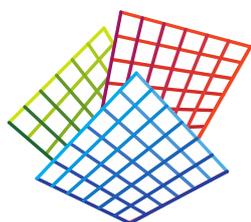


Under My Wing
Final Conference Report

September 2014



UNDER MY WING
SUPPORTING GRADUATE ENTREPRENEURS

Event Report

Final Conference Report

10th September 2014

Prepared by Meath Partnership

Secretariat

Project Title: Under My Wing – Supporting Graduate Entrepreneurship

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Introduction

The *Under My Wing* Final Conference took place on Wednesday, 10th September 2014 in the Trim Castle Hotel, Trim, Co. Meath, Ireland. The purpose of the final conference was to showcase the results of the Under My Wing Project and to introduce the Under My Wing approach to entrepreneurship education, developed over the 24 months of the project lifetime. The Final Conference also provided a forum for nascent and start-up entrepreneurs to network with established micro-enterprise owners, stakeholders, and international and national experts in the field of business creation and development. The event was also attended by representatives from national universities in Ireland, as well as national policy makers, providing an opportunity for project partners to discuss the exploitation potential of the Under My Wing curricular structure and approach with these stakeholders.

Meath Partnership is delighted to invite you to the

Under My Wing Conference *Supporting Entrepreneurship and Enterprise in Meath*

The conference will take place on Wednesday, 10th September at 9.30am in the Trim Castle Hotel, Trim and will be launched by

Minister Damien English, T.D.

Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Skills, Research and Innovation

The conference represents an exciting opportunity for business owners and new business start-ups to engage with a range of expert contributors bringing the practical realities of entrepreneurship to life through key insights, experiences and case studies.

The conference will be addressed by renowned keynote speakers such as

Prof. Damien McLoughlin, Associate Dean at UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School,
Ms. Orlaith Carmody of MediaTraining.ie,
Mr Stephen Kirwan of ActionCOACH to name but a few.

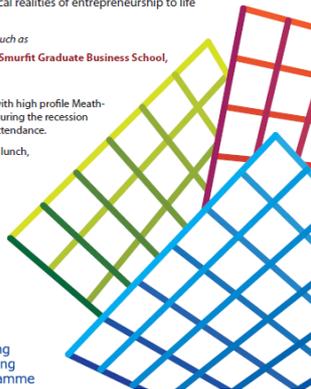
The conference will also host an interactive panel discussion with high profile Meath-based entrepreneurs many of whom have started a business during the recession willing to share their experience and offer advice to those in attendance.

The conference is free to attend and will include a networking lunch, however booking is essential as numbers are limited.

Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

To register your attendance please contact
Sarah or Tara in Meath Partnership at 046 9280790
or e-mail info@meathpartnership.ie
before Monday, 8th September, 2014.

www.undermywing.eu



The conference was attended by 97 participants representing all facets of the business community, including mentoring and support agencies, funding agencies, academic experts and facilitators of entrepreneurship education, policy makers, adult education professionals, graduate entrepreneurs, established micro-enterprise owners, political representatives from local government and representatives of local business networks. Representatives from the graduate studies departments of national universities in Ireland were also in attendance. Their attendance was

important to discuss the exploitation potential of Under My Wing, as these academic personnel have direct access to graduates from non-business related disciplines, and they provide career progression support and advice to these graduates. In total, the conference invitation was circulated to over 300 staff from these university departments, raising awareness for the benefit of the Under My Wing model to would-be entrepreneurs currently completing studies in university. The conference was also attended by 8 of the 12 graduates who completed the Under My Wing curriculum in Ireland, augmenting the value of the Under My Wing approach at a local level.

This report is a short synopsis of the proceedings of the Conference and sign-in sheets are attached at the end of the report. The working language of the conference was English.

