



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



SCAN ME

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A Message from our Chairperson

Dear Localise Community,

As the Chairperson of Localise Youth Volunteering, I am delighted to present our annual report for the year 2023. This report provides a comprehensive overview of activities undertaken throughout the year, together with financial information and future plans.

Throughout 2023, Localise Youth Volunteering remained steadfast in our commitment to empowering young people to make a positive difference in their communities. The enduring legacy of the global pandemic and other societal challenges highlights the importance of the work of our volunteers. One of the highlights of the year was the expansion of our volunteering programmes into new communities and contexts. Through strategic partnerships and outreach efforts, we were able to engage with more young people than ever before, providing them with meaningful opportunities to contribute to causes they are passionate about. Our volunteers' service not only benefits those they help, but in turn enriches their own lives and it is a joy to witness this service in action.

None of this would have been possible without the unwavering support of our, partners and community members. Your generosity and belief in our mission have enabled us to continue growing and evolving, ensuring that Localise Youth Volunteering remains a driving force for positive change.

I would like to take this opportunity to express gratitude to the core staff at Localise. This past year has once again reflected your dedication, passion and hard work.

As we look ahead to the future, I am filled with optimism and excitement for what lies ahead. With your continued support, I am confident that we will build on the successes of 2023 and continue making a lasting impact in our communities for years to come.

Thank you once again for your commitment to Localise Youth Volunteering. Together, we are truly making a difference.

Warm regards,



Dr. Cora O'Farrell
Chairperson
Localise Youth Volunteering



A Message from our Director

I am pleased to present our 2023 annual report, showcasing our organisation's growth and achievements. As the Director of Services, I have had the privilege of witnessing first-hand the incredible dedication, passion and hard work of all our youth volunteers and staff.

A major milestone this year was the launch of The National Youth Volunteering Portfolio, which recognises and accredits the skills of youth volunteers nationwide as pathways to education and employment.

We also strengthened partnerships with local organisations, schools, and government agencies to maximise our impact. By collaborating with those who share our vision, we are poised to establish a National Youth Volunteer Programme that allows all young people to contribute meaningfully to society, regardless of their background.


Additionally, we prioritised the well-being and development of our volunteers by offering training, mentorship, and leadership opportunities to help them grow and foster a sense of belonging.

Reflecting on the past year, I am grateful to all who supported our youth volunteer project. Your belief in our mission has been crucial to our success, and we deeply appreciate your continued support.

Looking ahead, I'm very excited about all the volunteer in action programmes that will take place in communities all over the country in the weeks and months ahead. Young people giving freely of their time, effort and energy in the service of others is a very humbling and inspiring experience.

Together we can create a future where empathy and kindness are the corner stones of our society and young people are at the heart of our all civic and community leadership endeavours.

Thank you.



Derek Cleary
Director of Services
Localise Youth Volunteering





2023 SUMMARY

Vision

Our vision is a world where all young people can have the opportunity to volunteer locally and become pro-active citizens and community leaders.

Mission

To enable young people, through voluntary action, to care in their community and be of service to others.

Core Values and Beliefs Localise works to:

- Awaken a culture of service and volunteering in young people
- Promote inclusion and integration through social engagement
- Enable young people to develop their skills and realise their self-worth
- Contribute to the development of a caring compassionate society
- Empower young people to be decision makers, change makers and valued contributors to society

Operating Context

2023 marked a continued period of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Although many restrictions had been lifted by the start of the year, the long-term impacts of the pandemic were still felt across communities, particularly in terms of mental health, social isolation, and economic instability. These challenges increased the need for community support services, where youth volunteering played a crucial role in bridging gaps and fostering social cohesion.

There has been a noticeable shift in how young people engage with social causes. The rise of digital platforms has made it easier for youth to connect with global movements, but it has also highlighted the importance of local grass root volunteerism. Localise adapted to these trends by blending traditional volunteering with digital outreach, ensuring that youth had multiple avenues to contribute meaningfully.

Economic uncertainty, including the rising cost of living and unemployment rates, influenced both the availability of resources and the stability which impacted young peoples ability participate in volunteer activities. Despite these challenges, Localise focused on providing accessible opportunities that required minimal financial commitment from participants, ensuring that volunteering remained inclusive.

The increasing emphasis on climate justice and environmental sustainability shaped the volunteer landscape, with many young people keen to engage in projects that addressed these global challenges. Localise responded by expanding the climate justice offering facilitating young people to contribute to local climate justice efforts.

In 2023, there was a growing focus on diversity and inclusion within the volunteer sector. Localise made concerted efforts to continue to reach underrepresented groups, ensuring that our programmes were accessible to all young people, regardless of background, ability, or location. This included developing partnerships with schools, community organisations, and local authorities to broaden participation.

