



Áine Kerr

Kinzen

GOING FOR GROWTH PROFILE

NAME:

Áine Kerr

BUSINESS

Kinzen

POSITION

Co-founder and COO

WHAT WE DO

Kinzen scales human solutions to the information crisis.

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Journalism and technology have always been an integral part of Áine Kerr's career so her latest venture – Kinzen – is a natural progression of that journey.

A former journalist, Áine first went into the start-up world as managing editor of Storyful, Ireland's first social media news agency. Now, she is back with Storyful founder Mark Little to head up digital technology company, Kinzen.

In between the two start-up ventures, Áine spent almost two years in New York as Global Head of Journalism Partners at Facebook.

"Myself and Mark always said that we might start something new – if we had the right idea. While I was at Facebook and Mark was at Twitter, we started talking about how to rebuild the connection between people and quality journalism. So we decided to launch what some people have called 'our difficult second album'," says Áine.

Kinzen was established in 2017 with the purpose to find human solutions to sifting out disinformation across platforms using machine learning and data science. Headquartered in Dublin, it has 10 full-time employees, a large base of contractors around the world and operations in 12 global markets.

"We wanted to look at how you, on one hand, use technology to build a platform to root out the bad actors who are spreading misinformation, and on the other hand, ensure that we are building technology that uses human judgement. The 2020 US elections was one of the biggest ever flashpoints in this area," says Áine.

"Kinzen is trying to rebuild that trust and engagement in platforms while also balancing the rights of freedom of speech. We see ourselves as 'trusted flaggers' but then it is down to each platform to use their own decision-making on whether or not to remove that content."

Áine's background in journalism has been essential in her journey to Kinzen and she believes that, while the media landscape is changing, journalistic skills are more important than ever. *"In 2021, we will see journalists use their skills in new and very important ways. They might not be working as traditional journalists but it is essential that we ensure quality journalism and the skills associated with that are maintained."*

Áine is a member of the Going for Growth community, having participated in the Starting Strong programme in 2018 with Susan Spence as her Lead Entrepreneur.

"When I joined the programme, I was starting a new business and that can be a lonely place. There are so many different layers to the support I received from the programme – both functional and emotional takeaways.

"The first thing was finding my tribe; being surrounded with people that have a sense of purpose and who want to do something important and are willing to take risks to do that. They were my accountability buddies. Knowing that you were going to be meeting regularly with like-minded people who were going to question you and help you find answers was invaluable.

"Running a business sees you spend a lot of time in the trenches, concentrating on the day-to-day. The beauty of the programme was allowing you that opportunity to step out of the trenches, draw a breath and give yourself an opportunity to look at the business six years or six months down the line rather than six weeks – or six days."

