

### AGENCY



### CLIENT

DIAGEO

### AWARDS

PUBLIC SERVICE, SOCIAL  
WELFARE & EDUCATION

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BRONZE

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### COMPANY PROFILE

**In the Company of Huskies** is a creative agency that helps bring brands closer to people in the connected world.

We believe brands are defined by what they do not just what they say.  
So we help our clients understand what people want from them, instead of the other way around.

Our work works because we know that when you really understand what people want, you can produce products and services that genuinely enhance their lives – it's never just a piece of advertising, it's a dialogue.

Our agency is built around a core belief that puts people at the centre of everything we do. We understand how brands need to behave and have restructured our agency to help them do it.

Our approach takes us from 'we want to say' to 'we're going to do'

We do this through data, insights, trends and a deep cultural understanding that allows us to create pictures of people with multiple need states. This allows us to create work that genuinely connects with people at the right time and place in a way that adds value to their lives – we become part of the conversation instead of interrupting it.

<sup>1</sup>. <http://www.thegatheringireland.com/Media-Room.aspx>

## INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Huskies agency would like to acknowledge that this programme was conceived along with PR partners WHPR (Dublin) and Freuds (London)

“A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not rich in social capital”

Sir Robert Putnam.

### Introduction & Background

Let's spare you the standard 30 second download on the miserable affairs of Ireland over the last couple of years and assume we all know what we're talking about. If not, 5 minutes with an Irish taxi driver will do more justice in providing 'background' than any case study could contend.

There was little doubt that in 2013 Ireland continued to need help. But help comes in many forms. The favoured form of help was economic. The Germans helped us in that vein and the Irish Government was getting ready to roll out a big dollop of help by way of The Gathering 'when Ireland would 'welcome the world' and go onto generate EUR170 million in revenue.<sup>1</sup>

But what of helping people and society helping themselves? Not just their pockets but their sense of identity, their role in society, and their sense of belonging in their country at a time when all of these areas were under real question.

What we are referring to was the need for another type of capital injection; that of social capital. Social capital isn't measured in 0000s. It's measured by the levels of connections between people in society and the net impact of these connections on society.

The aim, therefore, of this paper is to demonstrate how we applied the thinking behind social capital to conceive and bring to life The Arthur Guinness Projects and in turn deliver value to Irish society.

Where The Gathering was an outside-in approach to helping Ireland, we will show how in a highly individualistic society, against a backdrop of falling levels of trust and negative public sentiment, the Arthur Guinness Projects grew from the inside-out to become a unifying community that people wanted to belong to, participate in and support; all of which led to the creation of real social capital at a time when Ireland needed it.

<sup>2</sup> Putnam, Robert.

Social Capital. Measurement and Consequences OECD paper  
<http://www1.oecd.org/edu/innovation-education/1825848.pdf>

## MARKETING OBJECTIVES

Allow us a moment of academic explanation before we get into the meat of the story. Think of it as the pallet cleanser before we begin.

Social capital is defined by Lord Robert Putnam in its simplest form as “the value that arises from connections among individuals”<sup>2</sup>.

He advanced what was quite an academic notion in sociology to a more practical and understandable concept in recent years by making the connection between high levels of social capital and high levels of civic engagement (e.g. general positive participation in society such as willingness to vote).

The value of social capital to a society is that it increases people’s sense of belonging and inclusion, their willingness to participate in society for common good, and their sense of identifying with the society they belong to.

In order to allow us to create a working model of social capital creation, we put on our glasses (thick-rimmed, obviously) and studied the different measures that exist in literature around the subject and isolated four that are referenced most often as key contributors to social capital creation.

We then used these measures to build objectives for ourselves so that we could be sure we could demonstrate indicators of success. Social capital is not about numbers so much as evidence of behaviours. Therefore, we did not put numbers against the objectives.

