significantly over the past number of years. The structure of Foróige requires review to ensure that it is the optimum structure to provide oversight and also continue to develop the organisation.

There are two key elements to this area of focus. One area includes Foróige's governance structure, club support model, youth participation structure and volunteer support structures. The other area is that of the organisation itself – management (including senior management); assistant managers/project leaders/senior youth officers; those working directly with young people; those working to support volunteers in their roles; support services and education programmes etc.

The former, while effective and having undergone change in the previous eight years, requires a review to ensure that it is fit for purpose and able to provide comprehensive, transparent and compliant governance for an organisation that continues to grow and develop. Additionally, a review of the engagement, integration and support structures for volunteers is required to ensure that volunteers' needs are being met and they are influencing organisational decisions that affect them.

The internal structure of Foróige, notwithstanding the strategic development of support systems resulting from the One Foundation investment 2010 – 2014, has grown organically. This has led to uneven development and support for organisation development and needs to be reviewed and strategically reformed. However, it is the intention to retain Foróige's ability to respond to youth needs in an effective and flexible manner.

Objectives

- ▶ Foróige's governance structures are compliant and able to provide comprehensive oversight for the organisation
- ▶ Foróige's internal structure enhances the operations of the organisation and enables appropriate outcomes for young people to be achieved

Adequate Resources to support organisation development

Many of the elements and actions that will be required to achieve the five year key areas of focus, associated objectives and KPIs require additional resourcing. It is recognised that resources are not exclusively financial. Time, focus and people can be equally essential to organisation development as financial resources. The success of this plan is heavily reliant on adequate resources being available to implement this plan and achieve the associated objectives and KPIs within the timeframe.

Objectives

- ▶ All Foróige operations will be adequately resourced to provide the service required and implement improvement projects as identified.
- ▶ Resources will be available and allocated consistently as per agreed formula.

In 2024, Foróige will complete a detailed operational plan to report to the Board quarterly on progress against these objectives.

Structure, Governance and Management

Foróige is a company limited by guarantee. It develops and implements a youth education programme complementary to the home, school and work to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their own development and in the development of society. Foróige is a registered charity with the Charities Regulator (Ireland).

The Foróige Board of Directors is committed to maintaining high standards of corporate governance and has taken action to ensure that the organisation is fully compliant with the requirements of *The Charities Governance Code*. Further, Foróige has 'Triple Lock' status with the Charities Institute of Ireland. The Board is committed to annually review compliance with the principles of the Governance Code.

Members of the Board of Directors, all of whom are non-executive, are from a diverse range of backgrounds and bring a broad range of knowledge, skills and attributes to the Board. As provided for by the Constitution, nine Board members are elected from the membership of Foróige and three Directors appointed with specific skills and expertise required. There are two youth representatives (under 18 years of age). However, should a youth representative turn 18 during their term of office they become a Director. All Board members receive induction training shortly after appointment to familiarise themselves with their statutory responsibility, their role as Board members, the governance frameworks, Foróige's range of youth work and Foróige's risk environment.

There are clear distinctions between the roles of the Board of Directors and the Chief Executive Officer, to whom the day-to-day management is delegated. Matters such as policy, strategic planning and budgets are drafted by the Senior Management Team for consideration and approval by the Board who then monitor the implementation of these plans. The members of the Board, cannot, under the governing documents, receive remuneration for services to Foróige and may only be reimbursed for incidental expenses claimed.

There are four Board Committees: *Finance*, which monitors the organisation's financial results and policies; *Audit & Risk*, which monitors the control and risk management systems; *HR & Remuneration*, which monitors the HR policies and procedures and oversees pay and rewards policies across the organisation and *Governance and Nominations* which monitors the governance arrangements

of Foróige. The membership of these Committees includes members of the Board and also volunteers and young people who are members of the Company.

The Board met 12 times during the course of the year. The organisation elected a new Chairperson, Odhrán O'Mahony, at the AGM on 27th May 2023. The attendance below indicates the number of meetings attended out of the number of meetings eligible to attend.

BOARD MEMBER	NUMBER OF MEETINGS ATTENDED
AJ Tierney*	5/6
Alan Prendergast	12/12
Anthony Clinton	10/12
Barbara Daly	12/12
Ben Dempsey*	4/6
Caitlin Thompson*	4/6
Eoin Forkan*	5/6
Grace Gallagher	2/12
Noel Kelly	10/12
Odhrán O'Mahony	12/12
Patrick Ryan	5/12
Paul Maher	9/12
Roisín McGlone	11/12
Sandra McIntyre	10/12
Seamus Carey	2/12
Shane Fallon	11/12

*Under 18 years of age - Youth Representatives.

The majority of Board members had additional responsibilities in relation to Board Committees. These met during the year as follows: the Finance Committee met three times; the Audit & Risk Committee met twice; the HR & Remunerations Committee met four times; and the Governance & Nominations Committee met six times.

Internal Control and Risk Management

Foróige operates in a wide variety of environments. As an organisation we are committed to having appropriate systems and controls in place in all locations in order to ensure that assets are safeguarded and applied only for the purposes intended. We seek to achieve this by recruiting qualified and experienced staff, providing them with appropriate training and by giving them effective support in carrying out their work. Clear policies, procedures and guidelines are in place. These systems are robust and provide a high degree of assurance that resources are properly applied. That said, no system provides absolute guarantees, but we endeavour to ensure there is value for money and strong oversight at all times. In addition, we have compliance and protected disclosures policies and systems in place. In 2023 no instances of actual or attempted fraud were discovered.

Foróige has a risk management function that is responsible for ensuring that a comprehensive process exists to identify and rank significant organisational risks, it also considers how these are managed and how they are reported and monitored. As part of the risk management process, an annual risk review is undertaken and the results are presented to the Board. The purpose of that review is to ensure that the organisation is not on an ongoing basis exposed to an unacceptable level of preventable risk.

Appropriate systems and procedures are in place to manage these risks and provide reasonable but not absolute assurance against occurrence. Management undertakes ongoing monitoring of the level of risk and reports on this to the Board.

The major risks identified are:

Operational

Child safeguarding and protection is of primary importance to Foróige and policies are in place to ensure that the protection and welfare of young people remains of paramount importance.

In all aspects of our engagement with young people we aim to:

- ▶ exercise positive and developmental leadership and support
- ▶ create appropriate structures and a safe setting
- ▶ provide safe and appropriate programmes and activities

In this way the dignity of young people is both respected and promoted and they can grow into more confident, caring and creative human beings. Robust child protection policies and procedures are in place to ensure that both staff and young people are safe and protected.

Financial

Foróige has in place strong financial controls, monitoring and budgetary procedures to ensure that all funds are expended in line with appropriate procurement procedures and funders' requirements. Adequate insurance cover is maintained and reviewed annually.

The 2023 risk review continued to highlight the demand on resources to continue to ensure compliance with a wide range of legal and best practice requirements. In addition, while the commencement of the wind-up of the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme addressed the exposure to fluctuations in this scheme, the risk of funders not supporting pension scheme contributions continues to be an issue for the organisation.

Reputational

Foróige's commitment to applying best practice in all areas of the organisation's work minimises the potential exposure to reputational risk. We monitor sentiment and commentary regarding the organisation in the public domain on an ongoing basis.



Other Matters

Staff and Volunteers

Foróige is an equal opportunities employer. The aim of its equal opportunities policy is to ensure that all people receive equality of opportunity regardless of gender, race, religion, disability, nationality, marital/family status and sexual orientation.

