



Kildare

Local Enterprise Development Plan 2021 - 2024

“Building back better - great challenges but also great opportunities”



This **Local Enterprise Development Plan** has been prepared by the **Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Kildare**, Kildare County Council, in the context of the requirements and request of the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, their Department. It has also been prepared in the context of the adopted **Local Community and Economic Development Plan for County Kildare**.

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Foreword

This Local Enterprise Development Plan has been prepared by the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) Kildare, Kildare County Council, in the context of the requirements and request of the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, their Department. It has also been prepared in the context of the adopted Local Community and Economic Development Plan for County Kildare – which encompasses the broader countywide economic, social and cultural issues, opportunities and development actions which will affect the community and business environment within which the LEO will operate and within which its client base i.e. small and micro local businesses, will operate.

While our LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE Kildare DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021- 2024 encompasses objectives and actions that will facilitate this growth and economic activity in our Micro-Enterprise sector, it will work in tandem with “Kildare 2025: Kildare County Council Economic Strategy”, which in turn feeds into the review of the County Development Plan. Importantly, we are aligned with Government economic strategic documents such as Project Ireland 2040, Future Jobs Ireland , Enterprise 2 025, and the Report of the SME Taskforce: National SME and Entrepreneurship Growth Plan and the “Our Rural Future” strategic plan.

We take influence from the forthcoming National Economic Plan and reflect its roadmap for a **resilient, sustainable economy** with three key themes: -

- 01 — Building Resilience across Enterprise & Sectors
- 02 — An Inclusive & Balanced Recovery
- 03 — Future-Proofing our Economy & Society

The Plan sets out the strategic objectives for the LEO Kildare 2021-2024 building on the strategy embarked on by LEO Kildare since 2017 and sets out clear actions, activities and outputs for 2024. These are all set within the context of the vision statement and mission of the Local Enterprise Office which it believes to be challenging yet achievable. The Plan also outlines some of the challenges and opportunities which the LEO believes currently face the business community within the county and thus the county as a whole. As more than 92% of the businesses in the county are micro businesses it is incumbent on all the enterprise development agencies to keep in mind the critical role that these businesses play at local level in providing employment and in sustaining local communities. With the decision of the UK government to leave the EU & the Covid-19 Global pandemic the full impact and challenges arising from these are likely to be known and active during the lifetime of this plan.

The Local Enterprise Office Kildare acknowledges that while it is the designated primary agency for promoting and supporting entrepreneurship and the small and micro business sector at local level that it cannot fulfil this role without the co-operation and support of the other enterprise agencies, both local and national, and with the integrated support of the other sections within Kildare County Council. The Local Enterprise Office will work with these organisations to maximise the potential of the small and micro business sector in the county and will over the period of the plan seek to increase the number of local businesses seeking to increase their management capability and strengthen their sustainability and enter export markets.



Peter Carey
Chief Executive

Peter Carey



Jacqui Mc Nabb
Head of Enterprise

Jacqui Mc Nabb



“Building back better - great challenges but also great opportunities”

Executive Summary

This Local Enterprise Development Plan for the Local Enterprise Office Kildare (LEO Kildare) sets out the vision, strategic and operational objectives and actions proposed by the Local Enterprise Office in Kildare County Council and in particular details the actions and activities to be delivered on for 2024. It is anticipated that that these will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Local Enterprise Office Kildare has successfully established itself as the focal point for enterprise development in County Kildare and is central to nurturing an enterprise culture locally. We strive to foster and stimulate an environment that supports entrepreneurs as they try to establish sustainable and outward-looking businesses that are capable and ambitious for growth. While the post-Covid-19 recovery holds many challenges for our economy, Local Enterprise Office Kildare (LEDP) 2021 -2024 is our opportunity to set out a four-year vision that will address the challenges of the post Covid-19 recovery while seizing the many opportunities for future growth and strengthening of our economic development in a sustainable, future-proofed and responsible way.

The key areas for enterprise opportunity are identified in the Plan and the LEO will work with the other enterprise agencies in seeking to drive enterprise creation in these sectors as well as supporting new and existing business that can create employment throughout the county. In this regard the Plan places significant emphasis on the need for higher levels of efficiency, innovation, internationalisation and exporting but also recognises that for most small and micro enterprises there is a significant development curve to be achieved before some of these capabilities and objectives can be reached. The Plan sets out the LEO's vision and mission and the strategic and operational objectives which it hopes to achieve during the life of the plan. It also identifies Key Upgrade Goals– goals that require either a new approach or collective engagement. These goals and the operational objectives for 2024 have clearly defined timescales, outcomes and outputs and will be the core areas of delivery of the LEO on an annual basis.

The Service Level Agreement between Enterprise Ireland and the Local Authority sets out clearly the key role envisioned by Government for the Local Enterprise Office as part of the Local Authority and aligned with policies and actions of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Enterprise Ireland. The Service Level Agreement also identifies the potential role which the LEO can play in the overall economic development of the county and the integration of enterprise development within the broader local authority system. Through the synergies which this model can facilitate the Local Enterprise Office Kildare will have an increasingly important role in the direction and delivery of economic development, as well as enterprise promotion, support and development in the county.

We have been careful to craft a practical and pragmatic action plan that is grounded in our comprehensive understanding of the social, economic, and environmental factors in Kildare. Through the implementation of our Local Enterprise Development Plan 2021- 2024, our ambition is to enhance and build on Kildare's competitive advantage and successes, reinforcing our spearheads of the Knowledge Economy, Cleantech, Equine Innovation, Food /Agtech and Manufacturing sectors to support new startups and growing businesses in these areas. We do this in the context of building on the success of companies such as Kerry Group, O'Brien Fine Foods, Intel, Hp, Quigley Group, The Curragh & National Stud, to name but a few.

Working with Bord Na Mona and our academic partners, we want to seize new start-up opportunities in green and sustainability business models and harness new opportunities for sub-suppliers to the many logistics and distribution headquarters based in County Kildare including Aldi, Penneys and Lidl. Our Local Enterprise Office Kildare will contribute to rebuilding the local economy by developing Smart Towns & Smart Citizens model through this plan. We will also capitalise on the advantage of the tourism opportunity that is our Gateway, Waterway & Peatways to transform Kildare into a smart, sustainable and well-being destination.

Over the past four years, Kildare County Council increased investment in entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems to drive economic growth, including a county-wide Innovation Hub Strategy. Kildare County Councils Local Enterprise Office Kildare was an early adopter of Business Incubation both virtual and physical and as an economic development tool and launched a dynamic incubation support programme with the support of Kildare County Council, Enterprise Ireland and Maynooth University.

Looking ahead to 2021-2025, Kildare County Council and Local Enterprise Office Kildare will strengthen our entrepreneurial ecosystem of entrepreneurs, innovators, educators, academic, community champions, and public body stakeholders policymakers, collaborating in the context of recovery and advancing economic prosperity.

We will achieve this by **strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem** in County Kildare and the wider mid-east region across nine key areas:-

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 01 ● Regulatory Framework & Infrastructure | 05 ● Universities as Catalysts |
| 02 ● Funding & Finance | 06 ● Education & Training |
| 03 ● Culture | 07 ● Human Capital & Workforce |
| 04 ● Mentors, Advisors & Support Systems | 08 ● Local & Global Markets |
| | 09 ● Government Policy |

Through interdependence between entrepreneurship, innovation and business activities, it allows start-up support providers, such as Local Enterprise Offices, Enterprise Ireland, Maynooth University, Carlow IT, Leader Partnership, Kildare County Council, Government and the private sector to turn innovation excellence into business and growth.

In conclusion, The Strategic Priorities of the Local Enterprise Development Plan Kildare over the next 4 years are focused on a smart recovery based on entrepreneurship and investment, sustainability and exploiting new opportunities to deliver on more start-ups establishing in County Kildare, more micro enterprises growing globally, established businesses becoming more resilient, agile and leaner to ensure their sustainability and over all greater local job creation.



How do we learn during this crisis and use that to pivot our business to emerge in a stronger position

1.1 OVERVIEW / 4-YEAR OUTLOOK FOR ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT IN THE LEO KILDARE AREA

With continuing rapid growth, Kildare is the fifth-highest populated County in Ireland (current population of 222,504 according to the 2016 census). Our strategic location in the Mid-East Region is a significant advantage. The County's proximity to Dublin presents opportunities from an economic, social and environmental perspective but, equally, many challenges. Our economy's growth is highly dependent on entrepreneurs and the SMEs that they create, develop, and grow. The vision of the Kildare Local Enterprise Development Plan is that by 2024, the County and its hinterland will be among the leading entrepreneurial regions in Europe; characterised by a highly conducive environment for entrepreneurship and innovative start-ups.

Kildare has a diverse SME sector which has very significant growth potential but faces unprecedented challenges. SMEs need to be supported as they move their focus from protecting the business to recovery and growth and asking: "how do we learn during this crisis and use that to pivot our business to emerge in a stronger position".

SME and Micro-Enterprise sector

The SME and the micro-enterprise sector represents approximately 92% of all active business in Kildare. Evidence from the 2008-2009 recession highlights that small business creation was the key driver in the recovery of the economy: creating the majority of new jobs. As revenues have fallen for a large proportion of small and medium-sized enterprises since the onset of the Covid-19 crisis, exploiting new opportunities & global reach (notably in the green, equine, food and knowledge economies) will be a key focus of our Local Enterprise Development Plan.

Future of work

40% of Kildare's workforce commute to work outside the County. We are living in an era of a fundamental transformation in the way we work. Exploiting new opportunities for the future work blend of HUB- HOME- HQ will be a key focus of our Local Enterprise Development Plan Kildare. For countless businesses, remote working practices will be part of their new norm, and smart co-working hubs need to be positioned throughout Kildare to provide structured, well connected, professional working environments.

The flagship Mid East Regional Innovation Think Space (MERITS) building which will open in 2021 will be pivotal to the provision of international standard workspaces. Success in bundling space and talent mapping is cited by the IDA as vital for success. . Our Local Enterprise Development Plan will ensure that Kildare's emerging co-working hubs and enterprise centres need will connect space with skills and talent. The timely publication of "Making Remote Work, the National Remote Work Strategy¹" will guide us. The objective of this national strategy is to ensure that remote working is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace in a way that maximises economic, social and environmental benefits.

Knowledge Economy

With the Mid-East Regional Innovation Think Space (MERITS) opening in 2021, Kildare will benefit from a cluster of Irish and international new-technology companies. MERITS will give much-needed infrastructure, mentorship and support to attract high technology investment and industries. The project was approved Enterprise Ireland REDF funding of €1.9m and in 2019 was shortlisted for a National Award - Economic Development Award in the Excellence in Local Government Awards 2019 and LEO Kildare hosted the first Mid East Regional Innovation Conference.

Likewise, the development of the new Irish Equine Health and Welfare Campus with world-leading facilities and expertise for research and diagnostics and Equine Tech Innovation Ireland's development as Ireland's first equine technology accelerator are transformational investments in Kildare's knowledge economy MaynoothWorks (MW)'s success is the inspiration to add critical mass to the nascent technology start-up culture started by MaynoothWorks in wider County and region. The Local Enterprise Development Plan Kildare seeks to further intensify our growth in knowledge-intensive service sectors. There is growth in demand for both qualifications and tacit knowledge, with scope for rewarding and high-paid work – quite possibly in self-employment.

Unique economic development opportunities - Equine Innovation and Entrepreneurship -

Kildare is synonymous with the equine industry and is often referred to as the "Thoroughbred County". A recent report by Deloitte Consultants indicated that the industry is worth €1.8 billion nationally. At the heart of the equine industry, there are many opportunities for Kildare to develop and exploit.

¹ Making-Remote-Work.pdf (enterprise.gov.ie)

Focus on Climate Change

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. Kildare is the second most affected County in terms of job loss impact as a result of the ending of peat harvesting for power generation in the Midlands region. It is also disadvantaged by a shortage of suitable sites to establish new green Enterprises that could replace the labour-intensive work of peat extraction. Kildare County Council and Kildare Local Enterprise Office are clear that start-ups and small firms' ability to find suitable premises is a key constraint on the development of the green technologies sector in Kildare. The shortage has implications for economic growth locally and regionally (as many occupiers are as likely to consider other national options). Availability of sites for new start-ups and small businesses in the region is low.

Tourism

Pre Covid-19, our tourism and hospitality sectors were experiencing an upsurge, due in part to county Kildare's growing reputation as a hospitality and food destination. The emergence of the Athy Food, Drink & Skills Innovation Hub (subject to funding) will be a transformational catalyst for sectoral regeneration. It will revitalise an underutilised building into a powerhouse of food sector learning, innovation and production and will create a legacy impact. By collaborating with best-in-class industry, academic and training partners in the country, Athy Food, Drink & Skills Innovation Hub will be a strategic economic driver for job creation and innovation. Its timing is so important – the decimation of the hospitality industry, the acceleration of innovation by food companies to meet increased food demands, and the early indicators suggesting that the Covid-19 pandemic will result in more food start-ups, with an increasing number of skilled foodservice professionals losing their jobs and seeking new ways to earn a living.

Agri-Food Sector

The importance of the food and beverage sector in Kildare is evident. With a strong agri-food base, LEO Kildare is about to publish our Kildare Food, Beverage and Hospitality Strategy 2021-2023. This sets out the ambition to harness the strengths of the food landscape in the County and the actions needed to facilitate the growth of the sector in the throes of a Brexit and pandemic environment. The Kildare food landscape is diverse, typified by several very large food manufacturers, a modest number of small to medium producers and a strong cohort of farmers/growers. However, it is recognised that the County is at an earlier stage of evolving its food landscape, has a limited number of small to medium producers and is at an early stage of collaboration between the food stakeholder groups. Many food activities are yet to be “joined-up” under one banner, resulting in County Kildare not yet naturally seen as a destination food county. Through this plan, we will change that.

The opportunity for AgTech in Kildare was accelerated in January 2020 as NOVA UCD were awarded €3 million from REDF for a collaborative project to develop an AgTech Connector Innovation Hub at the UCD Lyons Farm in Kildare. LEO Kildare is a key stakeholder. The goal of the AgTech Connector Innovation Hub is to bring together the AgTech ecosystem in Ireland to accelerate the launch and scaling of AgTech companies. This will provide them with access to on-farm research collaboration opportunities, a location to test and trial their products and services in a real-world environment, along with access to dedicated acceleration programmes and incubation facilities. Through this plan, we will focus on this sector in building its capacity.





“We take influence from key national, regional and local policies, initiatives and objectives”.

The Report of the SME Taskforce: National SME and Entrepreneurship Growth Plan highlights the importance of entrepreneurship to Irish society, not only in economic and employment terms but also in creating a resilient, innovative community that serves the Irish consumer, EU and international markets. It stresses that in the context of a fast-moving external environment, entrepreneurship is very likely to increase in importance as local champions become more important contributors to developing a resilient society.

The Local Enterprise Development Plan Kildare 2021 -2024 also takes influence from the 2019 Global Business Monitor surveyed SMEs from 13 countries and found Irish SMEs were struggling with rising costs and cashflow difficulties². When Covid 19 struck in March 2020, its impact was immediate and stark. The pandemic has had a pervasive, penetrating, devastating and immediate effect on national economies. The ESRI contend



“The Covid-19 pandemic has been an unprecedented economic shock for Irish SMEs as one in every two small firms suffered a loss during the lockdown phase”

At the same time, Irish SMEs remain most exposed to Brexit’s twists and turns. Brexit will make it more difficult for start-ups to start exporting to what has always been our training ground and testbed for new ventures.

As highlighted, Irish SMEs face unique challenges to their operating environment posed by Covid-19. A dramatic and sudden loss of demand and revenue has affected their ability to function and caused severe liquidity shortages. Measures to contain the disease have also disrupted the availability of staff and supply chains. These various impacts are affecting both larger and smaller firms. However, the effect on SMEs is especially severe; mainly because of higher levels of vulnerability and lower resilience related to their size.

