

Fingal County Council

Press Release

July 24, 2020

Fingal County Council Launches the Not So Different Creative Hub in Blanchardstown

The Not So Different Creative Hub, the first of its kind in Ireland, was opened today in Blanchardstown Library. Located on the first floor of the Blanchardstown Library building, the Not So Different Creative Hub provides a wide range of services to bring together both neurotypical and neuro-atypical individuals to collaborate and develop the confidence to showcase their talent and make friends while exploring innovation and creativity.

Fingal County Council Community Department has worked alongside Not So Different to support the creation of the Hub into a creative community space. The Hub was awarded €40,000 in funding, under the Department of Rural and Community Development Digital Innovation Programme, to create 12 creative digital workstations.

Not So Different promotes equality and inclusion of people who are neurodiverse, such as those on the Autism Spectrum, and their families. They support them to realise their full potential through education and employment and to live a good life in community.

The Not So Different Creative Hub is the first of its kind in Ireland. Not So Different was founded in 2016 by Deirdre Lynch, a person with a lived experience of neurodiversity. The work of Not So Different is twofold – on the one hand working with individuals to develop and showcase their talents (in the Creative Hub) and on the other hand increasing the capacity of educators, employers, service providers and society as a whole by increasing their understanding of neurodiversity (in the Deirdre Lynch School of Thought).

Not So Different works with individuals to progress to their chosen career path providing jobs skills workshops and personal development training. Not So Different invites employers and industry professionals to work with the individuals to increase their understanding of their neurodiversity as a being competitive advantage in the world of work.

Speaking at the recent online launch of the Not So Different Digital Showcase, artist and participant Elizabeth Corkery said "Over time, I've been a bit stuck with my career path, I get work done but it's tough trying to get to the next level. Sometimes people who are autistic are brushed aside. This was a great opportunity for me because, finally, people can see my work. I do have the talent and the skills, it's just that you need that bit of support and the push forward".

Speaking at the launch, Mayor of Fingal Cllr. David Healy said: "I am thrilled to be officially opening the Not So Different Creative Ability Hub here in Blanchardstown. The Hub will provide much needed services and support young people to explore their careers in the creative industries. This will be an excellent addition to the services available to our Dublin 15 residents."

Chief Executive of Fingal County Council AnnMarie Farrelly said: "Fingal County Council were delighted to support the development of the Hub through the Department of Rural and Community Development's Digital Innovation Programme. Based in the heart of Blanchardstown, the Creative Ability Hub is a great addition to the area."

Margaret Geraghty, Director of Housing and Community at Fingal County Council, said: "This new facility in our Blanchardstown Library is to provide a creative space for children in our community to show the skills they have and the skills they can learn in an environment designed to support them."

Founder and CEO of Not So Different Deirdre Lynch said: "We are delighted to be opening this state-of-the-art space in Blanchardstown. We look forward to working with the vibrant community in Blanchardstown through the Not So Different Creative Ability Hub."

For more information on the Creative Ability Hub and the services that Not so Different offer, visit: <http://www.entsodifferent.ie/ability-programme/>

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For further information contact press@fingal.ie