

# AN INVITATION TO WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS WHO ARE SERIOUS ABOUT GROWING THEIR BUSINESSES



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AWARDED GOOD PRACTICE BY THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF GENDER EQUALITY (EIGE)  
HIGHLIGHTED BY THE OECD AND EU AS AN 'INSPIRING PRACTICE'  
WINNER OF THE EUROPEAN ENTERPRISE PROMOTION AWARDS 2015 - INVESTING IN ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS



# GOING FOR GROWTH

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"Increasing support for ambitious female entrepreneurship is a key national priority and Enterprise Ireland is proud to support Going for Growth. I believe our close partnership with Going for Growth provides excellent support to our incredible women entrepreneurs in scaling their businesses and achieving global ambition. Strong peer groups, wonderful Lead Entrepreneurs, excellent formal learning opportunities and frameworks for business growth make this a "must consider" for anyone seeking to accelerate her business."

**Leo Clancy, CEO, Enterprise Ireland**



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"KPMG is committed to encouraging domestic entrepreneurship and supporting diversity and female entrepreneurs in achieving their growth aspirations. KPMG is delighted to continue supporting Going for Growth; this is an exceptional programme for ambitious women looking to take their businesses to the next level. With the invaluable expertise and encouragement of the Lead Entrepreneurs, this programme engages participants with insights and experiences to succeed and connects them with their peers to boost entrepreneurship in Ireland."

**Olivia Lynch, Partner, KPMG**





# AN INVITATION TO AMBITIOUS WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

**Are you facing challenges in growing your business? Would you benefit from peer support and the insights and experiences of successful women entrepreneurs? Then read on. The Going for Growth initiative could be just right for you.**

A call is now being issued to ambitious women entrepreneurs who would like to be considered for participation in the 15th Cycle of the Going for Growth initiative. **Interested entrepreneurs should register on the website [www.goingforgrowth.com](http://www.goingforgrowth.com) and a link to an application form will be sent out immediately.** The closing date for receipt of completed applications is 18 November 2022. From those that apply, up to 60 suitable entrepreneurs will be selected for participation in the new cycle.

The Going for Growth initiative is supported by Enterprise Ireland and KPMG.

As the Lead Entrepreneurs are giving their time to the initiative on a completely voluntary basis, there is no charge to suitable entrepreneurs for participation in the round tables on the 15th cycle. They just have to cover their own expenses.

The emphasis will be on small numbers of committed participants at each round table who have a clear aspiration for growth, who value this opportunity, and who will commit to attending all the regular meetings.

## IS GOING FOR GROWTH FOR YOU?

Applications will be considered from entrepreneurs across all sectors who are located in the Republic of Ireland. Whatever the size of the business at present, the application will be considered if a strong growth ambition can be demonstrated.

While the selection is competitive, the application process is not over complicated.

To be considered suitable for participation, the entrepreneur should already be the owner manager of a business of which she is a major shareholder and key influencer. Suitable applicants need to demonstrate significant aspiration for growth and should be working full time in the business. It is expected that the business will have been trading for several years. Only in exceptional cases will a business at an earlier stage be considered. Applications from those who have been trading for a shorter period must demonstrate that the product/service is highly innovative in nature, has a longer development cycle than the norm, has exceptional growth potential and expects to grow on export markets. If accepted, these participants will be known as **Starting Strong**. All applicants must indicate the manner in which they expect to benefit from the support offered by Going for Growth.

The programme involves a time commitment of a full day in January and June and about three and a half hours once a month between February and May 2023. Those selected to participate in Going for Growth are expected to attend all monthly meetings, and must be available to attend the full day National Launch Forum on 16 January 2023.



Louella Morton, TestReach, Going for Growth Ambassador



Aine Kerr, Kinzen, Going for Growth Ambassador



Sponsors Leo Clancy, Enterprise Ireland (left) and Olivia Lynch, KPMG (right) pictured with Lead Entrepreneur Chupi Sweetman-Durney, Chupi and Past Participant Derval O'Rourke, Derval.ie.