² <https://www.gemconsortium.org/economy-profiles/ireland-2>

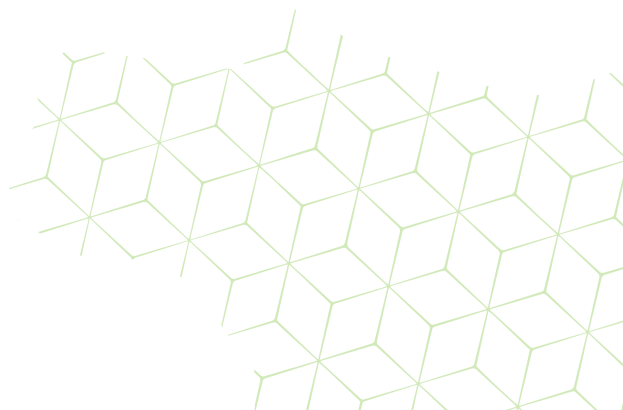
While this Local Enterprise Development Plan Kildare places a strong focus on supporting existing SMEs with their resilience and growth plans, it will also strive to create an environment that promotes new and indigenous entrepreneurial SMEs. The Overarching Vision for Entrepreneurship as set out in the Report of the SME Taskforce: National SME and Entrepreneurship Growth Plan gives insight into our ambition:



“Overall, the objective for entrepreneurship is that Ireland will be characterised by a strong entrepreneurial culture, recognised for the innovative quality of its entrepreneurs, and acknowledged by entrepreneurs as a world-class environment in which to start and grow a business. The challenge is to harness to the full the entrepreneurial potential of all those living in Ireland, whether they are establishing a social or commercial Enterprise”.



Terra Liquid Minerals was established by Athy brothers Tom and Pdraig Hennessy. They have developed an intelligent mineral dosing system and specialise in the accurate delivery of its custom-made formulation to livestock. In 2018 the business was named Overall Winner of the National Enterprise Awards.



Impact of Brexit and the Covid crisis on businesses, LEO clients, and the local economy of the LEO Kildare

Brexit is a once in a generation challenge for SMEs with the widespread concurrence that Irish SMEs need to make significant productivity gains to survive the fallout from Brexit. Kildare is a proven investment location with the second highest FDI rate nationally, it is ideally placed to appeal to international organisations seeking an English-speaking EU base. Relocations from the UK and Northern Ireland are a compelling opportunity. According to the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply UK, nearly one in seven EU companies with UK suppliers has moved part or all of their operations out of Britain. As the opportunities and challenges of Brexit begin to crystallise, Ireland has become the location of choice for companies looking to relocate their European hubs from the UK. Ireland's close ties to, and shared language with, the UK, as well as its comparable legal system and culture, give us a significant edge when it comes to attracting UK based multinationals. Across the UK, companies are carefully considering how to restructure their operations to cope with Brexit disruption. Sectors for which common regulation across the EU is vital are now looking to Ireland as their new base in the EU. Kildare needs to be ready to capitalise on this opportunity.

The global Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) has significantly impacted Kildare, our business ecosystem, and the people at the heart of our communities. It has highlighted vulnerabilities in our SMEs regarding lack of resources, limited technical capacity and capability and supply chain vulnerabilities. It has also highlighted that SMEs are famously agile and quick to adapt. It is accepted that recession usually brings about an acceleration in business model change. On the other hand, pandemics enable entirely new categories of businesses and disruption, especially science and technology. Both pandemics and recessions are accelerants to innovation and across our priority sectors, Kildare 2025 will nurture and facilitate recovery and innovative growth.

The Covid-19 pandemic may have the unintended effect of pushing us forward with the future of work. Remote working has the potential to create an array of economic and environmental opportunities in Kildare. More than one in four private-sector workers in Ireland can work remotely, and the development of co-working hubs with high-speed broadband has the potential to open up several economic and environmental opportunities and stimulate inclusive recovery in Kildare. Influence has been taken from the "Regional Co-Working Analysis"³ published by the three Regional Assemblies of Ireland and also the publication of "Making Remote Work – National Remote Work Strategy" which seeks to facilitate increased remote work adoption in a way that reaps the many benefits and mitigates negative side-effects of remote working through removing barriers, developing infrastructure, providing guidance, raising awareness and leading by example.

Local Enterprise Office

Are you a Kildare business?

Covid-19 Finance & Government Supports for Kildare Businesses

FREE WEBINAR

Thursday 27th August from 2pm – 4pm
Register at LocalEnterprise.ie/Kildare

With thanks to:

European Union, Enterprise Ireland, Cork County Council, Kildare County Council, Midway Ireland, Kildare Chamber, and others.

³ Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly More than 1 in 4 private sector workers are capable of operating remotely, analysis from the 3 Regional Assemblies of Ireland shows - Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly (emra.ie)

SWOT ANALYSIS: ECONOMIC DIMENSION

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Varied industrial and economic Enterprise base. ✓ Strong, established Foreign Direct Investment base for employment. ✓ Solid corporate base, e.g. Kerry Foods, Intel, Hewlett Packard, Pfizer, Green Isle. ✓ Growing Retail sector - Whitewater and Kildare Village. ✓ Overall education base. ✓ Good base of micro and SMEs. ✓ Established Tech, agricultural, horticultural and equestrian/bloodstock sectors nationally. ✓ Maynooth University - the fastest-growing University in Ireland /well-educated population. ✓ Location of Kildare within the Greater Dublin Area, with close proximity to Dublin. ✓ Major transportation corridors. Motorway and rail infrastructure of national importance in place. ✓ Youngest County in Ireland. ✓ Rapidly growing population. ✓ High labour force participation rate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Infrastructure unable to respond to rapidly increasing population/demand. ✗ Substantial gaps in services. ✗ Lack of business cluster networks/activities. ✗ No food incubation units. ✗ High proportion of workers commuting outside of the County for work, education and training. ✗ Skills shortages relative to employment opportunities. ✗ Increase in unemployment amongst more disadvantaged groups. ✗ Limited training opportunities and facilities. ✗ Restructuring challenges in agriculture. ✗ Relatively high regional dependence on construction-based employment. ✗ Lack of public transport options to service areas within the County. Poor transport linkages/cross connections. ✗ Poor public transport in rural areas. ✗ Under performing tourism sector. ✗ Capacity to meet the Ireland Ancient East brand promise.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Young, educated population base of the County. ✓ A strong agri-food industry. ✓ Good potential for agtech, equine tech, green tech, knowledge economy ✓ Economic recovery. ✓ Employment options growing – Kerry Foods and multiplier effect. ✓ Expanding educational opportunities, Maynooth University and Kildare Wicklow ETB. ✓ Rapidly growing population - potential for project promoters and innovative projects. ✓ Potential for diverse tourism offerings. ✓ Potential of the natural environment and leisure amenities ✓ Fáilte Ireland's Ancient East marketing initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Capacity to serve the needs of the significant and growing young population. ✗ Economic and social imbalances within the County. ✗ Growth has not been matched by essential services. ✗ Infrastructure constraints and increasing pressure on existing infrastructure. ✗ Lack of Next Generation Access fibre broadband across all areas of the County. ✗ Inability to match employer skill requirements with the skills available in the County. ✗ The decline of rural towns and villages in Kildare. ✗ The development of large scale 'out-of-town' retail developments. ✗ The country's major motorways which pass through the county/facilitate non-stop over traffic.

LOCAL AUTHORITY BUSINESS SUPPORTS

Kildare County Council takes a pro-active role in supporting the development of businesses within the county. As well as playing a key role in providing the necessary infrastructure that enables business and economic activity to happen in the county, Kildare County Council has a number of specific areas of engagement with and support to the businesses in the county:

- Kildare County Council increased investment in entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems to drive economic growth, including a county-wide Innovation Hub Strategy to date it has invested /committed to a sum of €6 million to 3 strategic Hubs. MERITS Nass, Equine Innovation Hub Kildare & Food, Drinks & Innovation Hub in Athy
- Through its Finance Section it works with local businesses to find solutions to challenges which they have in relation to rates and service charges and in particular has been instrumental in making payments under the Governments Commercial Rates Waiver.
- Kildare County Council has made available a strategic investment fund of some €350,000 per annum aimed at assisting local projects that add to the economic, social and cultural development of local communities throughout the county inclusive of the Shop Front Grant Scheme,
- It manages the funds and structures under which the LEADER Local Action Group now operates, and which will provide significant funding to rural enterprises, community projects and environmental projects over the next seven years.
- It owns and manages a range of land and building assets that have the potential to contribute significantly to the economic development of the county and specifically can provide suitable lands for enterprise development.
- Through the planning process – both the preparation and delivery of the County Development Plan and through the planning control process, the Council plays a very significant role in setting policies around land use planning that affects locational decisions and in delivering a timely service that facilitates business start-ups and expansions.
- Kildare County Council engages in the development of tourism products in particular signature attractions such as Curragh Plains and in the marketing of the County as a destination. It commits significant financial resources to this sector on an annual basis.
- Through its Economic Development Unit Research and Policy Unit, it carries out statistical and market analysis and policy reviews on issues and challenges affecting the County. This analysis and research assists in the planning and implementation of strategic initiatives, assists in enterprise development plans and enables investment decisions



1.2 Review of 2017-2020

The Local Enterprise Office Kildare serves as a “first-stop shop” to provide support and services to start, grow and develop micro and small businesses in each local area. Transformational change in Local Enterprise Office Kildare has led to our excellent performance in the LEDP period 2017-2020. Success was achieved across all LEO key focus areas maximising opportunities for job creation and retention. In summary,

Number of Clients receiving business advise	805
Number of participants in training programmes	9,288
Number of clients receiving mentoring	1,554
Trading Online Vouchers Approved	862 <i>In 2020, €1.14M was invested in ecommerce funding, supporting in excess of 500 Kildare businesses</i>
<i>Business Continuity Support</i>	<i>€1.75M invested in Covid 19 Business Continuity Support, supporting over 700 Kildare businesses in the initial weeks of the Covid19 pandemic</i>
<i>Grant aid to start up or expanding business 2017-202</i>	€1.9 million

Training		BA		Mentoring	
2017	1681	2017	235	2017	197
2018	1653	2018	181	2018	231
2019	2342	2019	264	2019	124
2020	3612	2020	125	2020	1002
Total	9288	Total	805	Total	1554

M1 GRANTS		*TOV	
2017-		2017-	
2020	172	2020	862
Total	172	Total	862

LEO Kildare is strategically charged with stimulating economic activity at county level through the development of Kildare's indigenous enterprise potential. County Kildare is proud to have become a hotspot for technology start-ups. As a flagship programme MERITS (Mid-Eastern Innovation Think Space), initiated by Local Enterprise Office, Kildare and funded by Enterprise Ireland and Kildare County Council. MERITS aims to accelerate the creation of new Tech start-ups with international growth potential, by serving as a platform where the owners of business ideas, professional talent and investors can meet. MERITS will focus on bridging the gap between the ideation stage and the start-up phase, and offers services such as mentorship, networking and access to finance.

Some highlights from the LEDP 2017 - 2020

Throughout the lifetime of the 2017 - 2020 LEDP, clients of LEO Kildare excelled the annual National Enterprise Awards

2017

Broghies Ireland was a Regional Final Winner

2018

Terra Liquid Minerals was a National Winner

2019

Pestle & Mortal was a National Winner

2020

QPQ was a first place Regional Final Winner

A Kildare LEO supported client Odyssey VC announced 100 new jobs in Kildare.

2017 and 2019 also saw regional IBYE success for Kildare start-ups Topper Technology and Equine MediRecord, and in 2018 Kildare had its first national winner of the competition – Access Earth.



In 2018 Kildare hosted the largest Female Entrepreneur gathering in the Country for National Women's Enterprise Day.

Outward Focus

Building on our export focus, LEO Kildare took part in its first overseas export development programme. Collaborating with Boston University, 13 companies were hosted on a research mission to Boston.

187 businesses availed of direct support to mitigate the challenges of Brexit and looking to inward investment, etc.

**LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE KILDARE VISION**

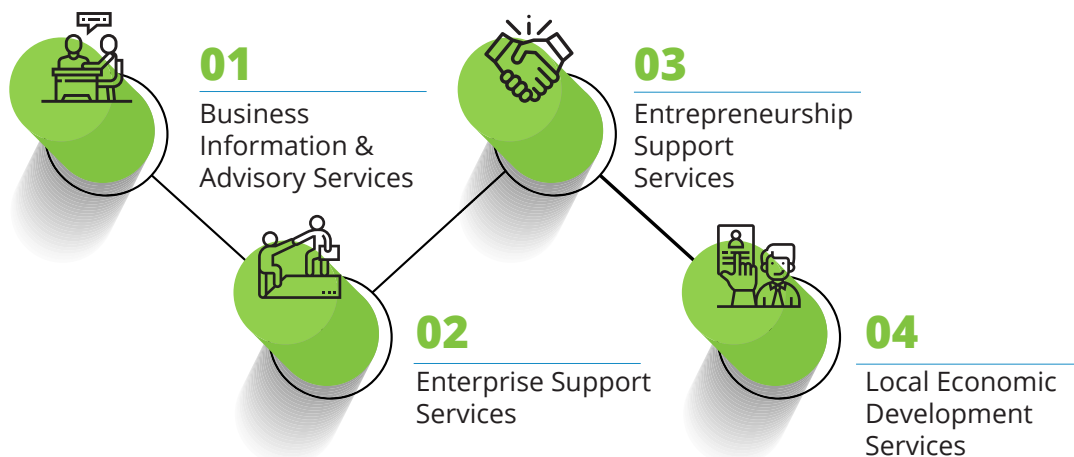
“To develop and sustain a positive enterprise ecosystem at local level throughout County Kildare that will in particular drive new added-value start-ups, the further growth of small and micro enterprises and enhance local economies.”

We aim to promote entrepreneurship, foster sustainable business start-ups and develop existing micro and small businesses to drive job creation. We will fuel economic growth by providing accessible high-quality supports to our community of entrepreneurs and businesses, who are supported to:

- 
- 01 INNOVATE**
 - 02 INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY**
 - 03 EMBRACE THE DIGITAL ECONOMY**
 - 04 PREPARE FOR THE LOW CARBON ECONOMY**
 - 05 INCREASE EXPORTS**
 - 06 BUILD RESILIENCE**
 - 07 REALISE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL AS AMBITIOUS AND DYNAMIC ENTREPRENEURS**

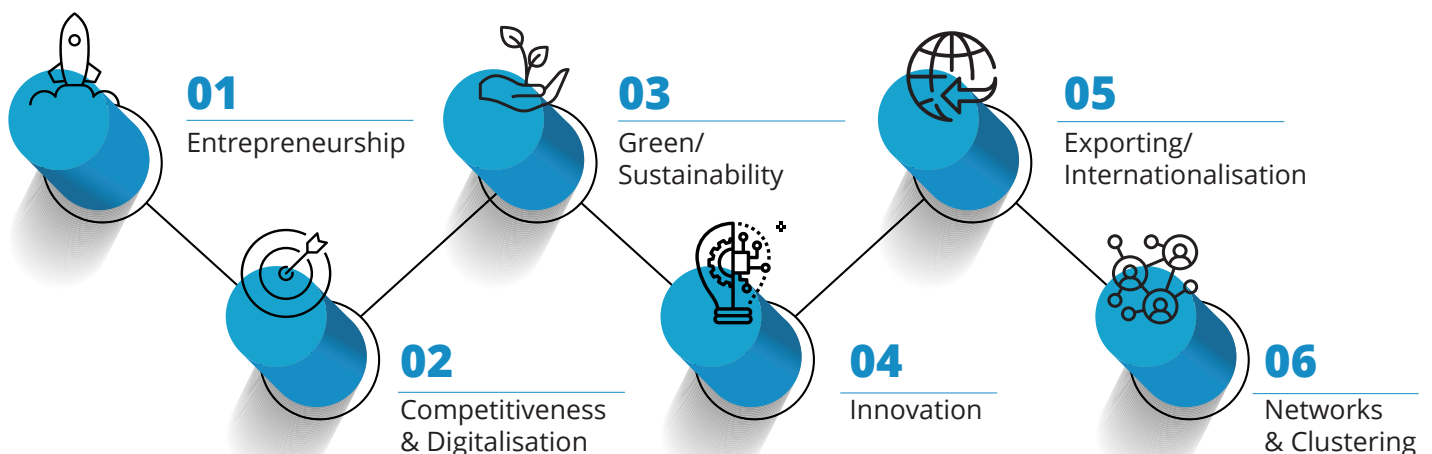
Local Enterprise Office Kildare's Vision and Mission will be met through the delivery of specific and defined actions set out in this local Enterprise Development Plan under **4 overarching Enabling Actions** and **6 Strategic Priorities Focus Areas**

4 OVERARCHING ENABLING ACTIONS



6 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

6 individual programmes of work to be carried out over the lifetime of the plan



2.1 BUSINESS INFORMATION & ADVISORY SERVICES



OBJECTIVE 1: Provision of first stop shop activities in respect of Business Support, Enterprise Development and Promotion, including Signposting.

