Corporate Social Responsibility for SMEs

Prepared by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, March 2020.
WHAT IS CSR?

The European Commission defines Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as ‘the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society’. CSR includes voluntary initiatives or practices that a business or organisation engages in which go ‘beyond compliance’.

In today’s challenging business environment businesses need to drive their competitive advantage to succeed - but in a responsible manner. CSR is about going ‘beyond compliance’ and not just meeting regulation but exceeding it - making your business more competitive and resilient.

Businesses and organisations that embed CSR at the heart of their business can become more resilient by:

- Driving sustainability
- Attracting and retaining talent
- Fostering social cohesion
- Protecting the environment.

Our vision for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is that Ireland will be recognised as a Centre of Excellence for responsible and sustainable business practice.

The National Plan aims to support businesses in Ireland to create sustainable jobs, embed responsible practices in the marketplace, embrace diversity in the workplace and encourage enterprises to consider their impacts on the environment.

Progress on the implementation of the National Plan is reported annually in the CSR Check. To date CSR Check 2018 and CSR Check 2019 have been published and available at csrhub.ie
Help employers and employees better understand the benefits of embedding CSR and responsible business practices into the day-to-day activities of businesses operating in Ireland.

Support the development of effective CSR practices in business through accessible and appropriate information resources.

Support organisations by promoting and highlighting best practice CSR, CSR news and events.

Advocate and support relevant policy priorities across Government which complement CSR, including implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, Business and Human Rights and the Healthy Workplaces Framework.

CSR Stakeholder Forum is a business-led voluntary Forum which includes representatives from business, Government and civil society. It drives the implementation of the National Plan on CSR with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation as secretariat. The Forum is committed to supporting SMEs to adopt CSR into their core business. Forum members and minutes of all meetings can be viewed on csrhub.ie
SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

Good CSR practice encourages businesses to go further and do more as they can see the win:win that an effective CSR strategy can achieve on an economic, societal and environmental basis.

Sharing good practice is a way to highlight the value of CSR and motivate other companies, particularly SMEs into adopting a CSR strategy for their business. This culture of sharing, uniquely facilitated by the CSR Stakeholder Forum, seeks to transform how business operates in Ireland, and in return, the workplace, the marketplace, the community and the environment.

There are over 100 case studies from businesses and organisations available on csrhub.ie that can be accessed or downloaded for free. The case studies provide insight and knowledge on how to get started or how to develop your CSR journey for your business.

Visit csrhub.ie for more information.
GET INVOLVED

The CSR Network is for businesses and organisations across Ireland active in CSR who want to be part of a growing network to share and drive best practice CSR.

Network members receive regular updates, invitations to outreach events, CSR Forum events and the annual CEO/Leaders Breakfast. If you wish to share your CSR story, learn from your peers and become part of the CSR community please contact us at csrhub@dbei.gov.ie

Membership is free and open to all businesses and organisations that are active in CSR and can provide a CSR case study for the csrhub.ie
supportingSMEs.gov.ie is a Government initiative to help Irish start-ups and small businesses navigate the range of Government supports available to them. Complete the online questionnaire to understand what Government supports you are eligible for.

supportingsmes.gov.ie

The Prompt Payment Code aims to improve overall business culture in Ireland by promoting fair and responsible business relationships and payment practices. Businesses that sign up to the Prompt Payment Code agree to pay their suppliers on time, as specified in their contracts. Becoming a signatory is easy – contact promptpayment@dbei.gov.ie

dbei.gov.ie/PromptPayment
GET STARTED

- Log onto csrhub.ie - dedicated website for CSR resources
- Follow @csrhubIrl – for up to date information on CSR nationally and globally
- Subscribe to the CSRhub newsletter – keep informed on CSR trends, best practice case studies
- Download the CSR Case Study template from csrhub.ie – start telling the story of your organisation and share it widely on csrhub.ie
- Join the CSR Network – meet your peers and drive CSR together
- Email csrhub@dbei.gov.ie – with any queries you might have

For more information see www.csrhub.ie
Businesses are increasingly aligning their CSR Plans to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Further information on the SDGs can be found on dccae.gov.ie