



Strategy 2023 - 2025

Contents



Introduction

Fundamentals of Citywise

Vision and mission

Theory of change

Approach to scaling

Alignment with Rethink Ireland

Securing donor commitments

Track record with Rethink Ireland

Context

Issue analysis

Stakeholder input

Strategic decisions

Goals and Objectives

Phases of implementation

Successful implementation

Managing implementation

Measures and milestones

Growing participation

Financial projections

Organisational roles and new capacity

Board profiles and governance

Introduction



Citywise Education has provided educational support to young people in West Tallaght for twenty-five years. We understand the ever-changing needs of young people from this community and we will continue to excel in our response to those needs.

This 3-year plan is underpinned with the capital development of a new live learning place in our centre. With the opening of our first of a kind whole life net-zero carbon Science and Language Centre in 2023, we will complete the initial vision of a community-led, wrap-around educational support service for young people growing up in underserved communities.

The new facility will allow for a 60% increase in the numbers currently served by Citywise, allowing us to widen and deepen our impact in the community, increase numbers going to and remaining in third level education, whilst meeting other local needs. Throughout the lifecycle of this plan, we endeavour to further our relationships with existing and new partners to ensure we are holistically supporting the community to the best of our ability.

Our work is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all (SDG4) and two of Ireland's targets under SDG4 are advanced by our work: ensuring equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university; and substantially increasing the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Together with our programmes and supports, our relationships with communities and stakeholders, and a talented and committed staff and volunteers, we possess the foundations for our approach to education to be replicated in other marginalised communities. This document sets out our strategy for 2023 to 2025.

Fundamentals of Citywise

Date	Topic	Location
• 10 th October	Team Building Exercise	Citywise
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Vision and mission



Vision

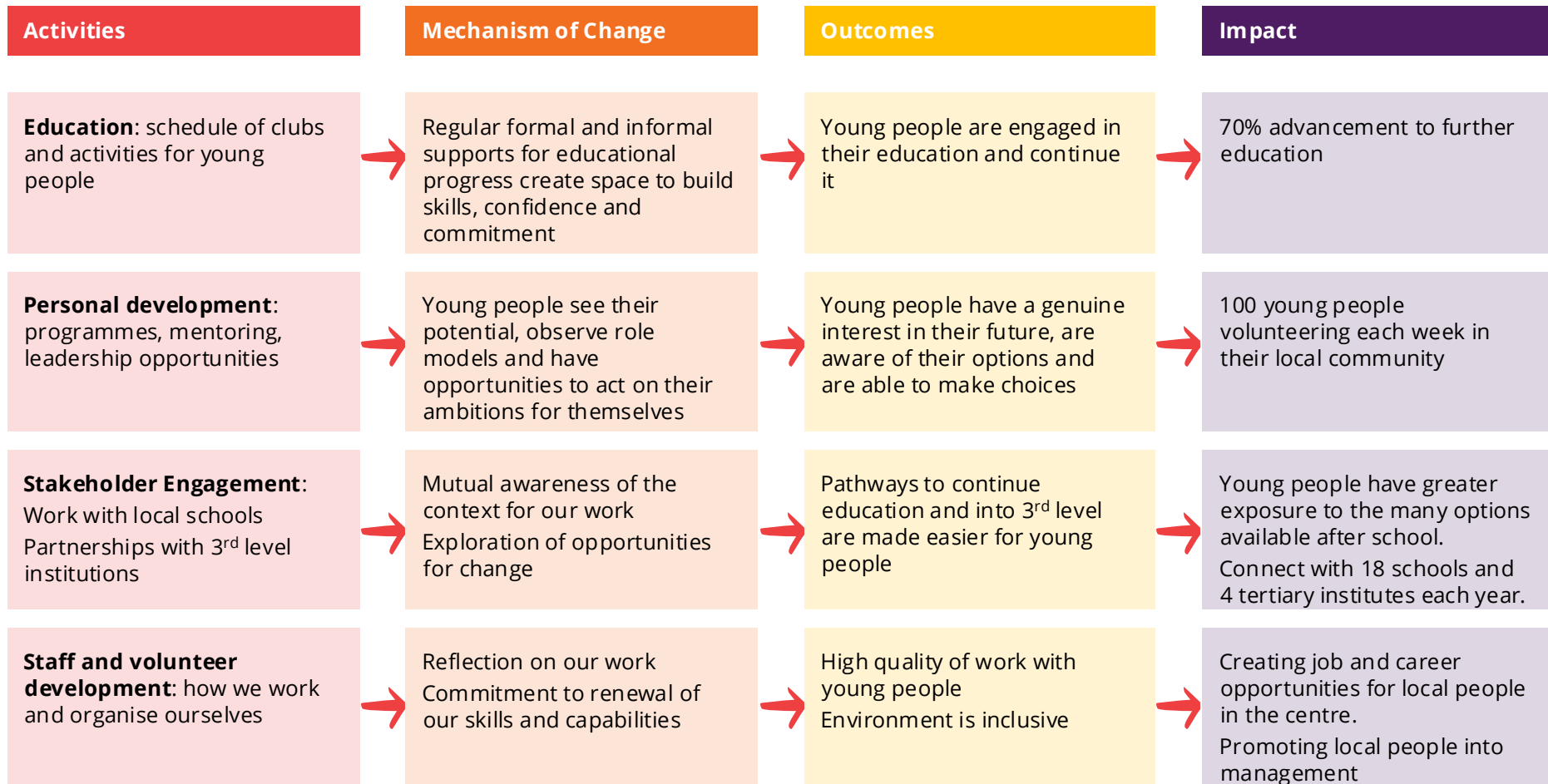
Improving communities through youth education.