Local Enterprise Office Kildare developed and enhanced the First Stop Shop referral and advisory services of the Local Enterprise Office embedded in Kildare County Council by working with all strategic enterprise partners at local and national level to deliver a seamless local support and referral system, into Kildare County Council, Enterprise Ireland and signposting to other State agencies.

Our weekly confidential advisory service is open to everyone exploring self-employment as an option or for those who are currently operating a business. Clients are welcome to discuss their venture with a Business Advisor. During these sessions we provide an outline of the services provided by the LEO and equally act as a sounding board for those with business ideas or challenges.

2017 – 2020 IMPLEMENTATION

During the period 2017 -2020 we assisted 805 entrepreneurs /interested individuals to identify the most appropriate supports and steps to take to advance their business proposition.

Information on the available finance and government supports provided to 405 participants through specially organised information seminars.

Weekly LEO Kildare newsletter circulated to 3,800 individuals with information on available LEO Kildare courses, programmes, Government business supports and those from other agencies, and helpful information for entrepreneurs and those considering taking the first step in starting their own business

2021-2024 PLAN

LEO Kildare will increase the impact of our Business Advisory Service/One Stop Shop in the post Covid-19 recovery period by a 20% increase in entrepreneurs/ interested individuals using the service to access high quality information on starting and growing a business in Kildare, and acting as a gateway to the provision of actions outlined **in Section 3.**

Develop and enhance the LEO Kildare First Stop Shop referral and advisory services by working with all strategic enterprise partners at local and national level to deliver a seamless local support and referral system that will ensure there is a fully informed and aware SME sector and improve the readiness SMEs to address challenges.

OBJECTIVE 2: Make It Easier to do Business

Provide supports, guidance and solutions that make it easier for entrepreneurs, owners, and managers to identify opportunities and implement actions to start-up, grow and survive within a competitive business environment. Typically, these supports include:



General business advice & information



Information & access to other enterprise related government agencies



Advice & information on accessing public procurement processes



Peer information sharing, learning and connections through access to sectoral networks and clusters



Advice on energy efficiency, sustainable development & alternative renewable energy sources

2017 – 2020 IMPLEMENTATION

LEO Kildare undertook an extensive client survey to understand the specific training and development needs of these clients. In response we offered extensive Brexit advisory supports, GDPR training, and strategic planning and Lean for Micro support to clients.

Training and support in business planning, mentoring, leadership, governance, capacity building, financial planning and digital innovation toprovided to approximately to approximately 10,000 businesses to help improve their business potential.

2021-2024 PLAN

LEO Kildare will provide relevant, suitable training and business development programmes to enterprises in County Kildare to make it easier to do business in a post Covid business environment.

We have engaged Bridgewater, an independent consultancy, to conduct direct research and needs analysis with the business community and stakeholders in County Kildare. Using this Data, we will mould our supports, guidance and solutions to make it easier for entrepreneurs, owners, and managers to identify opportunities and implement actions to start-up, grow and survive within a competitive business environment.

2.2 ENTERPRISE SUPPORT SERVICES



OBJECTIVE 1: Maximise Business Potential

Deliver support services that equip entrepreneurs, owners and managers with the knowledge to plan, grow and sustain productivity, innovation and competitiveness, as well as encourage greater technology uptake.

2017 – 2020 IMPLEMENTATION

Mentors were assigned to 1,554 clients who needed practical and sound one-to-one business advice and guidance. All Mentors were carefully selected, each with their own areas of expertise and all are highly skilled in assisting the small business owner/managers.

While it's important to focus on helping people start businesses, a concerted effort has been put into helping businesses grow. Growth presents a whole new set of challenges for our clients, and to assist, a series of export, productivity and digital innovation programmes were delivered to increase business competitiveness through Kildare LEOs enhanced partnerships with Maynooth University & IT Carlow. Key highlights included:-

2019 Local Enterprise Office Kildare hosted the Boston Trade Mission with Kildare Chamber of Commerce, Maynooth University and 10 Kildare Local Enterprise Office clients (2019) and initiated a Memo of Understanding with the North-Eastern University Boston to assist with market research in the North-Eastern Seaboard of the USA on behalf of Kildare businesses

2021-2024 PLAN

Maximise Business Potential by providing a quality suite of support services that equip entrepreneurs, owners and managers with the knowledge to plan, grow and sustain their businesses in particular through innovation and internationalisation and enhanced efficiency and competitiveness.

During this plan we will develop programmes of support to improve the competitiveness and productivity of Small and Micro Enterprises to better enable them to export.

We will ensure that supports like the Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters (TAME) and Trading Online Voucher Scheme (TOVS) are utilised to their fullest potential to support clients to achieve their export ambitions. Innovate Kildare, collaborations with Technology Gateways, promotion of Innovation Vouchers and New Frontiers programmes to support and nurture innovation within client companies will continue to be a key priority.

CarveOn Design

Founded in 2011 by two brothers, Alan and Gary McCormack, CarveOn design and make premium personalised leather accessories. This LEO Kildare client is now exporting to 50 countries.

Recognising the Challenge - 2020 was a challenging year with the sudden onset of Covid-19 and the ongoing concern of a no deal Brexit. Despite this, LEO Kildare approved 44 applications for M1 support in 2020. Associated with these approvals is the potential to create 72 new sustainable jobs. The capacity of LEO Kildare to adapt to the needs of the business community places it centrally with the regional enterprise support ecosystem.



OBJECTIVE 2: Collaboration with Enterprise Ireland

Collaboration and engagement with Enterprise Ireland continue to be prioritised. LEO Kildare work collaboratively with Enterprise Ireland to identify clients with growth and export potential. Approving LEO Clients for Enterprise Ireland supports is one such approach that has proven effective. Open and effective communication between LEO and Enterprise Ireland advisors also facilitates effective transitions of clients in both directions to ensure the best client experience is delivered.

2017 – 2020 IMPLEMENTATION

With 7 companies transferred from LEO to Enterprise Ireland in 2020 (and 33 in total over the 2017 – 2020 period), a strong pipeline of LEO clients are being supported towards a transition to EI supports.

This was achieved by maintaining a strong level of communication between LEO Kildare and Enterprise Ireland at regional and national level to facilitate the progression of companies from LEO Kildare to Enterprise Ireland, by facilitating access to relevant EI support programmes for LEO clients, including financial, business and innovation/ research facilities.

Robust processes were established and implemented for the two-way transfer of clients to and from Enterprise Ireland to ensure the delivery of appropriate client services and to maximise impact.

2021-2024 PLAN

LEO Kildare will undertake a full portfolio Analysis of its existing M1 Clients classifying those with the potential to expand and grow. Each key M1 client in the M1 portfolio will be assigned a Key Account Manager (KAM) to agree key Intervention Measures. This will facilitate the potential progression of companies from LEO to EI, facilitating access to relevant EI financial, business and innovation/ research facilities, and two-way transfer of clients to ensure appropriate services and maximum impact.

Each HPSU has been assigned a KAM to guide them through a progression Pathway to Enterprise Ireland. In addition, Kildare LEO act as a 'connector' in building the Mideast Regional Innovation Network. To maximise the potential of our HPSU Tech clients, pre accelerator and accelerator programmes of support will be delivered by successful tech entrepreneurs.

Odyssey VC

LEO Kildare Client Odyssey VC has devised software to help companies migrate crucial regulatory data to the cloud. It has transferred to Enterprise Ireland as a client and is plotting expansion and the creation of 100 new jobs.



2.3 ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT SERVICES



OBJECTIVE 1: Promote a Best Practice Enterprise Culture

Act as the catalyst and advocate for the establishment of a best practice enterprise culture among start-ups, micro and small businesses; also promoting enterprise and self-employment as a viable career option among the wider population.

2017 – 2020 IMPLEMENTATION	2021-2024 PLAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LEO Kildare provided 38 Start Your Own Business programs to 527 individuals who obtained and developed the necessary skills and knowledge to assess the marketing and financial viability of their business idea/project. 137 Established business were financially assisted to the value of 1.9 million over the life time of the previous plan• We continued our strong relationship with Maynooth University and 21 second level schools and over 6000 students were supported through student entrepreneurship initiatives including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Student Enterprise Programme• IBYE programme• EDEN leading to Enterprise Ireland's Student Enterprise Awards 3rd Level.• In collaboration with Network Kildare LEO Kildare ran over 50 events and training programmes for 200 female entrepreneurs.• Focus on Success LEO Kildare invested time and resources in celebrating client successes, sharing winning, or even just entering, prestigious awards programme such as the National Enterprise Awards. By highlighting our client base, we provide evidence of business growth, brand building and industry leadership that others can relate to. This strategic objective paid divide as multiple LEO Kildare clients won Local, Regional and National Enterprise Awards	<p>As an established home to tech giants like Intel and Hewlett Packard, Kildare is central to Ireland's vibrant start-up scene. LEO Kildare will instigate several collaborative new ventures that will provide crucial early-stage support to innovative start-ups in the county. We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop an integrated local and pro-active enterprise support ecosystem at local and regional levels with active and committed key stakeholders such as Enterprise Ireland and education partners• Continue Progression pathway for high potential start-ups and high growth companies to Enterprise Ireland including access to Business Angels, New Frontiers Programme etc. outlined in section 3.2• Increase the number of start-up businesses in the County and their survival rate by encouraging participation in Start Your Own Business courses and by providing a suite of follow up supports such as Business Advice, Mentoring, and the Trading Online Voucher Scheme• Continue Progression pathway for high potential start-ups and high growth companies to Enterprise Ireland including access to Business Angels, New Frontiers Programme etc. outlined in section 3.2• Maximise collaboration with the Equine Innovation Hub, MERITs, the Food, Beverage and Innovation Hub and Greentech Innovation Centre to assist start-ups to grow and develop.

Kildare Food and Craft Networks

The establishment of Kildare food and craft networks has allowed us to provide highly specialised training and opportunities to these clients. To cater to the changing needs of businesses trading through the Covid-19 pandemic, in June 2020, Kildare Local Enterprise Office was the first Local Enterprise Office to develop a shared local e-commerce platform designed to help small businesses make the move to online sales in quick and free-of-charge way (shopcountykildare.ie).



KILDARE CRAFT NETWORK
Celebrating Craft & Design in County Kildare

2.4 LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICE



OBJECTIVE 1: Environment for Start-Ups

By operating as a single cohesive unit LEO Kildare and Kildare County Council's Economic Development unit leverages the full range of potential enterprise support/economic development promotion mechanisms across KCC economic development remit.

2017 – 2020 IMPLEMENTATION

County Kildare boasts a thriving innovation ecosystem and has seen the emergence of a dynamic entrepreneurial culture in the past 5 years. LEO Kildare is a main driving force behind the creation of innovation clusters leading to economic growth and job creation. With the support of Enterprise Ireland's Regional Enterprise Development Fund and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Kildare County Council is investing in a dynamic capital programme to develop clusters of expertise in each of the following Innovation Hubs:

1. Mid-East Region Innovation Think Space (MERITS) in partnership with KCC & EI
2. Equine Innovation Hub at the Irish National Stud in partnership with KCC ,EI ,Horse Racing Ireland & LEADER
3. Food / Drink and AgriTech Innovation Hub in partnership with KCC, EI,UCD ,Boyne Valley Hub & Coco Cola
4. Green Tech Innovation Centre in partnership with Enterprise Ireland and Bord na Mona

At macro level these interventions have a deep impact on economic growth and at micro level they help create multiple jobs, wealth and innovative ventures

2021-2024 PLAN

Building on our strong foundation there is potential to substantially grow the County's innovation ecosystem and position it as a leading National innovation and start-up centre. Planned actions include:

- The Innovate Kildare Programme will be established to identify, prioritise and coordinate activities and complementary actions in the field of entrepreneurship, through synergies among agents of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- In tandem with "Kildare 2025" Kildare County Council Economic Strategy , the Local Enterprise Development Plan aims to create a favorable business environment (including access to finance), promoting entrepreneurship, implementing the regional research and innovation strategy for smart specialisation as well as identifying obstacles, barriers and critical measures for entrepreneurship.
- Key to the delivery of this objective will be the continuation of our countywide Innovation Hub Strategy to nurture commercial activities in our key areas. We will also continue to identify suitable locations and support the provision of co-working facilities, and eWorking centres throughout the County that function as outreach hubs for city-based employers and promote flexible working arrangements.



2017 – 2020 IMPLEMENTATION

During 2017 -2020 LEO Kildare also

- Implemented and monitored the economic actions of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP): and the 2021 Action Plan is currently being prepared
- Provided support to the development and execution of policies adopted by Kildare County Councils Economic Development, Enterprise and planning SPC and also the Council's Economic Working Groups
- Promoted Kildare as an innovative destination for FDI through advertorial in special Financial Times and Sunday Business post publications.
- Evaluated and monitored the wider enterprise eco system in Kildare identifying gaps and opportunities for the development of a series of Innovation Hubs outlined in the Mid-East Enterprise Plan 2017 -2020.
- Facilitated and supported the retail offering's expansion and sustainment in County Kildare in recognition of its role in revitalizing town centres.
- Supported key stimulus projects include the Shop Front Improvement Scheme, Accessibility and Age Friendly Grant Scheme to financially assist and support independent business owners to improve the appearance of their shop fronts or commercial properties.
- Supported 735 businesses to trade online through the Shop Local platform

2021-2024 PLAN

- LEO Kildare will expand further on the achievements and progress made in 2017-2020 by continuing to support the development and growth of new and existing, small and medium businesses in the County. This will be achieved by actively promoting, supporting and enabling economic activity, business development and employment in Kildare and building on the core strengths of the County while responding to identified economic development challenges.
- The Kildare Local Enterprise Development Plan 2021-2024 has been crafted in the context of major challenges – the Covid-19 pandemic and recession, Brexit and climate change. It has never been more important to plan and set out a roadmap for a resilient, sustainable economy. The focus will be on a smart recovery based on entrepreneurship and investment, sustainability and exploiting new opportunities.
- The Local Enterprise Development plan will work side by side with "Kildare 2025" Kildare County Council Economic Strategy , with the goal of creating a favorable business environment, where entrepreneurship is increasingly fostered and encouraged in the County.

Launch of Mid-East Region Innovation Think Space (MERITS) in partnership with KCC and EI



Kildare County Council's Senior Economic Development Officer, Orla McGee with Paul Lenehan and Jill Kinsella of Firecastle, Kildare Town launching the Look for Local campaign with Local Enterprise Office Kildare to encourage shoppers to shop local Christmas 2020.

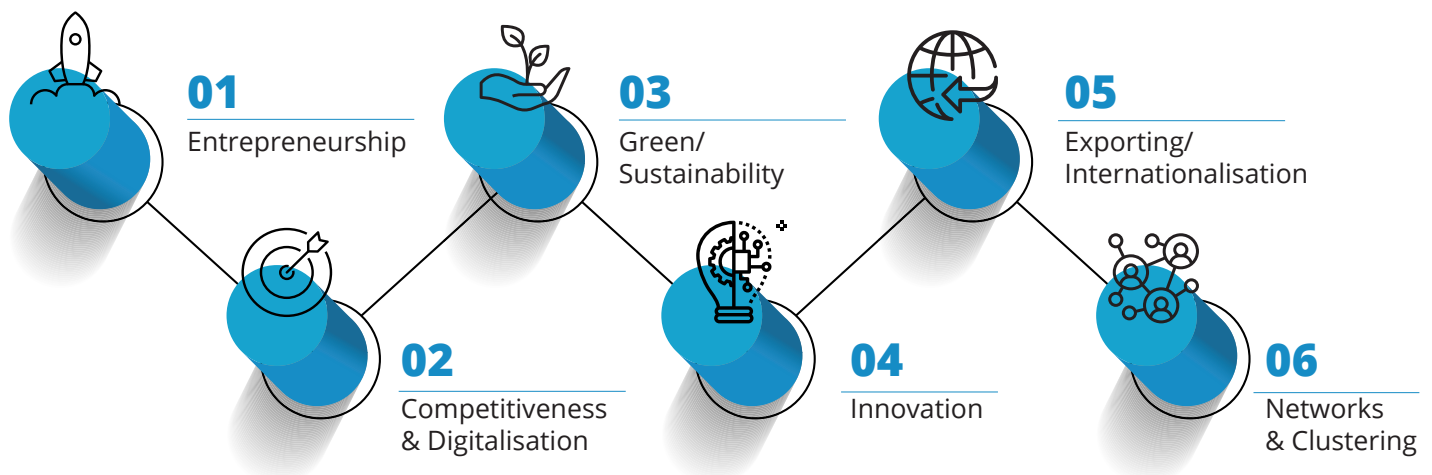
3.1 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR LEO KILDARE 2021

The Local Enterprise Office Kildare LEDP 2021 -2024 is our opportunity to set out a four-year vision that will address the challenges of the post Covid recovery while seizing the many opportunities for future growth and strengthening of our economic development in a sustainable, future-proofed and responsible way. We have been careful to craft a practical and pragmatic action plan that is grounded in our comprehensive understanding of the social, economic, and environmental factors in Kildare.

