"When a crisis hits, we are forced to confront the truth about how our systems work (or don’t). The places where things could be done better or more efficiently become glaringly obvious. All of a sudden, opportunities for innovation are staring us in the face."

- harvardbusiness.org/innovation-in-a-time-of-crisis/
ANNOUNCEMENT OF FUNDED PROJECTS

34 projects funded under €1 million Public Service Innovation Fund

34 diverse projects have successfully secured funding from this year’s call under the Public Service Innovation Fund, an initiative of the Our Public Service 2020 reform strategy for development and innovation in the Public Service. The Fund, now in its second year, is a competition designed to support innovation from public service bodies to promote collaboration and new and better approaches to service delivery.

This year’s call saw an increase of 168 per cent in applications for funding over the 2019 pilot. A total of 364 project proposals were received from organisations in all sectors of the Public Service - Civil Service, Defence Forces, Education Sector, Health Sector, Local Government, Justice Sector and Non-Commercial State Agencies.

Announcing the results, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Michael McGrath TD, said, “This year we have seen how, now more than ever, there is a need for our Public Service to be agile, innovative and responsive to the myriad of challenges facing the country. Cross-public service collaboration is outlined in the Programme for Government as a priority and this collaboration between our public service organisations, business and research communities is essential to drive the development of new ways of working and designing and delivering better services for the public.

“The projects receiving funding this year clearly demonstrate the willingness of public servants to work together to find better solutions. It is imperative that we create value in every public project embarked on, whether in healthcare, our emergency services, digital delivery of public services or education for our young people.” The portfolio of projects contains a diverse selection of innovations from around the country and across all sectors of the Public Service. Many are collaborative and have demonstrated evidence of their potential to scale and transfer within, and in some cases outside their own sectors.
Projects will be realised in 2020 with funding available of between €10,000 and €50,000 per project. The 34 successful projects (see full list on the following pages) display many types of innovation being employed across all sectors. The appetite to adopt new and emerging technologies in public services is also evident.

Describing the projects funded this year, Dr Lucy Fallon-Byrne, Head of Reform, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) said, “In the mix are projects that use new technologies such as sensor technologies and the Internet of Things (IOT), Robotic Process Automation (RPA), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Building Information Modelling (BIM) and Virtual Reality (VR).

“Some of the successful projects will digitise processes to create efficiencies in time and money. Other projects address aspects of major societal and environment issues by creating new ways of working on mental health challenges, recidivism, energy monitoring and climate change. The common factor among all projects selected is their potential for positive impact on the service user or public service organisation.”
What a fantastic start to the 'Inspiring Ideas' webinar series on Friday 3rd July 2020. The Public Service Innovation Network event was formally launched by Dr Lucy Fallon-Byrne, Head of Reform in Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, and she spoke about the plan for upcoming webinars to showcase the impressive innovations happening across all sectors and how important our innovative response is now more than ever.

Our first guests were Prof. Martin Curley, Ross Cullen and Lorraine Smyth from the HSE's Digital Transformation Unit (HSEDT) and the webinar was moderated by Breda O'Brien, DPER Public Service Innovation Projects Lead. We heard about the Unit’s process pre, during and post crisis and the team illustrated how quickly they were able to mobilise ideas from the assessment gate right through to broad adoption of their innovations. We were also treated to a whistle-stop tour of some of Digital Transformation Unit’s innovative solutions that have come about during the pandemic and a live demonstration of a prototype being used which further highlighted the importance of developing a prototype to socialise innovations and convince senior managers of the benefits. The power of being able to hold something, see it, and experience it, really adds to the compelling nature of the idea.

Read more and view the slides here.

INNOVATION NETWORK EVENTS

Upcoming webinars:
- 7th August
- 11th September

More details to follow on ops2020.gov.ie/innovation.

If you would like to present at a webinar please get in touch at innovation@per.gov.ie. We'd love to give you the opportunity to share your story with an engaged audience.
In response to the Covid-19-related challenges faced by colleagues throughout the Public Service, DPER's Public Service Innovation Team had commenced collecting stories of the innovative responses being developed since March. These interventions were primarily those developed by the Irish Public Service and categorised by sector. In addition, responses by other countries had been selected for inclusion as well as some interesting stories of diversification by industry.

