

Create Green
Offaly
sustainable by design

LEADER CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP

Nov 27 Nov 2025



Offaly Local
Development
Company





“Creativity is intelligence having fun.”

Albert Einstein



Journal of Economics & Commerce Vol. 15, No. 1, 2024

- Economic Contribution: contribute to economic sustainability by generating income, creating jobs, and fostering entrepreneurship
- Cultural and Social Sustainability: play a vital role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage, fostering social cohesion, and celebrating diversity.
- Environmental Considerations: an influence sustainable practices by incorporating eco-friendly processes and materials.
- Community Engagement: often engage with local communities, promoting social responsibility and sustainable development practices

https://jec.davjournals.in/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/JEC-Jan_Jun_2024.pdf#page=49





When it started 2008 - 2009

- Overview of Offaly's vibrant creative sector and early collaboration with Westmeath Community Development.
 - Recognised diverse creative community
 - Developed bespoke training: product development, pricing, presentation
 - Strengthened creative sector across Offaly & Westmeath
- 





Findings & Achievements



Stronger networks & increased visibility

Participation in retail and wholesale trade events (e.g RDS Craft Fair & Harrogate)

Collaborative approach

LEARNINGS



Importance of the Animation budget

Increased stakeholder engagement



International Collaboration: Finland (2013)

- Skills exchange with Finnish partners
- Shared craft traditions & business practices
- Growth in creative collaboration



CraftLink Development

- Cultural exchange programme
- Networking & business training
- Production of 8 promotional videos

Sector Review Findings

- One-size-fits-all approach ineffective
- Identified full-time, part-time & hobbyist creatives
- Expanded support to wider creative enterprises



Traditional Skills Programme

County-wide training: woodturning, basket weaving, sewing

400+ participants

Celebrated local Craft Masters through video series

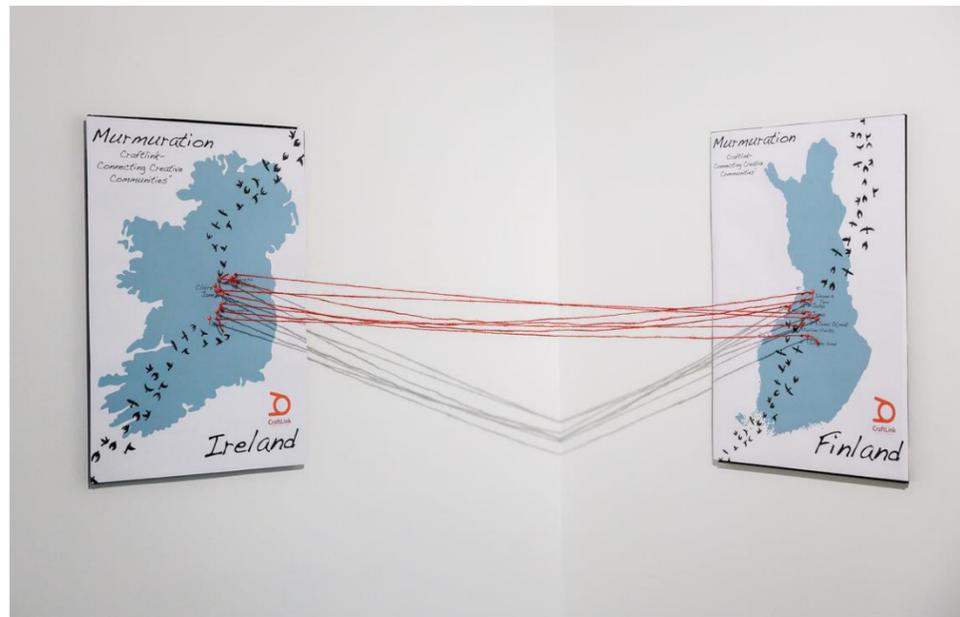


Finland Collaboration 2023/24

Murmuration - 16 Irish and Finnish makers collaborated

Exhibition in Tullamore & Finland

Craft as a Career' sessions for students





Create Green - Pilot 2023

We have long recognised that the creative industries already operate with a strong sense of sustainability. At the same time, we've been mindful of Ireland's and the EU's 2030 goals, and how these evolving priorities may shape the future of our creative enterprise



