

Process for selecting Irish Social Innovations to go forward to FUSE Consortium for final selection

Following a call for proposals for 'Competence centres for social innovation' (European Social Fund and European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation) in 2020, Facilitating United approaches to Social Innovation in Europe (FUSE) is one of six consortia in Europe selected to set up national competence centres to improve the ESF+'s effectiveness as an instrument that supports social innovation, channelling it towards the greatest societal challenges faced at the regional, national and European levels. See link - <https://ec.europa.eu/european-social-fund-plus/en/competence-centres-social-innovation>

The FUSE consortium, which consists of organisations from Ireland, Bulgaria, Cyprus, and Portugal, aims to cultivate networks, build capacities and synergies, spotlight efficiencies and develop tools and methods that will contribute to growing social innovation across the four countries and should also be helpful to EU countries. See link - <https://www.fuseproject.eu/> Genio is a member of the FUSE consortium, and in partnership with Rethink Ireland, co-leads the development of a National Competence Centre on Social Innovation in Ireland.

It is expected that each consortium will prepare and test the replication or up-scaling of high potential social innovation projects. Genio has expertise in scaling social innovations to solve complex problems. Through the experience gained over the past 12 years, both within Ireland and in the EU, Genio has developed and refined criteria to identify and validate innovations with potential to scale.

In collaboration with FUSE partners, Genio has developed a tool for validating social innovations for scaling. Each consortium partner will use this tool to validate social innovations within their respective countries, identifying up to 10 social innovations across the FUSE consortium.

Social innovations will be invited to undergo a validation process to determine their capacity and ability to scale their innovation. For the purpose of this process, scaling means scaling **impact** and is not about scaling organisations. Therefore, this process is not for early start-ups, but for organisations that have a proven track record of delivery.

Following a process of validation and identifying high potential scalable innovations within each of the four countries, 1-2 innovations will then be selected by the FUSE consortium to be promoted at National and EU level, and entered onto the EU database of social innovations. Additionally, the FUSE Consortium will organise 1-2 'scaling clinics' for the innovations selected. This **non-financial** support will consist of expertise, advice, support, networking, and signposting and will be offered to the 1-2 selected innovations in the development of scaling plans to assist with their scaling journey.

Steps in the process:

- Genio and Rethink Ireland will, with the support of the National Advisory Committee, and other networks, invite submissions from organisations/consortia of organisations that would like to have their innovation validated for scaling.



The FUSE project has received funding from the European Union Programme for Competence Centres for social innovation (European Social Fund and European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation) under Grant Agreement number VS-2021-0157.

- Submissions are welcome in relation to social innovation/s which aim/s to address the most pressing social challenges, that is/are considered **ready to scale**.
- **Closing date for submissions is CoB, Friday, 4th November 2022.**
- Each submission will be initially screened for eligibility by Genio and Rethink Ireland and subsequently validated by a panel consisting of Genio, Rethink Ireland and an academic in the field of social innovation.
- By November 2022, a number of top-scoring submissions will be selected to go forward to the FUSE consortium to participate in a cross-validation exercise to select a final 1-2 social innovations that score most highly.
- The group of selected innovations will be representative of a range of social issues and challenges across the four countries of the FUSE consortium.
- Communication will be made to those innovations not successful.
- By December 2022, the 1-2 selected innovations will be notified of their success and plans will be put in place to offer support as outlined above.