Mary B Walsh, Ire Well Pellets, Going for Growth Ambassador



Aimee Connolly, Sculpted by Aimee, Going for Growth Ambassador

# WHAT IS INVOLVED FROM A PARTICIPANT'S PERSPECTIVE?

## SUPPORTING GROWTH IN A UNIQUE MANNER

Participants are offered a unique learning environment with a peer led approach based on the shared experiences of both the Lead Entrepreneur and the other participants facing common challenges.

Going for Growth is based on peer support. The roundtables are led by experienced Lead Entrepreneurs, who each give of their time on a voluntary basis to meet with a small group of women owner managers to support their development.

Up to eight participants are invited by a Lead Entrepreneur to join her at a round table. The most important attributes of the Lead Entrepreneurs are that they have experience of growing a business and have personal experience of the growth journey on which the participants are embarking. Each is prepared to share her learning with the group.

In a spirit of collaboration, the Lead Entrepreneurs act as role models to the selected participants and share their knowledge and experience with them. Each participant will find a group of like-minded women around the table. The businesses will be different but many of the issues will be similar. A circle of trust develops around the table and all matters discussed remain confidential.

The initiative has been endorsed by successful business women who have agreed to become involved in the 15th cycle as Lead Entrepreneurs. These are **Anne Cusack, Chupi Sweetman-Durney, Gillian O'Dowd, Jeananne O'Brien, Leonora O'Brien, Louise Phelan, Monica Flood and Oonagh O'Hagan**. These busy and successful business women have agreed to give their time on a voluntary basis to support women entrepreneurs to achieve their growth ambitions.

Most owner managers agree that it can be a very isolating experience and it can be difficult to find someone on your wavelength who understands the issues involved. The Going for Growth roundtable initiative is designed to address these challenges.

Going for Growth is action and results oriented and goes beyond class room style learning and the usual inputs of professional trainers, consultants and academics. The roundtables are designed not to be theoretical or academic, but to be based on real experience of what has worked and what hasn't worked in real life situations.

## THE ROUND TABLE SESSIONS

Participants are expected to attend all meetings. These will take place once a month between January and June at a location convenient to the Lead Entrepreneur. As successful applicants will be placed with an appropriate Lead Entrepreneur, it may be necessary for participants to travel to attend the round table sessions. Unnecessary travel will be minimised, however. The arrangements for the monthly meetings (time and place) will be agreed by the Lead Entrepreneur with participants at their first meeting on 16 January 2023. A participant who is absent from two roundtable sessions will be asked to withdraw from the cycle.

## A COMMON AGENDA FOCUSED ON GROWTH

The focus of this initiative is on the growth challenge. Participants are invited to identify what success looks like for them and to translate this into a series of SMART goals and milestones. The continued focus on the attainment of these, combined with an agenda that explores questions relevant to growth, together with good peer pressure and support, frequently results in participants achieving more and in a shorter period than they previously thought possible.

For each round table session, an agenda will be provided to reflect growth related issues. In exploring the issues under discussion, the Lead Entrepreneur will share her experiences and thoughts. The other participants will similarly share their experiences and learn from each other. In this way, real peer learning takes place.

On successful completion of a cycle, participants will be given the opportunity to join the Going for Growth Community and have access to further development support and a very strong network of likeminded women.

## THE NATIONAL LAUNCH FORUM

**To start the cycle, a National Launch Forum will be held on Monday 16 January 2023. If selected, participants must be available to attend this full day event.**

The National Forum is designed to allow participants and Lead Entrepreneurs to explore a number of relevant topics and to have their first round table meeting.

The National Launch Forum will provide an opportunity for attendees to network with participants and Lead Entrepreneurs from other roundtable groups. It also allows participants to more fully understand the Community they have joined, the roles and responsibilities of Lead Entrepreneurs and participants, and the culture of collaboration and confidentiality, which is the hallmark of Going for Growth.

Previous participants derived great benefit from attending the National Forum.

## GOING FOR GROWTH COMES STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

Over 850 women entrepreneurs have already participated in a cycle of Going for Growth. In almost every case, the round table sessions translated into practical changes within their businesses and they felt nearer to achieving their growth goals, as a result of their participation in Going for Growth.