The initial aim of collating these examples was to inform and inspire colleagues of workable solutions to similar problems faced and hopefully inspire the creation of other innovative responses. It is now imperative to more comprehensively capture these stories of the strong and innovative responses of the Public Service and embed the successful and impactful solutions and efficiencies as a new and better way of doing our work into the future.

**Embedding the New Normal**

Some of the usual steps required in socialising new innovations have been bypassed in this crisis. Many of these innovations are now clearly needed to combat Covid-impacts and the bias towards existing ways of doing things is somewhat diminished. In a time of crisis different types of projects and capabilities are supported and doing something unusual can now seem perfectly normal i.e. online meetings. Some types of innovation will be easier in a crisis such as digital transformation and other innovations may struggle to emerge. The crisis has given increased legitimacy to supporting public service innovation and how valuable it will be in effectively responding to the global challenges that are emerging and will continue to do so.
It is now important that we document not only the innovations themselves but also the levels of coordinated innovation happening and any potential siloed responses in the system. It is critical that we arrive at the new normal with an evidence-base of what innovations emerged, what worked and what wasn’t so successful and why, and to capture learnings from our innovators to share throughout the system.

To embed these new ways of working as the new normal we need to emphasise the benefits, the efficiencies achieved etc. and these stories should be socialised and communicated widely in our Public Service. Solutions are easy to adopt when they are tangible, visible and come with a clear value proposition. Doing so will ensure these innovations are more durable. Engagement is therefore critical at this juncture to capture more comprehensively how the system has/is responding.

Public Service Organisations (PSOs) have been invited via their appointed Innovation Representatives to submit their Covid-19 innovations via an online form – see link here.

These innovations will be written up as one/two-page case studies. Over time as the collection of information grows it will be easier to describe Ireland’s innovative response as insights emerge. The final report of the Irish Public Service Innovative Covid-19 Responses will be available later this year. In advance of a final report, case studies may feature in our newsletter, and may be posted to our website www.OPS2020.gov.ie and posted on social media. This communication is essential for embedding the successful innovations as the new way of working.
We held ‘Meet the Robots’, an interactive webinar on Thursday July 23rd. At this webinar, we heard from the Minister for Public Procurement and eGovernment, Mr. Ossian Smyth TD, who set out the context of RPA in public services and outlined the importance of technologies like this in making services better for the citizen.

We also heard from representatives of the Robotic Process Automation (RPA) software providers that are available to your organisation under the Office of Government Procurement’s RPA Framework. The approved vendors are UiPath, BluePrism and NICE. This webinar gives you an opportunity to understand different features and capabilities of the software providers in automating processes. All three vendors participated in the event.

The vendors showcased concrete examples of how their robots have been deployed in public services to automate laborious workstreams; speeding up processes for our users and making the lives of public servants easier. The event also includes participation from RPA policy owners at the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in addition to expert advice from the RPA Framework provider, Deloitte.

A recording of the event will be available on www.ops2020.gov.ie.

Public Service Innovation Week 2020 takes place from 19th to 23rd October. This year we will be coming to you with a variety of exciting and inspiring online events with a special focus on our shared experiences of the challenges presented by Covid-19 and showcasing some of the fantastic and innovative public service responses to the crisis. Keep an eye on ops2020.gov.ie for the programme of events closer to the time.

#InnovationWeek2020
The Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission has recently published call for tender - 'ELISE 2020 – Creating Public Value through Local and Regional Innovations'.

It has two lots:
1. Leveraging the power of location information and technologies to improve public services at local level: an EU-wide analysis.
2. Regional and local data-driven innovation through collective intelligence and sandboxing.

The closing date for receipt of tenders is 25th August 2020; full details can be found here.

The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade has this month launched the first ever Iveagh Innovation Fund. The Iveagh Innovation Fund is a competitive fund which aims to support innovative ideas from across the Department and turn those ideas into reality, with funding of up to €50,000 available.

The DFAT Innovation Team, have been working to support and encourage innovation within the Department for almost two years. Over that time, they have witnessed fantastic examples of innovation from across the DFAT network.

The objective of the Iveagh Innovation Fund is to encourage new ideas to come forward and to provide resources and supports in order to turn those ideas into reality.

It is anticipated that the fund will be distributed across a number of projects and the Ideas to Reality project team are keen to support initiatives both big and small which can deliver value for the Department.

