



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 25th April 2018

EXTERN AND VERBAL CELEBRATE €3.99M PEACE IV FUNDING TO TRANSFORM THE LIVES OF OVER 800 YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEW 'THIRD SPACE' PROJECT

A new cross-border project, Third Space which will transform the lives of 800 children and young people identified as being vulnerable and at risk, is being launched today, Tuesday, 24 April 2018, at the Verbal Arts Centre, Derry/Londonderry. The project is being launched by the leading social justice charity Extern, and Verbal, the organisation that promotes the power of the spoken and written word, supported through €3.99m of EU funding under the PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU programmes Body (SEUPB).

Working with young people aged 14-24, from different communities, cultural, and religious backgrounds, Third Space will deliver a rolling personalised self-development and training programme. The project will operate across South West including Fermanagh and Cavan from 2018 until 2020.

A key focus of the project is to help highly vulnerable young people to:

- Reduce social isolation
- Develop a deeper sense of community awareness within their communities
- Successfully negotiate and manage a programme of personal development for themselves, supported by qualified staff.

As part of the programme, which is open to young people already on a range of benefits and allowances, participants will be offered the opportunity to meet new people, take part in residential, and participate in shared reading experiences. In addition, they will acquire new skills in video production, and gain a qualification.

Welcoming the project Gina McIntyre, CEO of the Special EU Programmes Body, said:

“This EU PEACE IV funded project will deliver a personalised self-development programme that will positively transform the lives of up to 800 vulnerable young people. By focusing on personal development, citizenship and good relations it will



make a real impact on a cross-community and cross-border basis. The project will also open up new opportunities in all those who take part in it by promoting self-esteem and resilience.”

Welcoming the funding from PEACE IV, Charlie Mack, Extern CEO, added: **“This is a wonderful day, and an exciting new partnership for Extern working with our friends at Verbal, made possible through funding from the EU PEACE IV Programme. Third Space is focused on engaging with, and making a meaningful impact in the lives of 800 young people, many of whom are from the most marginalised and disadvantaged parts of this island. We want to work with, support, and make a tangible difference to the lives of young people affected by mental health issues and long-term unemployment, and also those living in interface areas and in rural isolation. This funding will allow us to not only change the lives of those young people, but also to make a positive difference to their families and communities.”**

Focusing on the aims of the programme, James Kerr, Director for Verbal, said: **“We are delighted to be partnering with Extern on this exciting programme, which we know will bring so much to the lives of the young people involved. Third Space aims to promote positive relations characterised by a respect that we hope will enable a celebration of cultural diversity. Working together across Northern Ireland, and the border regions, we will be supporting young people to live, learn, and socialise together, free from many of the daily pressures they face around prejudice, hate and intolerance. This funding allows us to work together under the banner of the Third Space project to create real impact for young people and we are very excited about the potential it offers.”**

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

Referrals for the Third Space rolling programme are welcomed from agencies and organisations working with young people and can be made by contacting the project team at Extern 028 9084 0555 or Verbal 028 7126 6946.

For more information on the programme please contact;
South West, Fermanagh and Cavan: ken.keane@extern.org or aine.mccoy@extern.org



Ends.

For media information contact;

Maurica Mackle E: maurica@macklecommunications.com P: 07880804003 or Esther Haller
Clarke E: esther@hallerclarke.com P: 07830 513296

Notes to Editors

1. Charlie Mack, CEO, Extern and James Kerr, Director, Verbal, are available for interview. Please contact Maurica Mackle, 07880804003 or Esther Haller Clarke, 07830 513296 to arrange.

2. Media opportunities at the launch are available from 11.30am-12.45pm.

3. Photographs will be issued to picture desks on the afternoon of 24 April by Brian Morrison Photography.

4. Who is the Special EU Programmes Body (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 address the economic and social problems which result from the existence of borders. For more information on the SEUPB please visit www.seupb.eu

What partners are involved?

Extern is working alongside Verbal www.theverbal.co to deliver the Third Space project, as well as referral agencies across Northern Ireland and the border counties.

How long will participants be involved in the project?



Northern Ireland - Ireland

European Regional Development Fund



Special EU Programmes Body
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projects

Participants in the 'Third Space' project will commit to taking part in a 26week programme, held across five stages which will span three to four activities per week. Applications and referrals will be admitted on a rolling basis.

Where is the Third Space being offered?

The project will operate across, Belfast & Newtownabbey region (covering North, West, South and East Belfast), Derry/Londonderry, Fermanagh, Cavan and Donegal.