



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 3rd August 2018

800 Young People Participating in New PEACE IV Project

Futures is an EU PEACE IV project led by Belfast Metropolitan College in partnership with Start360, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Southern Regional College. Futures is one of 11 projects working directly with children and young people managed by the Special EU Programmes Body. The PEACE IV Programme has a value of €270 million (£239 million) and aims to promote peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. It is managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

Officially launched on Thursday 2nd August at Belfast Met e3 campus, Futures will work with approximately 800 young people, aged 16-24, contributing to their personal and social development; helping them to gain new skills and to become more aware of diversity and good relations in Northern Ireland so they can take up active citizenship roles in their local communities.

The project has a particular focus on providing opportunities to those young people who are most marginalised or at risk of becoming excluded from educational or economic opportunities. Damian Duffy, Director of Development in Belfast Metropolitan College said: **“We are delighted to be leading the Futures Project which reflects the College’s strategy of contributing to a thriving economy while supporting the active inclusion of young people who face particular challenges or require additional support. Futures will ensure that participating young people develop their potential and access opportunities to contribute to the continued economic success and social wellbeing of the city and wider region.”**

Gina McIntyre, CEO of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) said: **“This type of support is vital to develop our young citizens and create a more vibrant and forward looking society for the future. The children and young people participating in the project will gain the skills they need to positively transform not only their own lives, but also the different communities which they come from.”**



Start360 is a leading and cutting edge provider of support services to young people, adult offenders, and families across Northern Ireland. They are providing mentoring intervention for young people participating in Futures to ensure they are supported throughout the project and encouraged to reach their full potential. Start360's CEO Anne-Marie McClure said: "Our proven model of interventions, based on years of experience delivering GRIT and other youth work services, will support the young people through their journeys and ensure each one of them leaves us stronger. We know working together works, for the benefit of our young people and their communities."

NI Housing Executive are working with Futures to reach young people embedded in local communities and providing opportunities for them to get involved in community initiatives and social enterprises. Clark Bailie, Housing Executive Chief Executive said: **"As a landlord of over 85,000 homes, we're about more than just bricks and mortar and we pride ourselves in helping to build stronger communities. We're excited to be involved in assisting young people to build their personal development, helping them to get new qualifications, develop new skills and become more involved in our local community."**

Match-funding for the project has been provided by the Northern Ireland Executive and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in Ireland.

If you, or someone you know, are aged 16-24 and interested in joining Futures, please call 02890265212 or email futures@belfastmet.ac.uk.

- ENDS.

Notes for the editor:

SEUPB

- The Special EU Programmes Body is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in Ireland.



- It is responsible for managing two EU Structural Funds Programmes, PEACE IV and INTERREG VA which are designed to enhance cross - border co-operation, promote reconciliation and create a more peaceful and prosperous society.
- The Programmes operate within a clearly defined area including Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and in the case of INTERREG VA, Western Scotland.
- The PEACE IV Programme has a value of €270 million and aims to promote peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.
- For more information on the SEUPB please visit www.seupb.eu