



Supporting Ambitious Women Entrepreneurs

who are ambitious about growing their businesses



AWARDED GOOD PRACTICE BY THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF GENDER EQUALITY (EIGE)
HIGHLIGHTED BY THE OECD AND EU AS AN "INSPIRING PRACTICE"
WINNER OF AN EUROPEAN ENTERPRISE PROMOTION AWARD 2015

WHAT IS GOING FOR GROWTH?

ABOUT GOING FOR GROWTH

Going for Growth is an initiative to support female entrepreneurs who have been trading for at least two years and are strongly focussed on growth. Most owner managers agree that it can be a very isolating experience and it can be difficult to find someone on your wavelength who understands the issues involved in successfully growing a business. The Going for Growth round table initiative is designed to address these challenges. At Going for Growth, we believe that entrepreneurs learn best from each other. Accordingly, the initiative is based on interactive round table sessions that are facilitated not by consultants, academics or professional trainers, but by successful entrepreneurs.

Participants are offered a unique learning environment with a peer led approach based on the shared experiences of both the Lead Entrepreneur and the other participants facing common challenges. Participation is free of charge.

The Going for Growth initiative is supported by Enterprise Ireland and KPMG.

WHO IS IT FOR?

Are you facing challenges in growing your business? Would you benefit from peer support and the insights and experiences of successful women entrepreneurs? Then read on – the Going for Growth initiative could be just right for you.

Going for Growth is for ambitious female entrepreneurs across all sectors who are located in the Republic of Ireland. The entrepreneur should already be the owner manager of a business of which she is a major shareholder and key influencer. Suitable applicants need to demonstrate significant aspiration for growth and should be working full time in the business. It is expected that the business will have been trading for at least two years. Applications will also be considered on an exceptional basis from candidates who have more recently set up businesses that are highly innovative and demonstrate significant ambition.

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

The programme involves a time commitment of about three hours a month over a period of six months. Those selected to participate in Going for Growth are expected to attend all monthly meetings, and must be available to attend a full day National Launch Forum at the beginning of the cycle.

GOING FOR GROWTH COMES STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

Results to date demonstrate that the peer led approach of Going for Growth works. Over 450 female entrepreneurs have participated in the initiative to date. The evidence from these previous participants is that it delivers major impacts for both the entrepreneur and for her business - reducing psychological isolation and increasing confidence, motivation and know-how, which leads to the achievement of growth goals. Reports from last year's programme show that participants' businesses experienced a combined growth in sales over the cycle of €7.5m (+28%), the number of exporters increased by 43% and employment in participants' businesses rose by 17%.

Some of the many testimonials from previous participants may be read in this brochure or on the website - www.goingforgrowth.com/testimonials



Caroline McEnergy, The HR Suite, Marissa Carter, Cocoa Brown and Triona MacGiolla Rí, Aró Digital Strategy pictured at the Going for Growth Community Forum 2016



Sara Mitchell, Poulet Bonne Femme, 8th cycle participant



Olivia Lynch, KPMG, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, TD, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Paula Fitzsimons, Going for Growth and Orla Battersby, Enterprise Ireland



Julie Sinnamon, CEO, Enterprise Ireland



Mary O'Brien, VideoDoc, Going for Growth participant

'I always have lots of ideas and plans in the back of my head. Going for Growth has allowed me to step back from the daily operational activity and work on my business rather than in my business. I have taken the opportunity to take time out and have taken actions that were long overdue! In our Going for Growth group, there was a strong element of positive peer pressure to get things completed before the next meeting which I found refreshing and exciting'.

Oonagh O'Hagan - Meagher's Pharmacy Group, Past Participant, now Lead Entrepreneur



WHAT IS INVOLVED IN A CYCLE?