### **1. Membership of a community or network**

Demonstrate evidence active membership of a community

(Note: In this case we had to establish a community before we could generate membership)

### **2. Trust within the community**

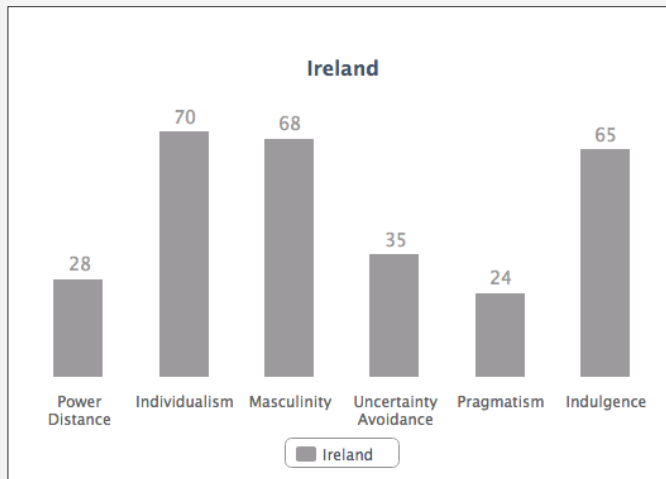
Ensure that members of the community trust each other

### **3. Reciprocity within the community**

Demonstrate active engagement and of members working together positively

### **4. Cohesion within the community**

Demonstrate shared values amongst the members of the community



<sup>3</sup> Hofstede Centre. Research on national culture and Ireland.  
<http://geert-hofstede.com/ireland.html>

<sup>4</sup> Edelman Trust Barometer, 2014.  
<http://www.edelman.ie/edelman-ireland-trust-barometer-2014/>

<sup>5</sup> KBC ERSI Consumer Sentiment Survey. June 2013.

## THE TASK

Trying to create a programme that would deliver on social capital creation in Ireland in 2013 was particularly challenging.

To give some context, we'll draw on some relevant statistics as well as some extracts from public discourse at the time that will collectively help frame the challenge we had on our hands in meeting these objectives.

### A nation of "before"

According to The Hofstede Centre<sup>3</sup>, Ireland is a highly individualist nation where people's self-image is defined in terms of "versus" compared to more collectivist societies where people belong to groups who take care of each other.

In short, Ireland, like many prosperous Western countries we had become a nation of me-first before us-together.

### Decreasing trust in institutions

Irish trust scores in four key institutions of media, business, government and NGO's continued to fall year on year. Further trust scores in "big business" were nearly 10% lower than that of the European average<sup>4</sup>. The environment for corporate involvement in any initiative, regardless of positive intent, was challenging.

### Waiting for the sun to rise again

Consumer sentiment scores from January through June 2013 were relatively flat with the chief economist of KBC bank describing the general mood as "Irish consumers are still waiting for some signs of economic sunshine"<sup>5</sup>

Although economic conditions are not directly applicable to our case they could not be discounted as having a significant impact on people's outlook and suspended sense of optimism.

### Perception of lack of opportunities

Emigration levels, particularly that of young people, were continuing to grow. Most interestingly one of the most stated drivers of emigration among a younger demographic was "there are no

<sup>6</sup> Irish Times, Generation Emigration, March 7, 2013  
<http://www.irishtimes.com/blogs/generationemigration/2013/03/07/is-there-any-hope-for-young-people-who-want-to-stay/>

<sup>7</sup> “The Future State of Ireland” Dr. Derval Tubridy. Huffington Post, November 2012  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dr-derval-tubridy/the-future-of-ireland\\_b\\_2170411.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dr-derval-tubridy/the-future-of-ireland_b_2170411.html)

<sup>8</sup> “Ireland has become a nothing mosaic with no binding identity”. Desmond Fennell. The Irish Times. January 2013  
<http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-34159161.html>

## THE TASK

opportunities here for me”<sup>6</sup>. A sense of belonging to and satisfaction with society is at odds with mass emigration from society.

### **The market before the people**

In an article in the Huffington Post in late 2012, Luke Gibbons, a leading Professor of Literary and Cultural Studies, described how, during prosperous times in Ireland, “culture and society were made subservient to the needs of the market”<sup>7</sup>.

Social capital puts people first but cultural observers noted that Ireland had put the market (the economy) first to questionable effect.

