



Startup Success: Sheelagh Brady of SAR Consultancy


Local Enterprise Office
Making It Happen

STARTUP STORIES: SAR CONSULTANCY

**SECURING ITS FUTURE: HOW LEO KILDARE HELPED
SAR CONSULTANCY SAFEGUARD SUCCESS**

AS A FORMER MEMBER OF AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA, SHEELAGH BRADY KNOWS ALL ABOUT PROTECTING PEOPLE.

She was a guard for 14 years and, since leaving in 2012, worked as a security analyst for a number of organisations in places such as Nigeria, Libya and Bosnia Herzegovina.

Her work brought her into dangerous regions at a time when organisations such as Boko Haram and Islamic State were just gaining ground.

She and her partner John Roberts co-founded SAR Consultancy, which stands for Security Analysis and Research, in 2015, specialising in organised crime, terrorism and corruption.

It was while she and John, who has 25 years' experience working in conflict and post conflict zones as a logistics expert, were being evacuated out of Libya that they first had the idea for the S-Man Security Travel Platform.

"On that particular trip we realised that, despite being very tech-savvy people, we had nothing apart from a few apps to help us assess what was going while on the move. I remember telling my Mum and Dad that if you don't hear from me after three days, don't worry, I'm just being moved." Such situations are difficult not just for the people in them but for friends, family and employers too.

Although there were tracking apps, communication apps and incident data

apps, there was nothing that combined all these functions and more.

"When you are moving through militia-held territories and being stopped again and again, it occurred to us there must be a better way of finding out what's going on. We also realised that other organisations could benefit from such a solution for their staff even in less risky environments, but we parked the idea and concentrated on developing the consultancy," she says.

It was while doing a PhD at DCU that Brady did an entrepreneurship programme with the DCU Ryan Academy. The team there suggested Brady should look at developing the product idea. It suggested she get in touch with her Local Enterprise Office for support.

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Sheelagh Brady, SAR Consultancy



Helping Make It Happen: Claire Dunleavy of Local Enterprise Office Kildare

“As a consultancy we had engaged with LEO Kildare for Start Your Own Business and financial management training and found it great. But we had never asked for any money because, as consultants, we didn’t think of ourselves as entrepreneurs,” she says.

LEO Kildare suggested the pair apply for a Feasibility Study Grant, to further develop their product idea.

“The belief LEO Kildare had in our product has been amazing to us. We’re very strong on our professional experience but you always hit a speed wobble when you go into an area you don’t know anything about which, for us, was the entrepreneurial side,” says Brady.

“We knew we had a good idea but we didn’t know if we were the right people to put it out there. The LEOs have been great at showing us we are and making us believe in ourselves. The Feasibility Study Grant

paid for us to develop our proof of concept. We got developers to create the solution, in two products; a security management software solution that sits on a desktop and an app for users.”

The software solution improves an enterprise company’s response capabilities in times of crisis, helping them to keep people safe and businesses up and running. That includes the full spectrum of risks, from flight delays to terrorist incidents.

The pair received a Local Enterprise Office TAME [Technical Assistance for Micro-Exporters] grant too, which funded travel to trade shows in Istanbul and San Francisco to meet with potential investors and customers.

“Sheelagh had an impressive career and successful security consultancy already with global clients. It was when she had an idea to scale her business that she

approached LEO Kildare,” recalls Claire Dunleavy, Senior Enterprise Development Officer at LEO Kildare.

If you are an aspiring entrepreneur with an idea and are unsure what to do next, the Local Enterprise Office should be your first port of call, she says. “Equally, if you have an existing business with ambitions for growth, the LEOs are well equipped to support you and your business through the challenges that growth presents.”

For SAR Consultancy LEO has been simply “invaluable”, says Brady. “It gave us the confidence to go out into the market when you don’t even have a product. We would have considered that to be selling without a product, now we see it is market validation and used this information to inform our proof of concept.”

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