SUPPORTING GROWTH IN A UNIQUE MANNER

- **Unique learning environment:** Participants are offered a unique learning environment with a peer led approach based on the shared experiences of both the Lead Entrepreneur and the other participants facing common challenges.
- **Peer support:** Going for Growth is based on peer support. Each Lead Entrepreneur selects up to eight participants to join her at a round table to look at common issues, share experiences and explore ideas and strategies for growing their businesses.
- **Lead Entrepreneur:** The most important attribute of the Lead Entrepreneurs is that they have experience of growing a business and have personal experience of the growth journey on which the participants are embarking. They each give about three hours of their time on a voluntary basis once a month to meet with a small group of women owner managers to support their development. Each is prepared to share her learning and experience with the group.
- **Collaboration:** In a spirit of collaboration, the Lead Entrepreneurs act as role models to the selected participants and share their knowledge and experience with them on a completely voluntary basis. Each participant will find a group of like-minded women around the table. The businesses will be different but many of the issues will be similar. A circle of trust develops around the table and all matters discussed remain confidential.
- **Results orientated:** Going for Growth is designed to be action and results orientated. It is based on real experience of what has worked and what hasn't worked in real life situations. Results to date demonstrate that the approach works.

Going for Growth has been endorsed by successful business women who have agreed to become involved in the 9th cycle as Lead Entrepreneurs. They include Áine Denn, Caroline Keeling, Fidelma McGuirk, Maeve Dorman, Marian O'Gorman, Mary McKenna, Monica Flood, Nikki Evans, Susan Spence and Oonagh O'Hagan. These busy and successful business women have agreed to give their time on a voluntary basis to support women entrepreneurs to achieve their growth ambitions.



Louise Phelan, PayPal and Lead Entrepreneur pictured with her round table group Gemma Rose O'Brien, Adam and Friends, Susannah Grogan, Susannah Grogan Designs, Alison Kealy, Kealy of Cloghran, Louise Stokes, Loulerie, Roisin Laverty, Kingston Lafferty Design.

THE NATIONAL LAUNCH FORUM

Each cycle of Going for Growth starts with a National Launch Forum designed to allow participants and Lead Entrepreneurs to explore a number of relevant topics and to have their first round table meeting. All participants must attend this full day event.

As well as providing more in-depth coverage of key topics, the National Launch Forum provides an opportunity for attendees to network with participants and Lead Entrepreneurs from other round table groups.

Previous participants derived great benefit from attending the National Forum.

One participant summed up her experience in a manner that was typical: **'It's great to be in a room full of so much energy and potential'** - Sue Dempsey, Sweetspot Sourcing



Claire McHugh, Axonista



Sue Dempsey, Sweetspot Sourcing

A COMMON AGENDA FOCUSED ON GROWTH

The focus of this initiative is on the growth challenge.

The questions to be explored over six monthly sessions include -

- Why go for growth?
- Is your business model fit for purpose?
- What are your KPIs?
- How to increase profitability through increased sales?
- What resources/capabilities do you need to underpin growth?
- What is the best growth path for your business?
- How can you make sure that profitable growth is the result of all your effort?

THE ROUND TABLE SESSIONS

Going for Growth round tables explore this series of relevant questions with the Lead Entrepreneur taking the lead and sharing her experiences and thoughts on the question under discussion. The other participants will similarly share their experiences and learn from each other. For each session an agenda will be provided to reflect these broad areas.

Participants are expected to attend all meetings. They will take place once a month over a period of six months at a location convenient to the Lead Entrepreneur. As successful applicants will be placed with an appropriate Lead Entrepreneur, it may be necessary for participants to travel to attend the round table sessions. The arrangements for the monthly meetings (time and place) are agreed by the Lead Entrepreneur with participants at their first meeting. A participant who is absent from two roundtable sessions will be asked to withdraw from the cycle. On successful completion of a cycle, participants will be given the opportunity to join the Going for Growth Community.

'I am happy to give my time to this worthwhile initiative on a voluntary basis and only wish that this type of support was available to me over the years as I was driving forward the growth of SoftCo. I have seen for myself that a collaborative peer-based approach, based on growth goals and the shared experience of what works in real life situations, gives the type of support that ambitious entrepreneurs need.'

Susan Spence - Co-founder and Executive Chairman, SoftCo, Lead Entrepreneur



THE LEAD ENTREPRENEURS

The Lead Entrepreneurs are not, and cannot be, experts in every area of business, but they have first-hand experience of facing the challenges of growing a business. They all agree that if such support had been available to them when they were growing their business, they would have found it most beneficial. The following Lead Entrepreneurs are facilitating the round tables for the 9th cycle of Going for Growth.



