



ESG – A New paradigm for business

What is ESG and what does it mean for your business

Duration: 09.00-13.00

Date: 1 July 2021

Member rate: €280

Non-member rate: €320

Venue:

Online Delivery - Zoom

Who should attend:

Business owners, Managers, Leaders who need to understand ESG and learn from best practice in this area.

Contact:

For further information, please contact:

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Programme overview:

The term sustainability is overused but at its core it is simply about recognising that we cannot have a thriving economy without a healthy planet and a more equitable society. In the context of COVID-19, the climate crisis and rising social inequality and populism, businesses are increasingly under pressure – from finance providers, governments and consumers - to show that they are playing their part in shaping a more sustainable future.

The pressures on business from finance providers is attributable to the increasing recognition that sustainability-related risks and opportunities, which span Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues, are financially material and can significantly influence profitability and long-term value. As a result, investors, banks and insurance providers are now evaluating companies through an ESG lens. They want to know that the companies they are investing in, lending to, or insuring, are managing ESG well. It is therefore essential that businesses understand the ESG issues that are relevant to them and can demonstrate clear strategies and policies to manage the risks and take advantage of the opportunities. Added to this there is a surge of new EU regulation around companies' disclosure and reporting on ESG, intensifying the focus on the topic.

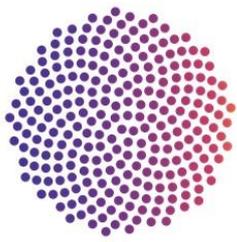
The bottom line is that being able to demonstrate robust ESG credentials is becoming a must-have for business. Having a clear sustainability or ESG strategy in place is mission critical for your organisation and its growth. This is about your stakeholders, your people and the future success of your business.

Programme outcomes:

On completion of this seminar, participants will be able to navigate the jargon and emerge with a firm understanding of ESG and how it relates to their business. They will learn how better management of ESG issues can create business benefits, from improved risk management, to enhanced reputation, increased profitability, and better access to capital. A high-level overview of recent regulatory obligations will help participants understand what is required and what optional or nice-to-have. And participants will be given an overview on how to develop their own sustainability/ESG strategy with real case studies and practical advice.

Approach: Online seminar with discussion and case studies

The programme is delivered online via zoom. The presenters will present relevant content to address the key learning points and showcase examples of ESG initiatives in a range of industries.



Agenda

09.00 Welcome from Ibec

Speaker: Danny McCoy

09.15 Profit, purpose and survival: why sustainability is a strategic imperative for business

Speaker: Laura Heuston, Co-Founder, SustainabilityWorks

- Overview of global sustainability issues, trends and risks
- Why sustainability is relevant for business from a risk and opportunity perspective
- Overview of stakeholders driving the sustainable business agenda and the benefits for business of embracing sustainability in a strategic and systematic way

09.40 Developing/Updating your Sustainability Strategy

Speaker: Karen Deignan, Co-Founder SustainabilityWorks

- Overview of steps to develop a sustainability strategy
- Overview of sustainability reporting frameworks, certifications and initiatives
- Short case study

10:10 The E in ESG

Speaker: Conor Minogue, Senior Executive of Environmental Policy, Ibec

- Environmental policy trends: What's coming down the track in relation to climate, waste, circular economy etc
- Practical impacts on business: Greenwashing v genuine corporate action
- Setting targets and metrics: What does good look like

10.40 Break [20 minutes]

11.00 The S in ESG

Speaker: Catherine Smith McKiernan, Group HR Director, Epic

- Key issues and trends: DEI (diversity, equity & inclusion), decent employment, wellbeing, modern slavery
- Practical impacts on business: Talent attraction and retention, engagement
- Setting targets and metrics: What does good look like?

11.30 The G in ESG

Speaker: David Duffy, Founder & CEO of The Corporate Governance Institute and of The Governance Company

- Key issues and trends: Board diversity, board quality and composition, board's role in shaping culture, independence, board literacy (tech, cyber risk, climate, sustainability and ESG)
- Setting goals, values, targets and metrics: What does good look like

12.00 Panel: Learning from Industry Leaders

Moderator: Laura Heuston, SustainabilityWorks

- Nicola Woods, Chief Transformation Officer, An Post
- Dave Fitzgerald, Head of Responsible Sourcing, Kellogg Europe
- Cormac Madden, Environmental and Sustainability Manager, ESB

12.35 Q&A

12.50 Closing remark

13.00 End

Speakers



Laura Heuston, Co-Founder, SustainabilityWorks

A chartered accountant and tax consultant, Laura has spent most of her career working with corporates and asset managers in renewable energy and energy efficiency finance, advising on transaction structures for fundraising and M&A transactions. She has since pivoted to focus fully on sustainable finance, a broad topic that is increasingly on the agenda of policymakers, regulators, investors and financial services firms across investment, banking and insurance. A leading expert in her field, she has in-depth knowledge of the global sustainable finance landscape. She advises, speaks and writes on a broad range of sustainable finance topics, with a particular specialism in EU sustainable finance policy, ESG, climate-related financial risk and opportunity, responsible investment and energy efficiency finance. She is an expert in designing solutions to leverage the power of finance and the financial sector to drive sustainable behavioural change, both for individuals and large companies alike. Laura previously worked with KPMG, Airtricity, and Sustainable Nation Ireland.