### **A question over the nation’s identity**

At a public discourse level, a widely-read article entitled “Ireland has become a nothing mosaic with no binding identity”<sup>8</sup> was published in January 2013 by Declan Kiberd, a leading cultural theorist in which he remarked upon Ireland’s lack of clear cultural identity.

One sentence succinctly describes the issue; when referencing a public debate about what monument should be erected on the main street of Ireland’s capital he states that “Ireland’s elected leaders decided on a towering spire of gleaming steel that represented - as precisely as a monument can”.

Put simply, our leaders couldn’t figure out what represented Ireland other than some steel.

In short, the conditions required for the creation of high levels of connectedness, trust and reciprocity amongst disparate groups of people in Irish society had been deeply eroded over the course of previous years.

But these barriers also served as motivators. If anything they reinforced the need for a network of people who would question Irish identity and take action to reshape it.

## THE STRATEGY

We needed to land on a purpose that was strong and meaningful enough to both create and bring to life a community that would come together for collective and altruistic benefit that trusted each other, and formed a strong social network.

### Initial Research

#### Looking back to look forward

Rather than talking to people and trying to project how we might create a network that brings people together for common good, we drew on writings of what it meant to be Irish over the course of history.

John Fanning's paper 'Branding and Begorrah: The Importance of Ireland's Nation Brand Image'<sup>9</sup> provoked some interesting considerations. - He draws on Yeats and the intellectual class in the 19th century and De Valera in the newly independent Ireland in the 20th century as two examples of people or groups who saw opportunities to reinvent Ireland after a period of unrest or social change.

Yeats' destiny was to 'make Ireland once again interesting to the Irish after centuries of enforced provincialism' where De Valera remarked that 'our desire to make ourselves Irish led to the construction of a new national identity", rural based, Irish speaking and Roman Catholic"

In considering the evolution of Irish culture and identity over the course of history, we observed two main things.

The first was that Ireland in 2013 was ripe for change as had happened before. The second was more concerning; with so many people leaving the country combined with the less than positive state of mind of those who were here, the risk was that the people who could transform our culture and identity might never find their collective voice.

### First Insight

The word 'revival' is used most often in the context of economics. But we realized that people in Ireland needed a cultural revival to begin the journey of understanding what we stood for as a nation - particularly when what we thought we stood for had effectively collapsed.

<sup>9</sup> Fanning, John. 'Branding and Begorragh: - The Importance of Ireland's Nation Brand Image'. - The Irish Marketing Review. - Volume 21 Number 1 & 2. - 2011.

## THE STRATEGY

### Second round of research

#### Ethnographic

Cultural revivals are started by people not corporations. So we undertook ethnographic research for evidence and characteristics of a revival that we could create support by way of creating a formal network. It would have been naive to assume a brand could, or should, start one.

This took the form of a cultural audit for signs of new ideas, creative energy and signs of emerging new talent and potential.

Although the research was more observatory than scientific it revealed that there was a clear sign of a cultural revival on an informal level. Although there was no formality or collective force behind the revival there were scattered pieces of evidence such as:

- ▶ There was evidence of 'rule-breaking' in the informal sense; new types of food offerings, new cultural hubs emerging in abandoned spaces
- ▶ Buildings were being repurposed for experimental use
- ▶ Street art was appearing at scale
- ▶ Small creative enterprises were developing in pockets throughout the country

In many ways the evidence was similar to the characteristics of revival that occurred in Berlin post the collapse of the Wall.

#### Core Insight

In short, our research on Ireland's previous cultural revivals combined with our ethnographic research led us to the insight that "there were the beginnings of a creative revival happening in Ireland"



## THE IDEA

Because this is a people-based solution that was advertised, rather than an advertising solution, there are three main components to the idea and how it came to life that are of equal importance.