Some of the many testimonials from previous participants may be read in this brochure or on the website - [www.goingforgrowth.com/testimonials](http://www.goingforgrowth.com/testimonials)

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR A NEW CYCLE

Women entrepreneurs are being invited to indicate their interest in becoming participants in the latest Going for Growth cycle.

As the number of participants that can be involved in this cycle is strictly limited, a selection process will take place. Those chosen to participate in the initiative will be those who, in the opinion of the Lead Entrepreneurs, will be most likely to benefit from the learning experience offered by the Going for Growth roundtables.

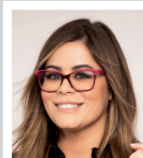
**Those interested in applying should register their interest on [www.goingforgrowth.com](http://www.goingforgrowth.com) and a link to an application form will be sent to them**

***Completed applications must be received no later than 18 November 2022.***



"Beginning the cycle I expected I would gain a lot of expertise, but I had no idea as to the extent of that expertise, or the friendships I would make along the way".

**Vanessa Creaven, Spotlight Oral Care, Going for Growth Ambassador**



"This programme inspires me, motivates me, grounds and focuses me. I've developed business friends and allies for life. It has been one of the most significant aspects in my business to date".

**Jennifer Rock, Skingredients, Going for Growth Ambassador**



# THE LEAD ENTREPRENEURS

The Lead Entrepreneurs are not, and cannot be, experts in every area of business but they have first-hand experience of facing the challenges of growing a business. They all agree that if such support were to have been available to them when they were growing their business, they would have found it most beneficial. The following will facilitate the round tables for the 15th cycle.



## ANNE CUSACK

In 1999 Anne co-founded Critical Healthcare, a leader in the Emergency Services market providing healthcare solutions at the front line. As CEO, Anne brought Critical Healthcare through many milestones, the winning and retaining of multiple public and private contracts including the NHS, and Falck Europe, the largest provider of Emergency Services globally, the design and patenting of innovative new products, the creation of an own brand portfolio of medical consumables & medical devices and the design & development of their own software procurement platform adopted by multiple Irish & European emergency service providers. A qualified Non-Executive Director from the Institute of Directors, Anne has served on a number of boards, including the Governing Body of TUS (Technological University Shannon). Anne is a member of the HealthTech Ireland Digital Health forum. In 2019, Anne was invited by the then Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, to serve as Chair of the Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan Steering Committee, 2019-2020 and again recently, 2020-2024. In 2021 Critical Healthcare was acquired in a management buy-in and Anne is now pursuing her many other interests.



## CHUPI SWEETMAN-DURNEY

After a decade of working in the giants of commercial fashion, Chupi founded her eponymous jewellery line in 2013. Her creative and strategic vision has scaled Chupi to a luxury jewellery brand selling into 65 countries. Part of the coveted EY EOY Alumni and a Lead Entrepreneur on the KPMG Enterprise Ireland backed Going for Growth program, Chupi is one of Ireland's leading female founders and is regularly featured in the press. Chupi designs timeless pieces to mark life's most precious moments. Her award-winning jewellery is destined to become your future heirloom. [www.chupi.com](http://www.chupi.com)



## GILLIAN O'DOWD

Gillian O'Dowd is co-founder and director of Azon Recruitment Group, a recruitment agency specialising in multiple industry sectors, including accounting and finance, financial services, taxation, legal and construction and technology. Since establishment in 2014, the award-winning recruitment agency has grown year on year. With offices in Dublin, Limerick and London, they now employ over 40 and service many national and international clients. With over 20 years' experience working on the financing and investment portfolios of Irish and International businesses, Gillian O' Dowd has extensive experience from start-up to exit, from growth to M&A across investments, property and recruitment sectors. Gillian holds a Bachelor of Commerce from UCC and a Masters in Financial Services from the Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business, UCD. [www.azon.ie](http://www.azon.ie)