The continued advancement of technology, particularly in digital communication and remote collaboration, presented both opportunities and challenges. Localise leveraged these tools to enhance the reach and impact of our programmes, offering virtual volunteering opportunities and online training. However, ensuring equitable access to technology remained a challenge, particularly in underserved areas.

The Localise success in 2023 was underpinned by strong partnerships with schools, local businesses, government agencies, and youth organisations. These collaborations were crucial for resource sharing, programme development, and expanding the reach of volunteer initiatives. Localise continues to foster these relationships, recognising the importance of collective action in achieving community goals.

Programme Delivery

This year 3,266 young people participated in 132 Localise programmes supported by 341 adult volunteers under the guidance of our dedicated staff.

The National Youth Volunteer Platform, Volunteering in Action and increasing our Climate Justice reach were key factors in engaging so many young people, who volunteered for approximately 44,790 hours.

In 2023 Localise delivered 132 Localise Youth Volunteer Projects under the following initiatives;

- The Localise Community Youth Programme
- The Localise Classroom to Community Programme
- The Localise Volunteering In Action Workshop
- The Localise Climate Justice Programme

Our Funders

Our work is made possible by the continued support of the **Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth** through the Youth Services Grant Scheme and the Youth Climate Justice Fund, and, the continued support of the **Department of Rural and Community Development** through the National Integration Fund. Because of this commitment to the work that we do, we have been able to expand our programmes, reach more young volunteers, and continue to awaken a spirit of service and community engagement in the young people of Ireland. We are incredibly grateful for the support and look forward to continuing our work long into the future.



What's New?

Transforming Futures - a vision for the National Youth Volunteering Portfolios

Addressing Inequality; MyVP is an essential tool for promoting equality of opportunity among young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. It tackles educational disadvantage by exposing youth to volunteering at an early age, fostering responsibility, empathy, and community awareness. This early intervention can guide young people away from negative influences and towards positive social contributions, reducing the likelihood of future social and behavioural problems.

In May 2023, Localise launched the National Youth Volunteer Portfolios in a proof-of-concept phase with Dublin City University with Further Education Colleges and Secondary School in North East Dublin. The portfolios provide young people with a place to record their volunteering achievements, have their skills and attributes endorsed, and outline a vision for their future. This initiative creates a pathway through further education to higher education institutions eliminating the need for CAO points.

In June 2023, Dublin City University agreed in principle to hold specific spaces on undergraduate programmes within the university for young people that have completed an Further Education course and have activated a National Youth Volunteer Portfolio (MyVP).

In September 2023, the proof of concept phase of the National Youth Volunteer Portfolio process began with the launch of the MyVP online platform (www.myvp.ie). By the end of the year more than 250 young people had created a MyVP profile.

Enhancement of the partnership between Localise and further and higher education sector occurred in June 2023 when Dr Justin Rami, Director of Further Education and Training Research Centre was appointed by Dublin City University to work in partnership with Localise on the further development of the National Youth Volunteer Portfolios and the inception of the Proof of Concept Phase. In December, Dr. Rory O'Sullivan former chair of the Further Education Principals of Ireland along with Dr. Breda McNally former Chair of Solas Ireland joined this appointment.

Advocacy work; Localise was appointed to the National Youth Volunteering Strategy - Youth Working Group by Minister Joe O'Brien.

Localise participated in the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People - Information Sessions in May.

Localise continues to be part of the advisory group to The North-South Practice Development Hub which has been established to strengthen and develop sustainable north-south youth work sector relationships.