To achieve our ambition to promote entrepreneurship, foster sustainable business start-ups and develop existing micro and small businesses to drive job creation, we have identified 6 Strategic Priority Focus Areas through which we will deliver a dynamic programme of 124 actions.

6 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

6 individual Programmes of work to be carried out over the lifetime of the plan

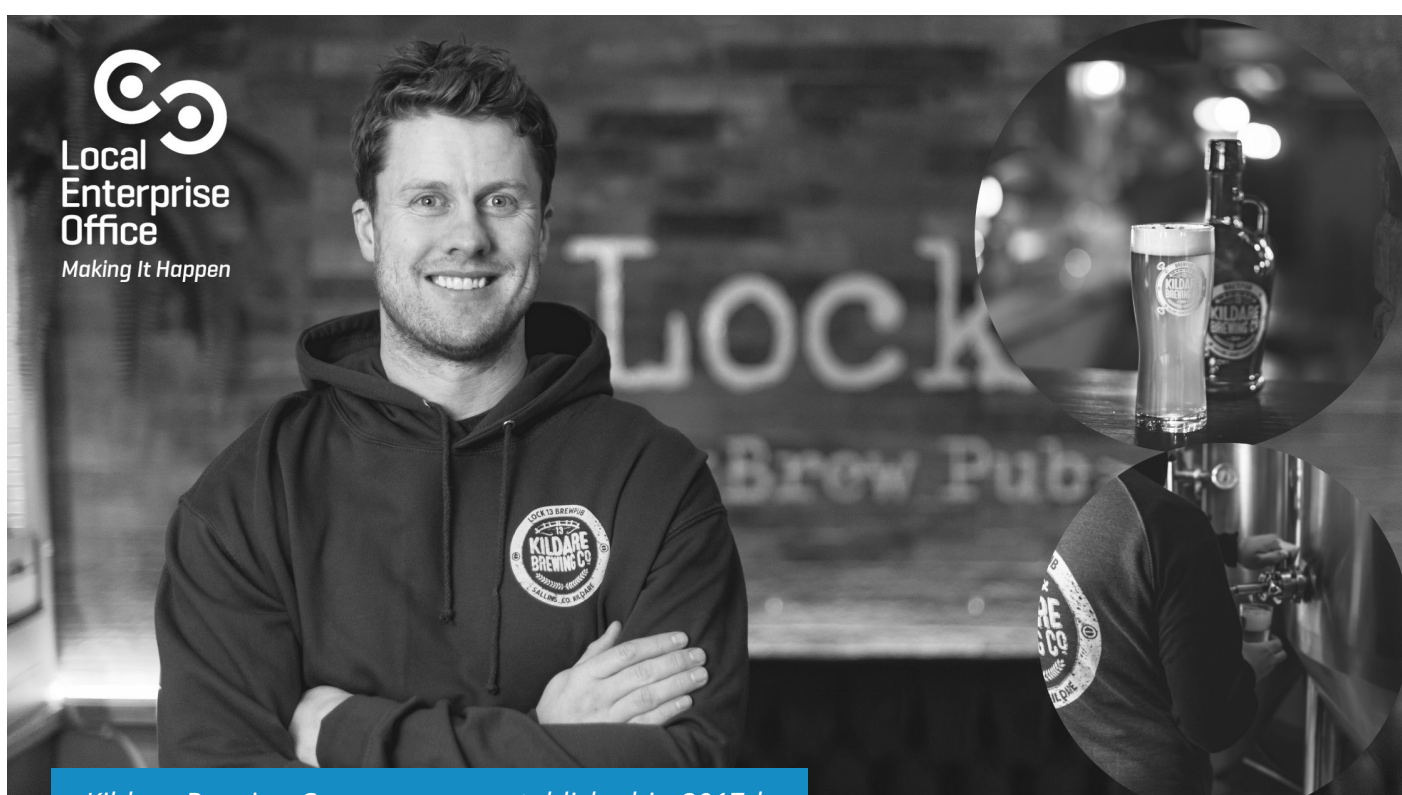


This section puts a synopsis of key activities the 6 individual work programmes and actions. The key performance metrics and goals are outlined in detail in Appendix 1.

01 ENTREPRENEURSHIP



LEO Kildare's overall objective is to identify, prioritise and coordinate activities and complementary actions in the field of entrepreneurship, through synergies among agents of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. We will create an appropriate economic environment to facilitate and support the growth of companies, focusing on internationalisation and on fast-growth companies referred to as gazelles. Apart from their important economic added value, they fulfil an exemplary role for start-ups and young entrepreneurs in County Kildare.



Kildare Brewing Company was established in 2017 by entrepreneur Barry Flanagan, and has been supported by LEO Kildare to grow with funding and advice.

OBJECTIVES:



Act as the catalyst and advocate for the establishment of a best practice enterprise culture among start-ups, micro and small businesses also promoting enterprise and self-employment as a viable career option among the wider population.



Increase the number of qualified applications in all areas of M1, TOVS ,TAME & MFI in line with KPIs



Increase the number of future potential HPSUs by providing best practice model of start-up support to existing and potential knowledge economy entrepreneurs in Kildare, supporting new start-ups and the acceleration / scaling of existing firms.



Stimulate engagement among Kildare enterprises in applying for direct Grant Aid under Measure 1 and/or participating in various training programmes and seminars covered under Measure 2.



Enhance communication with Enterprise Ireland to facilitate potential progression of companies from LEO to EI, facilitating access to relevant EI financial, business and innovation/research facilities, and two-way transfer of clients to ensure appropriate services and maximum impact.



Ensure the delivery of excellent Customer Service /First Stop Shop / Training Supports /Mentoring, Business Advice Service/ Clinics including Signposting. Increase our digitisation and data analysis yields from same.



Maximize the potential to combine funding opportunities and promote public and private partnership across business and education particularly across a collection of business models that create value and capture value using technology software, cloud services, data platforms, agricultural technology & technology economics.



Increase the number of businesses spun out from projects under the National Greenways/Blueways Integrated Strategy.



Harness future opportunities in terms of green, large FDI presence, tourism & digitalisation as a result of the National Broadband Plan.



Increase the number of equine enterprise business models in County Kildare.



Increase entrepreneurship participation in Social Enterprises and focus on under-represented demographics including female, youth, ethnic, and those with a disability.

ACTIONS - ENTREPRENEURSHIP ONBOARDING



Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
1.1	Host weekly Business advice Clinics to provide advice and support from experienced advisors in the early phases of business conception and start-up	Increase the number of added-value start-ups by 50% from the 2020 base.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
1.2	Create a filter system for all business advice requests to capture possible Gazelles (HPSU clients) at the earliest opportunity	Capture possible Gazelles (HPSU clients) at the earliest opportunity	LEO Kildare Enterprise Ireland Maynooth Works MERITS	2021- 2024
1.3	Prepare and deliver an annual marketing and communication plan. This will include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the dissemination of a weekly e-zine with details of supports and service. active promotion of funding & financing opportunities for clients in particular M1,TOVS ,TAME & MFI in line with KPIs while driving competitiveness & export potential 	Ensure a comprehensive and informative offline and online presence highlighting all LEO services	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
1.4	Host a Kildare in Business Monthly Webinar Series	Highlight the opportunities for growth through M1 financial supports and M2 innovation supports to assist the establishment and/or growth of enterprises	LEO Kildare and all other enterprise stakeholders	Monthly 2021- 2024
1.5	Roll out new outreach model for new promoters of start-ups by communicating & engaging with all entrepreneurs registered month-on-month on the CRO	Highlight the opportunities for growth through M1 financial supports and M2 innovation supports to assist the establishment of enterprises	LEO Kildare	Monthly 2021- 2024
1.6	Continually monitor media platforms for positive business announcements and acknowledge success of businesses in the County	Consistent and high profile media profiling	LEO Kildare	Quarterly 2021- 2024

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
1.7	Create and promote a series of client case studies from all M1 clients	Increase awareness of the supports and services of LEO while promoting entrepreneurial culture and activities	LEO Kildare	Quarterly 2021- 2024
1.8	Improve use of data and insights - migrate all Forms / Applications to Central Platform through submit .com	Make doing business easier and increase data analysis prowess	LEO Kildare	Q2 2021
1.9	Continue to drive the Business Incubation Strategy across our four strategic incubation projects across the County	Smart specialisation approach to strengthen our priority sectors.	LEO Kildare	Monthly 2021- 2024
1.10	Host strategic advocacy alliance meetings with stakeholders & other business support agencies and institutions	Ensure collective understanding and focus on entrepreneurship growth of Co. Kildare	MU Carlow IT, Into Kildare Tourism, Network Kildare, Kildare Chamber, County Kildare Leader Partnership	Biannually 2021- 2024
1.11	Launch Annual Career Exploration & Innovation open days hosting a series of events	Showcase entrepreneurship as a career option to Leaving Cert & College students prior to CAO application completion dates	LEO Kildare, ETB, Kildare Chamber	Q2 annually 2021- 2024
1.12	Launch Summer Entrepreneurship School	Encourage forward thinking deliberation on the future of enterprise	LEO Kildare MU, IT Carlow, Kildare Chamber, Network Ireland	Annually 2021- 2024
1.13	Collaborate with EIT to increase participation of Doctoral Students from Maynooth university in the Global Food Venture Programme	Increase the number of future startups in the food system challenges.	LEO Kildare MERITS UCD Nova	Annually 2021- 2024
1.14	Promote & programme manage student entrepreneurship initiatives including : 1. National Student Enterprise programme 2. IBYE programme 3. EDEN Maynooth University Entrepreneurship competition leading to Enterprise Ireland's Student Enterprise Awards 3rd Level.	Stimulate a strong pipeline of sustainable Entrepreneurship in County Kildare	LEO Kildare	Annually 2021- 2024
1.15	Launch Venture Lab Summer innovation program for students based on STEM subjects	Increase the number of future startups in the STEM.	LEO Kildare MERITS UCD Nova MU IT Carlow	Annually 2021- 2024

START OF THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP JOURNEY

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
1.16	Create and Launch a LEO Kildare onboarding experience for all new clients, create a future service road map specifically reflective of their individual growth ambitions and opportunities.	Enable a more engaged client-agency relationship and ultimately with a focus on their long-term success.	LEO Kildare	By Q2 2021
1.17	Appoint a dedicated Start Up liaison staff member who can welcome all start-ups. We will critically evaluate the number and outputs from the current SYOB programmes to ensure more targeted approaches to start-up generation and support.	Build a pipeline of eligible start-ups to contribute to the growth of M1 client portfolio in line with KPI's	LEO Kildare	By Q2 2021
1.18	Instigate analysis system to map the entrepreneur journey and to capture data insights and measurement statistics focused on the outcomes and the results of the SYOB programme and Business Advisory Services	To learn from and improve the SYOB programme and Business Advisory Services	LEO Kildare	By Q2 2021
1.19	In addition to generic SYOB programme, pilot a new model of sector specific Start your Own Business programmes to include one on one mentoring. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online sales businesses • Food/drinks manufacturing • Equine • Green & sustainable initiatives 	Provide a dynamic sectoral focus boost to our SYOB programmes	LEO Kildare	By Q2 2021
1.20	Establish and promote a specific Female Entrepreneurship Start up Programme with a focus on sustainable opportunities & work life balance	Increase the number of female business founders in Co. Kildare.	LEO Kildare	By Q2 2021
1.21	Develop and Launch an innovative SYOB programmes for Tech Companies in the theme of " Gazelles LEAP ", a pre accelerator focused on High-potential M1 projects	Increased the numbers of start-ups transferring to EI	LEO Kildare	By Q3 2021
1.22	Develop and promote tailored entrepreneurship pathway programmes for youth and long term unemployed	50 youth and long term unemployed per annum will engage in learning opportunities	LEO Kildare	By Q3 2021

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
1.23	In conjunction with the Equine Innovation Hub, develop and champion Ireland's First Equine Technology Accelerator.	Increase and cluster Equine Tech Businesses	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Equine Tech Innovation/Irish National Stud	By Q4 2021
1.24	Design and develop specific SYOB programme to leverage all entrepreneurial & tourism opportunity from the county's new : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenways • Blueways • Peatways 	Increase and cluster new businesses connected to greenways, blue	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Equine Tech Innovation/Irish National Stud	By Q4 2021
1.25	Launch a series of Hackathon Challenges	Help entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs and educators co-learn, co-lab & co-solve challenges and turn them into business	LEO Kildare MU, IT Carlow	By Q4 2021
1.26	Actively canvas Business Advisory Clinics & SYOB for candidates for the New Frontiers development programme for early-stage start-ups	Prime suitable potential candidates for the New Frontiers development programme	LEO Kildare Enterprise Ireland MUI	Ongoing commitment
1.27	Develop and provide access to a high calibre sector specific expert Mentor Panel.	Improve potential success rates of start-up and stabilisation amongst established businesses post Brexit /Covid	LEO Kildare Enterprise Ireland	Ongoing commitment
1.28	Support social enterprise initiation and start-ups through targeted programmes and initiatives. Provide tailored training for existing social enterprises	Increase the number of social enterprises in Co. Kildare and increase the skill base of existing social enterprises.	Kildare KCC Economic Dev. & Enterprise, LEO Kildare, Kildare Leader Partnership, Social Entrepreneurs Ireland	Annual programme delivery
1.29	Engage with the farming community and those in software development to pilot idea generation workshops to stimulate the creation of agri/ food tech businesses	Increase the number agri tech companies in the county 6 new businesses annually	Nova UCD, in collaboration with KCC, LEO Kildare, Teagasc	Annual programme delivery
1.30	Deliver Food Starter and other food enterprise start-up programmes	Increase the number of Kildare food and beverage start-ups by 10% year on year	LEO Kildare, Kildare LEADER Partnership	Annual programme delivery

SUSTAIN THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP JOURNEY

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
1.31	Conduct a portfolio analysis on all clients in the M1 portfolio to classify the clients/clusters in the portfolio to ascertain the realisation of potential, the supports received to date and the supports needed to accelerate their development.	Identify gaps in provision of service or opportunity not yet identified /future milestones	LEO Kildare	Q3 2021
1.32	Create and launch a LEO Kildare refresh- onboarding experience for all existing M1 clients and using the data gathered from analysis, create a future service road map with a focus on their long-term success.	Enable a more engaged and longer-term client relationship and targeted take up of LEO Kildare supports	LEO Kildare	Q3 2021
1.33	Adopt a new Key Account Management strategy to strategically liaise with M1 clients quarterly and provide a range of aftercare services.	Enable a more engaged and longer-term client relationship and targeted take up of LEO Kildare supports	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
1.34	Through the new Key Account Management Strategy, pre engage with all grant applicants to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set milestones pertaining to funding • prior to funding draw down, strategically review progress and opportunities • provide a range of post approval aftercare services 	Enable a more engaged and longer-term client relationship and targeted take up of LEO Kildare supports	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
1.35	Create a network of Remote Working hubs around Kildare with embedded expertise support panels delivering coaching, mentoring, networking activities, training, advice and support for key processes, innovation and internationalisation.	Connected network of remote working hubs resourced with key business support services	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
1.36	Work with industry and key stakeholders to conduct an established business needs analysis & develop and publish an annual training and development programme leading to the provision of training in business planning, mentoring, leadership, governance, capacity building, financial planning and digital innovation to help improve their business potential across all our priority areas.	Better meet the needs of some 3000 business owners accessing skills training to enhance their capacity.	LEO Kildare, Kildare County Council Economic Development & Enterprise Department, MU, ETB, Kildare Chamber Skillnets, Regional Skills Forum	Annual training calendar published