If you have any questions in relation the Iveagh Innovation Fund or the innovation initiative within DFAT, you can contact Marie Therese Power who is the project manager for the Ideas to Reality project.

Creating Public Value through Local and Regional Innovations
Department of Education and Skills
Project: Robotic Processing Automation (RPA) for Pensions
Funding: €40,000

The Pension Unit administers pension schemes for over 55,000 teachers and non-teaching staff. Its principal function is the calculation and processing of retirements and related benefits. However, the work of the Unit is manual, labour intensive and time consuming. This proposal is to introduce Robotic Processing Automation (RPA) to automate elements in the compilation of service histories.

The use of RPA to populate even the most basic elements of the service history from the various data sources will save around 20 minutes per service history, which for 55,000 scheme members equates to over 1.1 million minutes, 3,000 working days or 12 working years. As RPA will also eliminate some of the manual inputting of data, it will increase the accuracy of the digital profiles created and significantly improve services for customers.

Department of Justice and Equality
Project: Bed Management System for International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS)
Funding: €45,000

International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) provides accommodation to international protection applicants while their applications for international protection are being processed. Currently there are circa 7,700 residents accommodated across 76 locations across the country. The objective of this project is to develop a centralised 'Accommodation/Bed Management System' that will be accessible by accommodation centres to update required information in real-time for use by IPAS Operations to:

1. Enable IPAS to identify and manage accommodation availability in real-time;
2. Provide current and accurate information to produce management reports and statistics.

A centralised system with real-time information will enable accommodation capacity to be used in the most efficient, transparent and cost effective manner.
The Public Jobs Discovery Kit for Schools is designed to raise awareness and inspire young people in secondary schools (720+) across the country to find out more about the Civil and Public service, and highlight the variety of interesting career options in the sector.

It will be available through a dedicated microsite on publicjobs.ie and will be supported by dynamic content, downloadable tools to support interactive, fun and game based learning sessions, and links to other key second level career related resources. The funding will be used primarily to create, market test and develop a resource pack with easy to use facilitator guidance and a mix of activity based and multi-media content.

Ireland has a highly diverse range of approximately 250,000 SMEs keen to play their part in decarbonising Ireland’s economy. It is proposed to build a Climate Action ‘hub’ for the enterprise sector to guide them on their decarbonisation journey. This project will be delivered collaboratively by Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and the Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment, supported by Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, SEAI, EPA, Irish Water and the Department of the Taoiseach.

The Climate Action hub will contain tools such as a climate action plan template and a simple carbon calculator tool. The hub will direct users to the supports available from state agencies, depending on the key resources identified.
The proposal is to establish EOLAS, a civil service directory – accessible by all civil servants – listing the phone number, email address and unit details for officers across every Government Department. This will increase the efficiency of our communications and improve inter-departmental collaboration.

As it stands, it can be difficult to contact an officer in another Department if one does not already have the relevant contact details of that person. With a centralised civil service-wide directory, officers will be able to contact one another more easily reducing call volumes and increasing efficiency. The funding will be used to develop the proposal, including user requirements analysis in collaboration with the OCGIO (Office of the Government Chief Information Officer) and representatives from Government Departments.

In 2017, the Office of Government Procurement launched a ‘strategy for the increased use of digital technology in the delivery of key public works projects’; this includes a desire to adopt Building Information Modelling (BIM) on projects. Working using BIM, teams can virtually construct a building before it is built on site.

This proposal aims to assist teams making the transition to delivering BIM projects, using Revit modelling software, by developing a ‘Revit template’ for the OPW. This will provide a common ‘set-up’ for models, reducing time on projects, and will be stored, and updated, centrally for use across the OPW. The template will be developed by a team of OPW architects, engineers and technicians under the guidance of an external consultant.
For Government Departments and Public Service Bodies it can be challenging to publish high value aggregate open data sets via Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and full file downloads. This is a requirement of the revised 2019 Open Data and Public Sector Information Directive, which will make public sector and publicly funded data re-usable.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has written PxStat: an open source tool to publish statistical tables as open data. It is accessible via APIs enabling full file downloads. CSO will collaborate with Department of Education & Skills (DES) to pilot publishing dataset tables on the beta version of PxStat in 2020. This proof of concept pilot project will enable PxStat, as well as insights from the project, to be shared across the public service. The funding will be used for the experimental phase of the project.