- Looked internally to our BDP training
 - Encouraged sustainable materials & circularity
 - Training on SDGs & sustainable strategies
 - Supported 8 enterprises through pilot programme in Offaly & Westmeath
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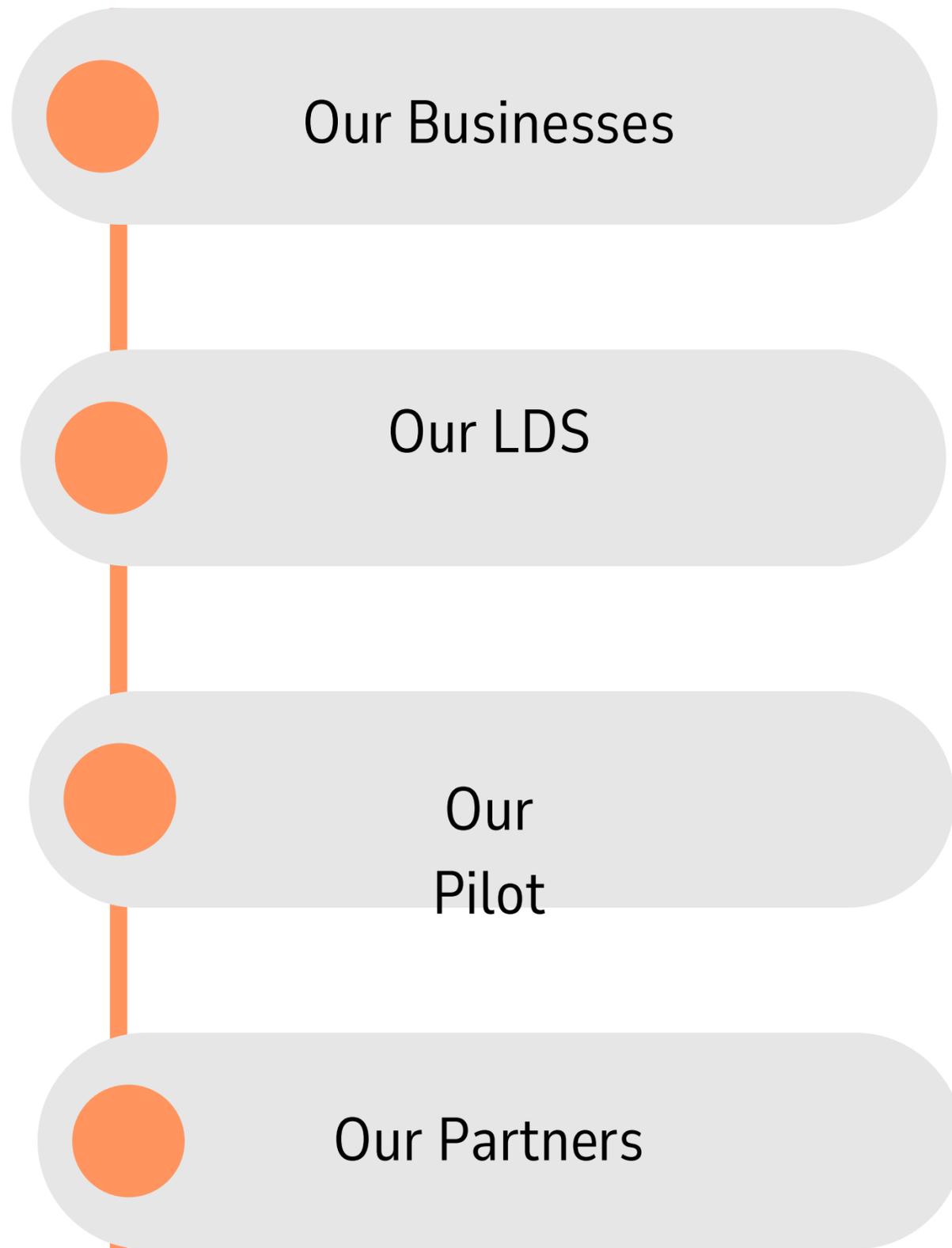




WHERE WE ARE NOW



The Drivers



The programme

OLDC designed a follow on programme which included:

- Sustainable Business & Product Development
- Financials - Going Green
- Deeper understanding of Sustainability
- Storytelling
- Digital Marketing

And a special outcome which was the development of 5 professional videos showcasing Offaly's Green Champions.