Mission

Improving communities by working with young people to develop the whole person through academic support and personal development.

Theory of change

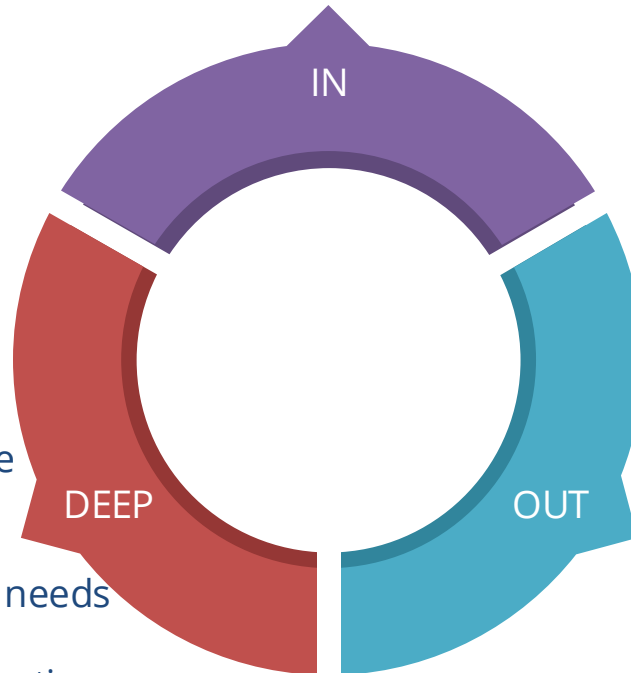
Our Theory of Change sets out how we believe our activities lead to outcomes which in turn, lead to long-term impact on communities.



Approach to scaling

Over the life of this strategy, we have set goals and objectives that will scale on each of three dimensions: in, out and deep. In each area there are several catalysts and drivers of the scale.

- Additional capacity of Science and Language centre
- Growing participation by over 1,000
- Detailed business case for a second site



- Research plan to improve alignment with needs
- Adding selected new programmes in line with needs and interests
- Quality goal includes retention (rollover) of students from year to year as a key metric

- Scaling in-person programmes with partner organisations
- Systems change goal for person-centred learning approach
- Innovating blended models to reach rural students

Alignment with Rethink Ireland

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Securing donor commitments



We are engaged with current and potential donors to support the implementation of this strategy.

Thanks to new investment our funding for scaling education will be circa. €570,000 over 3 years; together with the match from Rethink Ireland this will mean a total budget of €883,500.

With the support of our funders including Rethink Ireland, we will continue our sustainable annual growth in income and operating costs of 12%.

We've secured donor commitments from trusts, corporates and individual pledgers.

Track record with Rethink Ireland

Since 2017, Citywise has received multiple rounds of financial and non-financial support from Rethink Ireland which have been critical factors in our scaling to date.

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

2017-2020 Education Fund awardee for Fast Track Academy

- With this support, we developed a first strategy for Fast Track Academy in line with IT Tallaght.
- Participation in Rethink Ireland workshops and webinars
- Developed partnership with other awardees notably Trinity Access and An Cosan.
- Application processed for Growth Fund and approved in principle but due to the timing/pandemic Boost-It fund was recommended.

