



AONTAS

Adult Learners' Festival

4th-8th March 2019

#EveryDayImLearning

International Women's Day Policy Event: The Impact of Community Education on the Lives of Women

Date: Friday March 8th

Time: 10am-1.30pm

Location: The Richmond Education and Events
Centre, 1 N. Brunswick Street, Dublin 7

Context and Focus

Aim

With a specific focus on the impact of community education on the lives of women, the event will highlight the purpose and value of community education for learners and wider society and highlight the need for long-term and sustainable funding to ensure its continuity.

About AONTAS

AONTAS is Ireland's national adult learning organisation for adult and community education providers and adult learners. It promotes the value and benefits of adult learning, and advocates on behalf of the sector. 2019 marks its 50 year anniversary. As part of the AONTAS Adult Learners' Festival, we are hosting our annual policy day.

Focus of the Day

To bring policy makers from across government departments and politicians together to listen first-hand to the wide ranging benefits of community education on women's lives and offer a space to listen to organisations' views regarding the challenges of funding. Policy makers and politicians will be invited to participate in the discussion sessions in a listening capacity, to hear the experiences from practitioners and learners across community education organisations. They will have the opportunity to respond at the end of the event with their reflections, if they so wish.

What We Hope to Achieve

We are using the National Women's Strategy as a framework to demonstrate how a whole of government approach is needed to fulfil the potential of community education. We are seeking to explore the potential of a National Community Education Strategy (to include work in N Ireland post-Brexit). TEDtalk style inputs will cover a range of outcomes from community education in line with the National Women's Strategy. AONTAS will have a concise discussion paper available one week in advance of the meeting covering community education and the current status of funding based on recent research.

Agenda

10 AM Registration and networking

10.30 AM Welcome and Introduction
Tara Farrell, AONTAS Chairperson

10.40 AM Learner Panel Discussion
The Impact of Community Education Women, their families and communities

11.15 AM The impact of Community Education on Women's Lives 'TED Talks' from Practitioner Experts:

- Eileen Chan-Hu, CRAIC NI, Belfast
Community education for integration
- Alice McDonnell, Transformative Recovery College, Westmeath
Community education for mental health and wellbeing
- Tara Farrell, Longford Women's Link
Community education for sustainable employment
- TBC, Roscommon Women's Network
Community education and environmental sustainability
- An Cosán, Tallaght
Community education and widening women's access to apprenticeships and higher education
- Community education and Traveller Women's experiences

11.40 AM Break

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- 11.50 AM** **Community Education – A National Context**
Niamh O’Reilly, CEO, AONTAS
- 12 PM** **The Complexity of Community Education Funding – a Regional Perspective**
Liam McCarthy, Social Health and Education Project (SHEP) Cork
- 12.15 AM** **Table discussion sessions with ‘TED talk’ speakers**
Short input from speakers regarding the sustainability of community education at discussion tables with participants
- 12.15 PM** **European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL): EU Perspective: How Community Education can support employment in Belgium**
Veronique Halbart, Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles
- 1 PM** **General response from policy makers and politicians**
- 1.20PM** **Supporting accredited community education provision: Launch of the QQI reengagement Resources**
Developed from a partnership between AONTAS and Women’s Community Projects (Mullingar)
- 1.30PM** **Lunch**

Speakers

Tara Farrell – Longford Women’s Link

Tara Farrell is Chair of AONTAS and Deputy CEO of Longford Women’s Link (LWL). Tara has over 17 years’ experience in the Community & Voluntary and Education sectors. LWL is a Community organisation and Social Enterprise based in Longford Town that provides education and training opportunities for women who have experienced difficulty accessing formal education. LWL supports the development of collective approaches to achieving equality, addressing disadvantage, working in solidarity and making relevant the connections between local and national development.

Eileen Chan-Hu – CRAICNI, Belfast

Eileen Chan-Hu is the CEO and Founder of CRAICNI and has worked in the voluntary/community sector for over twenty years. CRAICNI delivers services in facilitation, training, workshops, project management and events to promote good relations and inclusion and diversity involving over 1500 participants drawn from government, community, youth and private organisations across Northern Ireland.

Alice McDonnell – Transformative Recovery College, Westmeath

Alice McDonnell is the Coordinator of Transformative Recovery College, a not for profit community organisation established in 2013 in response to the growing needs in the community for mental health and wellness. TRC provides participants with mental health and wellness education, group therapy, one to one counselling, music and creative arts therapy and nutrition.

Roscommon Women’s Network (Speaker TBC)

Roscommon Women’s Network (RWN) is a local community project and charity that supports women and families throughout Roscommon. The organisation highlights and endeavours to address women’s issue through empowerment, education, overcoming isolation and being a catalyst for change.

Véronique Halbart

Véronique Halbart is Project Manager at Ministère de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (Ministry of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation) and is co-responsible for the European projects, National Coordination and EPALE linked to the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL) for French-speaking Belgium.

Liam McCarthy – The Social and Health Education Project (SHEP)

Liam McCarthy is a Senior Training and Development Officer with SHEP, a community-based training and development organisation based in the south west of Ireland. Its key areas of work include: a unique training programme based on experiential group work approaches; counselling; advocacy; providing specialist support to community based organisations and international partnership.

Niamh O'Reilly – AONTAS CEO

Niamh O'Reilly is the CEO of AONTAS, the national adult learning organisation. Founded in 1969, AONTAS promotes the value and benefits of adult learning, and advocates for the right of adults in Ireland to quality lifelong learning at government level. AONTAS is the National Coordinator for the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL) in Ireland.

Maureen Murtagh, Women's Community Projects (Mullingar)

Maureen Murtagh is the Training and Education Coordinator at Women's Community Projects, a centre which provides a range of integrated support services to families and in particular to women and children. It is now Mullingar's largest training and development centre and is also home to one of the biggest childcare facilities in the country. The centre aims to provide learning and training, childcare for parents and to promote equality and progression of all women.

An Cosán (Speaker TBC)

An Cosán's mission is to empower through education by providing people of all ages with pathways to learning, leadership and enterprise. An Cosán offers a variety of programmes in early years education and care, parenting, community, further and higher education. With the establishment of Virtual Community College (VCC), the organisation now provides educational opportunities beyond Jobstown to locations across the country through virtual learning and support.



Celebrating Fifty Years

AONTAS

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