

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND CALL 2 VISIT

European Social Fund provision in
Clanrye Group

Family Foundations

Report of a Call 2 Visit in April 2022



Providing Inspection services for:
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Context

Clanrye Group is contracted by the Department for the Economy (DfE) to deliver the Family Foundations European Social Fund (ESF) project. The focus of the project is the support of the family unit to improve family relations and social inclusion. This project is part funded through the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme 2014-2020 and DfE. The strategic aim of the Programme is to: combat poverty and enhance social inclusion by reducing economic inactivity; and to increase the skills base of those currently in work and future potential participants in the workforce. It is aligned to the European Union 2020 Strategy for Jobs and Growth.

In April 2022, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a Call 2 visit to Clanrye Group on behalf of DfE to evaluate the capacity of the project promoter to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of the provision. The Call 2 visit was informed by the quality improvement plan which has been scrutinised by ETI.

Views of participants

At the time of the Call 2 visit, 84 participants¹ were registered on the project.

ETI met and spoke with a sample of participants during their learning and development sessions and in a focus group. They report that the curriculum has been impactful in helping them to improve their family relationships, confidence, communication and social skills, and prepare for employment through the development of interview skills and a curriculum vitae (CV). The participants feel respected and valued and are proud of the work-related skills they are developing through voluntary work and a wide variety of enrichment activities, including participation in a parenting group, a walking group, mindfulness sessions, a jewellery workshop and 'life through the lens' photography workshops.

Seventeen percent of the participants completed the online questionnaire. Almost all of them reported that the programme is well managed and they are provided with regular feedback on how they are progressing.

Focus of the Call 2 Visit

The Call 2 visit focused on evaluating the extent to which the project promoter is able to demonstrate its capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of provision for the Family Foundations ESF project.

The arrangements for safeguarding were also included.

Two of the key areas which the organisation has prioritised for improvement through its self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes are to review:

- the current systems for developing and monitoring the participants' employability skills; and
- the curriculum, to ensure it is current and fit-for-purpose in meeting the needs of the participants.

¹ All performance data in this report was provided by the ESF project promoter.

Key Findings

The Call 2 visit identified the following key findings.

- The curriculum provided for the participants is very good. It is appropriately tailored to meet the individual personal, social and development needs of the participants, in order to reduce their barriers to learning and employment through a well-balanced programme of accredited and non-accredited training and mentoring. Since the previous inspection in 2018², the project promoter has been proactive in developing further an accredited curriculum, and has extended the suite of online short accredited courses. The curriculum is kept under review and the organisation is currently engaged in a process of refining the curriculum offer, to better reflect the current and future needs of local employers. The learning and development and mentoring sessions observed were effective, planned well and characterised by supportive and enabling engagement between the staff and participants. Staff use online tools to collaborate effectively and to share and store resources. There are appropriate systems in place to track and monitor the progress of the participants' employability and transferrable skills.
- Over the four-year period, to date, all of the outcomes of the project are positive. The targets for recruitment and progression into employment or education and training have been exceeded. Retention has improved over the duration of the project, with the majority of participants successfully retained. With Call 2 closing, any participant who is exiting Call 2 and enrolling on Call 3 will be recorded with an outcome of into education or training³. Participants have been successful in progressing into a range of job roles including childcare, pharmacy, retail, construction, hospitality and digital technologies. Some of the participants have been recruited into mentoring, tutoring and administrative support roles within the Clanrye Group.
- The project promoter has adapted well to the challenges of the pandemic through the use of online and hybrid approaches to engage with participants. A strong emphasis was placed on maintaining contact with participants during lockdowns, and there are effective strategies to follow-up on those who have disengaged. There has been an increased focus on mental health and wellbeing of participants and staff, through for example stress management and wellbeing courses.
- There is highly effective leadership and management of the project, with a caring ethos at all levels. All of the staff report that they feel well supported. The well-structured and personalised staff induction process is valued by the staff and they are supported well through targeted continuous personal development opportunities.

² [European Social Fund provision in Clanrye Group - Family Foundations Community Family Support Programme \(etini.gov.uk\)](https://etini.gov.uk)

³ As per DfE European Social Fund Information Memo 09/22 – Performance monitoring – updating participant data.

- Within the well-established quality improvement team, there are clear roles and responsibilities and effective communication systems for the data-informed quality improvement planning process. There is a collegial approach to continuous improvement and the impact of the programme is evaluated against a range of qualitative and quantitative data collated from session observations, peer observations within and across courses, focus groups and participant surveys.
- The dedicated and experienced staff provide high levels of care, support and guidance for the participants. They have strong links and working relationships with a relevant range of external referral agencies and community based support organisations which are used well to recruit to the project and to signpost participants to specialist help and support as required. A 'wraparound' support service is in place for the participants to access the project promoter's wider suite of funded programmes and initiatives.

Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the Call 2 visit, the arrangements for safeguarding the participants of the Family Foundations ESF project reflect current legislation and practice.

Overall outcome

At the time of the Call 2 visit, and in the areas evaluated, Clanrye Group demonstrates a high level of capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of the provision for Family Foundations ESF project.

APPENDIX

A. Call 2 Performance Data

European Social Fund – Family Foundations	Over the four-year period ⁴
Numbers of enrolments and % against target	844 (113%)
Numbers of participants into employment upon leaving and % against target	243 (162%)
Numbers of participants into education and/or training upon leaving and % against target	294 (186%)
Retention - Numbers and % against target	539 (64%)

B. Methodology and evidence base

The arrangements for this face-to-face and on-line visit included: the observation of two sessions of practice (face-to-face); discussions with participants (21) during their learning and development sessions and in a focus group; discussions with key stakeholders (including employers and external agencies) and with key staff (including the quality improvement and safeguarding arrangements); and, the opportunity for all participants to complete a confidential questionnaire. Inspectors also scrutinised relevant data and documentation provided by the ESF project promoter.

ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the [ETI website](#).

C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75% - 90%
A majority	-	50% - 74%
A significant minority	-	30% - 49%
A minority	-	10% - 29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

⁴ From April 2018 to December 2021.

Overall outcome

ETI use one of the following outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the project promoter:

At the time of the Call 2 visit, and in the areas evaluated, xxxx demonstrates a high level of capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of the provision for xx ESF project.

At the time of the Call 2 visit, and in the areas evaluated, xxxx demonstrates capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of provision for xx ESF project.

At the time of the Call 2 visit, and in the areas evaluated, xxxx has not demonstrated sufficient capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of the provision for xx ESF project. ETI will continue to monitor how the project promoter brings about improvement and the Department may consider further action.

Safeguarding outcome

ETI use one of the following outcomes when evaluating the project promoter's arrangements for safeguarding the participants:

Based on the evidence available at the time of the Call 2 visit, the arrangements for safeguarding the participants of the for xx ESF project reflect current legislation and practice.

Based on the evidence available at the time of the Call 2 visit, the arrangements for safeguarding the participants of the for xx ESF project reflect broadly current legislation and practice.

The project promoter, however, needs to:

Based on the evidence available at the time of the Call 2 visit, the arrangements for safeguarding the participants of the for xx ESF project are unsatisfactory. <DN insert detail>.

ETI will return to the provider within six working weeks to monitor progress in addressing the unsatisfactory arrangements for safeguarding.

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