Press release

**Minister O’Brien launches €1m fund for Community Development Pilot Projects**

From [Department of Rural and Community Development](https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-rural-and-community-development/)

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Joe O’Brien TD, Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development today launched a call for Community Development Pilot Projects to trial community led interventions that address poverty, social exclusion and inequality, and promote human rights.

The call invites expressions of interest from community development organisations working to address issues in areas such as racism (including Travellers and Roma), domestic or sexual violence, migration, gender, people living in direct provision or seeking international protection, climate action and just transition. Up to eight projects will be selected to be part of the pilot which has overall funding of €1m for 2021.

**Speaking at the launch Minister O’Brien who has special responsibility for Community Development and Charities said** :

“True community development is trusting communities to develop their own solutions and pathways out of poverty and inequality. It’s important that these pilots are impactful and make a real difference as that can inform a potential growth of this community-led approach to the significant social challenges we are facing.”

This pilot programme will give community organisations the flexibility to develop community development responses to a range of social and environmental concerns and facilitate an empowering collaborative approach to building relationships between marginalised groups and main stream services.

[Community Work Ireland,](https://www.communityworkireland.ie/) the national organisation that promotes and supports community development work in Ireland welcomed the announcement from Minister O’Brien.

**Anastasia Crickley, Chairperson of the CWI Policy and Practice Working Group, said** :

“We in CWI see this development as a significant move forward in establishing a new community development infrastructure that is resourced to address the current, new and emerging challenges associated with poverty, social exclusion and inequality, and in ensuring the inclusion of minority and marginalised groups in Irish society.”

**ENDS**

**Note to editors:**

The 2021 Community Development Pilot Programme Information/Guidance and Application Form are available on gov.ie: [here.](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c115b-community-development-pilot-programme-2021/)