



## SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

### Project Case Study: FUTURE INNOVATORS

#### THEME:

Building Positive Relations:  
Regional Level Projects

#### FUNDING (ERDF+MATCH):

€996,436.78

#### MATCH FUNDERS:

The Executive Office, Northern Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development, Ireland

#### LEAD PARTNER:

Co-operation Ireland

#### PROJECT PARTNERS:

Belfast Interface Project,  
University of Essex,  
Donegal Youth Service &  
Animorphe.

**Start Date:** 01/07/2021

**End Date:** 31/03/2023

The Future Innovators Project has been developed to engage with communities living in the Urban Villages and the border counties of Ireland. The project incorporates a partnership of expertise, knowledge and skills in peace-building, community delivery, academic understanding and technical expertise.

Based upon previous experience of innovative delivery, and a desire to ensure the voice of the community is heard, the partnership have developed a range of activities that will provide practical benefits to the communities participating in the programme.

The project will develop an innovative community cohesion and planning toolkit, to create a Future Innovators training program and develop a regional network of communities, skilled in the use of social innovation technology. This technology will bring together people from different backgrounds and equip them with the strategies to tackle local problems and to collectively envision a shared future.



*“Co-operation Ireland is excited to lead this creative and innovative project focused on increasing capacity & technical support for community led initiatives to develop social economies throughout the target areas.”*

Co-operation Ireland, Lead Partner



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This contemporary model of co-operative delivery will incorporate new technology with physical and virtual local engagement, to ensure everyone in the community has the opportunity to have their voices heard and to influence the decisions that affect their lives and the communities where they live.

The Future Innovators' training programme is underpinned by three principles:

*Learn* - about social innovation

*Design* - creative solutions

*Empower* - lead your community in using innovation for social good

#### KEY ACTIVITIES:

- Development of a new cross-border partnership, committed to peace-building and reconciliation, which will amplify the voice of the community in policy and decision making processes;
- Sustained and meaningful engagement with 90 active participants;
- A community toolkit enabling a minimum of 500 other people in the target communities to actively contribute to the change design process;
- Direct support to eight community level organisations to develop their social enterprise plans and business models;
- Learning from innovative social enterprises in other settings;
- A lessons-learned report summarising the learning from the project and the potential for future scaling/roll-out;
- An online platform/website to capture the views and opinions of local people about their vision for their communities to inform policy and decision making processes;
- An educational campaign to promote the value of civic participation.