

New Report Identifies Critical Issues and Challenges for Irish Fundraisers

Submitted by [paul.meade](#) [1] on 27 August 2017 - 8:47pm

- SWOT and PESTLE analyses of Irish fundraising
- Seven issues explored in depth. Recommendations include:
 - Greater collaboration across the sector and a representative body for fundraisers, as exists in other countries
 - Ensure 'legitimate interest' is made primary basis for data processing
 - Lobby for better tax incentives for legacies and major gifts.

Greater collaboration among professional fundraisers is needed to address some of the major issues facing fundraising in Ireland, according to a [new report](#) [2] by the think tank Rogare, which was published last week at the Ask Direct Summer School in Dublin.

A serious shortage of fundraisers, a less than favourable tax environment, and the uncertainty caused by the forthcoming EU data protection regulation (GDPR) paint a challenging picture for the sector.

Many of the areas highlighted in the report, such as low levels of professional fundraising training, a lack of research and data on fundraising and giving in Ireland, and a tax environment that hinders rather promotes many types of giving, can only be addressed at a sector level and call for far greater levels of collaboration among fundraisers.

The recently formed Charities Institute Ireland (a merger of Fundraising Ireland and Irish Charities Tax Research) has made strides in addressing the broader fundraising environment. But with the extended remit of Charities Institute Ireland, there is now no longer a representative body for fundraisers in Ireland, as there are in other countries, and this has led to a lack of focus on the major issues facing the profession and fewer opportunities for fundraisers to meet, share and address common issues.

In a chapter of the Critical Fundraising (Ireland) Report, Colin Skehan, fundraising manager at Merchants Quay Ireland, examines the state of the fundraising profession in Ireland. He argues that a dedicated body for fundraisers would be able to lead in developing an academic qualification for fundraising, which, Skehan says, is necessary for fundraisers to achieve 'mastery' in the profession and develop their 'professional autonomy' in exercising that mastery.

Skehan writes:

'While non-profit membership and umbrella groups doubtless do dedicated and crucial work providing what opportunities do exist for fundraising training, would a professional body specifically for fundraisers, as exists elsewhere, be a useful step toward increasing professional autonomy?'

The Critical Fundraising (Ireland) Report is the first in a series examining trends and issues. This report which was developed by a task group led by Rogare International Advisory Panel member Gabrielle Murphy contains SWOT and PESTLE analyses of Irish fundraising, with seven essays exploring some of the main

issues highlighted in these analysis that have been research and written by Irish fundraisers.

Murphy, managing director of Purplegrass Consulting, says:

“We hope that this report will spark not only debate but joint and collaborative action across the sector by fundraisers, perhaps even a round table discussion that reviews the issues raised in this report, and others that may not have been covered. Certainly the compilation of the report raised questions around whether we need a sector-wide strategy and prioritisation of the key issues for fundraising that we can work to address over the next three-to-five years. Perhaps greater levels of discussion and collaboration may be needed across the sector if we are to address the key challenges faced by Irish fundraisers.”

Another major conclusion of the report is that the fundraising sector should engage with the Data Protection Commission on an agreed code of practice that enshrines legitimate interest as a basis for direct marketing. The essay on the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation written by Ask Direct’s Damian O’Broin also recommends that charities invest both in appropriate training for staff and clear communications with donors about the implications of the new regulations.

In all, the report makes 29 recommendations, including:

- Charities must combine their efforts to lobby for greater tax incentives for legacy gifts and major charitable gifts
- Establish a programme to benchmark nonprofits’ fundraising performances to produce better metrics and insight
- Research career opportunities and bottlenecks to understand how and why people leave the sector
- Charity-SORP needs to become a legal requirement for charities
- Invest in appropriate training for all relevant staff to ensure they understand GDPR and can manage and implement new regulations, policies and procedures.

Issues tackled in the CFR (Ireland) Report are:

1. The fundraising profession in Ireland ? Colin Skehan*, fundraising manager at Merchants Quay Ireland
2. Low levels of philanthropy and other forms of planned giving ? Gabrielle Murphy*, md at Purplegrass Consulting
3. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ? Damian O’Broin*, director at Ask Direct
4. Fundraising and financial regulation ? Bruce Clark**, head of individual giving at ActionAid Ireland
5. Media relations and public perception of giving ? Aoife Garvey**, supporter marketing manager at Concern Worldwide
6. Lack of evidence and research about Irish fundraising and giving ? Séamus O’Conghaile**, donor relations office at Merchants Quay Ireland
7. A crowded sector and the risk of market saturation ? Simon Scriver*, fundraising coach and trainer.

[Download report in full >>](#) [2]

Additional Information

* Member of Rogare International Advisory Panel

** Co-opted member

The CFR (National) Reports will be part of a series of report to be compiled by members of Rogare’s Advisory Panel over the coming years, which will also include CFR (Method) Reports, looking challenges for types fundraising, such as telephone and major gifts; and CFR (Issues) Reports, which will explore issues

such as regulation and ethics.

The Critical Fundraising (Scotland) Report ? currently being research by a team led by consultant Mafe Marwick ? will be published in November this year. It will be followed by a similar report for the USA in the first quarter of 2018. There is also interest in similar reports for Italy and Canada.

Critical Fundraising Reports are ?live? documents that will be regularly updated as new things appear on the radar and others drop off.

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