Video <https://youtu.be/Osw-ybu3zsU?si=hM9K9EmkqXp2Mm3L>



Create Green - Aims

- Promote sustainable materials and manufacturing and to foster local purchasing habits
- Making the Sustainable Development Goals meaningful to small business models.
- Clarify best practices and **dispel myths** around sustainable business development.
- Teach storytelling skills to highlight contributions to sustainable economic development.
- Showcase businesses' eco-credentials across websites, digital platforms, social media, and a digital flipbook.
- With hands-on learning and easy-to-use tools, the Create Green Network equips businesses to stay ahead of evolving sustainability standards and thrive for the long term





Create Green - Outcomes

- Accurate measurement of carbon footprint and key environmental metrics
- Actionable, recognized Sustainable Strategies
- Confidence and credibility in sustainability performance
- Readiness for EU Voluntary Sustainability Reporting
- Practical skills in tracking energy, waste, water, travel, and emissions
- Data-driven decisions to reduce environmental impact
- Strong need identified for a Green Network and recognition of Green Champions under the Create Green brand.



Why we think it is important...

It significantly contributes to (a) our LDS (b) our economies (c) the bigger picture

Our LDS:

- 1. That the economy of Offaly is sufficiently robust – using the County’s innovation, creativity and connections – to respond to emerging enterprise and employment needs and opportunities.*
- 2. To develop (and put into practice) an LDS, whereby the collective efforts of all three themes and their associated activities, contribute to Offaly’s place at the centre of the zero-carbon landscape in Ireland and Europe*

Our Economies:

Create Green is the first green business programme in Ireland that is specifically tailored to evolve the sustainable value of the local creative, food and social economies. It strengthens local economies by equipping SMEs with the capabilities to integrate sustainability, innovation, and circularity into their strategic operations



Why we think it is important...

The bigger picture:

Create Green's contributions to...

- Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8), which focuses on "Decent Work and Economic Growth"
- EU recognition that craft and local food sectors strengthen rural economic resilience more effectively than industrial sectors.
- Human ingenuity and creativity are positioned as the ultimate renewable resource.
(Journal of Economics & Commerce Vol. 15, No. 1, 2024)
- Just Transition in Offaly - JTA - A Research Paper developed by TUS which confirms the approach and process used - results validation - 100%





Key Takeaways to developing this initiative

- Patience - takes time
- Importance of mentoring to support training
- Understanding the challenges of small enterprises
- Long term commitment
- Importance of animation
- Demystifying the language



EU CAP NETWORK'S AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL INSPIRATION AWARDS (ARIA) 2025.

Create Green business training programme in Co. Offaly has been shortlisted as a finalist in the Environmental Protection category of the EU CAP Network's Agricultural and Rural Inspiration Awards (ARIA) 2025.

Selected from over 120 entries across Europe,—nominated by CAP Network Ireland — is one of just 24 projects, and the only Irish project to make the final shortlist



AGRICULTURAL & RURAL INSPIRATION AWARDS

FINALIST



Cast your **vote** for



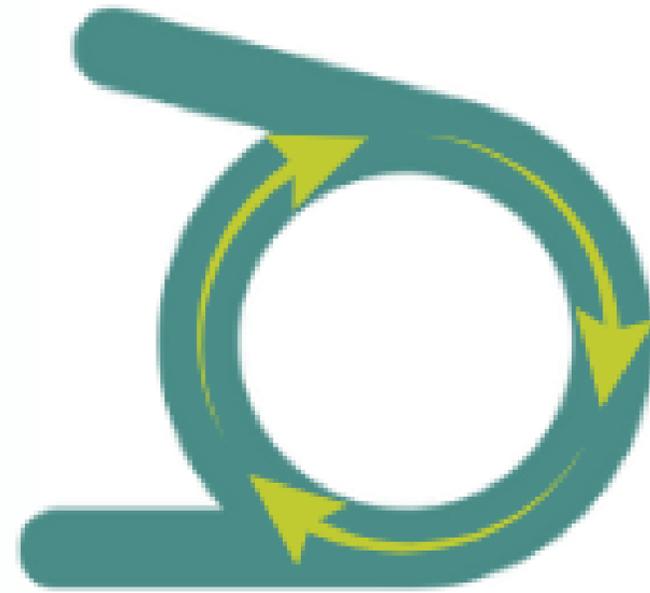
Create Green
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by **Monday, 1 December**



Offaly Local Development Company





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Rialtas
na hÉireann
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

Arna chomhchistiú ag An Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail agus Gaeltachta
Co-funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



Arna chomhchistiú ag
an Aontas Eorpach
Co-funded by
the European Union

LEADER
Development led by local communities