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
1.37	Host strategic FDI Alliance meetings to drive greater interaction between local FDI, larger firms, third level bodies and clients to recognise and leverage potential spin out opportunities and to transfer knowledge and skills.	Lever the power of Kildare's FDI base to yield local synergies to better understand and meet the product and service supply needs of FDIs in Kildare.	LEO Kildare, KCC, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Kildare Chamber	Bi-annually
1.38	Entrepreneurship & Family Business - family-owned enterprises face special challenges. Launch the Family Enterprise Challenge to help families understand the specific dynamic and management and succession support interventions that can apply to their own business and family.	Support the specific business needs of family owned enterprises in Kildare	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
1.39	Create a calendar of National & International Enterprise Competitions and Expos and actively encourage and facilitate client participation	Provide entrepreneurs with as many opportunities for public recognition for their successes.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
1.40	Enable artisan food producers to benefit from food tourism opportunities and a Kildare food trail	Open new food tourism opportunities for artisan food producers	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Fáilte Ireland, Kildare Fáilte, food industry stakeholders	2021- 2024
1.41	Put in place a food and beverage specific expert advisory panel to support stabilisation in the existing SME sector	At least 15 food and beverage SME's access the mentor panel per annum to mitigate any post Covid-19 or Brexit fall out.	LEO Kildare, food industry stakeholders	2021- 2024
1.42	Develop a Kildare Diaspora Strategy with Outreach Actions	Kildare Diaspora Strategy Document Connection with 20 US-based Kildare businesses	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Kildare Chamber, County Kildare Economic Forum, Dept of Foreign Affairs	Launch Q2 2021
1.43	Launch Retail Start and Retail Plus Initiatives to support those in or wishing to establish a business in retail premises and those existing retail businesses struggling to diversify.	This will see an intense programme of supports for 30 participants per annum over 4 years	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Kildare Chamber	2021- 2025



Entrepreneurship, technology and innovation are mutually supportive. Technology provides entrepreneurs with new tools to improve the efficiency and productivity of their business, or with new platforms on which to build their ventures. At the inter-firm level, they reduce the costs and increase the speed and reliability of transactions. They can also make management of supply chains more efficient. In turn, entrepreneurs fuel technological innovation by developing new or improving existing products, services or processes and ensuring commercialisation across a collection of business models that create value and capture value using technology Software ,Cloud Services ,Data Platforms, Agricultural technology & Technology Economics

OBJECTIVES:



Improve the competitiveness and productivity of small and micro enterprises through enhancing SME innovation and digitisation skills



Drive competitiveness with small and micro enterprises to enable them to become more productive and compete internationally by adopting the lean digitisation approaches



Increase the number of Kildare businesses conducting business online



Increase the number of online transactions for Businesses who are investing in improving online presence and Trading Online Vouchers uptake



Improve competitiveness, productivity and sustainable business practices of micro enterprises through enhancing SME management capabilities using the Lean for Micro programme



Drive productivity improvements through capital funding and access to finance



Support SMEs to strengthen their infrastructure for trust, security (including spam and viruses), privacy and consumer protection.



Provide opportunities for non-tech businesses to collaborate with experts in adoption of new technologies driving efficiencies and capabilities across multiple sectors.

ACTIONS - INNOVATION AND DIGITALISATION



Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
2.1	Increase LEO staff capacity for one-to-one client engagement to identify and respond to business Competitiveness and Digitalisation priorities	Clear and current understanding of the Competitiveness and Digitalisation priorities of client base and use this as a base for support interventions.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.2	As part of the new LEO Kildare onboarding experience for all new clients, create a future service road map highlighting lean and TOV supports	Increase awareness and uptake of lean and TOV supports for new clients	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.3	Conduct a portfolio analysis on all M1 LEO Kildare clients to classify clients/clusters in terms of the level of support they have received to date and matching LEO offerings in Lean and TOV to identified needs.	Identify gaps in provision of service or opportunities not yet identified /future milestones.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.4	Review all 2020 BCV Recipients (722) and cross reference with TOV Register to identify and engage with those who could benefit from a 1 st TOV	Support those with a business continuity planning need with increased trading digitisation through TOV.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.5	Review all TOV recipients and target those who would benefit from a 2nd TOV.	Support those who have commenced trading online to increase trading digitisation through an advanced TOV.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.6	Review all Shop front support recipients and target those who would benefit from a TOV.	Support those in the retail sector to commence/increase trading digitisation through TOV.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.7	Build a trading online module into the marketing content of all Start your Own Business programmes	Ensure a digital business model is considered by all startup businesses in Kildare	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.8	Review all the M1 grant applicant businesses, and review their website presence, where appropriate advocate TOV as part of the grant offering .	Ensure a digital business model is considered by all businesses investing in expansion in Kildare.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
2.9	Build TOV & Lean agenda into Management Development Programmes.	Ensure a digital and lean business model is considered by all businesses upskilling for growth in Kildare.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.10	Deliver a series of webinars to focus on “The Role of Digital Technologies in Climate Action & “The Workplace of the Future”	Future proof competitive and digital content shared with the enterprise community in Co. Kildare.	LEO Kildare, MU, Carlow IT, Kildare Chamber	2021- 2024
2.11	Deliver a series of webinars to focus on “SME 4.0: Showcasing SMEs that have adopted emerging digital technologies”.	Future proof competitive and digital content shared with the enterprise community in Co. Kildare.	LEO Kildare, MU, IT Carlow, Kildare Chamber	2021- 2024
2.12	Run 6 TOV briefings annually. Differentiate 2nd TOV by hosting dedicated briefings for same.	Ensure maximum awareness and uptake of TOV 1 and 2.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.13	Provide expertise to SMEs in respect of digital tools that are available to grow their businesses	TOV recipients to be facilitated to engage in the evolving digital economy	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.14	<p>Focus on growing online revenue through collaboration with Amazon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run the 2 day Amazon Academy Ireland programme Actively promote client engagement with Amazon Bootcamp Ireland 	Participants will learn how to grow revenues, enhance productivity and develop digital skills. They will understand how to sell products on the Amazon stores, scale operations, master social media,	Amazon, Enterprise Ireland, Enterprise Nation and the Local Enterprise Offices	2021- 2024
2.15	<p>Focus on digital marketing strategy through collaboration with Google Digital Garage including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run Digital Challenge competition in the community to solve everyday work problems as part of the journey to Smart Town – Smart Citizens Run Digital Challenge competition in Kildare County Council to solve everyday work problems as part of the journey to Smart Town – Smart Citizens 	Launch a series of Digital Marketing Strategy programmes to advance to Smart Town – Smart Citizens solutions for communities and the local authority.	Google, LEO Kildare, Kildare County Council	2021- 2024

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
2.16	Fully endorse and support the development of the National Cluster of Smart Energy Technologies incorporating the relevant Kildare companies	Smart cluster to encourage inter-company innovation	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Kildare Climate Action Office	Q1 2021
2.17	Review all previous Lean programme participants to advocate for advancing Lean Digitisation	Build additional digitisation prowess in companies engaged in competitiveness and lean programmes	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.18	Review all M1 capital grant fit out applications to ensure lean alignment.	Encourage uptake of Lean Manufacturing and Digitization mentoring with resultant increased business competitiveness	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.19	Create a portfolio of case studies of lean and lean digitisation participants to promote best practices.	Harness the power of case studies to deliver the benefit messaging to the wider Kildare business community	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.20	Develop and roll out series of sector specific lean programmes	Embed competitiveness and digitized uplifting through our clusters and networks.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
2.21	Build a series of procurement and supply chain management programmes	Upskill our business community in procurement and supply chain.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024

Pictured here are Sinéad Leigh and Tim Pullen of Cloudtech. The business specialises in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) technology. With the support of LEO Kildare the business further developed its online marketing strategy and created a new website with more online capabilities.



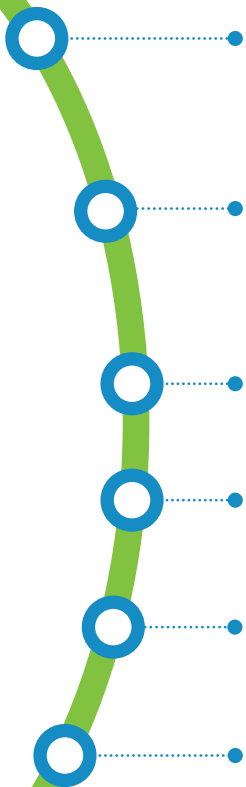


Green enterprise development results in greener, environmentally friendly, safer and more productive businesses. Our 2021 -2024 focus seeks to build a more robust, more sustainable and resilient economy through cooperation between agencies ,counties and private sector in the Mid-East region in the area of sustainable energy. This will contribute to our climate protection goals while all the time ensuring our businesses remain competitive.



“A green recovery can boost the economy, protect the environment and invigorate the workforce”

OBJECTIVES:



Position Kildare as a best practice model leading to a sustainable energy future by creating and supporting jobs by in the Green economy.



Support start-ups in developing sustainable enterprises involved green tech , solar energy, wind energy, forestry, retrofitting of properties and sustainable agriculture projects at appropriate locations and in a manner that supports rural economies in Kildare.



Develop leadership and competency in smart energy technologies



Assist local businesses to become more competitive through the provision of energy efficiency training and supports



Leverage Kildare’s “Green” county reputation; its quality environment credentials, its recreational, sporting and other amenities such as greenways, waterways & peatways



Strengthen the resilience of our retail sector to rebuild stronger and greener

ACTIONS - SUSTAINABILITY/GREEN ECONOMY



Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
3.1	Increase LEO staff capacity for one-to-one client engagement to identify and respond to business sustainability and green priorities	Clear and current understanding of the sustainability and green priorities of client base and use this as a base for support interventions.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
3.2	As part of the new LEO Kildare onboarding experience for all new clients, create a future service road map highlighting sustainability and green supports	Increase awareness and uptake of sustainability and green supports for new clients	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
3.3	Conduct a portfolio analysis on all MI LEO Kildare clients to classify clients/ clusters in terms of the level of support they have received to date and matching LEO offerings in sustainability and green supports to identified needs.	Identify gaps in provision of service or opportunity not yet identified /future milestones	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
3.4	Build sustainability and green content and opportunities into Management development & SYOB programmes.	Ensure a sustainable and green business model is considered by all startup businesses in Kildare	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
3.5	Review all 2020 BCV Recipients (722) and cross reference with TOV Register to identify and engage with those who could benefit from a Green Voucher	Support those with a business continuity planning need to become more sustainable and greener	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
3.6	Review all TOV Recipients and target those who would benefit from a Green Voucher	Support those who have commenced trading online to increase sustainability through green approaches.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
3.7	Review all Shop front support recipients and target those who would benefit from a Green Voucher	Support those in the retail sector to increase sustainability through green approaches.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
3.8	Develop and deliver environmental sustainability programmes for the LEO client/ portfolio based in particular with a focus on the circular economy, the green agenda and carbon-reduction.	Ensure a green and circular business models are considered by all startup and growing businesses in Kildare	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
3.9	Design and target a series of sector specific Green for Micro programmes for our key sectors:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing • Retail • Tourism • Architecture • Food • Service sector • Craft 	Provide a dynamic green and sustainability focus across our priority sectors.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
3.10	Promotion of Green Competitive Programme. Better environmental performance leads to improved resource efficiency and direct cost savings and can also increase access to customers who are increasingly demanding more environmentally friendly products and services.	Support companies to incorporate sustainable practices into the day-to-day running of their business.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
3.11	Increase the number of tourism businesses spun out from projects under the National Greenways/ Blueways integrated strategy	Increase the number of sustainable and eco tourism businesses spun out from projects under the National Greenways/Blueways integrated strategy	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Kildare Fáilte, Waterways Ireland Fáilte Ireland, Department of Tourism, Sport Ireland (Trails)	2021- 2024
3.12	SME Carbon Reduction Initiative Conduct 60 Energy Audits amongst Micro Businesses	Reduce Kildare's carbon footprint and industry costs	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, SEAI, Kildare Chamber, Kildare Climate Action Office,	Q1 2021
3.13	Support a programme focused on emerging sustainable retail practices within the circular economy, tracing the new ways retailers from fashion to food can design sustainability into their business model	Increase retail circular economy prevalence in the County	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Kildare Chamber	Q2 2021
3.14	Support the development of Green Enterprise Zone at one of the most prominent sites associated with the peat era will fuel innovation in Kildare, by providing the physical and skills environment to choreograph opportunities for green/circular entrepreneurs and their staff to interact with each other.	Provide green enterprise zone development sites and workspace. Facilitate relationships and create critical mass between businesses to generate, sharpen and accelerate the advancement of ideas.	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept	Ongoing

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
3.15	Provide a suite of training and mentoring supports to enhance the SME response to Kildare County Council's delivery of their Climate Adaptation Strategy (2019-2024) as pertains to the food and hospitality sector.	25 businesses in the food and hospitality sector will introduce climate change and sustainability programmes in their businesses	LEO Kildare. KCC, Athy Food, Beverage and Skills Innovation Hub, Kildare Food and Drink Network	2021- 2024
3.16	Collaborate with Athy Food, Beverage and Skills Innovation Hub in the delivery of a dynamic programme of promoting healthy nutrition at production and consumer levels - acting as exemplar case study to help other hospitality businesses to implement more sustainable, less wasteful practices in a bid to reduce their carbon footprint.	25 businesses in the food and hospitality sector will implement more sustainable, less wasteful practices in a bid to reduce their carbon footprint. 10 primary producers supported.	LEO Kildare. KCC, Athy Food, Beverage and Skills Innovation Hub, Kildare Food and Drink Network	2021- 2024
3.17	Promote the development of a Centre for Smart Grid Technologies	Smart grid provides unprecedented opportunity to move the energy industry into a new era of reliability, availability, and efficiency to contribute to our economic and environmental health.	LEO Kildare, Kildare Climate Action Office,	2021- 2024
3.18	Support the work of the Kildare Wicklow ETB in mitigating against the economic impact of the Just Transition.	Support development of skills programmes in tackling the economic impact of the Just Transition.	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, KWETB, Midlands Regional Transition Team	2021- 2024
3.19	Publish a Kildare Food and Beverage Sourcing Guide for trade distribution.	Build links between food and beverage producers and hospitality and food tourism businesses	LEO Kildare, Kildare Food and Drink Network	Annually 2021- 2024




Oifig Fiontair Áitiúil
Local Enterprise Office

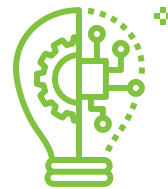
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Find out more and apply at LocalEnterprise.ie/Green

04 INNOVATION DRIVES GROWTH



Recognising the many guises under which innovation and entrepreneurship appear – scientific, technological, commercial, social, creative, and cultural – LEO Kildare has identified a wide base of disciplinary activity as primed for stimulation of innovation and entrepreneurship. We will promote a new approach to entrepreneurship education, in which innovation will be a centrepiece. We will pursue a new approach to creating value in collaboration with our enterprise, partners particularly in key smart specialisation areas of Knowledge Economy, Tech, Equine, Food, Tourism and Manufacturing.

**Creativity is thinking up new things.
Innovation is doing new things.**



Maynooth University
National University
of Ireland Maynooth



**INSTITUTE of
TECHNOLOGY
CARLOW**
Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Cheatharlach

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OBJECTIVES:



Accelerate innovation in County Kildare by providing a supportive environment that will facilitate and encourage higher levels of innovation across all sectors.



Enable more client firms develop internal innovation management processes



Enhance SME awareness and knowledge of all elements of the intellectual property system. These include patents, trademarks, industrial designs, utility models, trade secrets, copyright and related rights, plant varieties and nonoriginal databases.



Strengthen the integration of intellectual property issues in programmes and policy initiatives aimed at fostering innovation in SMEs.



Increase the level of innovation, technology-adoption and digitisation within LEO client firms



Outline a step-change which existing clients can be encouraged to embrace an innovation agenda



Tap into global innovation networks speeding up the development of the Kildare innovation system



Act as a 'connector' for Kildare in building a regional innovation network.



Maximise European funded programmes to identify new models of innovation support.



Promote linkage between the knowledge economy, research sectors, and other relevant sectors and enterprises, to achieve synergy between these groups.