National Monuments Service | National Parks and Wildlife Service

**Project:** HeritageData.Gov.ie  
**Funding:** €15,000

The proposal is to develop an online facility to share the rich and varied natural and archaeological information and imagery from National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) and National Monuments Services (NMS). The new *HeritageData.Gov.ie* website will be the official and authoritative publication channel from NPWS and NMS, content will contribute directly to data.gov.ie (Ireland’s open data portal) and will be accessible also through the gov.ie website.

The *HeritageData.Gov.ie* site will provide a one stop digital showcase of Ireland’s archaeological heritage, protected sites, habitats and species in new and interactive ways, including use of 3D visuals and video, providing virtual access to sites such as Sceilg Mhicil, our National Parks and Brú na Bóinne and wider heritage features, using a range of formats for all, especially those with disabilities to enjoy. The funding will be used for user requirements analysis, concept and prototype development for the new website which will also enable access to archive material.

Central Statistics Office | Department of Education and Skills

**Project:** Publishing Open Data Across the Public Service  
**Funding:** €15,000

For Government Departments and Public Service Bodies it can be challenging to publish high value aggregate open data sets via Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and full file downloads. This is a requirement of the revised 2019 Open Data and Public Sector Information Directive, which will make public sector and publicly funded data re-usable.
3 Operations Wing is tasked with a wide variety of helicopter mission capability requirements in support of the Defence Forces, and the Irish public as whole. A large amount of training is required by the unit, necessitating the use of expensive aircraft hours, some of which could be reduced by the unit having a purpose built, safe and suitable training aid.

In conjunction with the recently procured Helicopter Air Delivery Platform (HADP), a Virtual Reality (VR) training aid will add a high fidelity and scenario based training aid. This type of device is at the leading edge of training aid development and is still in its infancy. It will save overall costs on flight hours and maintenance, and provide a higher standard of training in a safe and controlled environment to students prior to going onto the live helicopter phase of training.
Irish local authorities have to comply with the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy (PSEES) and reduce energy consumption by 33% by 2020. The Nimbus Research Centre, Cork IT and Cork County Council have been collaborating towards this goal and have produced a platform (e-Lighthouse) that alerts on higher than expected consumption for an energy meter and produces time-series reports.

The funding will be used to extend functionality to support real-time monitoring of building assets equipped with smart meter, and provide a means to issue an alert and get feedback on the reasons for the anomaly from end users through the system. The design of the system is done in such way that it is transferable to any local authority, to support actions taken in meeting PSEES goals.

Clare Education Centre

**Project:** Climate Action in Primary Schools (CAPS) : An innovative STEAM outreach programme for primary schools

**Funding:** €40,000

Clare Education Centre is leading on the design, development and pilot of an innovative Outreach programme for primary schools based on climate change and action. The programme harnesses the arts as a foundation for a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) learning process on this complex and challenging area. The overall goal of the CAPS programme will be to build climate action knowledge and capacity in primary teachers and pupils through creative, collaborative, critical, and innovative thinking about the causes and effects of climate change. Learning how to understand and deal with these issues, using the Arts as a launch pad to investigate, will promote attitudes of individual and collective responsibility towards planet Earth and develop environmental literacy in teachers and pupils alike. The programme will be piloted in a number of schools in County Clare in Autumn 2020.

Cork Institute of Technology | Cork County Council

**Project:** Cork County Council Housing and Building Energy Monitoring System

**Funding:** €30,000

Irish local authorities have to comply with the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy (PSEES) and reduce energy consumption by 33% by 2020. The Nimbus Research Centre, Cork IT and Cork County Council have been collaborating towards this goal and have produced a platform (e-Lighthouse) that alerts on higher than expected consumption for an energy meter and produces time-series reports.

The funding will be used to extend functionality to support real-time monitoring of building assets equipped with smart meter, and provide a means to issue an alert and get feedback on the reasons for the anomaly from end users through the system. The design of the system is done in such way that it is transferable to any local authority, to support actions taken in meeting PSEES goals.
Newtown School Waterford | Waterford Institute of Technology

**Project:** Newtown Innovation Labs - STEAM Workshops for Primary and Secondary Students and Teachers

**Funding:** €16,000

Newtown Innovation Labs (iLabs) is a not-for-profit, community learning space located on campus in Newtown Secondary School in Waterford. Inspired by Microsoft DreamSpace, it is a creative place for students to learn through hands-on, practical workshops in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics).