Volunteers play a vital role in the provision of services and activities. Foróige's equal opportunities policy also applies to volunteers. Young people in Foróige benefited greatly from the guidance, support and assistance of thousands of volunteers who gave their time, expertise, commitment and energy.

The organisation acknowledges with gratitude the work of its staff and volunteers in 2023. The major achievements during the year are due to the belief and dedication of these people.

Our objectives as stated in our governing documents

The Constitution of Foróige states that the main object for which the organisation exists is: "...to develop and implement a youth education programme complementary to the home, school and work to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their own development and in the development of society."

It is supported by the 'ancillary objects' or aims namely:

- (a) to provide learning experiences designed to enhance human potential and foster the personal development of its members, young people, leaders, volunteers and others through involvement in its programmes, activities and events;
- (b) to foster the development by its members, young people, leaders, volunteers and others of essential knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for effective living, especially in areas such as:
 - (i) family life
 - (ii) vocational development
 - (iii) recreational activity and
 - (iv) democratic, civic and social activity

Lobbying and Political Contributions

There were no political contributions in 2023, and as a result no disclosures are required under the Electoral Act, 1997.

As required under the Regulations of Lobbying Act 2015, Foróige now records all lobbying activities and communications engaged in with Designated Public Officials (DPOs). It has made the returns and submissions required by the Act.



Plans for the Future

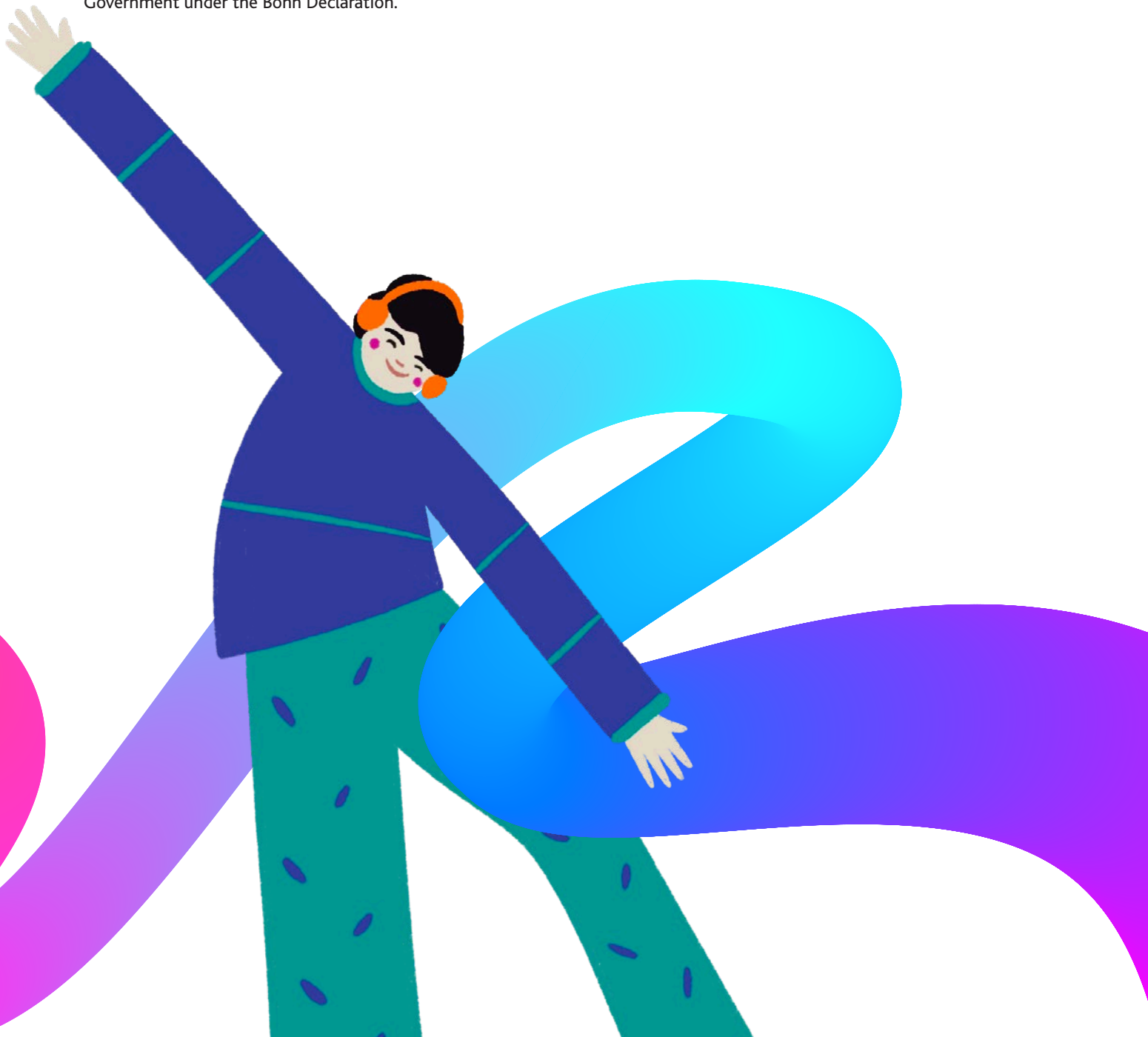
Foróige will develop implementation plans to realise our longer term strategies.

Foróige will continue to seek additional government, philanthropic and corporate resources to ensure that more young people have access to better youth services and supports. The organisation will also continue to embed the governance structures throughout the organisation and ensure that we are fully compliant with regulation, compliance and governance requirements.

In addition, Foróige will continue to advocate for universal access to youth work so that every young person who wants to be involved can be, as committed to by the Irish Government under the Bonn Declaration.

The organisation will also work to ensure that all young people have one good adult in their lives. This will include endeavouring to grow our volunteer numbers so that young people are linked with skilled community activists to support their own development and to strengthen communities right across the country - volunteers are the heart of youth work in Ireland and it is critical that we continue to champion and bolster their role in Foróige. What's more, we will continue to advocate that every young person that needs a mentor has access to one.

Foróige will continue to develop high quality digital youth hubs to ensure that young people are equipped with digital skills for what's now and next.





FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



Financial Statements

Financial Review

The results for the year are presented on pages 44 and 45 in the form of a Statement of Financial Activities in order to comply with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP) (FRS102).

The total income for the year ended 31 December 2023 was €37,770,199 (2022 – €34,753,097). There were no significant events during the year which impacted on the core financial activities.

Foróige's resources at the end of the year were in surplus by €10,459,296 (2022 €10,825,455) with unrestricted general funds of €531,696 (2022 – €1,029,722). €9,382,127 is held for restricted purposes (2022 – €8,823,271) as the funds were donated for specific programmes and projects as set out below. As the Defined Benefit Pension scheme went into wind up during 2023 there is no asset or liability at 31 December 2023 (2022 Surplus €430,000).

Restricted and Unrestricted Funds at 31 December	2023	2022
Universal Services	1,947,948	2,331,384
Targeted Services	6,649,824	6,472,604
Education Programmes	1,316,051	1,049,005
Defined Benefit Pension Fund	–	430,000
Unrestricted Designated Funds	545,473	542,462
	10,459,296	10,825,455

Reserves Policy

Reserves describe the part of Foróige's funds that are freely available to fund its general operations and is not subject to commitments, planned expenditure or restrictions. Consequently, reserves do not include restricted funds and designated funds.

Reserves should provide Foróige with adequate financial stability and the means for it to meet its charitable objectives.