## JEANANNE O'BRIEN

Jeananne O'Brien is Founder and Director of Artizan Food Co and Eatto. Artizan Food Co, a leading boutique corporate catering company, was founded in Dublin in 2005. Artizan has led the way in 'Cloud Kitchen' solutions having established their first cloud kitchen in 2008 and currently operate from their state of the art 26,000 square foot kitchen offering innovative digitally driven in-house and flexible workplace catering solutions. Jeananne also founded Eatto.ie, a sustainable frozen food ready meal brand, which launched in April 2020. A direct-to-consumer e-commerce model, Eatto.ie delivers handmade meals nationwide, using locally sourced Irish produce, with no additives or preservatives. Jeananne is hugely passionate about sustainability and holds it at the core of both Artizan and Eatto who are proud members of Bord Bia's Origin Green. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce from UCD and MSc in Marketing from Smurfit Business School, UCD.



## LEONORA O'BRIEN

Leonora qualified as a pharmacist and worked in pharmacy practice, regulation and policy development in Ireland and across the European Union. She founded Pharmapod in 2012, having noticed a gap in the market for inter-pharmacy interaction in respect of the reporting of critical incidents. Pharmapod developed a global software platform to reduce medication errors and deliver safe effective clinical services for patients worldwide. With Leonora as CEO, Pharmapod was widely adopted across 10,000 pharmacies and Long Term Care facilities by corporate clients such as Pillpack by Amazon in the US, CareRx in Canada as well as independent pharmacies and Pharmacy regulators. Pharmapod launched in multiple international markets including US, Australia, UK and Ireland, and secured over 65% of the Canadian market. In 2021, Pharmapod was acquired by Think Research in Canada and Leonora is now pursuing other business and charity interests. Leonora has won numerous awards for business, pharmacy practice and innovation, including Laureate for the Cartier Women's Initiative Awards, and the Tatler Woman of the Year Award for Entrepreneurship.

# THE LEAD ENTREPRENEURS CONTINUED...



## LOUISE PHELAN

Louise Phelan is CEO of Phelan Energy Group, an independent solar power producer that brings low cost clean solar PV power to future generations. The team, comprising over 100 specialists, delivers affordable, rapidly deployable, and sustainable clean energy worldwide. Previously, Louise was President for International Payments for PayPal, the world's leading online payment company, with over 300 million active accounts. Louise is a non-executive Director at Ryanair and former President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ireland. Louise has been widely recognised for her contribution to Ireland including being named the Great Place to Work 'Most Trusted Leader' 2014 and being presented with the Sir Michael Smurfit Achievement Award by The Ireland Chamber of Commerce United States (2012). She was also named Business Woman of Year 2013 and 2017 at the Women Mean Business Conference, and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy in 2016. [www.phelanenergygroup.com](http://www.phelanenergygroup.com)



## MONICA FLOOD

Monica Flood established an IT training and consultancy business in 1981. Olas has developed as one of the premier IT training companies in Ireland and is the sole appointed education partner for SAP. Monica completed the sale of Olas to a French public company, Assima plc. and has retired from the position of CEO to pursue other business and investment interests. Monica's experience of building a service business and a loyal customer base in a very competitive market provides an important perspective for growth and success. A great supporter of the arts in Ireland, Monica is a Patron of The Model in Sligo, home of the Niland Collection and one of Ireland's leading contemporary arts centres. Monica has recently been appointed as a non-executive Director to the Projects Arts Centre, which began in 1966 as a small, artist led collective and is now evolving into Ireland's national centre for the contemporary arts.



## OONAGH O'HAGAN

Oonagh O'Hagan is the owner and Managing Director of Meagher's Pharmacy Group. A qualified pharmacist, she was in her late 20s when she bought the landmark Meagher's Pharmacy on Dublin's Baggot Street from Pierce Meagher in 2001. She has since gone on to grow the business to nine pharmacies and a thriving online store [www.meaghers.ie](http://www.meaghers.ie). She now employs 150 people with further growth planned this year. Meagher's has been named as a Deloitte Best Managed Irish Company for the past seven years and has been awarded Platinum Status these past two years. The Meaghers Pharmacy Group have represented Ireland in the European Business Awards and collected the two top business awards at the Irish Pharmacy News awards ceremony, taking away the Business Development of the Year award and the OTC retailer in the same year. Meaghers have also been named as a "Great Place to Work" in Ireland for the past two years, being named as one of Ireland's Top 30 Small Places to work for 2021 and also collected the award for Customer experience in the Healthcare sector at the Cx awards last year. Oonagh herself has picked up many business awards and was named as Image Magazine's Entrepreneur of the Year in 2016 and is shortlisted for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards this year.. [www.meagherspharmacy.ie](http://www.meagherspharmacy.ie)