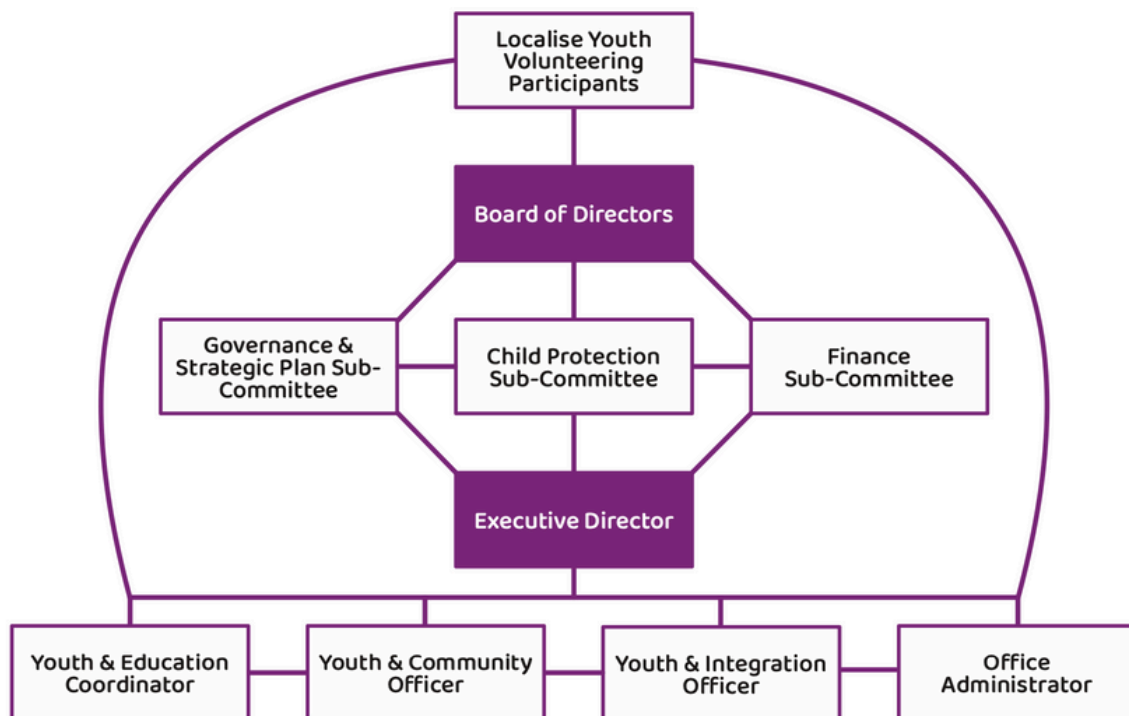
Localise moderated the DRCD Community Action Climate Showcase in November 2023

A group of people are gathered around a table, likely in a community center or meeting room. The table is set with various items including coffee cups, plates of food, and a large red balloon. A person in the foreground is holding a yellow highlighter over a document. The background features festive decorations, including a small house-shaped decoration and a wreath. The text 'OUR GOVERNANCE' is prominently displayed in the center of the image.

OUR GOVERNANCE

Governance

Governance Structure Localise works with a Board of Directors. There are 10 members of this Board, including a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary, and 3 subcommittees which are Governance & Strategic Planning, Child Protection and Finance.



Legal Status

Localise is a company limited by guarantee not having share capital.

Charitable Status

Localise is a non-profit organisation and is registered as a charity as such, it is regulated by the Charities Regulator.

Organisational Constitution

As per the legal requirement of a company, the constitution of Localise comprises of a Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Appointment of Board

The Board of Localise is appointed by registered Localise members, under the directive of the Not For Profit Company Limited by Guarantee. The rotation of Board members is laid out in our Memorandum and Articles of Association. A term of office for a Board member is one year, whereupon members can be re-elected. The positions of Board member or officer of the Localise Board are entirely voluntary and no Board member or officer receives payment from the organisation for this work. Upon appointment each Board member the Localise Governance Handbook and participates in Board training.

Directors	Appointed on
Seán Jevens (Chairperson) Cora O'Farrell (Chairperson) Mary Wall (Vice Chairperson) Mark Bennett (Secretary) Peter Foran (Treasurer) Aideen Cassidy Leo Gibson Adam Harris Theresa O'Leary Nuala King Claire Learmouth	Resigned Dec 1st 2023 AGM December 1st AGM December 1st AGM December 1st AGM December 1st AGM December 1st AGM December 1st AGM December 1st AGM December 1st AGM December 1st AGM December 1st
Finance Sub-Committee	Description of activities
Peter Foran (Treasurer)	<p>The Treasurer has the role of guiding the finance strategy and financial procedures with the assistance of the Finance Subcommittee.</p> <p>The Finance Subcommittee has the responsibility to monitor and review the accuracy of the financial statements of the organisation and announcements about the organisation's financial performance and financial controls and to monitor risk management systems.</p>
Strategic Planning Sub-Committee	Description of activities
Mark Bennett	<p>In 2021, a subcommittee of the board was established with special responsibility for beginning the process of reviewing the five year Strategic Plan as it comes to an end in 2022 and developing the next Three Year Strategic Horizon.</p>

Governance Standards

Localise is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

Localise is in full compliance with the rules and regulations in accordance with CHY status and its obligations to the Companies Registration Office.

In 2023 Localise continued with our compliance journey with the Charity Regulator guided by the 6 key principles as outlined with the Charity Regulator Advancing Charitable Purpose; Behaving with integrity; Leading People; Exercising Control; Working Effectively and Being Accountable and Transparent.

