



THE JUNCTION

COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCORPORATING THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT)

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Achievements and Performance

The financial year 2024-2025 has been another year of organisational consolidation for The Junction, with recently appointed CEO Ruth Gonsalves Moore entering her second year at the helm and continuing to provide a steady programme of delivery as well as developing a new vision for the organisation. The Junction appointed a new Finance and Office Manager with Mel Bradley joining the team in October 2024. Mel Bradley hit the ground running, updating our systems and claiming NIC Employer Allowance due as a charity.

The Junction has a very small team of staff members but is able to deliver a wide-ranging programme of peace building activities by contracting in Associate Consultants and facilitators who work on our core funded programmes, additional projects and contractual tender opportunities alike.

Community relations and peacebuilding – developing critical community learning opportunities and programmes.

The Junction's principal strategic aim is to progress good relations and peacebuilding, primarily through community engagement and learning programmes. This cornerstone of our work encapsulates the building of awareness and foundational knowledge as well as the development of skills and capacity of citizens, leaders and key stakeholders across civic society through community learning engagement programmes (workshop programmes along with seminar opportunities).

A thematic approach to good relations and peacebuilding.

This year The Junction has progressed community engagement and learning around three key thematic areas with each project engaging different groupings of Facilitative Leaders in its development and delivery. The three thematic Learning areas are: i) gender-based violence as part of the continuum of conflict, supported as part of our core delivery, and Strategic Partnership funding from DFAT; ii) the connections between wellbeing and peace and the importance of and value in



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creating communities of support within group work and community approaches to wellbeing and peace, and supported by The Ideas Fund; and iii) addressing intimidation within communities, supported through additional financial support from DFAT, Reconciliation Fund - Project Fund.

A gender inclusive and gender just peace.

The Junction worked with a small and diverse group of community based Facilitative Leaders who had participated in a new Train the Trainer programme on Liberation from Patriarchy and Gender Justice, to create a peer-led Facilitator Support forum. The Junction engaged Orla Hasson as a Co Lead working with our CEO to enable facilitators to work with existing material and to devise tailored programmes of learning to roll out to a diverse range of community groups across the region. This led to information exchange between the facilitative leaders and a sharing of both new and adapted resources. Working through this pool of Associate Facilitators, The Junction delivered five tailored 'Re-Imagining Relationships' programmes engaging: Clooney Women's Group, West Bann Development Association's – Women's Group, the Community Relations Forum, Glengormley, a men's group in North Antrim and the Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership Empower Project. These programmes created safe spaces and new opportunities for participants to discuss definitions and concepts of patriarchy, explore gender stereotypes, reflect upon societal systems of dominance around gender, sectarianism, racism, and classism. These programmes raise awareness around inclusive approaches to peacebuilding and provide a restorative space for women (and men) to explore 'lived experiences', consider both the personal and societal barriers and to begin to identify actions which can support an inclusive approach to long term peacebuilding.

In addition, The Junction organised and hosted the workshop *Misogyny and Feminist Law Making*, delivered by Dr Megh Hoyt, as a part of Derry Londonderry's International Women's Day 2025 programme. This workshop sought to consider the fact that gender is to be considered by the Dept. for Justice as an additional protection within Hate Crime in NI and it created some space to reflect on which gender protections exist in law and those which need to be written in law. Megh Hoyt did an excellent job in promoting feminist and citizen law making de-bunking myths around lawmaking. The Junction also took part in the Information Stall Event organised by Derry Women's Centre, Waterside Women's Centre, Strathfoyle Women's Centre and FWIN, interacting and engaging with representatives and individuals from Community and Voluntary sector groupings in the city on IWD 2025.

As our peacebuilding work in the area of gender justice crosses over into TEO's newly developed policy area of Ending Violence against Women and Girls, The Junction participated in Round table discussions organised by DCSDC's Mayor's office. These roundtables explored how DCSDC might roll out support addressing



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current issues of gender violence and safety in the city for women and girls, and furthering progress towards the outcomes of the EVAWG Framework. To this wider discussion, The Junction offered perspectives around gender violence as part of a continuum of violence in our society and emphasises a need to address 'root causes' and adopt a whole society transformational approach which is informed by feminist principles, conflict management approaches and a peacebuilding ethos. Relating to this, The Junction also developed a new proposal, submitting to the DCSDC EVAWG Change Fund.

Cultivating peace and wellbeing through community interventions.

