

Theme: NETWORKING AND REPRESENTATION IN GUIDANCE
Report

National Forum on Guidance

The National Forum on Guidance (NFG) met on 19th October 2016 in the Clock Tower, Department of Education and Skills. Attendees included representatives from AHECS, IGC, AEGAI, PLC guidance provision, DSP, DES, Job Centres, LES, Intreo, NEPS, AHEAD, Careersportal, Youth Information Service, QQI, ETBI, Léargas, Youthreach, AONTAS and NAPD.

At the last meeting in May 2016, it was agreed that the NFG would promote to the Regional Skills Fora and the Dept. of Education and Skills, that there would be representation for guidance at the Regional Skills Fora nationally. In this regard, it was timely to discuss the benefits and requirements of networking and representation in and for guidance.

Presentations with opportunities for questions and answers were followed by facilitated group discussions and feedback session.

Presentations included:

1. Guide+: A European Project Piloting Localised Training Modules for Guidance Practitioners
Presenter: Julie McCafferty, European Projects Manager, Ballymun Job Centre
2. Regional Skills Forum (RSF) Dublin
Presenter: Natasha Kinsella, Regional Skills Forum Manager Dublin
3. Networking Locally, Nationally and Europe-wide
Presenter: Jennifer McKenzie, Director, NCGE

Group discussions were facilitated to discuss the following 4 questions:

1. What local guidance-related networks are you involved in in your area (formal & informal)?
2. What can we (i.e. NFG and you) do to improve networking and co-operation at local and national level?
3. What information could be generated locally to inform RSF? How do we feedback this information to the RSF?
4. Who should the RSF Managers engage with or contact regionally?

Agreed outcome of discussions:

In the final discussion representation for guidance at local, regional and national level was considered. The RSF Manager for Dublin suggested that, it might be more appropriate for guidance representation to be sought at local RSF level in relation to specific issues and/or sub-sectors and that she had initial discussions with her RSF colleagues in this regard.

It was agreed by those attending that, as there are several representative bodies for guidance providers across the country, that it would be most beneficial if the RSF at regional level were made aware of who these representative bodies are, and how to contact them directly.

It was agreed that NCGE would develop such a document to provide to the RSF manager for Dublin, with the request to forward on this information to her RSF colleagues (available also on www.ncge.ie).

For more information about the National Forum on Guidance, please contact NCGE.

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Each table of attendees was asked to consider, discuss and note their responses to the 4 questions below and the following outlines their responses:

Q1. What local guidance-related networks are you involved in in your area (formal & informal)?

- AEGI
- PLC
- JOB CENTRES
- YOUTHREACH
- YOUTH INFORMATION
- TRAINING CENTRES
- LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS
- DSP / INTREO
- CASE OFFICER
- PRISON SERVICE
- REHAB
- LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
- COMMUNITY EDUCATION
- AONTAS
- DISABILITY SERVICES
- RPL (Practitioners Network) ⇒ Online
- IGC Branch Network
- ETB Planning Seminar
- HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORKS (local initiatives)
- SKILLS FORUMS
- HSE SERVICES
- LOCAL ENTERPRISE
- GUIDE +
- EX-Colleagues
- AHECS
- OTHER PRACTITIONERS
- ENTERPRISE BOARDS
- EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT
- NLN
- AEGAI

Q2. What can we (i.e. NFG and you) do to improve networking and co-operation at local and national level?

- Regular meetings / conferences
- Communication
- Engagement
- Participation
- Teach Networking
- Exchanging Information
- Linking of Services
- Client Centred
- Central Co-ordination from DES
- Overlap of delivery / Duplication
- Part IV – White Paper
- Co-ordinator must be impartial
- Funding

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- Marketing Strategy
- Focus on Skills gaps / Jobs in demand
- RSF Managers → Meeting
- Disseminating information appropriately / access improved.
- More practitioner involvement
- Shared forum at local level
- A lot of cooperation is informal / local
- NCGE – to collate info about guidance to RSF
- Promote client centred approach across delivery and services
- Match network areas / maps
- Promote better understanding of NFQ
- Keeping each other informed
- Seeking interdepartmental funding to facilitate this
- Let it be generally known that you are available i.e. selling your services
- Replicate this table on a broader basis

Q3. What information could be generated locally to inform RSF? How do we feedback this information to the RSF?

- Information on industry skills
- Skills gaps at local level
- Skills profile of local workforce
- Soft skills
- What support can be given regarding the gaps?
- Progression routes
- Skills analysis – Guidance and LEO
- Local employment needs
- Education profile – Literacy
- Awareness of local skills
- Skills conversion courses
- Differences between types of guidance provision for levels 1 – 10
- Local meetings
- Service gaps
- What we provide
- Gaps in services, e.g. lack of services in some disciplines
- Difficulties that customers have with access e.g. transport
- Profile of potential labour force
- Distribution balance in availability of service
- Value of experience garnered by customers
- Use of social media

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Q4. Who should the RSF Managers engage with or contact regionally?

- The remit of guidance services needs to be addressed
- Sector level sub-groups: e.g. Adult Ed / Higher Ed
- LEO
- Guidance Services
- Guidance Practitioners
- Jobseeker representative
- DSP / ETB's
- Education Providers
- AEGI
- AHECS
- Guidance Network
- AHEAD
- Employer Networks
- Professional Associations
- FET Directors
- Stakeholders identified in Q1 → Perhaps all should be contacted
- Guidance in ETB's
- Higher Education Guidance Services
- Access Offices
- Use of social media