Since opening in January 2020, a number of free STEAM workshops have been run for students and teachers in Waterford city. The funding will be used to extend the reach to the South East region and run free STEAM workshops for student groups and teachers at both primary and secondary level. The overall aim of these workshops is to increase the teaching of computer science and thus computational thinking in classrooms. This is in response to a trend of research that shows there is a lack of knowledge within schools about computer science, despite some investment in the sector.

Maynooth University | Irish Prison Service | Irish Probation Service | City of Dublin Education and Training Board | Irish Penal Reform Trust

**Project:** Unlocking Potential: Developing a Fair Approach to Higher Education Applicants with Criminal Records

**Funding:** €25,000

The Maynooth University (MU) and Mountjoy (MJ) Partnership, established in 2019, is working to address a root cause of recidivism by increasing access to higher education (HE) for prisoners and former prisoners.

The partnership has identified a number of issues concerning the operations of admissions policies by higher education institutions (HEIs) which are deterring applications from people with convictions. The toolkit will support HEIs to redevelop their admissions policies and practices for prisoners, former prisoners and people with convictions and aims to foster a common approach to this issue across higher education. It is intended that this work will contribute more broadly to recruitment practices, and the employment of people with convictions, across the public and civil service.
Health Sector

UL Hospitals Group (HSE) | Children's Health Ireland (CHI) at Crumlin
**Project:** Nutrition Calculator for Paediatrics
**Funding:** €50,000

Preterm infants, weighing as little as 401g, and critically ill children need intensive support from a team of specialists to help them survive and grow. International guidelines highlight specific nutrients required to optimise this growth. In neonatal and paediatric intensive care units in Ireland complex calculations are done every day, often by hand, to determine these individual nutrient requirements. This can take up to 1.5hr, in a scenario where timing and accuracy is critical.

Stemming from UL Hospitals Group hackathon, is association with Microsoft Ireland, this project hopes to develop a web based application for nutrition calculation. The funding will be used to commission and deploy the pilot application at University Maternity Hospital Limerick and CHI at Crumlin.

HSE Community Healthcare East, Mental Health Service | St Vincent's University Hospital
**Project:** Creating a Sensory Pathway for Service Users of an Acute Mental Health Inpatient Service
**Funding:** €10,500

Admission to an inpatient mental health facility during crisis can be an overwhelming experience. Service users are exposed to over stimulating, complex and often unfamiliar stimuli and the environment does not provide dedicated quiet, private spaces. Providing safe, therapeutic environments at ward-level and sensory-based opportunities for intervention can facilitate prevention strategies to reduce restrictive interventions and promote recovery-focused care.

Funding will support staff training in sensory approaches, provision of holistic, client-centred assessment, results of which will inform person-centred care and crisis intervention planning. A sensory space will facilitate de-escalation, support self-regulation in times of crisis, and reduce need for restrictive practices. This is an innovative, recovery-focused approach.
According to the Stroke Association UK (2016), 85% of stroke survivors will have upper limb deficits. Occupational Therapists (OTs) in the Stroke Unit in Cork are aware of the gap in the upper limb service provided to patients. A review of programs and equipment to optimise the stroke survivor outcome led to the selection of new technology: Bimeo Pro Virtual Technology (VT system) and the evidence-based: GRASP (Graded Repetitive Arm Supplementary Program) toolkit, which met the criteria to implement in the Stroke Unit.

This funding application will provide a choice of activity to be prescribed by the OT and self-directed by the patients on the unit. These activities will be particularly useful outside of therapy time and will promote family involvement. This is a novel approach to the stroke unit as it develops a culture of upper limb activity through both conventional and high tech equipment. It also encourages the patient to take a lead in their recovery.

Each year nearly half a million outpatient hospital appointments are wasted in Ireland as patients neither arrive nor cancel - referred to as ‘Do Not Attends’ (DNAs). In fact, the outcome of 150 out of every 1,000 outpatient appointments is a DNA. This means that some patients are not seen when they should be and that resources are not being used optimally.

This project will redesign and test patient appointment offer letters and text reminders to increase patient engagement and reduce DNAs. Funding will add functionality to IT systems in the participating hospitals to rigorously test the effect on attendance of redesigned behaviourally informed correspondence compared to existing correspondence.
Population health evidence suggests that the majority of patients' health and social care needs can and should be delivered in local settings, with hospital based care being reserved for patients who have highly acute complex care needs.