ACTIONS - INNOVATION DRIVING GROWTH



Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
4.1	Increase one-to-one client engagement to identify innovation and technology challenges within LEO Kildare client firms.	Clear and current understanding of the innovation and technology priorities of our client base and use this as a base for support interventions	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
4.2	Promote and assist access to the Agile and Innovation funds across all industry sectors with a key focus on digitisation and sustainability.	Opportunity to increase the ability of companies of all sizes to engage in innovation and research.	LEO Kildare, KCC, MERITS, MUI, Kildare Chamber, KWETB, Enterprise Ireland	2021- 2024
4.3	Deliver a series of innovation-centred workshops to include: Design Thinking, Business Model Innovation and Customer Experience Mapping.	Enhance SME awareness and knowledge of innovation through design thinking	LEO Kildare, KCC, MERITS, MUI, Kildare Chamber, KWETB, Enterprise Ireland	2021- 2024
4.4	Recruit and project manage increased adoption of Innovation Vouchers available through Enterprise Ireland by new and existing client base to meet yearly KPIs.	Increase the level of innovation, technology-adoption and digitisation within LEO client firms	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
4.5	Use successful case study to promote and increase access to the Agile and EI'S Innovation funds across all industry sectors	Expose LEO client firms to best practice and transferrable examples of use of innovation funds	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
4.6	Host an annual Innovation Conference for the SME community to increase innovation awareness and pathways	Promote linkage between the knowledge economy, research sectors, and other relevant sectors and enterprises, to achieve synergy between these groups.	LEO Kildare, Enterprise Ireland, Kildare County Council, MU, IT Carlow, UCD Nova, Kildare Chamber	2021- 2024
4.7	Host FDI round table to lever the power of Kildare's FDI base to yield local synergies and increased opportunities	Build on the success of the 2019 Inaugural FDI round table discussion with 26 Kildare FDI companies and agency stakeholders	LEO Kildare, KCC, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Kildare Chamber	2021- 2024

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
4.8	Identify and pursue funding opportunities to support the creation of a network of connected Innovation and Digital Hubs in the County.	Maximise funded programmes to identify new models of innovation support	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Enterprise Ireland, Kildare LEADER Partnership, Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, Department of Rural and Community Development	2021- 2024
4.9	Further expansion of MERITS (Tech Innovation Hub)	Provide much-needed infrastructure, mentorship and support to attract high technology investment and industries	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Enterprise Ireland, CKCN	2021- 2024
4.10	Establishment of the Irish Equine Health and Welfare Campus with world-leading facilities and expertise for research and diagnostics	In addition to infrastructure development, launch Ireland's first equine technology accelerator as a transformational investment in Kildare's knowledge economy.	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, CKCN, Irish National Stud, Horse Racing Ireland, Kildare LEADER Partnership, Enterprise Ireland	2021- 2024
4.11	Establishment of Green Tech Innovation Centre	Explore the feasibility of a Green Tech Innovation Centre	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Enterprise Ireland and Bord na Mona	2021- 2024
4.12	Support the development of a Regional Food Innovation and Skills Hub	Opening of Athy Food, Drink & Skills Innovation Hub	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, CKCN, Kildare/Wicklow ETB, Coca Cola, Kildare Chamber, Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, Department of Rural and Community Development	2021- 2024
4.13	Position Athy Food, Beverage & Skills Innovation Hub as a hub of recovery in the hospitality sector through economic stimulus, education and innovation	Deliver mentoring and training supports to assist hospitality businesses to rebuild post Covid 19	LEO Kildare, KWETB, Kildare LEADER Partnership	2021- 2024
4.14	Increase innovation in our food and beverage SME'S by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisting food SME's access the agile and innovation funds available from LEO and Enterprise Ireland Signposting high potential and global orientated food companies to the Food Works programme 	Increase Kildare's food and beverage SME prevalence in national innovation programmes	LEO Kildare, Enterprise Ireland, Carlow IT, MUI, Kildare LEADER Partnership, KCC, Bord Bia	2021- 2024

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
4.15	Kildare Tourism Recovery and Innovation Programme	Focused advisory programme to support the reopening of the Kildare tourism economy and get businesses up and running through digitisation, supporting the low carbon transition, and promoting the capital transformation needed.	LEO Kildare, County Kildare Economic Forum	2021- 2024
4.16	Collaborate with Carlow IT to design an Innovation Programme for M1 clients	A tailored innovation programme for the Kildare business community to increase innovation in the context of economic and societal transformation.	LEO Kildare, Carlow IT	
4.17	Collaborate with MUI to design a MVP (Minimum Product Value) Innovation programme for Pre accelerator clients	Maximise opportunities for lean start-ups, and agile approaches to new product development	LEO Kildare, MUI	2021- 2024
4.18	Promote the Innovation Diagnostic Toolkit to identify Innovation Programme participants. The toolkit is based of four pillars and signposts resources and supports to enhance performance in the areas of employee engagement, training, innovation, and productivity	Facilitate self-evaluation of the organisation's capacity to be an innovative workplace.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
4.19	Identify and pursue EU training funding opportunities (e.g. ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnerships for Transfer of Innovation) to develop specific programmes in youth and diversity e.g., empowering women in the food sector.	Secure funding for one EU programme in innovation in the food sector per annum	LEO Kildare, CKCN	2021- 2024
4.20	Maximise European funded programmes to identify new models of innovation support including the consideration of the establishment of a "national matching fund" for such projects	Increase knowledge of EU funding opportunities, build EU partners network, upskill in application development.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024



Access to global markets for small businesses can offer a host of business opportunities, such as larger and new niche markets; possibilities to exploit scale and technological advantages; upgrading of technological capability; ways of spreading risk; lowering and sharing costs, including R&D costs; and in many cases, improving access to finance. Gaining access to global markets can help prospective high-growth firms realise their potential.

OBJECTIVES:



Improve the competitiveness and productivity of Small and Micro Enterprises to better enable them to export.



Promote the role that foreign direct investment can play as a vehicle for SMEs to access international markets. In particular, the inclusion of local SMEs in the supply chains of multinational enterprises, and their resultant (indirect) involvement in exporting activity can lead to significant diffusion of technology and more efficient business models, thereby raising the international competitiveness of SMEs.



Facilitate access to the information SMEs need to operate internationally. Particularly important is information relating to tax, regulatory frameworks and requirements, advisory and support services for SMEs and dispute resolution procedures.



Support local firms to effectively respond to BREXIT.



Develop the confidence and drive the ambition of local firms to scale and compete internationally.



Increase the levels of exporting from within LEO clients to and outside the UK.



Increase awareness and uptake by business owner-managers and relevant promoters of export support networks like Enterprise Europe Network, InterTrade Ireland, Skillnets, and national Enterprise Ireland initiatives



Ensure that supports such as the Technical Assistance for Micro Exporters (TAME) and Trading Online Voucher Scheme (TOVS) are utilised to their fullest potential to support clients to achieve their export ambitions.



Ensure that clients with export capability and scale are transferred at an appropriate time and to the best possible point of contact, per the agreed transfer process.



Deliver support services that equip entrepreneurs, owners and managers with the knowledge to plan, grow and sustain productivity, innovation and Export/Internationalisation as well as encourage greater technology uptake.

ACTIONS - EXPORTING /INTERNATIONALIZATION



Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
5.1	Increase LEO staff capacity for one-to-one client engagement to identify and respond to business exporting / internationalisation priorities	Clear and current understanding of the exporting / internationalisation priorities of client base and use this as a base for support interventions.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
5.2	Develop an export readiness tool to assist LEO staff identify suitable clients for export support.	Increase knowledge and capacity to fast track the identification of export ready clients	LEO Kildare, Enterprise Ireland	2021- 2024
5.3	Develop an early-stage export capability development programme for LEO clients and integrate with the services of Enterprise Ireland.	Increase export knowledge and capacity of LEO clients with clear inter-agency support pathway	LEO Kildare, Enterprise Ireland	2021- 2024
5.4	Manage the dissemination of TOV Scheme funds across all industry sectors to drive the digital economy with a key focus on Internationalization	Increase international trading online capacity of all sectors through TOV Scheme.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
5.5	Develop inward buyer visits to identify new sales and export opportunities and maximise the Enterprise Europe Network in pursuing this action	Develop business linkages in key markets and increase awareness of the specific supply requirements of such markets.	LEO Kildare, Enterprise Ireland, Bord Bia	2021- 2024
5.6	Assist firms to engage in market entry visits to increase market knowledge and identify new market opportunities.	Develop business linkages in key markets and increase awareness of the specific export criteria of such markets.	LEO Kildare, Enterprise Ireland, Bord Bia	2021- 2024
5.7	Deliver Customs Readiness and new Market Opportunity workshops at local level	Increase export administration skills in LEO client companies. Facilitate access to the information SMEs need to operate internationally.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
5.8	Integrate the LEO export supports with those of Enterprise Ireland, in particular through increased engagement with Enterprise Ireland overseas offices	Build stronger links between LEO Kildare and clients with EI overseas offices	LEO Kildare, Enterprise Ireland	2021-2024

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
5.9	Integrate LEO supports to provide firms with comprehensive response to Brexit challenges.	Ensure LEO clients have comprehensive supports to overcome Brexit challenges	LEO Kildare, Enterprise Ireland	2021- 2024
5.10	Leverage existing business networks to develop a pipeline of strong potential companies for export development	Strengthen LEO Kildare's pipeline of companies with export potential	LEO Kildare, Kildare Chamber, Network Ireland and members of Kildare business networks and clusters	2021- 2024
5.11	Provide business owner-managers with the theoretical and practical knowledge and skills to understand what it takes to export successfully.	Develop the skills and confidence of local firms to scale and compete internationally.	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
5.12	Enterprise Start-up programmes with international focus - pilot new approaches for promoting new international focused start-ups.	Increase the number of export focused start-ups by 30% from the 2020 base.	LEO Kildare Enterprise Ireland	2021- 2024
5.13	Global Ambition Programme - Identify and encourage Kildare businesses which have the potential to develop and grow employment and export.	Ensure that LEO clients with export capability and scale are transferred at an appropriate time		2021- 2024
5.14	Work with colleagues in Mid-East Region to develop and fund a First Time Exporters Programme.	Increase the number of first-time exporter companies from the region	LEO and County Council Economic Development Offices in Mid East LEOs, Enterprise Ireland, Carlow IT, MUI, Intertrade Ireland	2021- 2024
5.15	Seek resources for a food and beverage export programme which will be mindful of the impact of Brexit. While engaging with Enterprise Ireland and Bord Bia, this programme would benefit from a regional approach	Assist 6 Kildare food and drink businesses to work on a programme of activity which will assist them enter new export markets.	LEO Kildare and mid-East colleagues, Enterprise Ireland, Bord Bia	2021- 2024
5.16	Host "meet the buyer" opportunities with distributors, specialist retailers, and other retail and foodservice buyers on the domestic and international markets	Create international linkage and sales opportunities for Kildare food and drink businesses	LEO Kildare, Kildare Food and Drink Network	2021-2024
5.17	International tourism to Kildare - continue to strengthen existing twinning/Diaspora relationships between Kildare and our Twinning partners	Maximise our international connections for tourism sector advancement	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Kildare Fáilte, Fáilte Ireland	2021-2024
5.18	Management Development Programmes include Exporting/ Internationalisation module	Embed exporting and internationalization upskilling in our management development programmes.	LEO Kildare	

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
5.19	Develop a Hub for Intertrade Ireland to deliver their programmes to clients from Kildare	Create a tangible link for LEO Kildare clients to the supports available through Intertrade Ireland	LEO Kildare, Intertrade Ireland	2021- 2024
5.20	Project Manage, promote, support and assist clients through TAME applications process to ensure KPI's are meet.	Ensure maximum awareness and uptake of TAME	LEO Kildare	2021- 2024
5.21	Build relationships and collaboration with Enterprise Ireland and M1 team towards the HPSU Agenda	Maximise HPSU export potential through seamless LEO-EI engagement	LEO Kildare, Enterprise Ireland	2021- 2024
5.22	Collaborate on export & Internationalisation programming with stakeholders such as Skillnet, Carlow IT, MU, Bord Bia, Chamber, MERITS, Intertrade Ireland and Enterprise Ireland.	Ensure interagency collaboration is maximised with shared goal of increasing exports	LEO Kildare, Kildare County Council, Skillnet, IT Carlow, MU, Bord Bia, Kildare Chamber, MERITS, Intertrade Ireland and Enterprise Ireland	2021- 2024



With the support of Kildare Local Enterprise Office, Emma Jane Leeson of Johnny Magory Books exports her products internationally



Networks and clusters have a positive role to play in helping Irish SMEs realise the benefits of collaboration and contribute towards increased productivity, internationalisation and spurring entrepreneurship. Networks and clusters can allow SMEs to tackle projects that they might not otherwise undertake, due to a lack of knowledge or resources, a limited number of industry contacts or relationships, organisational agility, or economies of scale.

OBJECTIVES:



Facilitate local & International business networks with a particular focus on peer learning and enhancing capabilities to drive productivity, knowledge sharing and competitiveness.



Improve SMEs access to information about networking opportunities.



Increase the participation of SMEs in research networks and technology markets. This includes greater SME involvement in existing (regional, national and global) public-private partnerships that connect science to innovation.



Support the emergence and maintenance of innovative clusters.



Help local actors implement the cluster strategies primarily through schemes to stimulate collaboration between public and private research institutions, improve the availability of market information and strengthen co-operation among firms, for instance in the fields of market intelligence, design and branding, and technological and human resource development.



Identify and promote best practice policies which support company innovation through cluster development. Encourage exchange of experiences at national and international levels, especially regarding the governance structures and evaluation of cluster initiatives most notable.



Organise and facilitate networking opportunities to promote inter-company networking, communications and sharing of best practices amongst the business community in county Kildare.



Develop and deliver clusters, sector initiatives and networking programmes at local level to maximise local strengths and ambitions.



Develop greater interaction between SME's/LEO KILDARE clients, local FDI, larger firms, the third level to transfer knowledge and skills and to create local synergies.



Support enterprise development agencies in their efforts to increase business innovation capacity, create a network of co-working /remote working hubs and to promote linkages between multinational companies and Irish owned enterprises.

ACTIONS - PROMOTING CLUSTERS AND NETWORKS



Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
6.1	Conduct needs analysis with each network/cluster and deliver on mentoring and training requirements per sector to strengthen their competitiveness.	Determine the exact needs of our identified clusters in order to tailor cluster specific mentoring and training offerings	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept	2021- 2024
6.2	Devise an annual calendar of programming for each cluster including national programmes but not exclusively: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Food Academy 2. Food Start 3. Digital School of food programmes 4. Design & Crafts Council Ireland programmes including Showcase 5. National Women's Day 	Facilitate networking opportunities to promote intercompany engagement in cluster networking, communications and sharing of best practices amongst the business community in county Kildare and on a wider basis	LLEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept	2021- 2024
6.3	Organise and facilitate exhibition & promotion opportunities for all networks to increase client profile & sales opportunities.	Facilitate networking and sales opportunities	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept	2021- 2024
6.4	Organise and Facilitate Start up Networking opportunities	Improve SMEs access to information about networking opportunities and the pathways to involvement	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept	2021- 2024
6.5	SME CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT Promote the development of industry clusters in consultation with the companies, agencies and Higher Education Institutes and advance the establishment of five superclusters under the "Innovation Superclusters Initiative".	Creation and strengthening of key clusters in Kildare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech Cluster • Green Tech/ Circular Economy • Equine • Manufacturing • Food • Craft • Women in Business • Remote working hubs • Supply chain • Tourism 	LEO Kildare, KCC Economic Development & Enterprise Unit, Enterprise Ireland, IT Carlow, MU, Bord Bia, HRI, Failte Ireland	2021- 2024

