

Ulster Bank announces €87,500 of grants available via its Skills & Opportunities Fund

Monday 3rd September 2018: Ulster Bank has made available a total of €87,500 in funding to Irish not-for-profit organisations through its Skills & Opportunities Fund. Organisations have until midday on Friday 21st September to apply for grants and can do so via the Ulster Bank Skills & Opportunities Fund [website](#).

Applications will be welcomed from not-for-profit organisations – including charities, community groups, social enterprises and State-funded schools and colleges– which are based in the Republic of Ireland, and currently carrying out, or planning, a community project related to financial capability or enterprise.

Applications are followed by a shortlisting process, with the public then helping to decide the final winners via online voting.

Speaking about the Fund, **Damien Daly, Head of Customer Experience & Products at Ulster Bank** said “We’re very proud of all that the Skills & Opportunities Fund has achieved since it was set up in 2015. In these four years we have made over €500,000 in funding available to many deserving community organisations across Ireland, with over 9,000 individuals benefitting from the support.

“The objective of the Fund is to strengthen communities, and we know that the best way to do this is by helping people to help themselves. We have focused on funding projects that equip people with the skills to manage their money, find work, progress their careers and even to start their own businesses.”

Previous winners include An Cosán, which provides educational programmes to people of all ages in the Tallaght West community. A Skills & Opportunities Fund grant enabled them build on the success of their award winning Tech Army and to deliver an accredited financial administration & digital skills programme, focused on creating tangible employment opportunities for 20 adults in Tallaght West.

Speaking three months after the organisation was granted €35,000 from the Skills & Opportunities Fund, **Anne Genockey, Chief Operations Officer at An Cosán** said: “At An Cosán our mission is to empower people through education by providing members of our community with pathways to learning, leadership and enterprise. Ulster Bank’s Skills & Opportunities funding has been a huge support in allowing us to continue our vital work; in the past three months it has funded the development of an accredited programme in business administration and ICT social enterprise skills.”

Applications are open until midday on Friday 21st September 2018. A shortlist of projects will be put to a public online vote from Friday 26th October until Friday 9th November, with the winners being announced on Monday 10th December.

If you are part of, or know of a local not-for-profit organisation that could benefit from Skills & Opportunities funding, please visit the Ulster Bank Skills & Opportunities Fund website to find out more, including full eligibility criteria and how to apply: skillsandopportunitiesfund.ulsterbank.com.

ENDS