The following Lead Entrepreneurs will facilitate Continuing the Momentum round tables.



## ÁINE DENN

Following a degree in Computer Science from Trinity College, Áine served in senior executive and board director positions in public and private companies, including The SCO Group, NewworldIQ, Prudential UK and Accenture. In these roles Áine gained extensive global experience launching new products, business units, and joint ventures. Áine then discovered the world of SaaS start-ups and spent 14 years building the global B2B SaaS business she co-founded, called Altify. There she and the team created best practices, methodology and technology to help sales teams win deals that matter and increase revenue in their key accounts. Áine's insight in establishing and growing Altify was informed by many years' experience in enterprise software, business development, operations, and customer engagement before she became an entrepreneur. Following the company's successful acquisition at the end of 2019 by Upland Software (UPLD), Áine exited the organisation. Áine is a credentialed coach, holds a Dip IoD, and was named in Ireland's top 30 women in tech for 2021. With a strong belief in giving back, Áine is delighted to be a long-standing volunteer Lead Entrepreneur for the programmes Going for Growth and Back for Business, helping foster the success of female and returning Irish emigrant entrepreneurs. Áine serves on the boards of Technology Ireland and the Irish Writers Centre.



## FIONA O'CARROLL

Fiona O'Carroll is a globally recognized expert on Leadership Mindset, Digital Transformation and eCommerce. She is a former C level executive with a variety of leadership roles including CEO, COO, Chief Digital Officer, VP Marketing, eCommerce GM in: Technology, Online Retail, Consumer Goods, Education, Media, Food, Computer Gaming sectors. Fiona has successfully scaled global businesses to exit, raised venture capital funding and held executive & non-executive board roles. She is the creator of The Digital Mindset & The Self-Aware Leader. She is the co-host of the Shedding Skin & Blisters Podcast. Fiona holds a BSc in Marketing and MSc Business Management from Trinity College Dublin, and she is a graduate of Leadership for Growth Executive Programme at the Business School at Stanford University, California.



# THE ADVISORY PANEL

The Going for Growth Team is delighted that former Lead Entrepreneurs will continue to be associated with the initiative by serving on the advisory panel to further develop and strengthen the initiative.



**ADRIENNE GORMLEY**



**ANNE HERATY**  
Cpl Resources



**BREEGE O'DONOGHUE**



**CAROLINE KEELING**  
Keelings



**CLARE DUIGNAN**



**ELAINE COUGHLAN**  
Atlantic Bridge Ventures



**FIDELMA MCGUIRK**  
Payslip



**HEATHER REYNOLDS**  
Formerly Eishtec



**LULU O'SULLIVAN**  
GiftsDirect.com



**MAEVE DORMAN**  
PayPal



**MARGOT SLATTERY**  
Sodexo



**MARIAN O'GORMAN**  
Kilkenny Group



**MARISSA CARTER**  
Cocoa Brown



**MARY MCKENNA**  
Tour America



**NIKKI EVANS**  
PerfectCard



**SUSAN SPENCE**  
SoftCo

"The programme really gave me the opportunity to look ahead, spending valuable time out of the business, working on the business. With our Lead Entrepreneur and the other round table colleagues, we all benefited from having open and safe conversations on common problems and challenges as well as learning from each other's perspectives."