The effective delivery of Board compliance duties in the following areas: Charity Regulator Report, CRO Reports, Lobbying Compliance Report, Revenue Returns.

In 2023, the Localise Board completed and updated various training sessions to ensure the organisation operated within current best practices for effective Board management.

The Localise Board appointed a new chairperson, Cora O'Farrell, a new Vice-Chair, Mary Wall, and Secretary, Mark Bennett in June 2023.

Localise continued its recruitment of Board members to increase the diversity of skills. Claire Cummings was appointed and has supported us in the understanding of the Department of Expenditure, Public Innovation and Compliance.

Board Training Good Governance Overview was to occur in November 2023. This was then rescheduled and occurred in January 2024. From this training, Board recommendations were identified in the following areas: Succession Planning, Conflict of Interest Policy, Corporate Enforcement Authority Guidance Documents.

In June 2023, an evaluation and allocation of Board roles and responsibilities was reviewed.

The Finance Subcommittee met throughout 2023 to review fiscal and financial planning. A new budget approval system was implemented in February 2023.

The Localise Strategic Planning Committee in 2023 developed a precursor to the Localise Strategic Plan entitled "A National Proposal: Providing Immediate and Long Term Solutions through Youth Volunteering".

In addition to this, Localise is affiliated to both the National Youth Council of Ireland and the Wheel and operates best practice governance codes and standards as set by both bodies. We follow all six principles within the Charities Governance Code.

Localise are engaged with Shared Services run by the DCEDIY Compliance Unit with support by The Wheel and Bradan Accountants. This is for Small to Medium organisations to support these organisations with CRO Compliance.

The Board ratified and implemented the updated Risk Assessment Register in February 2023. During this time, an update of the Localise Child Safeguarding Statement was updated and ratified.

In 2023, all our Policies and Procedures were in accordance with Annual Charity Regulator Requirements reviewed and then subsequently approved at our Board AGM.

Localise has as its foremost priority the welfare and safety of its youth participants. We are committed to providing a safe environment for young people enabling them through their volunteer work to care in their community. Localise has a number of procedures in place designed to safeguard every young member involved in our programmes.

Our staff and adult volunteers endeavour to ensure that children and young people are protected and kept safe from harm while taking part in any of the Localise Programmes.

Safe practice in our work is essential and Localise have in place the following procedures and guidelines for good practice, available on <https://www.localise.ie/resources/> which govern our work:

- Child Protection Policy
- Child Safeguarding statement
- GDPR Policy
- Volunteer Charter
- Virtual Meeting Policy
- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Code of Good Youth Work Practice
- Media & Public Relations Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Partnership Policy
- Substance Abuse Policy
- Cookie Policy
- LGBTI+ Inclusion Policy
- Terms of Use Policy

Garda Vetting is in place for adults working with young people in a paid and voluntary capacity in line with the National Vetting Bureau.

A background image showing a person in a white lab coat and yellow gloves working with a plant specimen. The person is holding a small plant with green leaves and a brown stem. The background is a light purple color with a faint grid pattern.

KEY OBJECTIVES

Objective 1:

To enable young people through voluntary action to develop their skills, realise their self-worth and make a positive active contribution to their community.

- We exceeded our projected figure of 2,400 youth volunteers with a participant total of 3,266 young people. The National Youth Volunteer Platform was a key factor in our increased youth engagement.
- Young people engaged in Localise programmes volunteered in excess 44,790 hours in 2023.

Objective 2:

To ensure that young people in socio-economic disadvantaged areas and in areas where migrant populations are highest participate in our programmes.

- Localise Youth Volunteering programmes are delivered in a variety of communities nationwide, including in socio-economic disadvantaged areas, and in schools that are designated with DEIS banding.
- Localise has targeted communities and schools with a high level of migrant populations using the Diverse Neighbourhoods: An Analysis of Residential Distribution of Immigrants in Ireland (Department of Justice, 2019).

Objective 3:

To construct learning around the core values of volunteerism.

- Localise programming supports and enhances the development of soft skills with youth volunteers and adult volunteers in the areas of leadership skills, communication and presentation skills planning and project management and personal development.
- Localise supports young people in becoming the next generation of civic leaders in their community. Localise does this by involving participants in decision-making, fostering positive networks of friends and community, and developing their skills personally and professionally.
- Localise Youth Volunteer Action Projects directly benefit a wide variety of charitable services and organisations.

Objective 4:

To development a system of the recognition of life skills gained through volunteering.

