



Strand 1 Frequently Asked Questions

What does the cross border and cross community element entail?

RiSE is a cross border and cross community programme and the organisations involved will reflect this demographic. The programme will require all organisations to come together at regular intervals for training and study visits where participants will be able to share their ideas, knowledge and experience.

What is considered a rural organisation?

For the purpose of the programme the partnership will prioritise rural organisations located in areas with a settlement size of 5,000 or less (NI) and 10,000 or less (border region of Ireland).

We are based in a town but serve a rural area, can we apply?

The RiSE programme is primarily focused on organisations based in rural areas, however, if you wish to demonstrate how the activity will benefit rural areas, you are welcome to complete an EoI and it will be considered and assessed with all completed applications.

What is the minimum number of members required to participate in RiSE?

We require a minimum of two organisation members to participate in Strand 1.

Where will activities take place?

The workshops, training and cluster events will take place in a range of venues throughout Northern Ireland and the border area. These will be confirmed once participating groups have been selected.

What is the time commitment for participation for Strand 1?

Strand 1 is delivered over a 10-month period, from November 2026 to August 2027, with an opportunity to progress to further support through Strand 2 which will also be for 10 months and delivered from September 2027 to June 2028.

Activities involved in Strand One are as below:

- *Introductory networking cluster event (1 day - in person, scheduled for Wednesday 27th January 2027)*
- *Strand One residential including Social Enterprise Academy peer to peer learning (1 night residential - in person, scheduled for 24th - 25th February 2027)*
- *Social Enterprise Academy peer to peer learning (online over 4 days March/April 2027)*
- *Study Visit in NI (1 day – in person, April 2027)*
- *Study Visit in Scotland (2 night residential – in person, May 2027)*
- *Study Visit in RoI (1 day – in person, June 2027)*
- *Networking cluster event (1 day - in person, August 2027)*

There will also be opportunities for 1 to 1 support, leadership training and measuring social impact training. All dates will be shared in advance with participating organisations, allowing you to plan and timetable your involvement.

What training is available in the programme?

The training offered will range depending on the stage of growth of the organisation participating in RiSE. Training will be delivered by the Social Enterprise Academy Scotland. Optional accreditation is awarded by Social Enterprise Academy and credit rated by Glasgow Caledonian University.

Examples of the training include:

- *Developing Sustainability*
- *Exploring Enterprise Leadership*
- *Measuring Social Impact*

How long will the training days be?

The SEA Training will normally be delivered from 10 am to 4 pm but there will be flexibility, the training will be to a maximum of 20 participants in one session.

Is it the same two members of organisation who must complete all of the training?

Yes, we ask that the same two members of the organisation complete the core training element of the programme, which is over 6 days, however other organisation members can step in to attend the study visits and cluster events.

Is the training online or in person?

Training will be delivered via a combination of in person and online.

How much does the training cost?

The training is fully funded, so there is no cost to participants. The programme represents a significant financial investment with support, expertise and resources being provided to organisations.

Do you need to have a Social Enterprise Idea before you start the programme?

No, we will be able to support you in developing a new idea.

What is a Diversity and Inclusion Plan?

The diversity and inclusion plan will review governance, volunteers and service users to identify new and innovative ways to broaden participation in social enterprises and community services. The focus is on inclusion and building future leadership.

The sector currently relies heavily on an ageing volunteer base, and there is a recognised need to attract new people and create more paid roles. Increasingly, the demands placed on volunteer leaders are becoming unsustainable, leading to burnout. Strengthening capacity through training, education and leadership development will be key to addressing this.

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