ÁINE DENN

Altify provides proven enterprise sales methodology in intelligent software that sellers use every day. As a co-founder and EVP of Altify, Áine Denn has been a strategic contributor to the direction of the company since its inception. Áine works directly with a number of key customers and leads many of the strategic programmes within the organisation, contributing to both customer and company success. Her insight is informed by more than 25 years' experience in business development, strategic operations and customer engagement. Prior to Altify, Áine has served in senior executive positions in public and private companies, and her career spans business, technology and consulting organisations. She holds a Computer Science degree from Trinity College Dublin. www.altify.com



MARIAN O'GORMAN

Since 1999, Marian has been CEO of the Kilkenny Group, the leading retailer of Irish designed products and proud promoters of Irish craft and design for over five decades. The family-run retail Group currently employs 280 people across its portfolio of 16 nationwide stores, two Cafés and online store, kilkennyshop.com. Trading for the company has continued to increase and has now reached over €30m. Amongst her career achievements to date, Marian was named as the 2014 Image Businesswoman of the Year and was also named one of WXM's Top 25 Most Influential Women for two years running in 2013 and 2014. Marian also works closely with the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland, assisting as an adjudicator in the annual Showcase Awards. www.kilkennyshop.com



CAROLINE KEELING

Caroline Keeling is the CEO of Keelings, a 100% Irish-owned family business, which started producing fruits and salads on their farm in the 1930s. Keelings are focused on growing and sourcing the best fresh produce from around the world. The Company is headquartered in FoodCentral, Dublin, but has operations around Ireland, in the UK, Europe and Asia. Keelings employs approximately 2,000 people and has sales of approximately €300m. Caroline has a BSc (Chem) & MSc in Food Science which she obtained from University College Dublin (UCD). Caroline started her career with Green Isle Foods from 1992 - 1994, going on to join Keelings as Technical Manager in 1994. Caroline is an Ambassador for The Women's Fund for Ireland and also sits on the Bord Bia Board. www.keelings.com



MARY MCKENNA

Mary McKenna, Managing Director of Tour America, has been working in the travel sector for almost 30 years. In 1995 Mary set up Tour America from home with a team of three. Tour America has continued to buck the trend by growing throughout the recession, now employing over 50 people in Dublin and Cork with a turnover of over €20 million. Constantly innovating, Tour America launched Luxury Cruises & Honeymoon Finders. The company also operates Cruise Holidays, which is the largest company selling cruises in Ireland, and was set up following 9/11. Mary was delighted to win the Deloitte Best Managed Company Gold Award (Platinum) again in 2016, for the 7th year in a row. www.touramerica.ie



FIDELMA MCGUIRK

Fidelma McGuirk runs Perregrin Management Consultancy. Perregrin works with multi-national companies across Financial Services, Payments & Technology sectors to grow their client base, increase client loyalty, enhance service delivery, optimize operational delivery and manage international procurement. Fidelma has over 18 years' experience in international business. Working as COO and CEO of Taxback.com she scaled the company from 30 staff to over 800, building operations and integrated technology partnerships across 21 countries from Australia, Europe, US, Peru and Korea, servicing over 300k customers per year. She established new companies in the areas of international B2B VAT recovery and employer tax compliance.



MONICA FLOOD

Monica Flood established an IT training and consultancy business in 1981. Olas has developed as one of the premier IT training companies in Ireland and is the sole appointed education partner for SAP. Monica completed the sale of Olas to a French public company, Assima plc. and has retired from the position of CEO to pursue other business and investment interests. Monica's experience of building a service business and a loyal customer base in a very competitive market provides an important perspective for growth and success. A great supporter of the arts in Ireland, Monica is a Patron of the The Model in Sligo, home of the Niland Collection and one of Ireland's leading contemporary arts centres.