Principal Funders

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth	TUSLA
Education and Training Boards	The Health Service Executive
Department of Justice	

Transfers in the Statements of Financial Activity

Transfers are made from restricted funds for the management and administration of projects with the agreement of funders. Transfers from unrestricted funds are made to restricted funds to meet the shortfall on restricted projects.

Defined Benefit Pension Plan

The last formal actuarial funding valuation of the organisation's defined benefit pension plan was carried out as at 1 November 2020. As part of this valuation it was noted that the plan met the statutory Minimum Funding Standard (MFS) as at this date and a positive Actuarial Funding Certificate was signed with an effective date of 1 November 2020. In April 2023, the organisation advised the trustees of the scheme that they would no longer be making contributions. As a result the Trustees decided to put the scheme into wind up as of 30 April 2023. At the date of signing the financial statement the wind up is still ongoing.

Financial Statements

continued

Directors and Their Interests

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. Therefore, the directors who served during the period did not have a beneficial interest in the company.

The names of the individuals who were directors at any time during the year ended 31 December 2023 and up to the date of approval of the Financial Statements are set out on the accompanying table.

All directors serve in a voluntary capacity.

The company secretary is HBK Secretarial Services.

Events Subsequent to the Year End

There have been no significant events affecting the company since the year end.

Accounting Records

The measures that the directors have taken to secure compliance with the requirements of sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014 with regard to the keeping of accounting records are the employment of appropriately qualified accounting personnel and the maintenance of computerised accounting systems. The company's accounting records are maintained at the company's registered office at Block 12D, Joyce Way, Park West, Dublin 12.

Statement on Relevant Audit Information

In the case of each of the persons who are directors at the time this report is approved in accordance with Section 332 of the Companies Act 2014:

- ▶ So far as each director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's statutory auditors are unaware, and
- ▶ Each director has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's statutory auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Mazars, Chartered Accountants, have expressed their willingness to continue in office in accordance with Section 383(2) of the Companies Act 2014.

The Financial Statements were approved on behalf of the Board on 24 April 2024 on its behalf by:



Odhran O'Mahony
DIRECTOR



Noel Kelly
DIRECTOR

	Date of Appointment	Date of Resignation
Seamus Carey		March 7 2024
Anthony Clinton		
Barbara Daly		
Shane Fallon		
Grace Gallagher		
Noel Kelly		
Paul Maher		
Roisin McGlone		
Sandra McIntyre		
Odhran O'Mahony		
Adam Prendergast		
Caitlin Thompson	April 1 2023	May 27 2023

Directors' Responsibilities Statement

The directors are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable Irish law and regulations.


Irish Company law requires the directors to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year. Under the law, the directors have elected to prepare the Financial Statements in accordance with the Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" issued by the Financial Reporting Council ("relevant financial reporting framework") and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP (FRS102)), issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. Under company law, the directors must not approve the Financial Statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at the financial year end date and of the net income or expenditure of the company for the financial year and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014.

In preparing these Financial Statements, the directors are required to:

- ▶ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ▶ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ▶ state whether the Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- ▶ prepare the Financial Statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for ensuring that the company keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the company, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and surplus or deficit of the company to be determined with reasonable accuracy, enable them to ensure that the Financial Statements and directors report comply with the Companies Act 2014 and enable the Financial Statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence, for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included in the company's website. Legislation in Ireland governing the preparation and dissemination of Financial Statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.



Odhran O'Mahony
DIRECTOR



Noel Kelly
DIRECTOR

Independent Auditors' Report

to the Members of Foróige the National Youth Development Organisation Limited



Report on the audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the Financial Statements of Foróige the National Youth Development Organisation Limited ('the Company'), for the year ended 31 December 2023, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows, and notes to the Company Financial Statements, including the summary of significant accounting policies set out in note 1. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is Irish law and FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* issued in the United Kingdom by the Financial Reporting Council (FRS 102).

In our opinion, the accompanying Financial Statements:

- ▶ give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Company as at 31 December 2023, and of its net expenditure for the year then ended;
- ▶ have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102; and
- ▶ have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report.

We are independent of the Company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of Financial Statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard for Auditors (Ireland) issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the Financial Statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the Financial Statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the Financial Statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the Financial Statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the Financial Statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the Financial Statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the Financial Statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

Independent Auditors' Report

continued

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- ▶ the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the Financial Statements are prepared is consistent with the Financial Statements;
- ▶ the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements;
- ▶ the accounting records of the Company were sufficient to permit the Financial Statements to be readily and properly audited; and
- ▶ the Financial Statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

We have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, are necessary for the purposes of our audit.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the Company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified any material misstatements in the directors' report.

The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the requirements of any of Sections 305 to 312 of the Act, which relate to disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions are not complied with by the Company. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Respective responsibilities

Responsibilities of directors for the Financial Statements

As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities Statement out on page 40, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the Financial Statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework that give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of Financial Statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the Financial Statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Financial Statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these Financial Statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the Financial Statements is located on the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority's website at: https://iaasa.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Description_of_auditors_responsibilities_for_audit.pdf. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent Auditors' Report

continued

The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities

Our report is made solely to the Company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Aedin Morkan

for and on behalf of Mazars
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm

Harcourt Centre
Block 3 Harcourt Road
Dublin 2

24 April 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Notes	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds – General €	Unrestricted Funds – Designated €	Unrestricted Funds – Pension €	2023 Total Funds €	2022 Total Funds €
Income							
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>							
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth – Youth Service Grant		3,446,017	–	–	–	3,446,017	3,313,478
Other income		33,645,434	358,064	–	276,000	34,279,498	31,409,475
		37,091,451	358,064	–	276,000	37,725,515	34,722,953
<i>Income from other trading activities</i>							
Other trading activities		19,608	22,065	–	–	41,673	30,144
Income from investments		–	–	3,011	–	3,011	–
		19,608	22,065	3,011	–	44,684	30,144
Total income		37,111,059	380,129	3,011	276,000	37,770,199	34,753,097
Expenditure							
Charitable activities		37,015,134	–	–	–	37,015,134	34,078,317
Other expenditure		–	415,224	–	65,000	480,224	–
Total expenditure		37,015,134	415,224	–	65,000	37,495,358	34,078,317
Net income/ (expenditure)		95,925	(35,095)	3,011	211,000	274,841	674,780
Transfers							
<i>Transfers between funds</i>							
Income transferred	19	(2,156,403)	2,156,403	–	–	–	–
Expenditure transferred		2,619,334	(2,619,334)	–	–	–	–
Net income/ (expenditure) before other gains and loss	2	558,856	(498,026)	3,011	211,000	274,841	674,780

Statement of Financial Activities

Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 31 December 2023 *continued*

	Notes	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds – General €	Unrestricted Funds – Designated €	Unrestricted Funds – Pension €	2023 Total Funds €	2022 Total Funds €
Carried forward		558,856	(498,026)	3,011	211,000	274,841	674,780
Other gains and losses							
Actuarial (loss)/ gain on defined benefit scheme	15	–	–	–	(641,000)	(641,000)	15,151,000
Net movement in funds		558,856	(498,026)	3,011	(430,000)	(366,159)	15,825,780
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds/ (deficit) at the start of the year		8,823,271	1,029,722	542,462	430,000	10,825,455	(5,000,325)
Total funds at end of year		9,382,127	531,696	545,473	–	10,459,296	10,825,455