This year our *Changing the Story I Tell Myself* project undertook a further community led creative enquiry, supplementing the work undertaken in the first phase of the project. The first phase of the project resulted in two new co-created Resources – the Facilitators Resource and the film *Éimear McCartney's First day Out in Months*. In recognition of the 'community of support' approach central to the initial enquiry, added to a commitment to co-design and co-creation of support materials, the participating group identified the need to understand what makes a good 'community of support' approach. A core focus of this project has also been to support the development and capacity of individuals to be confident and able facilitators active in supporting wellbeing in the community, as well as deepening our understanding of wellbeing as an integral and connecting piece of peace. Supported by extension funding through the Ideas Fund, the Junction engaged a new researcher in the form of Dr Jen Goddard from Ulster University. Maureen Hetherington continued in the role as Lead Facilitator. Through a series of focus groups led by Jen Goddard, leaders unpacked their understanding of the vital dynamics of good communities of support approaches, with the work being 'visually captured' by Gráinne O'Neill. This has been a very informative and generative exercise which has resulted in a re-investigation as to what are the underpinning values to transformative group work. Emergent is 'an a+casa model' around 'community of support' which will be written up into a paper and disseminated in due course.

Overcoming the Menace of Intimidation.

Amid rising sectarian and racial intimidation in Northern Ireland, the Junction launched a project to improve community safety and build cohesive, sustainable communities for lasting peace. In developing this project, the organisation adopted a collaborative project with three other key organisations – Building Communities Resource Centre, Radius Housing (Ballymena office) and Rural Community Network (the Beyond Belfast Practitioner Forum). This collaborative approach



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enables us all to draw on a wider sectoral knowledge and expertise and engage with practitioners across a number of geographies. Our CEO secured Project funding from DFAT, Ireland - Reconciliation Fund for the development of an up to date codesigned *Addressing the Menace of Intimidation Toolkit* and *Empowerment Training* programme. The CEO established the collaborative Leadership team engaging Katherine Murphy, of Building Communities Resource Centre, Kate Clifford and Rachael Power of RCN, and Lisa Mooney Radius Housing (Ballymena office) and an inter-agency advisory group to support and inform the co design process and Blu Zebra were engaged as Lead Consultants to research and write a much expanded and up-to-date Toolkit. This work is progressing and The Junction will be moving into a co design phase with community-based facilitators to pilot new Training Materials.

It has been a busy year of engaging participants in community learning while also engaging Facilitative Leaders and supporting their development in facilitating difficult conversations in the thematic areas. The Junction ran over 433 participatory activities as part of its core delivery over the year.

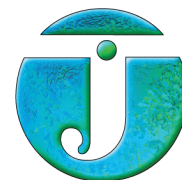
Sectoral Contributions

Throughout the year our core funding enables The Junction to contribute to a number of key sectoral forums supporting best practice approaches to peace-building. The Junction's CEO has actively contributed to four practitioner-led spaces including: CRC NI Shared Learning Forums, DFAT Reconciliation Fund Strategy Review, Beyond Belfast Practitioner Forum, Ideas Fund Community of Practitioners Forum and in addition contributed to Foyle Advisory Group (Housing For All), and Ulster University Community Partnership Framework group. The CEO and Board Members contributed to panel contributions e.g. New Gate Arts & Cultural Centre Summer School and represented the organisation at key events and consultations.

This year The Junction offered an internship to Carmen Estrada as part of the Ulster University INCORE programme. Mel Bradley played an active role in day-to-day supervision and Carmen undertook a reorganisation of The Junction's Library during her short time with The Junction.

The Junction's CEO continues to make strategic connections connecting with GROs and Managers of Local Growth Partnerships, and a number of other key Community and Voluntary sector organisations.

Plans for the future



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The Junction is moving into its 25th year as an organisation and is in a very active period of consolidation and growth. We are seeking to expand our community learning programmes and our pool of facilitators, expand and renew our Board of Trustees, and develop a new strategy. Plans for the incoming year include:

- exploring how we can re-align our gender justice materials to the new EVAWG Framework and opportunities available through the Change Fund;
- expanding the group of community leaders who have experience and interest in wellbeing and community relations, so they can lead the next stage of our community enquiry programme;
- involving community leaders in designing and testing Addressing Intimidation Training Materials; launching these materials strategically, ensuring resources and effective delivery methods are in place for the training program rollout; and
- creating a strategic planning process to assess peacebuilding needs, foster organisational ownership and transition, and improve delivery and engagement models.

Contributors to the success of the Junction

Our key achievements through the year have been shared with our Associate Facilitators and Consultants. We wish to express our gratitude to the following people who have played an active part as Associate Facilitators through this financial year: Catherine Pollock, Cara McLaughlin, Jen Clifford, Angela Mulholland, Orla Hasson, Danielle Bonnor, Maureen Hetherington, Jen Clifford, Gráinne O'Neill. We also acknowledge the work of Therese Hogg and Bruce Hogg as Consultants and all the community leaders, organisations and individuals we have engaged in the development of our community learning programmes and all participants who engaged in our community outreach work.

Our effective governance relies on our dedicated Board of Directors. This year, one Director stepped down and three new members joined. We aim to strengthen shared ownership and leadership in the coming year. The Junction thanks all volunteers for their valuable contributions.