MAEVE DORMAN

Maeve Dorman is PayPal's Head of Global Operations for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Maeve has worked in PayPal for ten years, most recently as Senior Director of Telesales and Merchant Operations, EMEA and Australia where she led 400 talented sales people. As Head of Global Operations, Maeve now leads 2,800 teammates across Dublin, Dundalk, Berlin and Sydney. She is a member of the senior global leadership team for PayPal's Operations. Before joining PayPal in 2006, Maeve worked in ClientLogics and, previous to that, Gateway. Maeve has a special interest in corporate social responsibility and supporting women in business and as entrepreneurs. www.paypal.com



NIKKI EVANS

As founder and CEO of PerfectCard, a FinTech company with offices in Wicklow and Galway, Nikki Evans is passionate about innovation. Focused on the prepaid sector, PerfectCard combines the security of a banking environment with easy to use tools for its customers. It provides incentive and expense solutions to the business market and shopping centre gift cards and consumer top-up cards to its retail clients. PerfectCard is an eMoney Institution authorised by the Central Bank of Ireland and issues over €40M in eMoney per annum. www.perfectcard.ie

THE LEAD ENTREPRENEURS



OONAGH O'HAGAN

Oonagh O'Hagan is the owner and Managing Director of Meagher's Pharmacy Group. A qualified pharmacist, she was in her late 20s when she bought the landmark Meagher's Pharmacy on Dublin's Baggot Street from Pierce Meagher and has gone on to grow the business to eight pharmacies and a thriving online store www.meaghers.ie. She now employs 100 people, with further growth and the opening of her first pharmacy outside Dublin planned for 2017. Oonagh was Chair of Retail Excellence Ireland for 2014-2016 and also founded Women in Retail within REI. Meagher's has been named as a Deloitte Best Managed Irish Company for the past two years and was an Irish Finalist in the European Business Awards in 2016. Oonagh was recently named as Image Magazine's Entrepreneur of the Year for 2016. www.meagherspharmacy.ie



SUSAN SPENCE

Susan Spence is Co-founder and Executive Chairman of SoftCo, one of Ireland's most successful software companies. With offices in Ireland, US, UK and Finland, and a million users worldwide, SoftCo is a leading global provider of finance automation solutions that increase productivity, reduce costs and ensure that organisations meet their compliance obligations. SoftCo is a Microsoft Gold Partner, an AWS Advanced Technology Partner, and its customers include Primark, Irish Life, Lloyd's Bank, Argos, and Bulmers. Susan is a former recipient of the Veuve Clicquot Business Woman of the Year and Irish Exporter of the Year awards. Before co-founding SoftCo, Susan held senior management positions with Hewlett Packard, McDonnell Douglas, and Phillips BV. She is a former non-Executive Director of CIE and member of the Government Enterprise Advisory Group. Susan is a member of the Institute of Directors in Ireland. www.softco.com

The following Lead Entrepreneurs are facilitating Continuing the Momentum round tables in the current cycle.



BREEGE O'DONOGHUE

Breege O'Donoghue is a highly experienced former Board Member at Primark and her most recent role, until mid-Sept 2016, was Group Director, Business Development & New Markets. She managed, with others, a business through significant growth and expansion from 17 stores to over 320 in 11 markets. She has had an extremely successful executive career across many functions, with considerable expertise in European and US markets, significant experience of leadership, diverse teams and complex cross-functional business projects. Breege also has extensive experience as a non-executive Director in the private sector, public commercial sector and in education at university level. Her awards are many. Among the most recent are - Fashion Retailing Personality of the Year, Drapers UK, 2016; Irish Tatler Hall of Fame Award, 2016; Knight (Chevalier) of The Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur 2016 ; 'Iconic Businesswomen of the Decade' WOMEN ECONOMIC FORUM, New Delhi, India, 2016. She also recently received a Doctorate of Philosophy, *honoris causa*, from DIT.



DEIRDRE SMITH

Deirdre Smith is an engineer, tech entrepreneur and Chartered Director of the Institute of Directors. She sits on a number of boards. Deirdre acts as a consultant, mentor and advisor to start-up companies and SMEs through EI and via Redefine.ie, a consultancy group that specializes in Strategies for Growth and Lean & Six Sigma Programmes. With a strong technical, operations and commercial background, Deirdre was the co-founder and CEO of Zandar Technologies from 1999, which developed award winning video solutions for the broadcast sector worldwide. She led Zandar through their acquisition in 2007 by Harris Corporation, a \$5bn US headquartered company (NYSE: HRS). Deirdre held various management positions with Harris, an international ICT company serving markets in more than 150 countries, until 2010.



