

Over 300 events planned to celebrate 'Local Enterprise Week' in March

From helping small businesses spot 'mega' trends to assisting start-ups to close more sales, the 31 Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) are teaming up to run hundreds of events across the country from 4th to 9th March.

Over 300 events are planned for Local Enterprise Week (4th to 9th March), to increase awareness of the range of supports and services available to microenterprises from the 31 Local Enterprise Offices in every county.

Covering a broad range of topics such as ethical entrepreneurship, spotting mega trends, getting ready for Brexit, how to tender for more work and close more sales, LEOs across the country will host the programme of over 300 events to showcase the supports that can be accessed locally.

In addition to one-to-one business clinics, start your own business bootcamps, finance workshops, trading on-line seminars, data protection briefings and Brexit-themed workshops, the LEOs will also be marking International Women's Day with a series of networking events for female entrepreneurs during the week. Local finals for the National Enterprise Awards and Student Enterprise Programme will also be held in several parts of the country.

Welcoming plans for Local Enterprise Week 2018, Minister Humphreys said: "Creating more and better jobs in regional and rural Ireland is a priority for the Government, which, through the Local Enterprise Offices, provide a range of focused supports for small businesses and start-ups across every county. I am delighted to see that over 300 events are taking place during Local Enterprise Week 2018 to highlight the supports available for microenterprises. The new start-ups of today are the employers of the future, and we need to ensure as many as possible succeed. That is why the LEOs in every county in Ireland are on hand to support people embarking on

their business journey.”

Minister of State for Trade, Employment, Business, EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection, Pat Breen T.D., also welcomed the plans, saying: “I am pleased to see such an impressive range of enterprise events for start-ups and existing businesses taking place across every county during Local Enterprise Week with themes such as sourcing finance, advice on Brexit and complying with the new data protection regulations. I believe that this concentrated week of events provides an ideal platform for raising awareness of the LEO services to businesses. I am delighted to see the collaboration between the LEOs, local business communities and other State support agencies. As Minister for Business, I would encourage start-ups, micro-enterprises and small businesses to find out what events are happening in their local area and to take up the supports that are on offer through their Local Enterprise Office.”

Sheelagh Daly, representing the LEOs, said that the aim of Local Enterprise Week is to showcase all the supports that can be accessed locally, saying: “Local Enterprise Offices are in every local authority area and we’re at the heart of delivering enterprise supports to small businesses and start-ups in local communities. From training programmes that help businesses unlock new markets to financial assistance that help businesses create more jobs, Local Enterprise Week is the ideal time to find out how your Local Enterprise Office can help your small business start-up and grow.”

The week officially kicks-off on Sunday, March 4th with the national final of Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur (IBYE) competition in Google Headquarters in Dublin. Over 1,400 young entrepreneurs entered the IBYE 2018 competition, which is an initiative of the Local Enterprise Offices and supported by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation and Enterprise Ireland.

In addition, several key events during Local Enterprise Week are organised in collaboration with State Agencies and Government Departments including Enterprise Ireland, InterTrade Ireland, Microfinance Ireland, the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland, the Department of Social Protection and the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. Other bodies, such as IBEC and Chambers of Commerce, are also supporting events during the week.

Event listings for Local Enterprise Week (March 4th to 9th 2018) are available from www.localenterprise.ie and by searching #localenterprise on social media.

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For more information, interviews and pictures, please contact your Local Enterprise Office.