



Going for Growth, Ireland

What?

Going for Growth started out as an entirely publicly funded scheme. It now receives over two thirds of its funding support from the private sector, excluding the voluntary contribution of time of the Lead Entrepreneurs, who facilitate the round table sessions. All are drawn from the private sector. The Lead Entrepreneurs act as role models and participate in the peer-to-peer support to women who seek to grow their businesses. The objective is to support ambitious women entrepreneurs in growing their business and expanding their networks. Going for Growth seeks to inspire more women to grow their businesses and offers a peer-learning environment.

Why?

In Ireland, women are less likely than men to be involved in entrepreneurship. Research suggests that women are often less confident in entrepreneurship, less perceptive of entrepreneurial opportunities and have less developed networks than men. Moreover, there is an even more significant gap between the much higher percentage of male entrepreneurs, compared to female entrepreneurs, who have significant growth ambitions for their businesses.

Key activities

Going for Growth supports women entrepreneurs with growth aspirations through a focus on the attainment of growth goals and time-defined milestones. The initiative leverages volunteer contributions from successful entrepreneurs, who facilitate peer support round tables through a structured approach in six-month cycles. These group meetings are facilitated by volunteer Lead Entrepreneurs, who are successful women entrepreneurs. They share their experience with their group, nurture a culture of trust and collaboration and facilitate the sharing of experiences and challenges. This approach provides support and 'good' peer pressure and inspires women entrepreneurs to achieve their goals.

The project also includes an optional Community element for past participants. Members of the Community have the opportunity to attend developmental workshops, participate in Continuing the Momentum round tables and grow their networks, through various events including an annual Going for Growth Community Forum. Going for Growth also champions positive media profiling of women entrepreneurs to promote them as capable of achieving growth.

Impact

In 2018, the project was in its tenth cycle and more than 600 women have participated in the initiative to date. Sixty-six participants successfully completed the tenth cycle in June. Between them they now have a turnover of EUR 66.8million; participants hired an additional 90 full time and 20 part time staff; and there were 4 first time exporters among the participants.

This case study was adapted from material published in: OECD/EU (2016), Inclusive Business Creation: Good Practice Compendium, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264251496-en> [1]

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Links

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