All results derive from continuing operations. The notes on pages 48 to 69 form part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2023

	Notes	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds – General €	Unrestricted Funds – Designated €	Unrestricted Funds – Pension €	2023 Total Funds €	2022 Total Funds €
Fixed Assets							
Tangible Fixed Assets	6	877,134	38,590	–	–	915,724	618,339
Investments	7	–	–	254	–	254	254
		877,134	38,590	254	–	915,978	618,593
Current Assets							
Debtors	8	1,103,568	147,250	–	–	1,250,818	965,506
Cash at Bank and in Hand		9,044,994	1,216,405	545,219	–	10,806,618	12,520,933
		10,148,562	1,363,655	545,219	–	12,057,436	13,486,439
Current liabilities							
Creditors (Amounts falling due within one year)	9	(1,643,569)	(870,549)	–	–	(2,514,118)	(3,709,577)
Net Assets excluding Pension Asset		9,382,127	531,696	545,473	–	10,459,296	10,395,455
Pension Asset	15	–	–	–	–	–	430,000
Net assets including Pension asset		9,382,127	531,696	545,473	–	10,459,296	10,825,455
The funds of the organisation	11	9,382,127	531,696	545,473	–	10,459,296	10,825,455

The notes on pages 48 to 69 form part of these financial statements.

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board on 24 April 2024 on its behalf by:



Odhran O'Mahony
DIRECTOR



Noel Kelly
DIRECTOR

Statement of Cash Flow

For the Year Ended 31 December 2023

	<i>Notes</i>	2023 €	2022 €
Cash (used in)/generated from Operating Activities	13	(1,125,534)	3,239,861
Cash flows from Investing Activities			
Interest received		3,011	–
Expenditure on tangible fixed assets		(591,792)	(653,116)
Net cash used in Investing Activities		(588,781)	(653,116)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents		(1,714,315)	2,586,745
Cash and cash at bank at beginning of period		12,520,933	9,934,188
Total cash and cash at bank at end of period	14	10,806,618	12,520,933

Notes to the Financial Activities

For the Year Ended 31 December 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Foróige is constituted under Irish Company law as a company limited by guarantee and is a registered charity. These Financial Statements have been prepared on a going concern basis and in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (FRS 102) and Company Law 2014. The Financial Statements have also been prepared in accordance with Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP) (FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities".

Basis of Accounts Preparation

The Financial Statements include all income, expenditure, assets and liabilities of Foróige, The National Youth Development organisation and of all projects directly managed and controlled by it. The Financial Statements cover the period for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Foróige meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Income

Income, primarily revenue-based grants, other than affiliation fees, are recognised in the financial year to which they relate. Income due, but not received, at the year-end is included in debtors on the Balance Sheet. Funds already received in respect of a specific performance by the organisation, are recognised when the organisation becomes entitled to the grant, this is classified as deferred income and is included in creditors in the Balance Sheet.

Income from affiliation fees is recognised in the financial year during which it is received.

Expenditure and Irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- ▶ Charitable activities
- ▶ Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred. During 2023, €4,366 (2022 – €3,923) was received under the VAT Compensation Scheme in respect of VAT expended in 2022. The VAT refund is recognised on receipt due to the uncertainty of amount to be refunded.

Allocation of Support Costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the organisation but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the organisation's programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The basis on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 19.

Donated Services and Facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the organisation has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the organisation of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time is not recognised and refer to note 4 for more information about their contribution.

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Interest Receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the organisation; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is calculated in order to write off the cost of fixed assets, on a straightline basis, over the period of their expected useful lives. The expected useful lives of fixed assets, by reference to which depreciation is calculated, are as follows:

Education equipment	5 years
Office equipment	5 years
Motor vehicles	5 years
Furniture and fittings	10 years
Buildings	10 years
Computer equipment and software	3 years

Financial Instruments

The organisation only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Cash at Bank and in Hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Funds

Restricted income arises when the funder has specified that the income may only be used for a particular purpose.

The balance of the restricted fund at the end of the year represents income held and not yet expended for the purpose specified by the funder.

Unrestricted income is available to the organisation to use for any of the organisation's purposes. The balance at the end of the year represents assets held for general use.

Unrestricted funds that are designated are held for Capital and Development purposes.

The organisation has also recognised the cost of the pension scheme as unrestricted funds to separately show its effect on the total funds of the organisation.

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

Creditors and Provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the organisation has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Leases

Operating lease costs are charged to the income and expenditure account as incurred.

Retirement Benefit Costs

During 2023 the organisation operated three contributory pension schemes, one of the defined benefit type, and two of the defined contribution type, for employees. The Defined benefit scheme went into wind up on April 30 2023.

Defined Benefit Scheme

The scheme is administered by trustees. At April 30 2023 the trustees of the scheme made a decision to wind up the scheme following communication from the organisation that the organisation would be ceasing contributions to the scheme.

The funds of the scheme are separate from those of the organisation. Contributions were paid to the scheme in accordance with the recommendations of independent actuaries to enable the trustees to meet from the scheme the benefits accruing in respect of current and future services.

Pension scheme assets are measured using bid value. Pension scheme liabilities are measured using a projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liability. The increase/(decrease) in the present value of liabilities of the organisation's defined benefit pension scheme expected to arise from employee service in the period is charged to expenditure. The expected return on the scheme's assets and the increase/(decrease) during the period in the present value of the scheme's liabilities arising from the passage of time are included in other income. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The pension scheme's surplus or deficit is recognised in full and presented on the face of the Balance Sheet.

Defined Contribution Scheme

Pension contributions in respect of the scheme for employees are charged to expenditure as they become payable in accordance with the rules of the scheme. The assets are held separately from those of the organisation in an independently administered fund. Differences between the amounts charged to expenditure and payments made to pension funds are treated as assets or liabilities.

Judgements and Key Sources of Estimation Uncertainty

The preparation of these financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions concerning the future that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenses. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results.

Judgements and estimates are continually evaluated and are based on historical experiences and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed below.

Retirement benefits

The organisation operates three pension schemes for its employees one of which is a defined benefit scheme, which went into wind up during 2023. The accounting policy in relation to the scheme is set out above. During the prior period the directors approved the underlying assumptions used in the calculation of the estimate of the liability for the scheme following input from their independent actuaries. The assumptions applied are set out in Note 15.

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

Donated services

The company received donated services in the form of volunteer time and occupies properties at below market lease rates. Accounting standards require that donated services should be recognised in the company Statement of Financial Activities at fair value. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102) the fair value of volunteer time is not included however, management have estimated the fair value of donated lease costs to be €120,000.

Establishing useful economic lives for depreciation purposes of buildings, equipment, and motor vehicles

Long lived assets, comprise a significant portion of total assets. The annual depreciation charge depends primarily on the estimated useful economic life of this type of asset and estimates of residual value. The directors regularly review these asset useful economic lives and change them as necessary to reflect current thinking on remaining lives in light of prospective economic utilisation and physical condition of the assets concerned. Changes in asset useful lives can have a significant impact on depreciation and amortisation charges for the period. Detail of the useful economic lives is included in the accounting policies.

Going concern

The net asset position of Foróige at 31 December 2023 was €10,459,296. Directors have reviewed the current reserve levels and forecast income and expenditure and note that Foróige continues as a going concern. The Board of this entity will continue to focus on the long-term sustainability of Foróige and the activities which it carries out. There is no material uncertainty concerning the ability of the organisation to continue as a going concern.

2. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

The net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging	2023 €	2022 €
Depreciation	294,407	211,503
Operating Lease payments	908,000	705,000
Auditor's remuneration – statutory audit	75,338	71,965
Directors' remuneration	–	–

3. WAGES AND SALARIES

The average number of persons employed (excluding casual employees) (full time equivalent 520 (2022 – 491))	2023	2022
Administration and Operations	547	510
Wages and salaries	22,361,840	19,838,069
Social welfare costs	2,470,237	2,191,112
Other retirement benefit costs	1,621,122	1,186,902
Redundancy costs	28,870	18,718
Retirement Benefit current service cost	65,000	1,149,000
	26,547,069	24,383,801

Statutory termination benefits were paid to 2 staff members in 2023 (2022 – 3) due to the posts becoming redundant.

The remuneration paid to the senior management team in respect of qualifying services for the year amounted to €914,489 (2022 – €1,095,015) including employers PRSI and pensions costs. Seán Campbell, Foróige CEO was paid €155,319 (2022 – €159,834) per year before the costs of employers PRSI. He receives a 10.3% (2022 – 8.5%) contribution to the pension schemes.

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

The Senior Management team who are also considered key management personnel is made up of:

Seán Campbell	Chief Executive Officer
John Cahill	Assistant Chief Executive Officer (retired 1 February 2023)
Claire Gavigan	Area Manager (North West) with SMT responsibilities
Karen Hannify	Director of Marketing, Communications and External Relations
Sarah Haslam	Director of Programmes and Research (on career break 2023)
Siobhan McCormack	Director of Finance
Rachael Murphy	Director of Support Services
Miriam Ryan	Director of Targeted Services and Safeguarding
Declan O'Leary	Area Manager (Cork) with SMT responsibilities

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fall within the following bands are:

	2023	2022
€60,000-€70,000	24	18
€70,000-€80,000	7	7
€80,000-€90,000	6	5
€90,000-€100,000	1	1
€100,000-€110,000	–	–
€110,000-€120,000	–	1
€120,000-€130,000	1	1
€130,000-€140,000	–	–
€140,000-€150,000	–	–
€150,000-€160,000	1	1

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

4. DONATED SERVICES

Volunteer Time

2023 was characterised by a return to normality for Foróige Volunteer involvement after the COVID-19 pandemic. There was growth both in terms of volunteer numbers and hours donated.

We had some 5,356 adult volunteers in 2023, contributing 300,200 hours to Foróige's youth development purpose. These figures count only the contribution of adult volunteers aged 18 and over.

Adults volunteer in Foróige in many different roles and settings, some of which are ongoing and some short term, including:

Governance Volunteers

These volunteers in addition to volunteering in clubs, projects and programmes contribute additional hours to attend meetings of District Councils, National Council, Sub-committees, Project advisory committees and Board Meetings.

We estimate that Governance volunteers contributed 8,300 hours during 2023.

Club Volunteers

435 Clubs were open during 2023 including 7 in the USA. Clubs tend to open for 2 hours once a week for eight months a year. In addition to attending to Club meetings Club Volunteers will also attend volunteer meetings and spend time with planning and administration. We estimate that club volunteers contributed 156,000 hours of their time during 2023.

Projects and Programmes Volunteers

These volunteers contribute in a number of settings including in local projects, as Big Brothers and Big Sisters in the Big Brother Big Sister programme, as mentors and judges in the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship programme and as Project and summer scheme volunteers. We estimate that volunteers within our projects and programmes contributed 111,400 hours in 2023.

Training and Events

Volunteers within Foróige attend and facilitate at a number of events throughout the year including local recognition events and achievement days, facilitation of local leadership, Trainer training, Reference Panel meetings, Regional Conferences, Officer training and volunteer training. We estimate that volunteers contributed 24,500 hours during 2023 to training and events.

In summary, we estimate volunteers contributed 300,200 hours during 2023. At the average industrial wage this would be valued at approximately €8,500,000 (2022 – €6,900,000). However, due to the nature of the estimates and in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102) this donated volunteer time has not been reflected in the Financial Statements.

Below Market Value Rent

A number of Foróige projects occupied premises at below market rent within the communities in which they operate. The valuation of the rent donated by these community resources is estimated at €120,000 and is reflected in both income and expenditure in 2023 (€110,000 in 2022).

5. TAXATION

The organisation is entitled to exemption from taxation under Sections 207 and 208 Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. The charity registration number is CHY 5359.

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment & Software €	Furniture & Fittings €	Office Equipment €	Motor Vehicles €	Education Equipment €	Buildings €	Total €
Cost:							
At 1 January 2023	222,212	758,104	308,691	827,516	185,263	562,187	2,863,973
Additions	15,200	19,677	7,369	444,130	105,416	–	591,792
Disposals	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
At 31 December 2023	237,412	777,781	316,060	1,271,646	290,679	562,187	3,455,765
Accumulated Depreciation:							
At 1 January 2023	(221,497)	(735,005)	(306,232)	(305,023)	(183,189)	(494,688)	(2,245,634)
Charge for period	(5,777)	(10,400)	(3,933)	(219,448)	(22,349)	(32,500)	(294,407)
Disposals	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
At 31 December 2023	(227,274)	(745,405)	(310,165)	(524,471)	(205,538)	(527,188)	(2,540,041)
Net Book Value							
At 31 December 2023	10,138	32,376	5,895	747,175	85,141	34,999	915,724
At 31 December 2022	715	23,099	2,459	522,493	2,074	67,499	618,339

7. INVESTMENTS

	2023 €	2022 €
Prize Bonds	254	254

The realisable value of the investments is not less than the above stated cost.

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

8. DEBTORS

	2023 €	2022 €
Debtors and accrued income	1,139,575	864,217
Prepayments	111,243	101,289
	1,250,818	965,506

9. CREDITORS: (AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR)

	2023 €	2022 €
Deferred income 9(a)	655,555	1,827,822
Tax and social insurance due	599,970	542,678
Trade creditors and accruals	1,258,593	1,339,077
	2,514,118	3,709,577

Trade Creditors

The carrying amounts of trade and other payables approximate to their fair values largely due to the short-term maturities and nature of these instruments. The repayment terms of trade creditors vary between on demand and 90 days. No interest is payable on trade creditors.

Taxes and Social Security Costs

Taxes and social security costs are subject to the terms of the relevant legislation. Interest accrues on late payment. No interest was due at the financial year end date.