2021-2022 Boost-it awardee

- With this support we have met the goals of supporting increased participation by students in Fast Track Academy, the STEMSquare programme and in the Afterschool Clubs and Leadership programme despite the challenges inflicted throughout the COVID 19 Pandemic.

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Issue analysis

The issues we are addressing can be understood through 5 inter-related lenses:

Communities underserved

- ❑ 5% of people in the immediate area we serve hold college degrees compared to 42% nationally;
- ❑ The Pobal deprivation index (2016) denotes 21 areas in Tallaght as very disadvantaged.
- ❑ The immediate area we serve is characterized by the highest levels of deprivation in the Dublin-Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board area.
- ❑ Unemployment in our local community is 30% (CYPSC Plan, 2020), creating a cycle of poverty.
- ❑ Wrap-around community education supports are needed elsewhere, apart from Tallaght.

Community integration

- ❑ There is a need for better integration of migrant and minority groups including traveller and Roma communities, who now make up 11% of the Irish workforce, with a more significant percentage of these living in underserved areas.
- ❑ Such underserved communities have a higher than average proportion of Black, Black Irish, Asian and Asian Irish population.
- ❑ Improved integration of immigrant communities is a major ongoing concern for all European cities.

Need for a learning culture

- ❑ In underserved areas where educational attainment and progression is lower than average, it can seem as though education is undervalued.
- ❑ Placing an emphasis on education and the idea of pursuing higher and further education is often outside the lived experience of young people.
- ❑ Therefore, there is a need to not only provide support to young people but to also change perceptions and create a college going and/or a career orientated culture.

Civic engagement

- ❑ There is a need for increased civic and community engagement of young people, especially those from underserved area.
- ❑ The UN report on Youth Civic Engagement notes the importance of supporting young people to engage in wider society. This research shows that the result of such programmes is engaged citizenship, positive youth development, an increased sense of belonging, increased care and resilience and a wider understanding of the root causes of structural inequality.

Lack of career advice and support

- ❑ There is a lack of availability of career supports for young people in underserved communities. A lack of information, confidence and resources as well as a lack of prior student awareness of course content is leading to a high drop-out rate at third level and to poorly-made career choices.
- ❑ There is a significantly high drop-out rate from third-level colleges, especially for students from underserved backgrounds.
- ❑ The demand for Science/STEM jobs is not being matched by training in schools

Stakeholder input (1 of 2)



A number of elements of the context for this strategy remain broadly consistent: the issues we are seeking to address, the other providers and stakeholders and the value we create.

In preparing this strategy, it is important to note that, in broad terms, Citywise continued to thrive through the COVID pandemic, although some of our students have of course faced challenges in maintaining their participation.

To ensure that our knowledge of our members and parents was accurate, their views were surveyed at the outset of the process of developing this strategy. The key findings were in three areas: reasons for participation, perception and impact, and future needs and expectations.

Member cite as their main reasons for participation:

- Educational support
- Develop social skills and make friends
- The atmosphere and people, especially as drivers for returning

Understanding why members stop coming was also explored. Reasons given for stopping coming to Citywise included:

- Jobs
- Transition Year
- Struggling with too much time spent on school / study

Stakeholder input (2 of 2)

Members perception of Citywise and the impact of their participation:

- The majority talk about Citywise to their friends, and those that don't said it was because their friends already know about it
- Most students take their study more seriously since joining and note the constant help available to them.
- Most have plans to continue their education
- There were mixed responses on access routes, with some knowing a little or others still unsure

Unmet and future needs and expectations:

- Some would like later study opening hours; some however said that they do not use the study
- Of the facilities, the café is very popular: new facilities and services desired included mental health space; more sports / cooking; help with the more practical subjects, e.g., Technical Drawing, Woodwork; and a video editing group
- A majority want to volunteer with Citywise when they can

Parents are an important stakeholder. Their reasons for wanting members to participate were similar although price was also a factor. They typically heard about Citywise via word of mouth and saw it as mainly their initiative (rather than the members') to access Citywise.

We plan to conduct a presentation of the strategy to receive feedback from students in Q4 when schools resume.