CLARE DUIGNAN

Clare Duignan has over 25 years CEO and senior leadership experience, and has served on the boards of both public and private organisations. As Director of Programmes RTÉ Television, she transformed home-produced content and grew audience share to a record high. As MD RTÉ Radio she reduced headcount and operating costs by 20% while holding audience share, identifying new revenue streams and driving a more customer-focused sales policy. Clare has a strong track record of strategic leadership and a deep understanding of consumer needs and behaviour, marketing and branding and social media. Her experience in recruitment, team leadership and performance management is coupled with a track record in supporting female leadership and promoting gender balance in the workplace. She has mentored female start-up entrepreneurs and emerging social entrepreneurs, and recently led the search for new CEOs in a number of different organisations. Clare is a board member of a number of organisations including the Digital Hub Development Agency, The Irish Times, Business to Arts, and the Dublin International Film Festival. Clare is a member of the Institute of Directors and received the Diploma in Company Direction (Dip IoD) in July 2013.



MARGOT SLATTERY

Margot Slattery is country president of Sodexo Ireland. As country president, Margot has corporate governance and directorial responsibility for all Sodexo's divisions operating in the Republic and Northern Ireland. It includes corporate services, sports and leisure, education and universities and government services. Sodexo employs 2,200 staff at 200 site locations with a turnover of €98m. Sodexo won the Top Site Contract Caterer Award at the 2016 Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Catering. For her role in promoting diversity and inclusion, Margot won a Trailblazer Award at the 2016 WXN Most Powerful Women in Ireland Awards and Sodexo appears on the 2016 Top Ten Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality in Ireland. Margot is Image Magazine's CEO of the Year 2016, Irish Tatler's Businesswoman of the Year for 2016, on the Out at Work/ Telegraph's 2016 Top 50 LGBT Executives, OUTstanding/ Financial Times' 2016 Top 100 LGBT Business Leaders and Cranfield University School of Management's 100 Women to Watch in 2016. Non-executive board memberships include GLEN (the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network), Professional Women's Network Dublin and Injuries Claims Board Ireland. She is also President of Appeals for the Irish Hospitality Trust.

THE ADVISORY PANEL

The Going for Growth team is delighted that former Lead Entrepreneurs continue to be associated with the initiative by serving on the advisory panel to further develop and strengthen the initiative.



ANNE HERATY
Cpl Resources



COLETTE TWOMEY
Clonakilty Food Comany



EILEEN BERGIN
formerly Butler's Pantry



ELAINE COUGHLAN
Atlantic Bridge Ventures



FIONA O'CARROLL
GiftsDirect.com



GERALDINE RUANE
Trinity College



HEATHER REYNOLDS
Eishtec



HEATHER ANN MCSHARRY
Company Director



LOUISE PHELAN
PayPal



LULU O'SULLIVAN
GiftsDirect.com



MARY ANN O'BRIEN
Lily O'Brien's Chocolates



SÍOFRA FLOOD

'Going for Growth had an extremely positive impact on the development of my business. The whole experience was really supportive and inspiring. Meeting with other like-minded business women was instrumental in achieving my goals. In one year, I have bought a second company, increased my turnover by 120 % and now employ over 200 people.'

Cora Murphy - The Care Team



'Going for Growth not only prompted me to critically analyse my business, but provided invaluable access to advice, discussions and practical ideas that I can apply to my business. Meeting women who are willing to share their own successes and failures enabled me to push the boundaries and grow my business.'

Anne Cusack - Critical Healthcare, SFA Innovation Award 2013 & IMSTA Best Services Company, MedTech Awards 2014



'Going for Growth helped me focus on growing my business. It provided great networking opportunities. I enjoyed taking time away from my business and meeting like-minded women who faced similar challenges.'

Deirdre McGlone - Harvey's Point Hotel, No. 1 Hotel in Ireland, TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and Georgina Campbell Hotel of the Year 2016.



