

Hope & Ambition

Mount
Street
Club
Trust

The Mount Street Club Trust is a private charitable trust, originally founded in 1934 as the Mount Street Club. In 2019, the Trust created Hope & Ambition, aiming to put the principles of trust-based philanthropy into practice - and to the test - in an Irish context. The first three-year phase of Hope & Ambition concluded in June 2022, from which time the Trustees invited the recipient organisations to participate in a co-design process to explore how the second phase of Hope & Ambition could be shaped, building on the relationships that have been fostered over the last three years with a proposal for collaborative action and a new momentum of shared hope and ambition.



What others appreciate about our organisation

The Mount Street Club was a unique response to poverty and despair in 1930s Dublin and was informed by a philosophy of practical action. The current Trustees are very interested and curious about the work they support. Hope & Ambition re-energised the Trust, reinforcing its commitment to addressing social, economic and cultural inclusion with consistency, flexibility and a willingness to address new needs.

What is important about this work

Supporting people striving to make a life in Ireland is dependent on the power of relationship and community. We champion people who want to work in complex, justice-informed, practice-based environments that challenge the status quo. We facilitate relationships and connections across the recipient organisations. Staff and volunteers comment on feeling braver and on being more creative when questioning the structural causes of poverty and exclusion. The practice of trust-based philanthropy offers the potential to be more realistic about resourcing inclusion work and may challenge assumptions around how 'value' is assessed in the grant-making process. Hope & Ambition shows that people need encouragement to value work and leadership that depends on building relationships and that respects the pace at which genuine inclusion can happen.

Our planned activities include:

MSCT will share experience of partnering with recipient organisations working on inclusion and empowerment. Together we will continue to articulate and respond to the needs of people who are marginalised by systems, societal norms and attitudes. The ambition to work collaboratively to tackle anti-racist and exclusionary organisational practice will be explored and we will consider the potential for a symposium/summer school event exploring 'Overlaps in Exclusion'. Sharing our experiences creatively will test assumptions and raise further questions about the structural nature of exclusion.

Why we think Hope & Ambition should continue

The MSCT Trustees invest in relationships and welcome opportunities for collaboration with partner organisations. Features of this collaboration include the co-design of initiatives and sustained availability and supportive contact. Moreover, the Trust aspires, through Hope & Ambition, to enhance its own learning and development through fruitful engagements with its partner organisations.

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Intercultural
Language Service

Intercultural Language Service provides targeted intercultural language and integration training for marginalised refugees and migrants in Dublin. Our work supports social inclusion and civic participation for newer community members through community-based language and (inter)cultural training, activities and events. We operate integration as a two-way conversation between equals.

What others appreciate about our organisation

ILS is a two-time winner of the Engage & Educate Award based on our innovative real-world methods and practices and won the European Language Label Award for excellence in learner engagement with our Intercultural Storytelling Project.

“The dedication of ILS to each learner and their English language needs is extraordinary.”
– Professor Lorna Carson, TCD School of Linguistics.



Why we think Hope & Ambition should continue

For us, Hope & Ambition is a refreshing paradigm shift in the way philanthropy is done.

Instead of ticking finite boxes, its open-ended, iterative learning approach and trust-based practices have initiated courageous transformations within our previously struggling organisation. Hope & Ambition passionately informs and streamlines our justice-based endeavours and challenges the stifling bureaucratic status quo of our previous funding experiences.

What is important about this work

While maintaining pedagogical excellence, ILS disrupts outdated practices and social silencing, encouraging members to claim their right to speak and be heard. As a Community of Practice, we operate in a safe, welcoming space where transformative learning promotes personal growth and shared purposes of becoming and belonging, and the building vital new social networks.

Our planned activities include:

Using our growing network of partners to deepen our expertise and practices. We are in the process of building partnerships with TCD and CDETB to gird our sustainability and are applying for School of Sanctuary. This coming year will see our innovative practices being shared across EU Erasmus+. We will also use the alliance of Hope & Ambition to continue to co-develop our fundraising approaches.

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The Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation works to transform political and inter-communal conflict and build peaceful, inclusive societies. We bring individuals and groups impacted by conflict together to find pathways to reconciliation and sustained peace through facilitated dialogue. The Intercultural and Refugee Programme facilitates people from diverse backgrounds to support their active participation in Irish society. Hope & Ambition Phase One supported accompaniment work with women asylum seekers living in a Direct Provision Centre in Clondalkin, Dublin. The aims of the work included relationship building and emotional support, building connections that sustain inclusion and integration.



What others appreciate about our organisation

Glencree is seen as a unique and special place located in the Wicklow hills, surrounded by nature. The Centre is experienced as a safe space, bringing a weight of knowledge, skills and passion to peace-building work. In recent years Glencree has been recognised for enhancing the voice of women in leadership.