9(a). DEFERRED INCOME

	2023 €	2022 €
Opening balance	1,827,822	1,160,809
Recognised during the year	(1,827,822)	(1,160,809)
	–	–
Deferred income during year – Funding received relating to subsequent year allocation	655,555	1,827,822
Closing balance	655,555	1,827,822

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

10. COMMITMENTS

Operating Leases

The organisation holds a number of leases for its properties around the country. There are 15 leases in operation (2022 – 11), the duration of which ranges from 1 to 10 years. The total minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2023 €	2022 €
Due within one year	287,455	232,694
Expiring between two and five years	593,057	636,933
Expiring between six and ten years	76,250	31,500
	956,762	901,127

11. FUNDS OF THE ORGANISATION

	2023 €	2022 €
Balance at beginning of year	10,825,455	(5,000,325)
Net income	274,841	674,780
Actuarial (loss)/gain	(641,000)	15,151,000
Balance at end of year	10,459,296	10,825,455

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

11. FUNDS OF THE ORGANISATION (2022 MOVEMENT)

	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds – General €	Unrestricted Funds – Designated €	Unrestricted Funds – Pension €	2022 Total Funds €
Income					
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>					
Department of Children and Youth Affairs – Youth Service Grant	3,313,478	–	–	–	3,313,478
Other income	31,044,726	364,749	–	–	31,409,475
	34,358,204	364,749	–	–	34,722,953
<i>Income from other trading activities</i>					
Other trading activities	11,943	18,201	–	–	30,144
Income from investments	–	–	–	–	–
	11,943	18,201	–	–	30,144
Total income	34,370,147	382,950	–	–	34,753,097
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	32,719,317	–	–	1,359,000	34,078,317
Total expenditure	32,719,317	–	–	1,359,000	34,078,317
Net income/(expenditure)	1,650,830	382,950	–	(1,359,000)	674,780
Transfers					
Transfers between funds					
Income transferred	(1,954,710)	1,954,710	–	–	–
Expenditure transferred	2,332,526	(2,332,526)	–	–	–
Net income/(expenditure) before other gains and Loss	2,028,646	5,134	–	(1,359,000)	674,780

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

11. FUNDS OF THE ORGANISATION (2022 MOVEMENT) *continued*

	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds – General €	Unrestricted Funds – Designated €	Unrestricted Funds – Pension €	2022 Total Funds €
Carried forward	2,028,646	5,134	–	(1,359,000)	674,780
Other gains and losses					
Actuarial gain on defined benefit scheme	–	–	–	15,151,000	15,151,000
Net movement in funds	2,028,646	5,134	–	13,792,000	15,825,780
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds/(deficit) at the start of the year	6,794,625	1,024,588	542,462	(13,362,000)	(5,000,325)
Total funds/(deficit) at end of year	8,823,271	1,029,722	542,462	430,000	10,825,455

12. BALANCE SHEET 2022 BY FUND

	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds – General €	Unrestricted Funds – Designated €	Unrestricted Funds – Pension €	2022 Total Funds €
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Fixed Assets	544,922	73,417	–	–	618,339
Investments	–	–	254	–	254
	544,922	73,417	254	–	618,593
Current Assets					
Debtors	853,282	112,224	–	–	965,506
Cash at Bank and in Hand	10,640,036	1,338,689	542,208	–	12,520,933
	11,493,318	1,450,913	542,208	–	13,486,439

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

12. BALANCE SHEET 2022 BY FUND *continued*

	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds – General €	Unrestricted Funds – Designated €	Unrestricted Funds – Pension €	2022 Total Funds €
Current liabilities					
Creditors (Amounts falling due within one year)	(3,214,969)	(494,608)	–	–	(3,709,577)
Net Assets excluding Pension Asset	8,823,271	1,029,722	542,462	–	10,395,455
Pension Asset	–	–	–	430,000	430,000
Net assets including Pension asset	8,823,271	1,029,722	542,462	430,000	10,825,455
The funds of the organisation	8,823,271	1,029,722	542,462	430,000	10,825,455

13. CASHFLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023 €	2022 €
Income	274,841	674,780
Adjusted for:		
Depreciation	294,407	211,503
Investment income	(3,011)	–
Movements in trade and other receivables	(285,312)	200,095
Movements in trade and other payables	(1,195,459)	794,483
Pension contributions – current service cost	65,000	1,149,000
Gain on Pension settlements	(266,000)	–
Net return on retirement benefits	(10,000)	210,000
Net Cash (used in)/generated from operating activities	(1,125,534)	3,239,861

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

14. ANALYSIS OF NET CASH

	2023 €	2022 €
Cash at bank and in hand	10,806,618	12,520,933

15. RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The organisation operated three contributory pension schemes during 2023 for employees. One scheme is of the defined benefit type which went into wind up during the year and two schemes are of the defined contribution type.

Defined Contribution Pension Scheme

The defined contribution pension costs charges in the Financial Statements represent the contribution payable by the organisation during the year.

The regular cost of providing retirement pensions and related benefits is charged to the Statement of Financial Activities over the employee's service lives on the basis of a constant percentage of earnings. A new scheme was opened to all staff on November 1st 2022 who were not eligible to join either of the two previous schemes and who met eligibility criteria at that time. From May 1st 2023 all existing staff who were members of Defined Benefit scheme and who met eligibility criteria were offered the option to join the Defined Contribution Scheme. The organisation's contributions to the defined contribution schemes amounted to €882,660 (2022 – €49,484).

Defined Benefit Pension Scheme

At April 30 2023 the trustees of the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme made a decision to wind up the scheme following communication from the organisation that the organisation would be ceasing contributions to the scheme. An additional €300,000 goodwill payment was made to the scheme by the organisation from unrestricted reserves.

The defined benefit pension scheme is administered by trustees. The funds of the scheme are separate from those of the organisation. Contributions are paid to the scheme in accordance with the recommendations of independent actuaries to enable the trustees to meet from the scheme the benefits accruing in respect of current and future services.

Payments made to the fund are charged annually in the Financial Statements. The fund is valued every three years by a professionally qualified independent actuary. The rates of contribution are reviewed by the actuary for the continued appropriateness in the intervening year.

The table below outlines the organisation's total cost relating to the defined benefit plan and are included in the Financial Statements as follows:

	2023 €'000	2022 €'000
Recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities	162	2,362
Remeasurements recognised in other comprehensive income and included in the cost of the asset	641	(15,151)
Total cost/(income) related to defined benefit pension plan	803	(12,789)

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

15. RETIREMENT BENEFITS *continued*

Financial Assumptions

The principal assumptions used, which are based on the advice of an independent actuary are set out below:

	April 30 2023	December 31 2022
Discount Rate	4.25%	4.25%
Pensionable salary inflation	2.75%	2.85%
Inflation/Revaluation	2.50%	2.60%
Promised Pension increases	2.50%	2.60%
Discretionary Pension Increases*	0.25%	0.25%

* For benefits earned after 1/11/2015 at the discretion of the Trustees.

At 31 December 2023, the scheme held no assets. The fair value of the invested assets held at 31 December 2023 was €Nil (2022 – €32,812,000). The breakdown of assets between the main asset sectors is given in the table below. As the scheme is in wind up there is no expected return on the plan assets (2022 – €591,000).

Plan Assets	% of Scheme Assets 2023	Market Value 2023 €'000	% of Scheme Assets 2022	Market Value 2022 €'000
The asset allocations at the period-end were as follows:				
Equity instruments	0%	–	49%	16,087
Debt securities	0%	–	16%	5,362
Property	0%	–	7%	2,192
Other	0%	–	28%	9,171
Total	0%	–	100%	32,812

The movement in the defined benefit liability over the period to when the scheme went into wind up is as follows:

	Present Value of Obligation €'000	Fair Value of Plan Assets €'000	Total €'000
At 1 January 2023	32,382	(32,812)	(430)
Current service cost	394	–	394
Gain on settlements	(266)	–	(266)
Interest expense/(income)	447	(457)	(10)
At 30 April 2023	32,957	(33,269)	(312)

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

15. RETIREMENT BENEFITS *continued*

	Present Value of Obligation €'000	Fair Value of Plan Assets €'000	Total €'000
Remeasurements:			
– Return on plan assets, excluding amounts included in interest expense/(income)	–	(481)	(481)
– Loss/(gain) from change in financial assumptions	(645)	–	(645)
– Experience (gains)/losses	1,767	–	1,767
	1,122	(481)	641
Exchange differences			
Contributions:			
– Employers (including additional €300,000 goodwill payment)	–	(373)	(373)
– Plan participants	163	(163)	–
Payment from plans:			
– Benefit payments	(1,566)	1,566	–
– Settlement payments	(32,590)	32,590	–
– Insurance premiums and Administration	(86)	130	44
At 30 April 2023	–	–	–

