

## **'Lifelong Learning for All' Seminar**

*Exploring the possibilities for a more equitable system of Lifelong Learning in Ireland*

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**Venue:** Buswells Hotel, 23-27 Molesworth St, Dublin 2

**Date:** Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018

**Time:** 10am - 1.30pm

**#LifelongLearningForAll**

### **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. Founded in 1969, it is an independent NGO, with 500 members nationwide.

AONTAS' work is aimed at:

- Widening participation in lifelong learning
- Ensuring community education supports quality learning opportunities for the most educationally disadvantaged
- Ensuring adult learners are central to local, regional, national, European and International adult learning policy
- Promoting quality adult learning

AONTAS is the national coordinating body for the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL), which is aimed at increasing participation in lifelong learning across the EU, enhancing policies and supports for adult learners, and gathering and disseminating best practices.

### **Lifelong Learning in Ireland**

In Ireland, the lifelong learning participation rate ranges from 6 – 7% – lagging behind the EU average of 10%. The lower the education attainment level, the less likely adults are to participate in lifelong learning. Adults who completed secondary education are 65% more likely to participate in adult learning activities compared to those without secondary level education (Global Education Monitoring Report Education for all 2000-2015: Achievements and challenges). In Ireland, life expectancy is linked to educational attainment. At aged 30, men with higher education can expect to live 6 years longer than men who didn't complete secondary school. For women the difference is 5 years.

In order to create a more equal society in Ireland we must look at widening participation in lifelong learning to include people who have been educationally disadvantaged.

2017 marks ten years of the **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)** which acts as a translation device to make national qualifications more readable across Europe, promoting workers' and learners' mobility between countries and facilitating their lifelong learning. With this in mind our seminar aims to explore ways that we can ensure a more equitable system of Lifelong Learning in Ireland, drawing on the perspectives from our EU counterparts, and in different contexts including at work and in the community.

## AGENDA

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- 10.00am**      **Registration**
- 10.30am**      **Welcome/Introduction**  
Liz Waters, President, AONTAS and Niamh O'Reilly, CEO, AONTAS
- 10.45am**      **Learner Panel Discussion – What Supports Greater Participation in Lifelong Learning**
- Lee Carroll, Adult Learner, Access 2,000 Wexford
  - Kathleen Dowd, Adult Learner, Longford Women's Link
  - Sharon Conlon, Adult Learner, Warrenmount CED and Maynooth University
- 11.15am**      **Widening Participation in Lifelong Learning for Workers**  
Stephen Evans, Chief Executive, Learning and Work Institute, UK
- 11.50am**      Coffee Break
- 12.00pm**      **The Role of NGO's and Civil Society in Supporting Lifelong Learning**  
Dr. Aideen Quilty, UCD Lecturer and Community Education Provider
- 12.25am**      **Discussion Sessions**
1. Lifelong Learning for All – Workers
  2. Lifelong Learning for All – Community education
  3. Lifelong Learning for All – Progression to higher education
  4. Lifelong Learning for All – Further Education and Training
  5. Lifelong Learning for All – EU perspectives
- 12.55pm**      **Closing Remarks and Recommendations**
- 1.10pm**        Lunch