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
6.6	THE FUTURE OF WORK Support the creation of a network of connected Innovation and Digital Hubs in the County. The development of hubs will take into account the NACE sub-sectors of the economy that have been identified as being remote workable. This will improve their chances of accommodating remote workers in these hubs.	Establish and connect 10 hubs across Kildare	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Enterprise Ireland, LEADER. DETE, DCRD	2021- 2023
6.7	HUB AND SPOKE INNOVATION NETWORK Support MERITS team to provide hub and spoke innovation supports to the network of up to 10 connected Innovation and Digital Hubs across Kildare	Networking & connectivity amongst knowledge and tech companies across the region.	LEO Kildare, MERITS and County Kildare Economic Forum	Mid 2021
6.8	ACCELERATION - Introduce Ireland's First Equine Technology Accelerator. Equine Tech Innovation Ireland could develop and champion Ireland's first equine technology accelerator.	Increase and cluster Equine Tech Businesses	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Equine Tech Innovation/Irish National Stud	April 2021
6.9	SECTOR SUSTAINABILITY Establish Equine Stakeholder forum	A strong Equine Industry Network	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Kildare Chamber HRI/Horse Sport Ireland	2021- 2024
6.10	EU TRANSFER OF INNOVATION EU Transfer of Innovation Ensure benefit is derived from pan European equine connections.	Develop linkages with EU centres of equine excellence and secure EU funding for knowledge transfer	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept HRI/ITM (Irish Thoroughbred Marketing)	2021- 2024
6.11	DEVELOP A FOOD AND BEVERAGE NETWORK - to promote inter-food company networking and communications. Support the network with the creation of bespoke digital marketing material to build awareness. Develop and promote an annual calendar of events.	Launch of Food Network A suite of Marketing Materials and an annual calendar of events.	LEO Kildare, KCC Economic Development & Enterprise Dept, HRI/ITM (Irish Thoroughbred Marketing)	2021-2024
6.12	FOOD TOURISM - As a cross-cutting action, enable artisan food producers to benefit from food tourism opportunities and a Kildare food trail	Cross sector food and food tourism focus	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Fáilte Ireland, Kildare Fáilte, food industry stakeholders	2022-2024
6.13	DEVELOP AND MARKET A FOOD TOURISM EXPERIENTIAL TRAIL Create a food trail to profile and market Kildare's food sector	Create new income generation opportunities for artisan food and hospitality businesses and Increase the number of food tourists	LEO Kildare, KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Fáilte Ireland, Kildare Fáilte, food industry stakeholders	2022 - 2024

Ref.	Action	Target/Output	Stakeholders	Timeframe
6.14	CLUSTER OF SMART ENERGY TECHNOLOGY SMES Fully endorse and support the development of the national cluster of Smart Energy technologies incorporating the relevant Kildare companies	Smart cluster to encourage inter-company innovation	LEO Kildare KCC Econ Dev & Enterprise Dept, Kildare Climate Action Office	2021- 2024
6.15	DEVELOP A KILDARE CRAFT NETWORK to promote inter-craft company networking and communications. Support the network with the creation of bespoke digital marketing material to build awareness. Develop and promote an annual calendar of training & events.	Launch of Craft Network A suite of Marketing Materials Suite of Training & Annual Events	LEO Kildare, Kildare KCC ECONOMIC DEV. & ENTERPRISE, Design & Craft Council of Ireland	2021- 2024
6.16	DEVELOP A KILDARE FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR NETWORK to promote Kildare based female entrepreneurs networking and communications. Support the network with the creation of bespoke training programmes. Develop and promote an annual calendar of events.	Launch of Female Entrepreneur Network A suite of female entrepreneur specific training and annual event calendar	LEO Kildare, Kildare KCC ECONOMIC DEV. & ENTERPRISE, Network Ireland	2021- 2024

Kildare food businesses pictured here collaborating at the Naas Wild Food Festival.



3.2 CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

LEO Kildare, Kildare County Council and KCCN CLG are ambitious enablers of infrastructure development projects which reflect our sectoral strategy priorities. Our funding ambitions are summarised as:-

REGIONAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT FUND

THE COMPLETION OF THE MERITS BUILDING IN 2021 (REDF FUNDED)

MERITS will act as an innovation hub for tech start-ups and digital entrepreneurs in Kildare and neighbouring counties. The purpose-built 1,200 square metre facility beside Devoy Park will have space to accommodate up to 120 people when construction is completed and it is fully operational in Q3 2021. MERITS will provide Kildare the Mid-East region with the much-needed infrastructure, mentorship and support to attract high technology investment and industries.

SECOND FLOOR EXTENSION TO MERITS BUILDING (REDF APPLICATION)

Given the recognised demand for additional innovation space in the county, Kildare County Council will be seeking Part 8 planning permission and will prepare an application to secure funding from Enterprise Ireland for an additional floor on the MERITS building.

DEVELOPMENT OF A GREEN TECH HUB (REDF/JUST TRANSITION FUND APPLICATION)

The economic development strategy supports further investment in the green economy and the associated initiatives. Kildare LEO and Kildare County Council have engaged with the relevant stakeholders to assess the feasibility of creating a Green Tech Innovation Hub that will provide upskilling and training on low carbon transitioning right through to green innovations startups. It can become a Centre of Excellence in the Circular Economy and provide training programmes to support businesses meet their obligations under the Green/Sustainability Agenda. Any future funding for this centre will be applied for under REDF or Just Transition.

RURAL REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

RENOVATION OF THE ATHY MODEL SCHOOL TO A FOOD DRINK AND SKILLS INNOVATION HUB (RRDF APPLICATION)

The proposed development at the Model School on the Dublin Road in Athy, will involve the refurbishment and fit-out of the vacant building to provide training, demonstration and shared commercial kitchens, café/meeting area and a co-working area. The building will be a centre for educational and entrepreneurial excellence for the food sector. In addition to offering fresh approaches to food and culinary skills training, this hub will provide a space for food producers in Kildare and the wider region to access high class facilities to enable them to develop innovative food concepts and to commence small scale production.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME | LEADER

RENOVATION OF THE IRISH NATIONAL STUD TO AN EQUINE INNOVATION HUB (LEADER FUNDING)

The hub, on the grounds of the Irish National Stud, will promote innovation in the equine sector, by supporting entrepreneurial businesses in the field and fast-tracking the commercialisation of equine research. The Irish National Stud's pivotal role in the development of world-class equine and human talent marked it out as the perfect location for the hub. Construction on the renovation of the museum into a 14-desk innovation hub will commence once Covid 19 restrictions on the construction industry are removed.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT CAPABILITY

In the delivery of this 2021- 2024 Plan, LEO Kildare will promote a number of Management Development Capability initiatives which will drive the strategic priorities of Entrepreneurship, Competitiveness and Digitalisation, Green/Sustainability, Exporting/Internationalisation, Innovation, Infrastructure, Clustering and Networks. Key to achieving success are two key enablers:

- 01 Conducting a Portfolio Analysis
- 02 Launch a Key Account Management Strategy

LEO Kildare will analyse its current business portfolio to determine how much attention or support a M1 client might need this is significantly influenced by the life cycle stage of each business. The idea behind this holistic view is that LEO Kildare management want to put more resources into those clients that demonstrate the most potential to create employment and internationalise.

Our key focus in 2021 is about strengthening our relationship with all M1 Clients. After evaluating the current M1 business portfolio across 4 Business Unit categories, we will appoint a Key Account Manager (KAM) to each unit. Adopting a Key Account Management Strategy could be a huge shift in our organisation - it's a long-term game of demonstrating continued value to our clients and growing with them. Using the KAM approach, we will better understand each part of the M1 Clients business and previous support history and be able to communicate effectively to build bespoke product offering for them. In addition, this approach leads to

- 01 Becoming valued partners to our clients.
- 02 Stronger and improved business relationships
- 03 Greater awareness for our current offerings
- 04 Provision of pertinent data on the portfolio

3.3 KILDARE PERSPECTIVE ON NATIONAL LEO PROGRAMMES

The following is a summary of the actions and programmes at national level in which the Local Enterprise Office Kildare actively engages in on an annual basis and will continue to do so during the lifetime of this plan.

Student Enterprise Programme

The Student Enterprise Programme (SEP) is the biggest enterprise competition for students in Ireland. It helps students to grasp life skills associated with running an enterprise, including working as part of a team, managing production and finances, organising a sales and marketing campaign and liaising directly with customers, judges and the media. Each year over 17,000 students all over Ireland get to find out what it's like to run their own business by taking part in the Student Enterprise Awards Programme. In Kildare in 2020, **21** secondary schools participated in the Student Enterprise Program with **1,504** students participating overall in Kildare region.

National Enterprise Awards

The Enterprise Awards Competition is designed to recognise and reward the commitment, dedication and entrepreneurial spirit of small businesses at local and national level. The competition for the awards involves three stages: a local competition, at County level, with the winner then representing the County at a National Final. The competition is open to businesses that have received direct financial support since its inception. Kildare based Client company QPQ Ltd represented Kildare at the National Enterprise awards 2020. Previous to this, Kildare held the 1st place title for 2 years running.

National Women's Enterprise Day

National Women's Enterprise Day is held in October which supports female entrepreneurs. A range of events are organised at a National level aimed to support local Women in Business. In 2020, the Largest Female Entrepreneur gathering was held during Women in Enterprise Day, held virtually. Kildare based Client company Pestle & Mortar headlined the National event.

Showcase

Showcase at the RDS is the first major trade event of each year, organised by the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland and promoted internationally by Enterprise Ireland. The dedicated Enterprise Zone on the balcony area, co-ordinated by the LEOs, has become known as the home for emerging designers and craftspeople in recent years. A wide range of creative sectors is represented within the Enterprise Zone, such as ceramics, knitwear, jewellery, interiors, skincare and giftware. LEO Kildare have had a number of clients exhibit in recent years including Sonia Deasy of Pestle & Mortar, Sean Curran and Ciara O'Keefe.

Food Academy

The Food Academy is an initiative designed collaboratively with Bord Bia, Musgraves and the Local Enterprise Network. Its aim is to give 'Small Producers a Big Chance'. The Food Academy works with and nurtures small businesses through their journey from start up to getting their products on SuperValu shelves. In 2021, 13 clients commenced on the Food Starter Programme which will lead into the Food Academy programme.

National Ploughing Championships

The National Ploughing Championships are held in September each year. As part of its National Programme the LEOs host a Local Enterprise Village to provide an opportunity for clients to take full advantage of this unique consumer event. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the quality and high standard of goods and services supported by LEO Kildare.

Local Enterprise Week

A Local Enterprise Week will be held in early March of each year. The County will host a series of Events aimed at stimulating business growth and new business creation to drive economic prosperity. A programme of Events offers something for everyone, regardless of whether you want to develop a business idea, start a business or grow your existing enterprise. In 2021, 18 events were run over the course of Local Enterprise Week including a National Spotlight Event in the area of Lean for Micro.

Microfinance Ireland

Sole Traders, Partnerships and Limited Companies with fewer than 10 employees and an annual turnover of less than €2 million are eligible to apply. Unlike some of the other financial supports available from LEO Kildare, all business sectors are eligible to apply. Loans can be used to fund start-ups, existing and growth micro-enterprises and can be used for working capital or the hiring of new employees, the purchase of stock, equipment, machinery and business vehicles. In 2020, LEO Kildare received 22 applications for Microfinance Ireland Loan applications.

Trading online Vouchers

The Trading Online Voucher is an initiative for small businesses (with 10 or fewer employees and less than €2m in revenue), that aims to enhance their online trading presence. Vouchers to the value of €2,500 (50% of eligible costs up to the maximum of €2,500) are available through this programme. LEO Kildare provided €1.32 million investment in E-commerce funding.

Agile Innovation Fund

The Agile Innovation Fund has been developed by Enterprise Ireland to support product, service and process innovation to build competitive advantage. The key benefit of this support is that it allows for a simple application process and delivers a faster response time from application to approval. The Agile Innovation Fund is also open to eligible Local Enterprise Office clients and it allows companies to access up to 50% in support towards innovation projects with a total cost of up to €300,000.

Students at the 2020 Kildare Student Enterprise Awards Final.



4.1 PROTOCOLS

The following protocols govern dissemination of information, information signposting and inter-organisation referrals. LEO Kildare will continue to implement these protocols on an on-going basis and review locally as required. The aims of the Protocols are:

- To establish a structured link between the Local Enterprise Offices and Protocol Partners to support the provision of information and guidance measures for enterprise development;
- To provide for an efficient customer service in response to LEO clients' queries;
- To provide for informing and updating staff from both organisations of respective programmes and services;
- To provide for cooperation on awareness and promotion activities;
- To provide for exchanges between the parties on the uptake and operation of the measures and levels of demand for information/guidance by clients of the LEOs;
- To provide for periodic review of the operation of the protocol;
- To Provide for collaboration and efficiencies in the provision of training programmes where appropriate.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

Agreed between the Department of Social Protection and The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (on behalf of Enterprise Ireland). This protocol aims to maximise the recruitment of appropriately skilled persons from the Live Register by enterprise agency client companies. More information on the supports available can be found online at www.gov.ie/welfareandwork or by emailing info@welfare.ie

CREDIT REVIEW OFFICE

Agreed between the Credit Review Office and The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (on behalf of Enterprise Ireland). The Credit Review Office provides a simple, effective review process for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, including sole traders and farm enterprises, who have had requests for credit refused or existing credit facilities reduced or withdrawn. More information can be found on line about the support available from the Credit Review Office online at <https://www.creditreview.ie/> or by email at info@creditreview.ie

FÁILTE IRELAND

Agreed between Enterprise Ireland and Fáilte Ireland. Fáilte Ireland. is the National Tourism Development Authority, whose role is to support the tourism industry and work to sustain Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourism destination. Fáilte Ireland also works with other state agencies and representative bodies, at local and national levels, to implement and champion positive and practical strategies that will benefit Irish tourism and the Irish economy. More information on the support available through Fáilte Ireland can be found online at [https:// www.failteireland.ie/](https://www.failteireland.ie/)

MICROFINANCE IRELAND

Agreed between Microfinance Ireland and The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (on behalf of Enterprise Ireland). Microfinance Ireland, as a not-for-profit lender, has been established to deliver the Government's Microenterprise Loan Fund. All business sectors are eligible to apply. Companies may be Sole Traders, Partnerships and Limited Companies with fewer than 10 employees and an annual turnover of less than €2 million. Loans may be used to fund the start-up of a business, the purchase of stock, equipment, machinery, and business vehicles and are also available to established enterprises. More information on the financial support offered by Enterprise Ireland can be found online at <https://microfinanceireland.ie/contact-us/>

SKILLNETS

Agreed between Skillnets and The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (on behalf of Enterprise Ireland). Skillnets actively supports and works with businesses in Ireland to address their current and future skills needs on the basis that training and up-skilling are key elements in keeping Irish companies competitive. Skillnets funds groups of companies in the same region/sector, and with similar training needs, through training networks that deliver subsidised training to Irish businesses. More information can be found by visiting the Skillnet Ireland website at <https://www.skillnetireland.ie/> or by phone on 01 2079630 or email info@skillnetireland.ie

EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARDS (ETBS)

Agreed between Enterprise Ireland and Education & Training Boards Ireland. The ETBs are statutory authorities which have responsibility for education and training, youth work and a range of other statutory functions. ETBs manage and operate second-level schools, further education colleges, multi-faith community national schools and a range of adult and further education centres delivering education and training programmes. Further education and apprenticeship training is also provided through 16 training centres nationally. ETBs are active in local communities through the direct provision of training and education programmes delivered in training centres, colleges and other training and educational settings. Information on the education and training programmes available from the Kildare and Wicklow ETB can be found online at <http://kildarewicklow.etb.ie/> or by phone on 045 988 000 or email admin@kwetb.ie

REVENUE

Agreed between The Revenue Commissioners and The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (on behalf of Enterprise Ireland). The role of the Revenue Commissioners is "to serve the community by fairly and efficiently collecting taxes and duties and implementing customs controls". Specifically, in relation to business, Revenue provides information and support under three headings:

- A comprehensive range of information and guidance on taxation issues, customs and Revenue requirements relating to starting and running a business, including the Revenue Online Service
- Tax Simplification Initiatives for Smaller Businesses
- Supporting Job Creation and other Enterprise Supports.
- National Association of Community Enterprise Centres (NACEC)
- Agreed between Enterprise Ireland and The National Association of Community Enterprise Centres. The National Association of Community Enterprise Centres is a strong representative body of 120 community enterprise centres in the Republic of Ireland. Its primary role is to support and develop the interests of community enterprise centres on a national basis.