	Present Value of Obligation €'000	Fair Value of Plan Assets €'000	Total €'000
At 1 January 2022	48,731	(35,369)	13,362
Current service cost	1,960	–	1,960
Gain on settlements	–	–	–
Interest expense/(income)	801	(591)	210
	51,492	(35,960)	15,532
Remeasurements:			
– Return on plan assets, excluding amounts included in interest expense/(income)	–	3,993	3,993
– Loss from change in financial assumptions	(21,947)	–	(21,947)
– Experience (gains)/losses	2,803	–	2,803
	(19,144)	3,993	(15,151)

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

15. RETIREMENT BENEFITS *continued*

	Present Value of Obligation €'000	Fair Value of Plan Assets €'000	Total €'000
Exchange differences			
Contributions:			
– Employers	–	(1,003)	(1,003)
– Plan participants	493	(493)	–
Payment from plans:			
– Benefit payments	(373)	373	–
Insurance premiums and Administration	(86)	278	192
At 31 December 2022	32,382	(32,812)	(430)

There were no reimbursement rights.

The last formal actuarial funding valuation completed of the Defined Benefit Pension plan was carried out as at 1 November 2020. This valuation set the ongoing contribution rate for the plan and noted that the plan met the Minimum Funding Standard as at that date. The MFS test as at 31 October 2022 showed that the plan continued to meet the statutory MFS as at that date.

The organisation made an additional goodwill contribution from unrestricted funds toward the scheme in May 2023.

The scheme went into wind up on 30 April 2023.

16. INCOME FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, EQUALITY, DISABILITY, INTEGRATION AND YOUTH

The following income was received directly from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth:

	2023 €	2022 €
Youth Service Grant	3,446,017	3,313,478
National Participation Office and Hub na nÓg	1,027,553	988,202
Big Brother Big Sister Dormant Accounts Funding	1,051,481	870,256
Other grants and invoiced services	338,603	182,061
Climate Action	34,497	100,000
Online Safety	130,000	56,246
Integration Funding	51,573	50,000
Capital Grants	39,550	43,739
LGBTI Youth Strategy	–	43,625
	6,119,274	5,647,607

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

16. INCOME FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, EQUALITY, DISABILITY, INTEGRATION AND YOUTH *continued*

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth – Youth Services Grant is issued annually for a term of one year and is restricted to supporting the work of Foróige:

	Core €	Big Brother Big Sister €	Total €
Grant Income	3,053,860	392,157	3,446,017
Pay, Service Provision and General Administration	(3,053,860)	(392,157)	(3,446,017)
Surplus for year	–	–	–
Deficit forward from prior year	–	–	–
Deficit forward	–	–	–

17. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTION

Details of remuneration to key management is set out in note 3. There were no other transactions with related parties.

18. DIRECTORS' EXPENSES

During 2023, 14 Directors were reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of their responsibilities as Directors for a total of €6,129 (2022 – 14 Directors €5,251).

19. ALLOCATION OF SUPPORT COSTS

The central operation of the organisation charges an Operational Support Cost to each Youth Service, Project or Programme operated by the organisation as a contribution towards the cost of essential professional services provided to them. Through the provision of these in-house shared services, Foróige provides a cost effective means by which staff have access to resources, knowledge, procedures, supports, controls and facilities that would otherwise be out of their financial reach. The basis on which the charge is applied to each project is detailed below. The professional suite of support services provided to all Foróige operated Youth Services, Projects and Programmes through the Foróige Operation Support Charge are as follows.

Management Support: Each Youth Service, Project or Programme provided by Foróige is assigned to a Foróige Area Manager. This Manager offers staff a number of key supports which ensure that the objectives of each initiative are achieved effectively, efficiently and within budget. The range of direct management supports include:

- ▶ Project planning, evaluation and reporting – The responsibility for the oversight and implementation of planning, evaluation and reporting lies with the Foróige manager. It involves coordination and organisation of the completion of quarterly reports and annual reports and plans across the project staff and other relevant sections within the organisation including the Foróige Finance and HR Teams. The manager has overall responsibility for the sign off on plans and reports and ensuring that they are completed and returned in a timely manner. In recent years, in line with funders' requests, planning and reporting processes have become more robust and complex.
- ▶ Staff support and supervision – Formal supervision provides space for the youth workers to reflect on their practice, and to develop strategies in relation to improvements to future practice. Youth work by its nature is often characterised by engaging with young people facing difficult situations, responding to their needs and those of their families, the requirements of the funding body, relationships with partner organisations, colleagues and management, and the ever-increasing demands of administrative work, all of which is supported formally in regular and planned supervision. Outcome of supervision can entail the identification of specific trainings which require added follow up.

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

19. ALLOCATION OF SUPPORT COSTS *continued*

- ▶ Staff consultancy and problem solving – The complexity of the needs of the young people referred to the projects often requires management support. While formal supervision forms part of the Management support, informal, weekly support is imperative to guide and enable youth justice workers in their decision making.
- ▶ Child protection policy and procedure implementation – Identification and reporting of child welfare and child protection cases is common amongst the projects and services. Guidance, support and up to date and relevant child protection policies and procedures are essential to ensure the very sensitive element of the work is supported accurately.

Finance: A professional finance department which:

- ▶ Implements the financial control policies and procedures of the organisation, ensuring value for money and adherence to best practice
- ▶ Ensures compliance with FRS102 and Charities SORP, statutory obligations, DPER, internal policies and procedures, funders service level agreements, relevant company law and best practice
- ▶ Manages a full suite of finance functions including payroll, accounts payable and receivable functions
- ▶ Delivers on internal and external reporting requirements
- ▶ Manages budgets and cashflow on a project by project basis
- ▶ Facilitates strategic and operational financial planning

Governance and Compliance: Governance, risk management and compliance regarding the key priorities of the organisation is the responsibility of Senior Managers. Oversight of potential and actual risks and implementing effective policies and procedures to mitigate any challenges and threats. The priority components are:

- ▶ Overall Governance compliance in line with the Charities regulator
- ▶ Financial oversight and compliance of all statutory obligations as listed above
- ▶ Data Protection policy and systems that support projects in relation to data protection compliance and support, training and systems for data protection compliance
- ▶ Compliance with the Lobbying Act
- ▶ Health & Safety Compliance
- ▶ Child Safeguarding and protection
- ▶ Vetting of staff and any adult volunteers that become involved in the projects and services

Marketing and Communications: A full suite of marketing and communications services which include:

- ▶ Media relations and publicity support, including local, national and digital media
- ▶ A full communications and marketing consultancy service
- ▶ A media monitoring and evaluation service
- ▶ A social media monitoring and evaluation service
- ▶ Event management support
- ▶ Online communications support
- ▶ The provision of promotional literature and other promotional items

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

19. ALLOCATION OF SUPPORT COSTS *continued*

Human Resources: A comprehensive range of HR services which include:

- ▶ Provision of comprehensive HR advice to management and staff
- ▶ Recruitment and selection process
- ▶ On boarding of staff
- ▶ Disciplinary and grievance process
- ▶ Policies and procedure development and implementation
- ▶ Employee relations
- ▶ Legislative compliance
- ▶ HR administrative support

Information Technology: An in-house IT Department, which provides:

- ▶ Centralised IT purchasing processes ensuring value for money on IT purchases for all parts of the organisation
- ▶ Policies and solutions to ensure the organisation complies with data protection and security policies and guidelines
- ▶ IT support and training to staff
- ▶ Set up and ongoing support on all IT hardware and software
- ▶ Centralised security and encryption support

Training, Learning and Development: Foróige's Training, Learning and Development unit enables staff and volunteers to develop the competencies to carry out their job to the highest standard in order to best facilitate youth development and ensure that the objectives of each Youth Service, Project or Programme are being achieved. The operation support charge covers the cost of training programme development, the trainer and programme materials.