David W. Duffy, Founder & CEO of The Corporate Governance Institute and of The Governance Company an advisory company

David has provided governance advisory services to plcs, financial institutions, state organisations, universities, private companies, membership bodies, charities, sporting and healthcare organisations and regulators for over 15 years to over 200 organisations. He is an experienced board member and has served on boards in Ireland, UK and France. He is Ireland's leading author on corporate governance. His last two books are "A Practical Guide to Corporate Governance" and "A Practical Guide for Company Directors" and were published by Chartered Accountants Ireland. David is considered an innovator in governance research and engagement and is an authority for all things board-related in Ireland and across Europe.



Conor Minogue, Senior Executive-Infrastructure, Energy and Environment, Ibec

Conor is a senior policy executive in the business group Ibec. Since joining the organisation in 2012, Conor has held several policy roles. He now works with Ibec members to develop and promote the climate and energy agenda for Irish business. He also represents the Irish Ports Association. Prior to joining Ibec, Conor worked in the EU Delegation in Washington DC. Conor studied history, political science, and international relations at University College Dublin, University of California, Berkeley and Cambridge University. He is the Ibec representative on Business Europe's Industrial Affairs Committee.



Karen Deignan, Co-Founder, SustainabilityWorks

Karen began her career at the UK's Carbon Trust where she applied her knowledge of organisational and behavioural change to designing engagement programmes that empowered businesses to tackle climate change. She has since advised companies around the world on sustainability strategy, communications and reporting. Her strength lies in making complex issues simple through distilling information down to the key messages that will resonate with different audiences and inspire them to act. She has extensive knowledge across a wide breadth of sustainable development issues, from climate change to responsible sourcing, human rights, and diversity and inclusion. A strong writer, speaker and facilitator, she is passionate about the role that good communications can play in galvanising and motivating climate action. Karen also previously worked in the UK with communications agencies di:ga, Salterbaxter and Corporate Culture.



Catherine Smith McKiernan, Group HR Director, EPIC

Catherine Smith McKiernan is an experienced people and organisational consultant and is currently serving as the Group HR Director for EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum. Catherine brings unique perspectives on organisational development and change gained from her experience across the public, private and not for profit sectors. Having built a career around enabling people to embrace change and transformation she is leader who values curiosity, collaboration, innovation and trust. An experienced board member and HR Director, Catherine's work covers all aspects of organisational development, HR and change management, including governance, strategic planning, project management, facilitation, training and communications. Catherine has previously worked with Accenture, Mercer, BearingPoint and Adare HR Management.



Nicola Woods, Chief Transformation Officer, An Post

Nicola joined An Post in May 2020, bringing a wealth of Strategy and Transformation experience. As part of her role, Nicola is leading An Post's Sustainability strategy with a commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions from operations by 2030, with a 50% reduction by 2025. This strategy is at the centre of An Post's business transformation and focusses on five of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals most pertinent to the global postal industry - Climate Action; Decent Work & Economic Growth; Sustainable Cities & Communities; Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure; and Responsible Consumption & Production. Prior to An Post, Nicola worked across a variety of industries in the UK and Ireland including fintech, banking, technology and management consultancy. Nicola holds a BA in Economics and Social Studies from Trinity College Dublin and a MSc in Economic History from the London School of Economics.



Dave Fitzgerald, Head of Responsible Sourcing, Kellogg Europe

Dave Fitzgerald leads European Responsible Sourcing for Kellogg. He has worked for over 20 years in the food and beverage sector including 15 years with a major drinks multinational and more recently for 4 years with a dairy cooperative as Group Head of Sustainability. In his current role Dave works with Kellogg's suppliers to ensure that the ingredients, packaging materials and services that they supply are sustainably produced and delivered. This includes leading the Origins Program™ where Kellogg invests in sustainable agriculture projects with growers including a wheat project in the UK and a rice project in Spain.



Cormac Madden, Environment and Sustainability Manager, ESB

Cormac is the Environment and Sustainability Manager for ESB Group, responsible for the direction and governance of the company's Environmental and Sustainability ambition and performance. ESB's corporate purpose is to lead the transition to a low carbon society and coordinating the effort to make that a reality is Cormac's central focus. Cormac is a member of the Steering Group for the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), the BITCI Low Carbon Pledge sub-group and the Social and Sustainability Working Group of Eurelectric.