- ▶ Concept construct and design - “The concept and how it was designed
- ▶ A creative campaign - How the idea was communicated
- ▶ An engagement model - How people engaged around the idea over an extended period of time

### 1. Concept construct and design

The idea was defined as:

The Arthur Guinness Projects - championing the next generation of talent and creativity in Ireland. The Arthur Guinness Projects became a cultural initiative designed to champion and celebrate people whose ideas, passion and spirit were shaping culture and identity in today’s Ireland. - By offering financial support, mentoring and marketing, the objective was to help talented people with ambition and potential to turn their ideas into reality.

We cannot comment on brand or marketing objectives in this paper relating to Guinness or Diageo. - However it is important to note that Arthur Guinness (founder of Guinness) had a strong and respected legacy in supporting Irish society.

### Establishing a clear role

The word “Championing” was chosen because we were clear we were merely tapping into an existing behaviour, not creating it. - It would have been a massive oversight to try and claim or behave otherwise.

### Applying the principles of social capital to design the concept:

#### A) Bridging people

4 categories were created in the areas of Arts, Sports, Music and Food. - This was determined by the need to be inclusive and to bring people from different areas together rather than bond those who already have shared interests (e.g. branded sponsorships of rugby/music etc)

Social capital that bridges rather than bonds is a key component of Putnam’s work.



### THE IDEA

#### B) Trust and networks

People trust academics/experts and “other people like them” (source: Edelman Trust Barometer 2013).

- ▶ This influenced the decision to work with 16 (4 per each category) well-known and respected experts in each of the categories who would lead the initiative and ultimately provide mentoring and support to the winners.
- ▶ The team was delighted to have experts with real influence believe in the idea and the purpose of the Arthur Guinness Projects such that Chris O’Dowd (him that’s big in Hollywood) went out of his way to get on board along with The Script, Jim McGuinness and Dylan McGrath.
- ▶ While voting for AGP was entirely in the hands of the people (more below) the projects that had received the top 10% of votes were judged and awarded by the experts.
- ▶ The judges went on to give their own time, expertise and access to their networks to awardees.

#### C) Cohesion

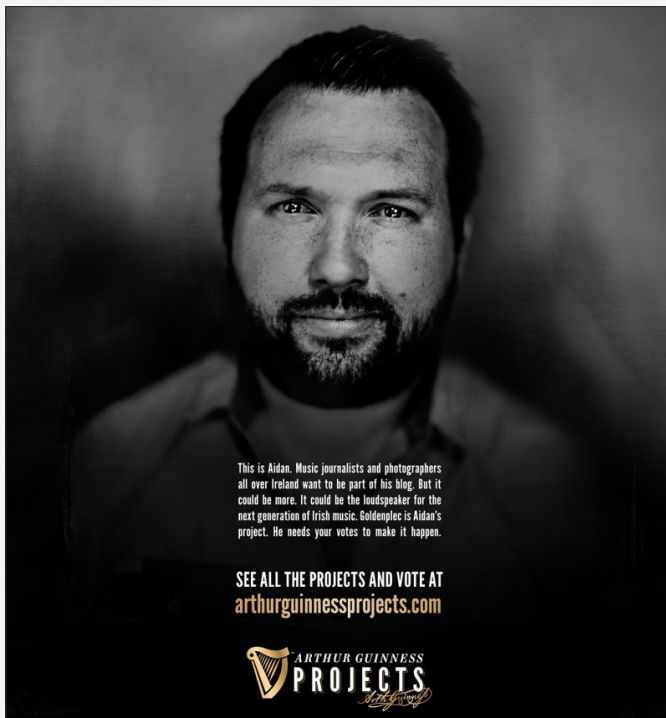
Every project had to specify the value it would bring to people and society. - Popular culture fed on Dragon’s Den style funding for private for-profit projects. - This was about ideas that would be additive to society in driving our culture and identity.

#### D) Reciprocity

- ▶ Who were we to decide what constituted brilliant ideas that would shape our society?
- ▶ An effective network is one in which people actively support each other. - In this case, we knew that this was people working with people. - This meant we had to create a fully transparent, public voting-led system with no corporate involvement (other than verifying that projects qualified under the stated criteria).

# The Arthur Guinness Projects

## In the Company of Huskies



## THE IDEA

### E) Authenticity

- ▶ Authenticity was the guiding principle in the creative solution.
- ▶ This led to real people being used in all communications. - No models, no artifice.