**Caroline Dunlea, Core Optimisation, Going for Growth Ambassador**



# EXTERNAL RECOGNITION OF GOING FOR GROWTH

Going for Growth is the brainchild of Paula Fitzsimons who put it forward in response to an initiative on women and entrepreneurship proposed by the NDP Gender Equality Unit in the then Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. *'My mission in Going for Growth is to support women entrepreneurs to achieve their growth ambitions and to get more women entrepreneurs into a growth frame of mind'.*

Since 2009 the merits and excellence of *Going for Growth* have been recognised repeatedly by the EU, OECD, and European Institute of Gender Equality. In 2015, *Going for Growth* was awarded the European Enterprise Promotion Award, Investing in Entrepreneurial Skills. In 2016, the initiative was included by the EU and OECD in a compendium of examples of innovative initiatives. The entrepreneurship tool for policy makers released by the EU and OECD includes Going for Growth as a case study.



## COMPLIMENTARY INITIATIVES

### STARTING STRONG

Starting Strong is designed for ambitious female entrepreneurs who are at an earlier stage in the development of their business than traditional participants on the Going for Growth programme. However, the application process is the same with those interested registering on [www.goingforgrowth.com](http://www.goingforgrowth.com) in the first instance. To be considered the businesses will have moved well beyond the concept and prototype stages and must have made some initial sales. Starting Strong is aimed at exceptional female entrepreneurs whose length of pre-revenue development, degree of innovation and growth potential are all significantly greater than the norm. They should also expect to be exporters. Starting Strong participants have a specially tailored programme including round table sessions with Lead Entrepreneurs and relevant topic based workshops. This is made possible by the contribution of the following Starting Strong Supporters – Beauchamps, Glandore, KPMG, PayPal and SoftCo. [www.goingforgrowth.com/starting-strong](http://www.goingforgrowth.com/starting-strong)



### CONTINUING THE MOMENTUM

On successful completion of a cycle, participants can stay connected by joining the Going for Growth Community. Members can apply to participate in Continuing the Momentum round tables, take part in topic based workshops and are invited to attend the annual Community Forum. Continuing the Momentum was developed following a clear demand by many participants for continued participation on Lead facilitated round tables in order to continue their growth journey through a focus on goals and milestones and the benefit of an advisory panel of peers. Supported by Enterprise Ireland and KPMG, the activities of the Community are tailored to deliver focused developmental support to the individual member and her business, together with enhanced networking opportunities. [www.goingforgrowth.com/continuing-the-momentum/](http://www.goingforgrowth.com/continuing-the-momentum/)



### ACORNS

Several members of the Going for Growth community, who have started and grown businesses in rural Ireland, are now acting as voluntary Lead Entrepreneurs on ACORNS, an initiative to support early stage female entrepreneurs in rural Ireland. As past participants of the Going for Growth programme all have first-hand experience of the round table peer learning approach and of its benefits. Going for Growth Lead Entrepreneurs also give of their time in a voluntary capacity to facilitate ACORNS Plus, a growth-focussed round table initiative. Over 350 female entrepreneurs have taken part in ACORNS to date, with a further 50 being selected for the next cycle of the programme. ACORNS was designed and developed by Fitzsimons Consulting and is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. [www.acorns.ie](http://www.acorns.ie)



## OUR SPONSORS

**Enterprise Ireland** (EI) is the government organisation responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets. EI works in partnership with Irish enterprises to help them start, grow, innovate and win export sales on global markets. In this way, EI supports sustainable economic growth, regional development and secure employment. You can find detailed information on Enterprise Ireland's activities, strategy and performance on [www.enterprise-ireland.com](http://www.enterprise-ireland.com)

**KPMG** in Ireland is a provider of professional services, offering a range of audit, tax, advisory and consulting services to a broad range of domestic and international clients across all sectors of business and the economy. We operate on an all-Ireland basis and have 117 partners and over 4,000 people in offices in Dublin, Belfast, Cork and Galway. KPMG works with entrepreneurs and start-ups to support the early achievement of business objectives and has a reputation for continuing these strong relationships as organisations evolve and grow. KPMG's reputation for excellence is based on passion for business and an unrivalled understanding of key industry issues in all sectors of the economy. Find out more at [www.kpmg.ie](http://www.kpmg.ie)