The National Ambulance Service (NAS) are implementing a community-based healthcare initiative whereby Community Paramedics work in partnership with General Practitioners (GP) and Primary Care Teams, in responding to and managing patients with low acuity conditions, delivering care in their homes and communities, using Telemedicine. This will lead to improved communications consultation between the Community Paramedic and GPs; GP access to real-time patient monitoring data; and real-time consultation between the patient and GP.

South Galway Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
Project: Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy
Funding: €41,500

This project aims to assess the feasibility of virtual reality (VR) technology in the treatment of anxiety disorders in children and teenagers. The funding will be used to develop a pilot programme using VR to recreate real life scenarios and interventions for anxiety. Despite evidence for the efficacy of VR in the treatment of anxiety, it has yet to be utilised in CAMHS, even though this medium would have a particular appeal for children and teenagers.

For the pilot programme South Galway CAMHS team will lead the project and collaborate with colleagues across Galway, Mayo and Roscommon CAMHS services. The team hopes to partner also with the Department of Education, Primary Care Psychology and TUSLA in the design and development of the videos and in evaluating the usability, feasibility and efficacy of VRET as an early treatment intervention.
Capturing physiological parameters in hospital such as blood pressure, pulse rate and temperature are some of the parameters used in calculating National Early Warning Score System (NEWS), a key indicator which determines the degree of illness of a patient and prompts critical care intervention. A sample study from the Galway Clinic has shown that there is a 50.44% error rate (ranging from incorrect totals, total scores, wrong field etc.) in calculating the NEWS manually on paper records, which is the practice with all public HSE hospitals throughout Ireland at present. This can contribute to a delay in clinical interventions and some patient developing sepsis, cardiac arrest and many other conditions.

This project will pilot a digital NEWS on wards in Tallaght University Hospital with an evaluation in collaboration with University partners. A digital NEWS can improve patient safety significantly while maximising utilisation of existing bed capacity. Having a robust NEWS supports the reduction of a patient developing Sepsis or being at risk of a cardiac arrest, fundamentally saving lives and increasing bed capacity through shorter length of stays. The project has the potential to be scaled using the HSE Digital Labs staging system.
Forensic KOP Shop (Knowledge of Protocols) aims to provide the customers of Forensic Science Ireland (FSI) with a simple, user-friendly digital platform to access knowledge and correct procedures for collecting and packaging items for testing in FSI. It is vital to increase awareness among members of An Garda Síochána of the impact of well sampled and packaged items that allow forensic analysis without compromise. FSI has limited resources and opportunities to provide scene of crime examiners or members of An Garda Síochána with this knowledge. With well over 10,000 existing Gardaí on the beat and 800 new recruits coming out of the Garda Training College each year, our ability to connect with our customer on this topic is limited.

In 2019 many members of An Garda Síochána were issued with an Android mobile phone for work purposes. The proposal for this innovation project is to build a mobile app, compatible with Android mobile phones, and populate it with short informative videos demonstrating correct sampling procedures for different evidence types. The content will also include helpful data sheets on evidence, the correct PPE to use, essential health and safety information, anti-contamination considerations, correct packaging for the evidence, sampling strategy, etc. The app will also have the contact details for the FSI helpline. The funding will be used to build the platform for the app and prepare quality content, including instructional videos.

Forensic Science Ireland  
**Project:** Forensic KOP (Knowledge of Protocols) Shop  
**Funding:** €33,200

Dr. John O’Shaughnessy, Chemistry Team Manager, Forensic Science Ireland
Part of the remit of the Policing Authority is to promote public awareness of matters relating to policing services. Stakeholder engagement to date has included holding public consultations and collecting responses, the vast majority of which come from civil society organisations. The existing approach, while worthwhile, is lacking in interactivity; it does not necessarily reach or engage many individual citizens; and it can be difficult to collate measurable data from the responses.