Conference registration began at 9.30am and the **Conference Agenda** was as follows:



Wednesday, 10th September 2014
Trim Castle Hotel, Trim, County Meath

CONFERENCE AGENDA

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|---------|--|
| 9.30am | Registration |
| 10.00am | Welcome address by Mr. Michael Ludlow, CEO, Meath Partnership |
| 10.10am | Opening Address by Minister Damien English, T.D. – Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Skills, Research and Innovation |
| 10.30am | Supporting Graduate Entrepreneurship: the Under My Wing Experience by Ms. Jennifer Land, Project Manager |
| 10.50am | Partnership for Prosperity: a policy insight into the <i>Under My Wing</i> approach by Dipl.-Volksw. Ms. Lara Melissa Fortmann, University of Paderborn, Germany |
| 11.15am | Tea & Coffee Break |
| 11.30pm | Promoting and developing entrepreneurship at Third Level by Ms. Bridget Kerrigan, Project Manager, Campus Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Network |
| 12.00pm | Developing a winning mindset to succeed in business by Mr. Stephen Kirwan from ACTIONCoach Business Coaching |
| 12.45pm | Networking Lunch |
| 1.45pm | Starting or growing your business in a recession: keynote address by Ms. Orlaith Carmody of Mediatraining.ie followed by a panel discussion with Meath-based entrepreneurs. Meet the people behind Meath's newest business and find out how they made it happen! |
| 3.30pm | Marketing Inspiration: strategic insights from Prof. Damien McLoughlin, Associate Dean at UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School in Ireland |
| 4.30pm | Closing Remarks and Conference Close |



Conference Proceedings

The Final Conference was opened by Mr. Michael Ludlow, Chief Executive Officer of Meath Partnership, who welcomed everyone for attending and participating in the Conference, and thanked the speakers and business owners for their support in organising this event. Mr Ludlow explained that the Under My Wing Project brought together the world of education and world of enterprise in a way that heretofore had not been tested in Meath or in many communities across Europe. By working with graduates, many from non-enterprise backgrounds, we began to shape a programme of support that balanced the theory of enterprise or entrepreneurship with the realities on the ground. Mr. Ludlow concluded by stating that he was hopeful that the Under My Wing Project would contribute to the growing recognition of the value of entrepreneurial skills amongst graduates, nascent entrepreneurs and young people, both from a practical and policy perspective and then welcomed Minister Damien English, T.D. and invited him to address the delegates.



The opening address of the conference was delivered by Minister Damien English, T.D. – Minister of State at the Departments of Education and Skills & the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation with Special Responsibility for Skills, Research and Innovation.

In his presentation, the Minister highlighted the role of his department in bringing enterprise culture to many government departments and also spoke about the role of the education system. He highlighted the role of industry communicating their needs and working with the education system. He gave several examples of sectors working with educational institutions. The role of online learning was seen as a key part of how learning material will be delivered in the future.

The Under My Wing Experience: Project Presentation

As the Project Co-ordinator, Ms Jennifer Land presented the Under My Wing Project to the conference audience and began by sharing the aims and objectives of the project, setting out what the project consortium had hoped to achieve in September 2012, and how much these aspirations has been realised.

Charting the highs and lows of the project and sharing some of the lessons learned, Jennifer brought the delegates through the main outputs and products of the project and informed them that copies of all deliverables were available on the project website should they require additional information. Jennifer then provided a review of the flipped classroom model and the authentic learning approach taken by the Under My Wing consortium when designing the curriculum, and explained the innovation behind these new approaches to entrepreneurship education. The core elements of the project were highlighted in the presentation and Jennifer finished by thanking all the organisations, individuals and contributors at local level in the six implementing partner countries for their overwhelming input, insights, commitment and energy which greatly assisted in the delivery of the Under My Wing project.