ACORNS INITIATIVE

Seven members of the Going for Growth community, who have started and grown businesses in rural Ireland, agreed to be voluntary Lead Entrepreneurs on ACORNS, an initiative to support early stage female entrepreneurs in rural Ireland. ACORNS was designed and developed by Fitzsimons Consulting and is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. www.acorns.ie



FURTHER INFORMATION

COMPLIMENTARY INITIATIVES

STARTING STRONG

Starting Strong is designed for ambitious female entrepreneurs who are at an earlier stage in the development of their business than traditional participants on the Going for Growth programme. The businesses will have moved well beyond the concept and prototype stages and typically will have made some initial sales. Starting Strong is aimed at exceptional female entrepreneurs whose length of pre-revenue development, degree of innovation and growth potential are all significantly greater than the norm. Starting Strong participants have a specially tailored programme including round table sessions with Lead Entrepreneurs and relevant topic based workshops.

We are delighted that the following corporate organisations have become Starting Strong Supporters for 2017 - Beauchamps, Boots, Citi, CPL Recruitment, Key Capital, KPMG, Megazyme, Paypal and Softco.



CONTINUING THE MOMENTUM

On successful completion of a cycle, participants can stay connected by joining the Going for Growth Community. Members can apply to participate in Continuing the Momentum round tables, take part in topic based workshops, attend a Meet the Leads event, and are invited to attend the annual Community Forum. Continuing the Momentum was developed following a clear demand by many participants for continued participation on Lead facilitated round tables in order to continue their growth journey through a focus on goals and milestones and the benefit of an advisory panel of peers. Supported by Enterprise Ireland and KPMG, the activities of the Community are tailored to deliver focused developmental support to the individual member and her business, together with enhanced networking opportunities. Going for Growth also gratefully acknowledges the support of Dublin Chamber.



EXTERNAL RECOGNITION FOR GOING FOR GROWTH

Going for Growth is the brain child of **Paula Fitzsimons** who put it forward in response to an initiative on women and entrepreneurship proposed by the NDP Gender Equality Unit in the then Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. *'My mission in Going for Growth is to support women entrepreneurs to achieve their growth ambitions and to get more women entrepreneurs into a growth frame of mind'*.

Since the completion of the pilot in 2009, the merits of Going for Growth have been recognised for its excellence not only by participants, Lead Entrepreneurs and sponsors alike but by independent third parties. Following a competitive process, Going for Growth received a good practice accolade from the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE). Paula Fitzsimons also won the Boots WMB Empowering Women Award 2014 and was appointed honorary ambassador for female entrepreneurship in Poland. Most recently, Going for Growth was announced as the winner of the European Enterprise Promotion Award 2015 - *Investing in Entrepreneurial Skills Category*. This followed on from the initiative being highlighted as an *inspiring practice* by the EU and OECD LEED (Local Economic and Employment Development) in a report entitled 'The Missing Entrepreneurs'.



Happy faces all around as Joanna Drake, Director DG Enterprise, presents Paula Fitzsimons the National Director of *Going for Growth* with a certificate to mark the selection of *Going for Growth* to represent Ireland in the European Enterprise Awards 2011, which were held in Budapest in May 2011.

OUR SPONSORS

Enterprise Ireland (EI) is the government organisation responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets. EI works in partnership with Irish enterprises to help them start, grow, innovate and win export sales on global markets. In this way, EI supports sustainable economic growth, regional development and secure employment. You can find detailed information on Enterprise Ireland's activities, strategy and performance on www.enterprise-ireland.com

KPMG is Ireland's leading professional services firm with over 2,500 professionals based in Dublin, Belfast, Cork and Galway. KPMG provides a broad range of audit, tax and advisory services to clients ranging from dynamic privately owned businesses to individuals, partnerships and publicly quoted companies. KPMG works with entrepreneurs and start-ups to support the early achievement of business objectives and has a reputation for continuing these strong relationships as organisations evolve and grow. KPMG's reputation for excellence is based on a passion for business and an unrivalled understanding of key industry issues in all sectors of the economy. www.kpmg.ie



GOING FOR GROWTH WHAT'S STOPPING YOU?

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