This project proposes to use technology to reach beyond organisations to encourage wider and more meaningful engagement with individual citizens, using a consultation on policing priorities as a pilot. Software will be used to enable a novel form of engagement through a ‘prioritisation deliberation’ exercise. With this interactive exercise, the citizen has a certain finite number of ‘points’ to allocate to various areas which he or she considers a policing priority. This also offers an opportunity to educate the public and raise awareness about policing.
Fingal County Council | Smart Dublin
Project: 3D Virtual Reality Model to Enhance Citizen Engagement
Funding: €20,000

Balbriggan is now the youngest and one of the most ethnically diverse towns in Ireland. Its rapid growth has meant amenities have not kept pace with population growth; the local economy and main street have struggled; and perception of the place is poor. Engaging with the people of the town as part of its rejuvenation is a key element in the strategic plan. The proposal is to create a 3D Virtual Reality (VR) Model to be used in Our Balbriggan Hub, to connect with residents, public services and business in a meaningful way. The hub, situated in the centre of the town will be the engine room for the plan and is where the Our Balbriggan team will be based. Having VR technology will enable the team to engage further with the citizens and help them to visualize how their town will be developed.


Local Government Management Agency
Project: Applying Robotics to Core Exception Reporting
Funding: €15,000

At present in the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), clocking and attendance details for all personnel within the organisation are recorded and managed on the ‘Core’ time and attendance system. The same system is used in all local authorities in the country. Currently, the reporting of all Core clocking exceptions is managed manually for the 100 staff within the LGMA. This process takes on average 15 hours per month of valuable administration resources to execute and manage.

By applying Robotic Process Automation (RPA) technology, it is proposed to develop a monitoring and execution process aligned with Core that will automatically identify and escalate exceptions to the appropriate management level within the organisation, thus allowing the administration resources to add value to the organisation elsewhere. Once developed and validated, this solution could be deployed across the entire Local Government sector of over 40,000 staff.
Traffic congestion is one of the biggest challenges for Fingal County Council. Many of Fingal's citizens travel outside the area to work, leading to congestion and long commute times. This compounds congestion and commuter issues, seriously affecting citizen quality of life and damages Ireland's attractiveness to foreign investment.

The funding will go towards developing intelligent traffic solutions and trialing IoT sensors in the Dublin 15 pilot area, in partnership with ESB Innovation. This will enable Fingal County Council to use real-time data to improve traffic flows, reduce congestion and monitor traffic and environmental data. A better overall picture of the urban landscape can be obtained and data used in planning and building strategic infrastructure for communities.
Enterprise Challenge 2020 is a joint initiative which matches micro/small-medium commercial enterprises and social enterprises in Dublin with teams of final year or Masters level university students. Students from diverse backgrounds, nationalities and cultures will work in teams of 4-5 with selected enterprises to help provide insights, propose solutions and ultimately present a bespoke and tangible plan that sets out how challenges and opportunities could be addressed. The types of enterprise challenges that students can work on include: innovation, design thinking, new product/service development, business development, opportunity identification and evaluation, commercialisation, and new venture creation.

Public Service Innovation Funding will be used to scale the project in 2020. Prize funds for enterprises and student teams will be created to enhance the pitch competition and initiative. Funding will also be used to develop programme and marketing material in order to strengthen the initiative for further regional scaling.

South Dublin County Council

Project: Creative Studio

Funding: €21,000

The Creative Studio is a free to use digital maker space facilitating the creation of music recordings, podcasts, videos, digital stories and oral histories. At the centre of this space is a recording booth providing library patrons with access to a variety of audio and video recording equipment and software.

South Dublin Public Libraries will open a new library in Rowlagh, Clondalkin in 2020. Rowlagh is a deprived area, typified by a high level of unemployment and anti-social behaviour. The idea of introducing The Creative Studio is to engage with younger people in particular - ene10rgise them and provide upskilling in digital media, with a view to expanding their horizons on future career possibilities.

Dublin City Council / LEO Dublin City | TU Dublin | DCU

Project: Enterprise Challenge 2020

Funding: €12,500

Enterprise Challenge 2020 is a joint initiative which matches micro/small-medium commercial enterprises and social enterprises in Dublin with teams of final year or Masters level university students. Students from diverse backgrounds, nationalities and cultures will work in teams of 4-5 with selected enterprises to help provide insights, propose solutions and ultimately present a bespoke and tangible plan that sets out how challenges and opportunities could be addressed. The types of enterprise challenges that students can work on include: innovation, design thinking, new product/service development, business development, opportunity identification and evaluation, commercialisation, and new venture creation.