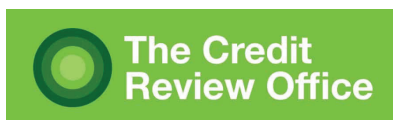
More information and guidance can be found on the Revenue Commissioners website at <https://www.revenue.ie/en/Home.aspx>

LEADER

Agreed between **The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media** and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The aim of the protocol between Local Enterprise Offices and Local Action Groups is to ensure that the available enterprise supports are complementary, are configured to meet local needs and ultimately, maximise the impact of both development bodies in their local areas. More information on the supports available can be found on the County Kildare LEADER Partnership website at <https://www.countykildarelp.ie/> or by phone on **045 895450** or email info@countykildarelp.ie

ÚDARÁS NA GAELTACHTA

Agreed between Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta. The rationale for the development of this proposal was to ensure that all client enterprises of Údarás na Gaeltachta and LEOs have equal access to services and funded programmes and benefit from enhanced collaboration and information sharing between the organisations. Údarás na Gaeltachta manages its client base in the Gaeltacht and use its core funding (exchequer and own resources) to service existing commitments & Údarás led schemes (grant-based supports for employment and capital projects). LEOs in the eight Local Authority areas comprising of Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht areas continue to operate in the county and city areas outside of the Gaeltacht and Údarás na Gaeltachta continue to deliver enterprise support in the Gaeltacht. More information on the supports available through Údarás na Gaeltachta can be found online at <https://udaras.ie/en/> or by phone on **091-503100** or email eolas@udaras.ie



4.2 OTHER INITIATIVES

MERITS

With the MERITS building coming on stream during 2021, LEO has been supporting the promotion and brand awareness of MERITS by supporting a series of webinars which included: “The Role of Digital technologies in Climate Action”; “The Workplace of the Future” and “SME 4.0: Showcasing SMEs that have adopted emerging digital technologies”.

During 2021 LEO will partner with MERITS to deliver a number of programmes aimed at developing StartUps and ScaleUps in the county. The first of these is the GLOBAL AMBITION programme which we will run twice during 2021. The first of these was held in March 2021 and saw 10-12 selected early stage companies undertake an intensive 8 week series of modules aimed at developing the businesses to be ready for expansion. The programme will end with a presentation to a team of investors and other stakeholders so that the revised business plans are fully stress-tested and ready for implementation.

The second programme will be a Pre-Accelerator targeted at “StandUps”, i.e. entrepreneurs with a business idea that is not yet fully developed. The programme will take them through a process of validating both themselves as prospective entrepreneurs and their business idea. They will be taken through a structured programme to help them assess and quantify Total Addressable Market (TOM), Serviceable Available Market (SAM) and Serviceable Obtainable Market (SOM) and we as developing a business plan and a streamlined and compelling “pitch”.

Opportunities are also being explored to involve MERITS in appropriate European and International Networks such as the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) and the network of European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIH).



LEO Kildare has assessed the risks that may adversely affect the delivery of LEO objectives and strategic priorities during the period 2021 - 2024 and has crafted actions to mitigate or remove these potential risks.

RISK CLASSIFICATION



Description	Risk Category	Impact on LEO	Likelihood of Occurrence	Risk Score	Management Control/ Mitigations	Timeframe to mitigate risk	Assigned to
Lack of Co Ordination between agencies regarding Enterprise support	Strategic	3	2	6	Ongoing and regular contact with all stakeholders, with particular attention to be paid to national, Regional and local plans identifying actions of relevance to LEO Kildare	Ongoing review and update of agency reports and contacts.	Head of LEO and/or designate
Lack of awareness among new and potential entrepreneurs regarding business supports available	Reputational (Local & National) brand	2	3	5	Implementation of the LEO Communications Strategy, ensuring that all supports received a tailored approach towards marketing and promotion, thereby ensuring that the message regarding enterprise support is clearly and widely understood	Review of Communication Strategy on a quarterly basis to assess impact and penetration into market LEO will arrange for direct contact with clients on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are supplied with all up-to-date information regarding full suite of supports available incl. Brexit & Covid-19.	Head of LEO and/or designate

Description	Risk Category	Impact on LEO	Likelihood of Occurrence	Risk Score	Management Control/ Mitigations	Timeframe to mitigate risk	Assigned to
Closures of small business in Kildare, affecting employment levels	Reputational (Local & National) brand	3	3	7	Ongoing promotion of supports available to all businesses, reducing the likelihood of closure if addressed early and effectively, and/ or identifying supports to the business owner and staff in developing existing and new business markets. The recent appointment of a business advisor will act as a point of contact for all businesses from pre- start, start and existing stage and will signpost to all supports available & guide and track progress accordingly. A Training Needs Analysis carried out to focus on the current business issues affecting the sector to ensure that current supports are relevant. Tailored Brexit related advisory in place with the recent appointment of Brexit advisor.	Ongoing review of sector.	Head of LEO and/or designate
Building sub-supply relationships with Large Foreign Direct Investment Multinationals	Partnership Relationships.	3	2	4	Support indigenous enterprises to sustain, develop their business and maximise the potential opportunities to provide added value services to large multinational employers This process will involve senior management team and LEO coordinating their ongoing contact with FDI's and developing a strategic approach to communications, meetings and creating a database of potential sub supply requirements.	Ongoing review and implementation	Head of LEO and Management Team

Description	Risk Category	Impact on LEO	Likelihood of Occurrence	Risk Score	Management Control/ Mitigations	Timeframe to mitigate risk	Assigned to
Lack of Quality Start ups	Strategic	3	3	9	Support the establishment of a best practice enterprise culture and promote enterprise and self-employment as a viable career option among the wider population. Student Enterprise and IBYE are key vehicles. LEO will consider the research of best practice models in enterprise support for the development in the areas of Digital, IT, Food, Gaming & Pharma as the areas considered HPSU and export orientated	Quarterly review at staff meetings to update on application activity.	Head of LEO and/or staff designate
Lack of Funding Options for Enterprises	Political	3	2	6	LEO will promote and raise awareness of business finance, business plans and start up finance supports available to business and entrepreneurs.	The impact will be assessed on an ongoing basis and will be amended in the event of changes being required.	Head of LEO and/or staff designate
Funding not being availed of	Operational/ Technology & HR	2	3	6	LEO will maintain regular and frequent contact with Enterprises recently approved funding to address any potential impediment to that funding being fully utilised at an early stage. Procedures will be in place to advise of the legal and statutory requirements for drawdown in advance of approval.	Ongoing review	Head of LEO and/or designate
GDPR Compliance	Operational/ Technology & HR	3	3		LEO are currently undergoing a full GDPR compliance review in conjunction with external consultant to ensure documentation and processes are GDPR compliant	Ongoing and to be reviewed in 3 months.	Head of LEO and/or staff designate

Description	Risk Category	Impact on LEO	Likelihood of Occurrence	Risk Score	Management Control/ Mitigations	Timeframe to mitigate risk	Assigned to
Staff Changes	Operational/ Technology & HR	3	4	8	LEO Kildare are currently preparing an extensive procedure manual which outlines the key processes, tasks, responsibilities and reference documentation associated with the delivery of all activities relevant to Kildare LEO. <i>In the event of an external focus changing, adjustments to the staffing profiles are implemented in response to any new supports/initiatives or changes to work practices. LEO have championed greater collegiality and networking opportunities by interactions with staff and the business community via online coffee mornings/ virtual meetings etc.</i>	Ongoing and reviewed <i>regularly at staff meetings</i>	Head of LEO and/or staff designate
Compliance with Financial Instruments under Enterprise Ireland MOU	Operational/ Technology & HR	3	3	9	Kildare LEO will implement the guidelines as agreed and all promoters will be appraised of the qualifying criteria. All financial supports are subject to EVAC process and approval	Ongoing process and reviewed at quarterly staff meetings.	Head of LEO and/or staff designate



FUNDING

LEO Kildare is funded annually by Government through Enterprise Ireland from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE). LEO Kildare will continue to work with Enterprise Ireland and DETE on its annual funding and resourcing requirements to drive our strategy. LEO Kildare commits to maximising its budget allocation ensuring value for money in fulfilling its objectives and strategic priorities.

TRAINING

LEO Kildare commits to the 2021-2024 Learning and Development plan for LEO staff and managers to ensure we have the necessary business development skillset to support our clients evolving needs to survive and thrive in the ever-changing business environment. A collaborative approach between Enterprise Ireland and the LEO's is taken to design programmes to support us in achieving the strategic priorities across Entrepreneurship, Competitiveness and Digitalisation, Green/Sustainability, Exporting/Internationalisation and Innovation. A best practice approach is adopted to deliver programmes such as the Professional Business Advisor programme, Green for Micro, Finance, Social Media and other business pillar programmes accordingly.

COMMUNICATIONS

Local Enterprise Office Kildare communications strategy will be fully aligned with the national 'Making It Happen' marketing and communications strategy for the Local Enterprise Offices, as set out by the LEO Communications Committee and LEO Communications Team in Enterprise Ireland. This strategy will focus on four key pillars:

- 01 — Promoting LEO-led programmes, supports and initiatives and those open to LEO clients from local authorities, Enterprise Ireland, protocol partners and other stakeholders
- 02 — Showcasing LEO and client announcements, regular profiling through case studies and thought leadership
- 03 — Rolling-out brand communications campaigns locally, to include 'Pre-Start,' 'Start' and 'Grow' themed campaigns
- 04 — Increasing the LEO's digital footprint online and enhancing social media presence and reach

The LEO Kildare Communications Strategy will continue to support National Initiatives such as those focused on Exporting, Innovation, Green, Digitalisation and Look for Local'.

In line with our Customer Charter, LEO Kildare will endeavour to ensure that our staff:

- Have the relevant knowledge and experience, responsibility and authority, to deal with customer enquiries or refer them to someone who can.
- Deliver our services in a friendly and inclusive manner.
- Treat all customers with courtesy and professionalism.
- Give clear, accurate and helpful information.
- Deal with customer requests, enquiries and concerns promptly.
- Treat all customers equally and without discrimination.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Continually explore new and better ways of delivering our service.
- Where the LEO cannot deal with a customer enquiry it will provide a referral service to the appropriate agency.
- The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Enterprise Ireland have agreed protocols with the relevant agencies to ensure an efficient customer service in response to LEO clients' enquiries.



01 APPENDIX 1 - LEO/ECO DEV. SUPPORTS & SERVICES 4 PILLARS

The key overarching objectives of the first-stop-shop LEO structure are to act firstly a) as a facilitator of access to enterprise services and b) to promote and support all enterprise at local level (with particular reference to micro enterprise).

1 Business Information & Advisory Services	2 Enterprise Support Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General business advice and information provision: Business Planning, Financial Advice, Management and Accounting, How-to Guides etc. Advice and information on rates, planning, licensing etc. including cost reductions e.g. water conservation and waste minimisation Information and access to other government services such as: Revenue [Seed Capital Scheme, Employment Investment Incentive Scheme (EIS), Revenue Job Assist] Social Protection/National Employment & Entitlements Service (NEES) [Back to Work Enterprise Allowance] ETB in relation to Training, Up-skilling and accreditation Companies Registration Credit Review Office Other services for example, Fáilte Ireland and An Bord Bia etc. Advice and information for local businesses on accessing public procurement and tender opportunities Advice on energy efficiency, sustainable development and alternative renewable energy sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide financial support for start-up and business development. Provide training supports e.g. Start Your Own Business Programmes, Kickstarter, Management development support etc. Access to commercial/enterprise space Mentoring Marketing Access to dedicated business networks Product and Service development Development of web-enabled services with a focus on trading online Maximising the impact of Community Enterprise Centres in local areas Access to Microfinance Ireland Loan Fund Progression pathway for high potential start-ups and high growth companies to Local Enterprise Office including access to Business Angels, New Frontiers Programme etc. Access to promotional space
3 Entrepreneurship Support Services	4 Local Enterprise Development Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education – Primary & Second level programmes Female entrepreneurship Senior entrepreneurship Development of clusters Enterprise Awards Enterprise promotional activities IBYE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development & implementation of local enterprise plan Input into County Development Plan Development of partnerships with relevant agencies e.g. North/South development Promotion and marketing of local areas as location for investment in conjunction with the appropriate national body e.g. IDA Identifying & developing projects & programmes including leveraging resources to implement these programmes and those funded from non-core resources Development of appropriate enterprise infrastructure at county/city level Management of local authority enterprise infrastructure or assets e.g. enterprise parks Acting as an enhanced resource for Government to undertake one-off initiatives Assisting in development of County/City Economic Strategies as proposed in the Local Government Reform Programme Direct engagement by Local Authority with businesses in difficulty in order to develop payment plans e.g. commercial rates

THE LEAN FOR MICRO PROGRAMME

Designed to support owner managers and key staff members who wish to gain an understanding of lean principles and how lean can help increase the overall productivity, effectiveness and efficiency of the enterprise.

THE LEAN DIGITISATION PROGRAMME

As a follow up from very successful lean program interventions, we have launched the LEAN Digitisation Programme to support Kildare businesses in the introduction and implementation of a secure and effective CRM system.

THE GREEN FOR MICRO PROGRAMME

Designed to improve the environmental performance of the business thereby increasing the agility and resilience to climate change impacts. It is intended for businesses unfamiliar with or lacking sufficient capability in environmental improvement methodologies. Eligible projects may include:

- Guidance with basic Environmental / Climate Action Management Systems
- Guidance with developing a Sustainable Strategy and Action Plan
- Guidance with aligning environmental practices to global/Irish sustainability reporting initiatives, e.g. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Origin Green, etc.
- Guidance with Life cycle assessment and/or Circular economy thinking

LEADERSHIP COACHING

The aim of this coaching is to build the individual leadership capacity, as well as supporting the development of skills to manage stakeholders and teams, during adverse (changing) business environments. Coaching sessions involve establishing a clear vision, identifying challenges and opportunities and agreeing leadership goals. Some outcomes include:

- Equips the individual with the skills to enrich performance in their role, by building on their strengths, improving their development areas and achieving their goals.
- Enhances specific aspects of interpersonal, communication and leadership skills.
- Strengthens skills in leading and managing change, and improving performance, as required by their role.
- Creates the environment for the individual to agree and implement a plan of continuous performance improvement.
- Empowers the individual to take full responsibility of their own leadership development.
- Supports a culture of continuous professional development.
- Generally, improves confidence, performance and capability to lead the business in a volatile business environment

INNOVATION CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Aimed to support owner managers to embed innovative thinking into their business. An innovation expert will support them in a practical way to develop a roadmap to uncover the innovation potential that exists in their business stimulating the creation of new business models, services, products and processes to create new opportunities in the marketplace.

STRATEGIC FINANCIAL CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

To support owner managers who wish to strengthen their strategic financial capability. The objective is to demonstrate how financial information can be used to assist in strategic decisions that will help grow the business and the practical implications for implementing.

NEW MARKET DEVELOPMENT

focused on upskilling domestic focused business interested in understanding if exporting is for them. Consideration of the challenges and opportunities for commencing an export journey:

- Domestic business and product capability
- Export opportunity – customer – competition – culture
- Export opportunity – products – sales – logistics
- Export opportunity – potential sales and costs
- Providing clients with the tool to develop a strategy leading to client achieving their global ambition
- Product and competitor understanding
- Customer and Market Understanding
- infrastructure understanding
- Capability and capacity understanding

ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK

The Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) is the world's largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises that have international growth ambitions. The EEN is active in more than 60 countries around the globe, bringing 3,000 experts together from more than 600 member organisations. Through the Local Enterprise Offices, the EEN can help small businesses get expert advice, source technologies and identify trusted business partners.

INTERTRADE IRELAND

Intertrade Ireland provides a range of services to businesses on the island of Ireland including information and support through voucher funding, a tailor-made on-line learning tool, a tariff checker, glossary of key Brexit terminology, research, networking and information events. Further information and eligibility criteria are available at intertradeireland.com/Brexit

PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS FOR CUSTOMS TRAINING

These one-day interactive online workshops, run regionally by Local Enterprise Offices, will provide businesses with a better understanding of the potential impacts, formalities and procedures to be adopted when trading with a country which is outside the Single Market and Custom Unions (a "Third Country"). This will occur when the UK leaves the European Union on December 31st 2020. Open to all businesses, these workshops will cover areas such as what export and import procedures apply, how tariffs work and how to correctly classify goods. Brexit: Customs Insights course (online) The Customs Insights course from Enterprise Ireland helps businesses understand the key customs concepts, documentation and processes required to move goods from, to and through the UK. The online course, which is open to companies of all sizes, will provide learners with a firm understanding of the customs implications for their business and the options from Revenue to make this process more efficient.

READY FOR CUSTOMS GRANT

The Ready for Customs Grant from Enterprise Ireland will assist businesses to increase their capacity to manage the customs process. Up to €9,000 is available for each new full-time employee engaged in customs work. This grant contributes to recruitment costs, employee costs and provision of IT infrastructure. If a business employs a new person to deal with customs on a part-time basis a grant of up to €4,500 is available. (Eligibility criteria applies)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MICRO-EXPORTERS (TAME) GRANT

The TAME grant supports clients to explore and develop new export market opportunities, such as participation in international trade fairs and development of export related marketing materials and websites. With a focus on helping companies to diversify, this scheme is a matched-funding opportunity with up to €2,500 available.



NOTES

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