

Ireland's  
Nonprofit  
Data Portal**Benefacts**

# TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST

## IRELAND'S CHARITABLE SECTOR HAS A NEW TOOL

Philanthropy—which literally means 'love of mankind'—is seen as a way of participating directly in solving society's ills and needs. In the US, philanthropy is an everyday occurrence engaged in by all socioeconomic groups. Of the \$335 billion worth of charitable gifts made in the US last year, 85% came from families and individuals. Philanthropy is a very personal response to public problems from all sectors of society.

The most essential element for allowing philanthropy to flourish is a healthy, reliable charity sector. People won't donate unless they trust the recipients. The bedrock of giving in the US is the fact that the sector is utterly transparent, and individual citizens can assess and analyze the effectiveness of charities. Independent rating agencies allow the public to judge the effectiveness of charities on an objective basis. This results in a healthy, competitive and effective environment.

The Ireland Funds are proud to be co-funding Benefacts with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and Atlantic Philanthropies. It is an excellent example of what a public philanthropic partnership, with the State and philanthropists working in unison, can deliver for the public good.

## **BENEFACTS — A NEW TOOL FOR TRANSPARENCY IN IRELAND**

Now, a new tool has been unveiled in Ireland to further the culture of philanthropy and increase transparency and trust in the nonprofit sector.

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Mr. Brendan Howlin T.D. introduced Benefacts—a new website that will provide up-to-date detailed financial and governance data on nonprofits in Ireland. The initiative is being funded in a partnership between the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Atlantic Philanthropies and The Ireland Funds.

## **TRUSTED AND IMPARTIAL INFORMATION**

When Benefacts.ie is available in early 2016, the public will be able to access a wide range of information on more than 12,000 Irish nonprofits—the first time that such comprehensive regulatory data has ever been gathered and re-published in one place. The mission of Benefacts will be to make data available to support better-informed decisions—whether by nonprofits or their funders, policy-makers, prospective donors or volunteers or indeed anyone with an interest in data for social good.

The public will not be the only users of the database: Benefacts will make data available in customized formats to a range of other end-users, in the nonprofit sector itself, and among its funders and donors including government. Social entrepreneurs, analysts and researchers will also benefit from access to a database which is maintained up-to-date and which, over time, will become the authoritative source of trusted, impartial information about the entire population of nonprofits operating in Ireland.

The Benefacts team has already started to build the new database and web service. The contents will be drawn from various regulatory sources including filings by nonprofit companies with the Companies Registration Office.



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- 2 Caitriona Fottrell; Kieran McLoughlin, President and CEO, The Worldwide Ireland Funds; Patricia Quinn, Managing Director, Benefacts; John Fitzpatrick, President & CEO, North America Fitzpatrick Hotel Group; and Chairman, The American Ireland Fund
- 3 John Fitzpatrick; Brendan Howlin, T.D. Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform; Kieran McLoughlin



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