### 2. Creative Campaign and Communications Strategy

For business reasons beyond our influence the initiative ran from June 26 2013 through to August 23 with results announced in September.

There were three distinct phases:

It's important to note that the following stages happened over a 9 week period.

#### Phase 1: - Launch and recruit

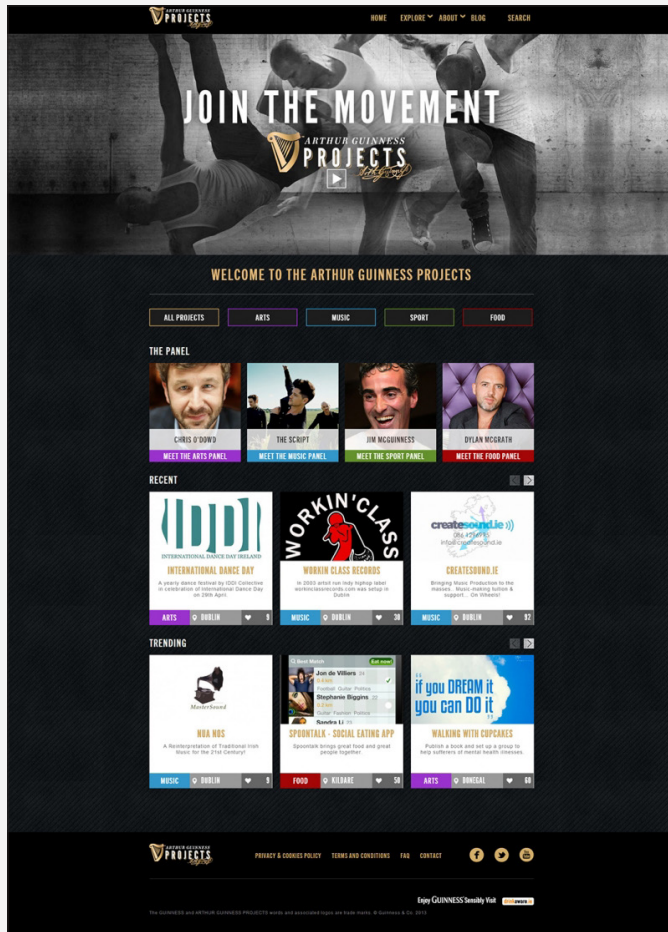
Objective: Inform and excite the public and recruit applicants.

- ▶ It was imperative to communicate the message in a simple yet engaging manner to ensure comprehension. - The tagline "Join the Movement" was used as it was relevant to applicants and voters alike.
- ▶ We used real people in each of the 4 categories to feature on OOH.
- ▶ The main drivers were outdoor and an online launch video that was pushed through owned channels, promoted on YouTube and through our expert panelist's social networks.
- ▶ PR and social both played a vital role in bringing the idea to life.

#### Phase 2: - Vote and Support

Objective: - To rally ongoing interest in and support for the Projects.

- ▶ We featured the real "People behind the Projects" in press and in a suite of YouTube mini-documentaries designed to give people an insight into why people were entering AGP and why their vote could help make their ambition a reality.
- ▶ We knew that people connect with people first and their ideas second which guided our approach to swift creative development.



## THE IDEA

- ▶ In social we selected the top trending projects in each category each week from the site and heroed them through our owned social channels.

### Phase 3: - Celebrate

Objective: - Give credit to everyone in Ireland who got behind AGP, be it as entrants, voters or general supporters.

- ▶ Through PR and social we showcased the people and their ideas, inspired the public with the scale of support and shared the final 14 awardees with the public.

### 3. Engagement model solution

- ▶ Key to the creative solution was the agile publishing model to create genuinely engaging and relevant content throughout the 9 weeks.
- ▶ Conversations and topics related to the Arthur Guinness Projects were tracked and monitored through Social, Search and PR on a daily basis which informed the topics of content produced, from social objects, blog posts, articles and videos.
- ▶ This meant all content was timely, relevant and promoted through the right channels allowing us to actively participate in real time conversations around AGP.