What is important about this work

We have steadfastly facilitated the Clondalkin Towers women's group for six years. We apply a gender perspective to the work, attentive to the traumatic experiences the women have been through. The work provides vital support for women living in this stressful, transient environment.

Our planned activities include:

The continuation of our work in Clondalkin, facilitating women to take more ownership and active participation in it. We also plan to develop a new strand of wellbeing work in Citywest where large numbers of refugees are being accommodated. This wellbeing work has also inspired the development of a new project of wellness and relaxation sessions being held at Glencree for those working with refugees and for refugee leaders in Co. Wicklow and the Dublin region.

Why we think Hope & Ambition should continue

Over the three years of Hope & Ambition, a strong bond of solidarity has been established between practitioners, CEOs and projects, enabling open and honest sharing.

The Mount Street Club Trust trusts us to identify the needs of those who are marginalised, do our work well, and share our learning in a cross-sectoral context.

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The Irish Refugee Council provides services and support for people seeking protection and people recognised as refugees in Ireland and advocates for humane and dignified protection procedures and responses to people fleeing persecution. Hope & Ambition Phase One supported the IRC's Youth Work Programme which supports young people to empower themselves, develop a sense of belonging and ensure their voices are heard through structured group work and one-to-one support.



What others appreciate about our organisation

With 30 years' experience of working with and for refugees, the Irish Refugee Council is recognised as a steadfast, innovative and vital support for people seeking international protection in Ireland. As the need for our services has grown over the last few years, we have strived to meet these new challenges while continuing to ensure that the voices of those with lived experience are at the centre of all we do.

Why we think Hope & Ambition should continue

Hope & Ambition provides a unique space for practitioners and CEOs to be reflective of their practice and allows for learning opportunities to emerge within these spaces. There is great wisdom and expertise among all who are part of Hope & Ambition and this is recognised and cherished by MSCT. The reflective sessions allow us all to take stock of the wider context we are working in and to acknowledge the similar challenges faced by the various organisations involved. We feel that MSCT has a great deal of belief in the value of our work and this gives us the confidence to be brave and courageous in everything we do.

What is important about this work

Our youth work is important because it celebrates and centres on young people, builds on their strengths and focuses on the importance of relationships and connections. Our youth workers have many years of experience working with young people seeking protection and are a consistent and dependable presence in their lives. Our approach is innovative, flexible and responsive to the needs of young people; we value creative methods and empower young people to share and use their voice and experience.

Our planned activities include:

Framed within four key themes: connection, leadership, advocacy and education, our work over the next three years will focus on tailored one-to-one support, creative group projects and a youth leadership programme. We will also continue to offer education and training to schools and youth work organisations. Finally, we will engage in advocacy and policy work to ensure that the issues facing young people are highlighted and addressed. This will involve amplifying young people's voices and ensuring that their needs are heard by decision-makers.

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Rua Red is a vibrant, dynamic multidisciplinary arts centre located in the heart of Tallaght on the edge of the Dublin Mountains. We serve all South Dublin County. Rua Red is known for embracing brave, ambitious projects that explore socio-political themes and subjects that have deep relevance locally, nationally and internationally. At Rua Red we pride ourselves on creating a neutral space where important, challenging and often difficult conversations can take place.

What others appreciate about our organisation

Rua Red prides itself on its warm welcome. We have no time for elitism, we think outside the box and overcome the barriers that keep people from being engaged with the arts. All arts activities at Rua Red are either free or affordable and we create new, alternative ways for people to engage with contemporary art practice. We celebrate our culturally rich and diverse county and constantly seek to find better ways to engage with and welcome our new communities who have made South Dublin their home.



What is important about this work

At Rua Red we support artists and creatives at every stage of their career in a holistic way through our work with schools and colleges, through the provision of subsidised artists' studios, music spaces, recording facilities and rehearsal rooms, through our exhibition programme and the employment of artists within our Education and Engagement Programme. Our exhibition programme promotes the work of both Irish and international artists, bringing the best of contemporary art to the people of South Dublin.

Why we think Hope & Ambition should continue

The Hope & Ambition programme is rooted in trust. It provides a unique support mechanism which creates space and time for personal and professional reflection. The programme has enabled partner connections across our different contexts and projects in a holistic and synergistic way. The CEOs and Practitioners Clubs encouraged us to reflect on our own resilience and needs. They offer a safe and supportive space to discuss the everyday challenges inherent in the work we undertake and focus on our own wellbeing.

Our planned activities include:

With the assistance of Mount Street Trust Club and Hope & Ambition, we are developing an in-house Traveller-led arts initiative. The initiative will be guided by a steering group made up of individuals from within the Travelling community who bring a wide range of skills to the group. The initiative will be a go-to resource, a residency space where Traveller artists, activists, musicians, creatives and content makers are supported to make work in various formats such as digital, broadcast, video, photography, moving image and audio storytelling.

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