Strategic Decisions

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Goals and objectives

Goals

Objectives

1

Increase organisation's alignment with the needs of the community

- Improve engagement with students (post-pandemic and 'hard to engage' students)
- Increase share of staff and management drawn from local community
- Assess the community's current and future needs
- Maintain an inclusive environment, where equality is upheld and diversity respected

2

Launch science and language centre and programmes

- Science and Language center capital project managed to opening
- Year 1 to 3 of operations resourced and qualified staff in place
- Demonstrate impact on student's awareness of opportunities

3

Improve the quality of services we provide

- Ensure continuity of supports to young people ages 8 to 23 years
- Progressively improve 'rollover' year to year
- Further develop leadership and career-focused programmes
- Revise current programmes and create new programmes from assessment of needs

4

Promote a person-centred learning approach across the education system

- Capture our learning, insights and impacts
- Produce this material in a form that others can act on
- Disseminate this material to communities and education stakeholders

5

Scale towards national reach

- Package our programmes to allow others to deliver them with our support
- Develop blended models that can scale independently of physical sites and reach rural students
- Develop the detailed business case for a second site by 2027

6

Balance our funding to ensure sustainability

- Increase public funding as share of total funding for operations
- Secure multi-year philanthropic funding that funds investment in growth
- Ensure current corporate support is extended to end of the strategic period

Phases of Implementation

Most of our resources – including our time – are dedicated to our operations. We therefore plan to implement the strategy in phases. This will also assist us in focusing early attention on elements of the strategy which help facilitate later elements:



Successful implementation

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Managing implementation

We will ensure that the strategy is implemented through a set of measures that ensure accountability, track progress and allow for problem-solving and resource re-allocation where needed.

Board

- Included in monthly report from CEO
- Annual strategy review and refresh

Management Committee

- Monthly implementation progress report
- Quarterly dedicated implementation progress reviews

Implementation Coordinator

- Development Manager coordinates colleagues
- Compiles progress report for Management Committee

These measures combine day-to-day coordination by the Development Manager with mutual accountability among members of the Management Committee and the oversight and challenge of the Board. Collectively, this provides a strong basis for successful implementation.

Measures and milestones

For some goals and objectives, we have identified meaningful measures and milestones. We expect to refine these throughout implementation:

1

Increase organisation's alignment with the needs of the community

- 50% of staff and management live or grew up in our area of operations
- Annual research into community needs

2

Launch science and language centre and programmes

- Students improve their awareness and confidence in science and language careers
- Stakeholders including corporations initiate new programmes and offers in the centre

3

Improve the quality of services we provide

- Annual analysis and action plan for improving retention (returning members)
- Maintain and update a list of options and ideas for new programmes for periodic review

4

Promote a person-centred learning approach across the education system

- Adopt an annual research plan including dissemination at conferences and events

5

Scale towards national reach

- Partner with other organisations to deliver Citywise programmes in new geographical areas

6

Balance our funding to ensure sustainability

- Maintain current financial health and sustainable growth in costs and income

Growing participation

	AY 2023-24	AY 2024-25	AY 2025-26
Total participants	3,157	3,725	4,368
Fast Track Academy:	409	487	572
6th Year	60	68	80
5th Year	35	45	50
3rd Year:	40	52	64
Tertiary:	30	38	52
Junior Fast Track:	40	54	68
Intermediate Fast Track:	24	30	38
Citywise Means Business:	180	200	220
STEAMSquare:	355	475	596
Khan Academy:	20	30	40
CS Girls:	20	24	28
Robotics:	30	36	42
Code Club Junior:	20	30	40
Code Club Intermediate:	20	30	40
Code Club Senior:	20	30	40
STEAM Masters:	10	16	20
Inventors Club:	15	20	28
Science Classes:	40	60	80
Math Classes:	60	75	90
Engineering Classes:	10	14	18
Regular STEAM In-School Programmes:	90	110	130
After-school Clubs:	263	318	390
Athens and Brussels:	25	30	40
Grenoble and Hamburg:	25	30	40
Citywise Engage:	80	92	105
Chess Club:	25	30	40
Music Club:	22	30	40
Art Club:	26	36	45
Homework Club:	60	70	80
Leadership:	80	95	110
Bridge 2 College:	250	250	300
Summer and Easter Camps:	1,000	1,100	1,200
Once Off School Activities:	800	1,000	1,200

Our ambition is to grow by more than 1,000 participants over the strategy.

We track participants rather than individual members. This is because a key driver of impact is a member accessing multiple different opportunities to participate.

Over this strategy, STEAM participation will grow faster than other programmes as the new centre creates additional capacity.