## THE RESULTS

To recap, this is a case study about applying the thinking behind social capital in order to deliver societal benefit. The value of social capital to a society is that it increases people's sense of belonging and inclusion, their willingness to participate in society for common good, and their sense of identifying with the society they belong to.

We had no access to qualitative research pre or post the programme period. Instead we use the data collected over the course of the programme as evidence.

In this context, we collected evidence of real success against the objectives we set.

### 1. Membership of a community or network

Demonstrate active membership of a community

- ▶ We created a network by way of the [arthurguinnessprojects.com](http://arthurguinnessprojects.com) website where over the course of 8 weeks, nearly 700 people brought to life and shared viable project ideas. The KPI for project entrants had been set at 500.
- ▶ In other words, in 9 weeks 700 people identified with the shared vision behind AGP to the degree that they already had ideas that they wanted to share with the nation.
- ▶ So while our original ethnographic research hit upon a sense of a cultural revival, this figure affirms that we found a genuine needstate and acted to create a community around it.
- ▶ Further, the project submissions were evenly spread across all categories and represented all counties in Ireland, which delivers on the objective to bridge disparate groups of people around a central network.

### 2. Social trust within the community

Ensure that members of the community trust each other

- ▶ Ideally we would have quant research that asserts levels of social trust in the community.
- ▶ But without, it seems credible to assert that given 700 people were willing to share their dreams, ideas and ambitions with the nation, they trusted the shared values of the Arthur Guinness Projects.

## THE RESULTS

- ▶ We believe our design of AGP (real people, real stories, transparent systems, no corporate sway) all contributed to trust that induced action.

### 3. Reciprocity within the community

Demonstrate active engagement of members and proof of members working together positively

- ▶ Over 270,000 votes were cast over the course of 9 weeks.
- ▶ [www.arthurguinnessprojects.com](http://www.arthurguinnessprojects.com) site 425,098 unique visits - this is equivalent to 12% of the Irish internet population. We have not seen this level of engagement before on a brand initiative.
- ▶ Social channels drove 60% of the traffic to the site with most of this traffic coming from supporters of the ideas canvassing in their networks for the ideas they believed in.
- ▶ What does this mean? The people took over and carried AGP very early on. It became a living network of people working together to get their friends and peers to submit an idea they had spoken about, to gather support, to share their stories and to inspire the public to get behind them for the benefit of society.

### 4. Social cohesion within the community

- ▶ Demonstrate shared values and beliefs amongst the members of the community
- ▶ From the launch of AGP the public sentiment around the idea was overwhelmingly positive.
- ▶ To substantiate this statement we refer to Facebook data.
- ▶ There were 37,000 likes, comments and shares and only 365 users commented negatively on the posts relating to AGP. For a programme with considerable reach, this figure is low.
- ▶ The click through rate on Facebook was 2.39% which is 20 times over the average facebook CTR rate.

### Project Payback

Show me the money!

## THE RESULTS

We can't because this wasn't about money.

But what we can show (proudly!) are the 14 ideas that have come to life as a result of the programme, not to mention the hundreds that were not awarded but have every ability to come to life.

The diversity of the ideas are all united by the fact that they demonstrate a new breed of thinkers and doers who are reshaping Irish culture and are doing it through the support of like-minded people throughout Ireland.

Up to 7 Jobs have been created

| PROJECTS: ARTS CATEGORY             | IDEA  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Aerial Dance Creation Centre</i> | A dedicated space for aerial/circus performers.                                 |
| <i>Man on Bridge</i>                | An interactive documentary that celebrates the legacy of Arthur Fields          |
| <i>One Nation's Sons</i>            | Encourages the empowerment of potentially isolated young men in their community |
| <i>Lifeline</i>                     | Regenerating the disused Midland Great Western Railway                          |



