



COMMUNITY LOAN FINANCE  
FOUNDED 1996

# GOOD NEWS

## FOR A CHANGE!

April 2021

### Clann Credo strengthens its community development credentials with the appointment of Mary Lawlor as Chief Executive Officer

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Mary Lawlor as the new Chief Executive Officer of Clann Credo.

Ms Lawlor has been Chief Executive Officer of Carlow County Development Partnership, the Local Development Company in Carlow, since 2009. Prior to that, she held the position of Chief Executive Officer with Carlow LEADER Rural Development Company Ltd. for seven years.

The appointment was announced by Clann Credo's Chairperson, Colin McCrea, who said *'I am delighted to announce this appointment. Mary is an established leader in the community and voluntary sector for over nineteen years and has a proven track record of delivering results for clients and stakeholders. Her appointment reflects our ambition to deepen our engagement with specific demographics and communities across Ireland, and our focus on strengthening our capabilities to generate high impact social dividends in new sectors. On behalf of the Board, I am delighted to welcome Mary to Clann Credo.'*



Since Clann Credo's establishment in 1996, we have provided almost €150 million to community organisations, charities, sports clubs and social enterprises. This represents an investment in more than 1,900 projects and services in the community and voluntary sector in Ireland.

Speaking about her appointment, Ms Lawlor said *'It is an honour to be appointed to the role of Chief Executive Officer. Given Clann Credo's deep pool of talent, growing client base and strong balance sheet, I am excited to lead the team and engage with stakeholders to deliver the company's strategic ambition, which includes investing in new sectors to generate high social dividends, particularly post COVID-19 as Ireland heads into an era of unprecedented change.'*

We look forward to continued success under the stewardship of our new Chief Executive Officer!

## Clann Credo Online Events:

### Remote Workers – New Opportunities for Communities

The latest online events in our series *Changing Landscapes* took place in April. Both focused on the opportunities arising for communities now that so many people have been working from home and new positions are being designed for remote working.

#### Remote Working and Communities – Volunteers

The first event explored the potential benefits to community groups if they access the skills of people working from home. Many people are working from home now, and a growing number of people are taking up positions designed specifically for remote working. Many of these workers have skills that are valuable to community projects, and many people working from home want to connect with their community. It can be a win, win situation!

The event featured presentations from:

- Martina O'Moore, Clann Credo - Community Loan Finance
- Rose Barrett, Grow Remote
- Henry Healy, Moneygall Development Association

Don't worry if you missed the event! The video recording and presentations can be found [HERE](#).



#### Remote Working and Communities – Facilities

The second event focused on adapting community facilities for people working at home. There are several reasons remote workers look for workspaces outside the home, for example:

- Lack of access to high-speed broadband
- Lack of suitable workspace at home
- Lack of social interaction throughout the working day

We heard about the surge in digital hubs and hot desking facilities that are being created throughout the country. Many of these are partnerships between community facilities and local development bodies, as discussed in presentations from:

- Tracey Hannon, Clann Credo - Community Loan Finance
- Sean O'Coisdealbha, Údarás na Gaeltachta
- Alma Gallagher, DigiSpace, Claremorris

The recording of the full event and each of the presentations can be found on our website [HERE](#).

## New public awareness campaign for non-profits

Clann Credo is proud to support the development of a ground-breaking new campaign to transform public perception of charities, community and voluntary groups, and social enterprises.

And we can't do it without you!



You are warmly invited to a special townhall briefing where you can help to shape plans and inform thinking for an upcoming national campaign — the first of its kind in Ireland.

*Simply click on your preferred date below and fill in the short RSVP form. Please note that all sessions are the same, so you don't need to attend more than one.*

- [29th April – 3pm – 4pm](#)
- [30th April – 10am - 11am](#)
- [5th May – 10am - 11am](#)
- [6th May – 6pm - 7pm](#)
- [7th May – 9am - 10am](#)

### About the campaign

Last year, a group of sector representatives came together to lay the foundations for a brand-new campaign, which would showcase the incredible value and impact of the charity and community sector to the public. The group included Boardmatch, Charities Institute Ireland, Disability Federation of Ireland, Dóchas, The Wheel, and Volunteer Ireland and we at Clann Credo are proud to be supporting and collaborating on this important campaign.

Since then, the campaign group is delighted to announce that they have secured funding from The Community Foundation for Ireland via its RTÉ does Comic Relief Fund to roll out this campaign nationwide.

This is a long-term campaign, which will be delivered in various phases over the coming years. Every step of the way, it will support and equip staff and volunteers to raise their voice and shine a light on the incredible contribution of our sector across the country. From taking part in social media campaigns, attending training, and advocating with policy makers – the campaign will be multifaceted and practical.

The campaign will conduct research into public opinion and sentiment towards the broad charity and community sector, and also consult at length within the sector itself. This will provide the material and insight to build a united campaign concept, messaging and brand informed by the lived experience of the sector on the ground while also addressing any information gaps or misconceptions the general public may hold.

The campaign will focus on elevating the story of the sector's work to increase public understanding of what we do and why it is so important. To support this, the campaign will develop tailored training for the sector to upskill staff and volunteers in the areas of effective communications and storytelling.

We hope you will join the townhall briefings to hear more about this ground-breaking campaign and to play your part in crafting it. Join one of the events listed above!

By shining a light on the life-changing work happening in every town, village, and city in Ireland, as well as internationally, we can help the public to recognise the incredible value that non-profits bring to their lives and the lives of others.

## European Social Innovation Competition – Open for Applications!

Applications for the 2021 European Social Innovation Competition are now open. The deadline for submissions is 12.00 CEST Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2021.

Three €50,000 prizes will be awarded for the best socially innovative projects designed to change our society for the better.

Each year the competition addresses a different issue facing Europe. This year's theme is: *Skills for tomorrow - Shaping a green and digital future.*

All applications must be submitted directly through the official website. All information on how to enter the competition can be found here: [European Social Innovation Competition | Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eic/competition/social-innovation/).



## Covid-19 Operational Update



To ensure maximum safety, Clann Credo continues to suspend all face-to-face meetings with customers.

Our regional Social Finance Executives continue working remotely and can be contacted via email or their mobile phones. Their contact details are [HERE](#).

Our friends at The Wheel have a lot of practical advice for community groups and organisations [HERE](#).

Please stay safe and protect others.

## Follow Clann Credo – Community Loan Finance on Social Media

For interesting news about the sector and information about grant aid opportunities, follow Clann Credo on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#).



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Clann Credo Company Limited by Guarantee is a self-financing, not-for-profit organisation serving the community, voluntary and charity sectors. All its capital comes from private sources; religious charities and the retail banking sector through the Social Finance Foundation. The interest paid on its socially directed investments covers its operational costs.

CRO No: 253147    CHY No: 13308    Registered Charity Number: 20041076  
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**Directors:** Gary Brennan, Jerry Butler, Jim Egan, Colin McCrea (Chair), Emer Ní Bhrádaigh, Sarah Nic Lochlainn, Grace Redmond, Jim Rourke (Vice Chair).

**Founding President:** Magdalen Fogarty