Partnership for Prosperity: Presentation of the Policy Paper

Ms. Lara Melissa Fortmann from the University of Paderborn, Germany and project partner presented the policy paper developed within the framework of the Under My Wing project. Ms. Fortmann began by outlining that discussion regarding the importance of finding new approaches to entrepreneurship education in Europe, and the importance of fostering the growth in entrepreneurship to safeguard the economic future of Europe. Ms. Fortmann proposed that Under My Wing has created a new approach to entrepreneurship education, which is directly linked to the policy directives of the European Union. With specific mention to the Europe 2020 Strategy, the ERASMUS for Young Entrepreneurs Initiative and the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP) supported by the European Union, Ms. Fortmann's presentation centred on the ways in which the Under My Wing curriculum directly address the current EU policy on entrepreneurship education, and then provided an overview on how these policies can be better supported by the work of the Under My Wing consortium. A full copy of the policy paper is available for all to access through the project website.

Promoting and Developing Entrepreneurship at Third Level



Ms. Bridget Kerrigan from the Campus Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Network (CEEN) delivered her presentation on the ACE Initiative. This Initiative targets under-graduate students from non-business programmes, and provides entrepreneurship education to them, with the aim of producing entrepreneurial graduates. Ms. Kerrigan detailed how until now, graduates leave university without the core skills and competencies they need to progress directly into entrepreneurship. Ms. Kerrigan also highlighted how the skills and competencies associated with entrepreneurship can also better equip non-entrepreneurial graduates to be more successful in today's competitive labour market, because of the life skills, ability to work as part of a team and the self-confidence which students gain from entrepreneurship education.

This presentation was followed by a short talk by Jessica Moneley, a student enterprise intern from Dundalk Institute of Technology, one of four interns that are embedded in the schools of Business, Engineering, Informatics & Media and Health & Science. Jessica's role is to promote, develop and sustain an enterprising environment throughout the campus of DkIT by enabling students to discover and practice their enterprising skills in a safe, or low risk, environment and in a social setting. Jessica outlined the range of supports and activities that she and her fellow students have organised in order to support these activities.



Developing a winning mindset to succeed in business

Mr. Stephen Kirwan from ActionCOACH, concentrated his presentation on the necessity of budding entrepreneurs to maintain a positive mindset. He provided a short overview



of the supports which ActionCOACH provide to established and new entrepreneurs to help them to achieve this mindset and to succeed in business. As external observers of micro-enterprises, business mentors are able to provide impartial advice to entrepreneurs who often cannot see why their business may be struggling, because they are too involved in the enterprise. This presentation provided a useful insight for

graduate entrepreneurs into the types of supports available for them when they decide to launch their business venture.

Networking Lunch

To encourage and support the networking opportunities presented by this Final Conference, between these presentations, there was an hour-long networking lunch and meet and greet session arranged for all delegates. It was at this point that policy makers and academic representatives had the opportunity to interact directly with the business community, and was one of the biggest successes of the event, as graduate entrepreneurs had the opportunity to speak with experts in the field of business development as well as with successful entrepreneurs who have recently been through the process of establishing their own business in a challenging economic climate.

Starting or Growing your Business in a Recession



To kick-start the afternoon session, Ms. Orlaith Carmody of Mediatraining.ie centred her presentation on the importance of self-belief and motivation when starting your own business. Ms. Carmody explained that all too often would-be entrepreneurs expect that they will need an established market presence before they can talk the plunge into becoming fully self-employed.

However her message to start-up entrepreneurs was to concentrate on securing the first customer; and that once a business has a single customer it can officially consider itself to be a functioning micro-enterprise. This message was re-iterated by the panel discussion with local micro-enterprise owners, which Ms. Carmody chaired.



21st Century Marketing Inspiration



Prof. Damien McLoughlin's presentation focused on a case study example of a Greek yoghurt producer, who used innovative marketing techniques to grow his brand in the global market. As an Associate Dean at the Smurfit Business School at University College Dublin and Marketing Lecturer on their MBA programme, Professor McLoughlin shared some key strategic approaches to marketing innovation with a dynamic and interactive presentation.



Conference Close

The Conference was closed by Ms. Jennifer Land who added some concluding remarks and thanked everyone for the participation and presence at the Conference.

Copies of available presentations are provided with this report, along with the delegate sign-in sheets.



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