- The further development of our online platform The National Youth Volunteer portfolios - MyVP
- MyVP provides young people with a place to record their achievements, have their skills and attributes endorsed and outline a vision for their future.
- MyVP will create a pathway to further and higher education.
- MyVp is an opportunity for all young people to have their attributes and skills gained through volunteerism recognised and affirmed.



FUTURE PLANS

The Localise Strategic Planning Committee in 2023 developed a precursor to the Localise Strategic Plan entitled ***“A National Proposal: Providing Immediate and Long Term Solutions through Youth Volunteering”*** which outline how Localise has embraced a hybrid model integrating technology to create a scalable and accessible platform, capable of reaching every young person in Ireland.

In May 2023, ***“Transforming Futures - A National Proposal: Providing Immediate and Long Term Solutions through Youth Volunteering”*** for 2024-2026 was developed. This proposal outlines how Localise can enable 222,000 youth to join MyVP by 2033 generating €28 million worth of community service within 10 years.

By actively listening to the needs and suggestions of our community partners, volunteers, teachers and participants, we have begun revisions to our **Volunteering In Action** workshops. Enhancements include diversifying workshop content, increasing the frequency of sessions, and leveraging our digital platform so that we can reach a broader audience in 2024 and beyond. These changes will not only boost participation rates but will also deepen engagement, fostered a more vibrant culture of youth volunteering within our communities.

In 2024, to meet the growing demand for our **Climate Justice** programme, we look to partner with the organisation Education for Sustainability. This partnership will empower an estimated 375 young people from DEIS banded schools from Dublin North East Inner City to become agents of change. Education for Sustainability will engage students in school-based learning sessions with their expertise in climate change and related issues. Localise will then support the young people in implementing grassroots volunteer projects addressing Climate Justice concerns. Our partnership with Education for Sustainability will further deepen and enhance the learning concerning climate activism and grassroots sustainability initiatives.

2024 will see the continued implementation the ‘proof of concept phase’ of our **National Youth Volunteering Portfolio – MyVP** lead by our advisory group and in collaboration with a diverse range of stakeholders, including higher education institutions, further education providers, second-level schools, and young volunteers. These partnerships have been instrumental in shaping a comprehensive and cohesive framework that meets the varied needs of our young people. This ongoing phase is crucial in refining our portfolio and ensuring its scalability and effectiveness across different educational settings nationwide in the years to come in line with our Strategic Plan. We aim to officially launch MyVP in Q4 2024.

As our programmes continue to expand and develop we maintain our commitment our core mission of awakening a culture of volunteerism that enables young people, through voluntary action, to care in their community and be of service to others and that the impact of youth volunteerism amplifies the importance of social inclusion, while celebrating the diversity in local communities nationwide.

A blurred background image of a woman in a dark top, sitting at a table and holding a pen, with a microphone in front of her. The image is faded and serves as a backdrop for the text.

AACCOMPTED

A full set of audited accounts is available on our website www.localise.ie or via this [link](#). What follows is the Income and Expenditure, and, the Balance Sheets for 2023

Localise Youth and Community Service CLG

**Income and expenditure account
Financial year ended 31 December 2023**

	Note	2023 €	2022 €
Income	5	344,292	406,845
Gross surplus		344,292	406,845
Programme expenses		(29,495)	(12,188)
Administrative expenses		(353,182)	(285,901)
Other operating income	6	25,644	23,566
Operating (deficit)/surplus		(12,741)	132,322
(Deficit)/surplus before taxation		(12,741)	132,322
Tax on (deficit)/surplus	10	-	-
(Deficit)/surplus for the financial year and total comprehensive income		(12,741)	132,322
Retained earnings at the start of the financial year		161,488	29,166
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year		148,747	161,488

The notes on pages 12 to 25 form part of these financial statements.

Localise Youth and Community Service CLG

Balance sheet
As at 31 December 2023

	Note	2023 €	€	2022 €	€
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	12	553		1,660	
Tangible assets	13	3,161		143,264	
			3,714		144,924
Current assets					
Debtors	15	30,862		1,992	
Cash at bank and in hand		137,025		125,228	
		167,887		127,220	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(22,829)		(110,245)	
Net current assets			145,058		16,975
Total assets less current liabilities			148,772		161,899
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		(25)		(411)
Net assets			148,747		161,488
Capital and reserves					
Income and expenditure account	20		148,747		161,488
Members funds			148,747		161,488

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

These financial statements were approved by the board of directors on 30/05/2024 and signed on behalf of the board by:



Ms Cora O'Farrell
Director



Mr Peter Foran
Director

The notes on pages 12 to 25 form part of these financial statements.



Localise

Youth Volunteering



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Company Registered No: 511416



Registered Charity No: 20081393