## THE RESULTS

| PROJECTS: MUSIC CATEGORY | IDEA  |
|--------------------------|---|
| <i>Popical-Island</i>    | Popical Island is a small, hard-working collective of bands and like minded souls who work together to organise events and releases. Popical Island is not a record label; the bands own their recordings and copyright 100%. |
| <i>Golden Plec</i>       | GoldenPlec is an award winning music website run by an enthusiastic collective of Irish based writers and photographers.  |
| <i>Voices of Hope</i>    | A Community Choir for people who suffer from Parkinson's Disease  |

| PROJECTS: SPORT CATEGORY               | IDEA   |
|--|--|
| <i>Assessing the Ocean</i>             | Supplying tailored surfing lessons for people with special needs.    |
| <i>Breast Cancer Fitness Programme</i> | A dragon boat team whose members have had a breast cancer diagnosis. |
| <i>Club Colours</i>                    | Helps GAA clubs of all sizes sell bespoke merchandise online.        |





## THE RESULTS

| PROJECTS: FOOD CATEGORY  | IDEA   |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>Grow HQ</i>           | Create an understanding and empathy for food, its origin and how it's produced by teaching people how to grow their own food.  |
| <i>Food Cloud</i>        | An innovative solution to food waste and food poverty, redistributing food, from those who have a surplus, such as supermarkets and restaurants, to those who are in need of more.                         |
| <i>The Green Kitchen</i> | The focal point of a new multi-functional Community Resource Facility led by the community charity, WALK that will use produce from the community garden and provide training courses in food preparation, |
| <i>Gaelic Escargot</i>   | Ireland's first free-range snail farm, producing snails more sustainably than in the warmer continental climates, where they are traditionally farmed.   |



## THE RESULTS

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- ▶ Up to 5 New businesses have been incorporated
- ▶ 1 University Partnership created
- ▶ 5 new spaces acquired for projects to house their business
- ▶ 4 Partnerships with retail stores

### **Discounting Factors**

The “Guinness” Factor

It would be easy to think that the name Guinness gets you on the public’s guest list.

In truth, given the evidence about reduced trust in corporations it is possible that attaching a brand name to this kind of initiative could have been interpreted as a barrier rather than a driver.

### THE IMPACT

Ideally we would have had access to quant research at a nationwide level to quantify the impact of the idea on areas such as national identity. But to our mind the impact of behavioural attitude is best represented by the actions taken by people such as 270,000 votes and the nearly 700 ideas submitted.

We include some verbatim quotes from awardees that demonstrate the impact of Arthur Guinness Projects on their lives.

#### **On belonging to a community of like-minded people**

“The expert mentors have been amazing at putting me in touch with people who have given me great help in progressing things. One set me up with a photographer who had also entered AGP. Another put me in touch with Limerick City council and now I have a project running there in the Summer. Without those connections, I wouldn’t have met key people who have really helped me along the way. The contacts I’ve made through AGP have opened up areas that are important for my project development”

Joe Caslin; Our Nation’s Sons.

#### **On Reciprocity within the Community:**

“It was an amazing feeling to see how people around Ireland engaged with our project when it appeared on AGP. It was so nice to get that kind of validation for an idea that you have”

Iseult Ward: Food Cloud

“It was amazing to see strangers get behind the projects and vote. It’s nice to know the work has an impact on people and that there are so many people out there who care about new thinking and ideas in Ireland”

Joe Caslin, Our Nation’s Sons.

### NEW LEARNINGS

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- ▶ We believe there are new learnings for public and private bodies on the principles of how to effectively engage people in the interests of society.
- ▶ We also believe there are learnings for brand leaders in how to look at people instead of thinking of 'consumers' and in doing so design solutions that are advertised rather than advertising solutions.
- ▶ Although we cannot comment on the impact on brand scores it is an interesting to consider an approach that puts the creation of social capital ahead as probable driver of positive brand growth rather than as a tag on.

### SUMMARY

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The Arthur Guinness Projects is a people-led creative solution that created a new sort of value for Ireland - that of social capital. It bridged disparate communities of people around a shared purpose and brought them together to get behind hundreds of new ideas that would influence Ireland's next generation of talent and creativity at a time when the country most needed it.

# The Arthur Guinness Projects

In the Company of Huskies



## MEDIA GALLERY

### CREATIVE