Public Service Innovation Funding will be used to scale the project in 2020. Prize funds for enterprises and student teams will be created to enhance the pitch competition and initiative. Funding will also be used to develop programme and marketing material in order to strengthen the initiative for further regional scaling.
Monaghan County Council (MCC) proposes the development of a virtual reality 360-degree tour and house inspection app for housing stock. The solution will allow the housing applicant to experience a virtual tour of the house either in the local authority offices or at their own convenience at a time and place that suits them. This frees up local authority staff for other work.

Housing inspections are currently very time-consuming for local authority staff. MCC engineers take many 2D pictures of each room in the house. They also spend a lot of time manually recording issues in the house on paper-based forms. The proposed solution will use voice recording and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to log specific categories of damage for repair e.g. electrical, plumbing. Funding will be used to develop a Build to Share application and for project materials.

Pictured (L-R): Carmel O’Hare, Nuala Woods and Sinéad McCann from Monaghan County Council

National Building Control Office | Dublin Housing Observatory | AIRO
Project: National Building Open Data Portal
Funding: €40,000

The National Building Control Office (NBCO) provides a national shared service by managing the system for Building Control administration in the 31 Building Control Authorities (BCMS). This system is accessed and used in over 20 countries daily. In the current political climate and in the midst of a housing crisis, access to data around housing and, more specifically, house building activity and progress, is in constant demand. The NBCO is uniquely placed to allow Data to be an Enabler in this highly complex area.

A joined-up and integrated approach is required for the solution and the NBCO recognise the need to provide the same information to people at the same time. The funding will go towards the development of an Open Data Portal to access building commencement and completion data.

Pictured (L-R) are Mairéad Phelan, Sabrina McDonnell (NBCO) and Colin Barden (Wexford County Council)
Enterprise Ireland (EI) and IDA Ireland are committed to helping their respective client companies, and the entire public sector, grow their innovation agenda and manage transformation. The proposal is to develop a digital innovation tool that will help organisations assess where they currently are, identify gaps in their innovation approach, and be signposted to where they need to go to get support. This is essential for future organisational success. Building capability in innovation is currently is a key challenge for both EI and IDA clients and the public service in Ireland.

Funding will be used to develop a common digital tool, based on the ISO 56000 series (Innovation Management), that has the potential to be used by the entire public and private sector in Ireland. It will foster a shared understanding of our innovation positions and help identify opportunities for learning, collaboration and development. The tool also offers huge potential for significant insights through data analytics that will drive more effective development of innovation capabilities across the board.

Citizens Information Board
Project: ISL (Irish Sign Language) App
Funding: €50,000

Currently, a member of the Deaf community wishing to remotely access certain public services or make a medical appointment needs to register with the Irish Remote Interpreting Service (IRIS) in advance. Often Deaf clients cannot access information or services as the organisation is not able to connect to the chosen platform due to ICT restrictions.

The funding will be used to develop a VIP (Video Interpreting Platform) app that will connect the Deaf community with public services. This will enable public service bodies to provide direct access to ISL through an app that can be downloaded to a tablet or mobile phone. The camera and speakers are already provided and the app will link directly to a registered interpreter. This allows for greater flexibility and more access to services for the Deaf community.
Smart D8 is a new two-year programme led by Dublin City Council, Smart Dublin and the Digital Hub Development Agency in collaboration with a range of other stakeholders in health, research and enterprise development, focused on developing a Smart City testbed district in The Liberties in Dublin 8. Falling under the ‘umbrella’ of Smart Dublin – the innovative city programme across the four Dublin local authorities - the Smart D8 testbed district aims to identify and trial a series of collaborative initiatives that use smart processes and digital innovation to improve the lives of people in Dublin 8, and which encourages ongoing collaboration between local partners in the fields of healthcare and community development.

Smart D8 will be a key element of the emerging ‘Health Innovation Corridor’ of leading health care institutions such as St James’s Hospital, National Children’s Hospital and St Patrick’s Mental Health Services, significant research bodies and Dublin 8-based enterprise hubs for technology companies collaborating to create a centre of excellence in digital healthcare and social care in Dublin.

With Smart D8’s focus on community wellbeing, DPER funding will support an initial phase of community and stakeholder engagement that establishes a strongly collaborative approach for the programme from the outset. The funding will be used for a series of workshops and to conduct surveys with project stakeholders.