This figures do not currently include participation resulting from scaling with partners and this will be incorporated as these partnership models are agreed.

Financial projections

The costs of scaling in, out and deep are primarily in increased staff numbers; our model of working with young people means the time and energy of committed staff is the primary resource employed.

Income	2020 Act	2021 Act	2022 (M/R)	2023	2024	2025
Public Funding	54,671	69,315	80,500	83,475	136,643	195,031
Trusts \ Corp Funding	188,783	279,683	272,333	182,566	199,286	299,596
Personal donations	45,559	41,847	27,000	28,350	27,768	27,256
Rethink- Educational Funds (Scaling Ed)			63,000	190,000	190,000	127,000
Rethink- Educational Funds - Uplift			35,000	105,000	105,000	70,000
Earned Income	262,463	230,370	207,571	210,100	252,260	256,067
Grand Total Income	551,476	621,215	685,404	799,491	910,957	974,950
Operating Costs Incl Extra for S&L						
All Staff Costs	277,285	333,458	395,516	463,292	540,068	559,843
All other costs	204,394	223,138	259,140	304,097	331,691	362,438
Total Operating Costs	481,679	556,596	654,656	767,389	871,758	922,281
Surplus	69,797	64,619	30,748	32,102	39,199	52,669
% Surplus	12.7%	10.4%	4.5%	4.0%	4.3%	5.4%

Key features:

Sustainable annual growth in income and operating costs of 12% consistent with historical rates

Increasing share of funding from public sources as we align with national policy objectives

Scaling costs are driven by increased staff numbers as we reach more young people

Cost per participant falls as we achieve increasing economies of scale

Current	New
STEAM Manager Responsible for organising, developing, and growing all five areas of STEAM projects using the latest technologies.	Chief Executive Officer Responsible for managing the overall organisation, the staff and accountable to the board
Development Manager Responsible for generating income and developing programmes aimed at increasing educational aspirations and developing the whole person.	Fast Track Academy Manager Responsible for organising, recording, developing, and growing the core educational programme.
STEAM Officer Support the STEAM Manager in organising, developing, and growing STEAM programmes.	Café Manager Manages Café operations, healthy snacks for young people, food sustainability and cookery lessons.
Development Officer Responsible for developing programmes aimed at increasing educational aspirations and fundraising to support the delivery of these programmes.	Core Receptionist Manages reception team, all CRM admin and front of house duties.
Education Officer Responsible for organising, delivering, and developing activities and programmes for young people.	After-School Manager Responsible for organising, developing, and growing after-school & leadership programmes.
After-School Officer Support Afterschool Manager in organising, developing, and growing afterschool and leadership programmes.	Fast Track Academy Officer Support Fast Track Academy Manager in organising, developing, and growing the core educational programme.
Chief Operations Officer Responsible for the day-to-day operation of the centre, programmes and volunteers	Chief Financial Officer Responsible for the financial operations of the organisation including all reports and budgets.
Interns Responsible for organising and delivering after-school activities and programmes to young people, and developing and supporting young leaders. *	Community Employment Workers Support staff across all programmes and fundraising to continue services offered to young people.
Volunteers Support staff in the day-to-day running of all programmes, using their individual expertise.	Tús Workers Support staff across all programmes and fundraising to continue services offered to young people.
European Solidarity Corps Volunteers Support staff across all programmes and fundraising to continue services offered to young people.	

* We believe that the observed high-quality of interns is a basis for expanding the number of intern roles as we grow. This has benefits for cost efficiency and for the impact on the career development of our interns.

Board profiles (1 of 2)

Citywise has a board with deep experience and diverse capabilities to oversee the implementation of the strategy.

Marie Corr, Chair

I am a Community Development professional with a strong background in advocacy, mentoring, capacity building, leadership and policy development. My current role is Intercultural & Diversity Coordinator responsible for delivering a quality standard project across 3 of the country's largest AHBs Cirde/Clúid/Respond. From 2004 – 2014 I served as a member of South Dublin County Council representing the Tallaght South ward and I was elected Mayor twice. I have spent over 20 years working and volunteering in the community sector. I have a particular interest and specialism in working with migrant communities and in areas of disadvantage addressing social exclusion and developing capacity and solutions within communities. I first got involved with CWE a long time ago as a French teacher helping members improve their oral language skills for Leaving Cert. I am also a proud parent to 2 Citywise alumni who have benefitted hugely from their membership and engagement with CWE FTA and Leadership programmes. I am passionate about the work and continuing development of Citywise Education and it's enduring positive impact on the lives of young people and their families across the Tallaght area. I joined the board and have the privilege of being Chair since 2020.