Courses include:

- ▶ Induction to Foróige
- ▶ Needs Assessment and Curriculum Design
- ▶ Planning and Evaluation
- ▶ Personal Effectiveness and Group Dynamics
- ▶ Child Safeguarding and Protection
- ▶ Organisational Procedures and Policies
- ▶ Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug Awareness
- ▶ Gender and Sexuality Awareness
- ▶ Skills to Succeed (Youth Employability)
- ▶ Manualised programme training – Leadership for Life, REAL U, Youth Citizenship, Putting the Pieces Together, Be Healthy Be Happy, Brief Intervention

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

19. ALLOCATION OF SUPPORT COSTS *continued*

Volunteer Development: Foróige provides support services to staff to enable them to proactively engage volunteers in roles relevant to the work of the particular project or service.

Services include:

- ▶ Staff and volunteer training
- ▶ Recruitment policy and procedures
- ▶ Garda vetting service
- ▶ Volunteer recognition and progression
- ▶ Development and dissemination of best practice guidelines on all aspects of volunteer involvement in the organisation
- ▶ Support in developing volunteer role descriptions.

Charge amount

The Operation Support charge is calculated based on the number of staff employed in each project. The rationale for this method is that the number of staff indicates the level of activity in the project. There are two rates applied on a per employee per project per month basis. A higher rate where there is no Foróige manager on site and a lower rate where there is a manager on site. 1/2 of the appropriate rate may be charged where an employee does not work full time hours.

The rate in 2023 was €450 (2022 – €426) per employee per project per month where there is no Foróige manager on site and €270 (2022 – €255) per employee per month where there is a Foróige Manager on site.

The total charged for 2023 was €2,156,403 (2022 – €1,954,710) and this is reflected as a transfer from restricted to unrestricted reserves in the Statement of Financial Activities.

20. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The analysis of the carrying amounts of the financial instruments of the organisation required under Section 11 of FRS 102 is as follows:

	2023 €	2022 €
Financial Assets that are debt instruments measured at transactional/settlement value		
Trade debtors and accrued income	1,139,575	864,217
Prepayments	111,243	101,289
Prize Bond investment	254	254
Cash at bank and in hand	10,806,618	12,520,933
	<u>12,057,690</u>	<u>13,846,693</u>
Financial liabilities at transactional/settlement value		
Deferred Income	655,555	1,827,822
Trade Creditors and accruals	1,258,593	1,339,077
	<u>1,914,148</u>	<u>3,166,899</u>

Notes to the Financial Activities

continued

21. MOVEMENT IN RESERVES

By Activity	Opening Reserves €	Income €	Expenditure & Net Transfers €	Closing Reserves €
Universal Services	2,331,384	7,425,670	(7,809,106)	1,947,948
Targeted Services	6,472,604	28,388,379	(28,211,159)	6,649,824
Education Programmes	1,049,005	1,677,139	(1,410,093)	1,316,051
Unrestricted Designated Funds	542,462	3,011	–	545,473
Defined Benefit Scheme	430,000	276,000	(706,000)	–
Total	10,825,455	37,770,199	38,136,358	10,459,296

By Funder	Opening Reserves €	Income €	Expenditure & Net Transfers €	Closing Reserves €
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth – Youth Service Grant	–	3,446,018	(3,446,018)	–
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth – Other Grants	306,852	2,673,257	(2,789,903)	190,206
Education and Training Boards	571,024	8,319,387	(8,581,108)	309,303
Department of Justice	2,688,500	11,342,993	(10,295,568)	3,735,925
TUSLA	1,137,797	5,941,094	(5,778,920)	1,299,971
The Health Service Executive	374,613	1,011,551	(1,008,731)	377,433
Department of Education and Skills	89,636	300,000	(389,636)	–
Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs	22,295	124,260	(146,555)	–
Pobal	–	118,784	(118,784)	–
Other Income	5,204,738	4,216,855	(4,875,135)	4,546,458
Pension Fund	430,000	276,000	(706,000)	–
Total	10,825,455	37,705,199	(38,136,358)	10,459,296

22. CONTINGENCIES

Foróige, in the normal course of its activities is subject to claims and legal matters. Due to the status and likely outcome of these matters, no provision has been recognised in the Financial Statements.

Schedules to the Financial Statements

RESTRICTED FUNDS	<i>Schedule</i>	2023	2022
Charitable Activities Expenditure		€	€
Salaries and Direct Costs	1	35,454,801	31,389,796
Administrative Support Costs	2	1,560,333	1,329,521
		37,015,134	32,719,317

SCHEDULE 1	2023	2022
Salaries and Direct Costs	€	€
Salaries and Pensions	26,081,271	23,234,801
Travel and Subsistence	1,259,683	911,716
Training and Programme Costs	5,113,036	4,343,285
Project Premises and Operating costs	3,000,811	2,899,994
	35,454,801	31,389,796

SCHEDULE 2	2023	2022
Administrative Support Costs	€	€
Support offices premises costs	199,291	244,728
Insurance	185,030	137,354
Support offices operational costs	158,627	126,613
Public relations and advertising costs	99,268	85,424
Professional fees	84,383	64,927
Bank interest and charges	19,154	18,394
Human resources and recruitment	126,371	108,994
Audit and accountancy fees	75,338	71,965
Voluntary committee expenses	20,644	24,228
Information technology	297,820	235,391
Depreciation	294,407	211,503
	1,560,333	1,329,521

Thank you to our generous funders and supporters who include

Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

Department of Education

Department of Health

Department of Justice

Department of Rural and Community Development

Department of Social Protection

Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

TUSLA, The Child and Family Agency

Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board

City of Dublin Education and Training Board

Cork Education and Training Board

Donegal Education and Training Board

Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board

Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board

Kerry Education and Training Board

Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board

Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board

Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board

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Adelaide Foundation

Accenture

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Cork City Council

Cork Local Sports Partnership CLG

Courts Service

Change X

Donegal County Council

Dormant Accounts Fund

Dundalk Institute of Technology

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

Fingal County Council

Galway City Partnership

Galway University Foundation

Healthy Ireland Fund

HSBC

International Fund for Ireland

JP Morgan Chase Foundation

Kilkenny County Council

Kilkenny Leader Partnership

Laois County Council

Leitrim County Council

Local Drug and Alcohol Task Forces

Longford County Council

Mayo County Council

Monaghan County Council

Northside Partnership

Pobal

Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Forces

Rethink Ireland

School Completion Programme and Management Committees

Stripe Technologies

Special EU Programmes Body

Sligo County Council

Smurfit Kappa

South Dublin County Council

Strengthening Families Programme

The Blackwood Trust

The Community Foundation

The EU Commission

The Health Service Executive

The Lakeside Fund

The National Lottery

The Sunflower Foundation

Tomar Trust

Toyota Ireland

Westmeath County Council

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