Seán Preston

Pharmaceutical Engineer with BEng Mechanical Engineering, DIT Bolton Street. I've been involved in Citywise since I was 8 years old. I took part in the summer camps and after school groups, progressed to junior leadership and Fast track academy, learned I could go to college through the guidance of my FTA tutors as they had very similar backgrounds to me so I thought if they can do it why can't I! Through constant exam failures and repeat exams in the summer months along with the constant support of the Citywise leaders, I graduated from college. I had to leave after my degree and get a job as my girlfriend was due our first child and I was lucky to get a job in a pharmaceutical company where I started in a very low position and again through the ongoing support and mentoring from my friends in Citywise and the skills I learned in the leadership programs I was able to work hard and integrate well into my working team which opened many doors that helped me to progress. I now manage teams of engineers using the same skills and implementing the same culture I learned in Citywise. I'm now privileged to sit on the board of directors to help ensure Citywise continues its great work and retains its unique culture so all our community can reach their full potential just like Citywise helped me to reach mine.

Paul Whinnery

Paul is a former Manager of Citywise Education Belfast. He is also the former Centre Assistant Manager of Citywise Education in Dublin. Paul currently works as the Deputy Principal at Rockbrook Park School in Dublin. Paul is very experienced working in the education field and withholds various qualifications. Paul has completed a BA Joint Degree in Geography/Italian from Queens University Belfast. He also graduated from Dublin City University with a diploma in education. Paul achieved his Master's in Education from NUI Maynooth in 2014 with a focus on access to education in disadvantaged communities. Paul has been involved in Citywise for 25 years, initially starting off as a volunteer, then as a staff member, and now again as a volunteer. He currently serves as a board member which he has been for the past four years.

Louise Donovan

Louise started working in UPS in 2000 and has progressed her career through various roles, as Team Leader and is currently Management Concerns Supervisor for UK/IE. Louise grew up in Liverpool where she attended both primary and secondary school and completed her A Levels. Louise moved to Dublin 25 years ago, and in 2021 completed a BA (Hons) First Class Honors Degree in Management & Leadership. Louise has been involved with Citywise as a parent since 2010 and began volunteering in 2015. She has been a board member in Citywise since 2019, and currently also volunteers as a member of the HR Sub Committee.

Board profiles (2 of 2)

Citywise has a board with deep experience and diverse capabilities to oversee the implementation of the strategy.

Azeez Abdullai

Azeez has held various roles including working at Almac Pharmaceuticals as a Pharma Services Analyst. He also held a role in Takeda Pharmaceuticals as a QC Analyst and Leo Pharma as a Chemistry Laboratory Technician. He is the founder of Express Grocery's. Azeez has previously completed a degree in BSc Biochemistry with Cell Biology. He has also studied a Masters in Translational Oncology.

Codie Preston

Codie is an educator and with 20 years' experience working with young people. A Jobstown native, he attended Citywise as a youngster and continued as his involvement as a volunteer ever since. He obtained a BSc(Hons) from UCD, majoring in Zoology, and completed his PGDE in TCD. He has worked as a secondary school teacher of science and biology since. Codie is also a passionate advocate for the environment and is a Biodiversity Ambassador for Green Sod Ireland and well as an active member of the Irish Schools Sustainability Network.

Liam Molloy

Liam has over 20 years experience working in the Financial Services Industry in Ireland. His current position is Head of Finance, KBC Bank Ireland. Liam holds a degree in BSc (Hon) Environment Biology, UCD. He has also completed a HDip Business Studies, Michael Smurfit Business School (UCD) and is an FCCA (Qualified Accountant). He was a participant on the very first Citywise Summer Programme. Over the years have progressed from participant, to junior leader, to running summer programmes in Dublin & Belfast through to 15+ years directorship on the Citywise Board.

Maeve Martin

Maeve currently works as a HR Manager in MSS Building Services Ltd. Maeve has completed diplomas in HR Management, and Mediation Employment Law respectively. Maeve has been involved with Citywise as a parent and regular volunteer since 2010. She has recently joined the board of Citywise.

Contact information

Jonathon Doyle
Chief Executive Officer
Citywise Education

Tel: 01 404 9736