

Company Number NI030477
Charity Registration No. NI102189

TRAINING FOR WOMEN NETWORK LIMITED
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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TRAINING FOR WOMEN NETWORK LIMITED

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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TRAINING FOR WOMEN NETWORK LIMITED

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES **YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Reference and Administration Details:

Name: Training for Women Network Ltd (TWN)

Reg No: HMRC Charity no: XO 2044-95
NI Company No -NI030477
NI Charities Commission No- NIC102189

Address: Ground Floor, Suite 2
Elizabeth House
116-118 Holywood Road
Belfast
BT41NY

Trustees Patricia Lewsley Mooney (Chairperson)
Dr John Barry (Resigned 14/09/2023)
Kelly Andrews (Vice Chair)
Maureen Maguire
Katherine McCloskey (Treasurer)
Eileen Bell (Company Secretary)
Julie Flanagan
Caroline Johnston (Appointed 06/12/2023)
Rhonda Lusty
Dr Maire Braniff

Chief Executive: Norma Shearer

Solicitors: Cleaver Fulton Rankin.

Bank: First Trust Bank Ltd
33-35 University Road
Belfast

Auditors: BMK Accounting Ltd
43 Lockview Road
Belfast
BT9 5FJ

TRAINING FOR WOMEN NETWORK LIMITED

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2. Structure, Governance and Management

Training For Women Network Limited (TWN) is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association and is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. TWN is also a registered charity registered with the Northern Ireland Charities Commission Number NIC 102189. TWN is a membership organisation and as such its trustees are recruited from its membership base. TWN members are invited to stand for election to the Board of Directors at the AGM. At the first meeting following the AGM, there is an induction and training programme to ensure that all members are aware of the roles and responsibilities of their posts as members of the Board of Directors. Board members serve for three years, after which they must stand down and apply for re-election.

The Board's roles and responsibilities are contained in the Board Induction Manual and detail the strategic level of their decision-making powers. Operational matters are delegated to the Chief Executive who reports to the Board at meetings held six times per year.

3 Objectives and Activities

TWN was called forward for registration by the Charities Commission Northern Ireland and received its charity number and registration in May 2015.

The Purpose of the Charity is:

1. To advance, promote, develop and coordinate the provision of adequate, accessible, quality training and pre-vocational training for women in Northern Ireland and beyond to maximise the integration of women in the labour market.
2. To provide a forum/ focus for Northern Ireland, representatives of the private, public and voluntary sectors, the trade unions, education and training practitioners and individuals involved in women's training.
3. To promote any or all activities for the benefit of the community which now or hereinafter may be deemed in law to be charitable and in particular the advancement of all forms of training of women.

The public benefits that flow from the charitable purposes are:

- a) Women are securing:
 - i. Enhanced educational attainment, transferable skills, capabilities and capacities of women and improved potential to secure employment.
 - ii. The empowerment of women to play a full part in their communities and society in general.

The beneficiaries are women throughout. These benefits can be evidenced through internal records kept of the progress and qualifications achieved by the participants, evaluations of the work and impact of the organisation, feedback from beneficiaries and independent evaluations for funding bodies.

- b) Advocacy, promotion and sharing of best practices in training for women. Research into issues impacting women and Development of appropriate flexible innovative training packages to meet the identified need.

The beneficiaries are women as individuals and through appropriate community and voluntary sector organisations. These benefits are evidenced through publications such as research reports, and monitoring returns.

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- c) Increased efficiency and effectiveness of the community and voluntary organisations that receive support, resulting in enhanced outcomes and service delivery and, consequently, an improved quality of life for those who benefit from the work of these organisations. The beneficiaries are community and voluntary sector organisations. These benefits can be evidenced through internal monitoring records and feedback and evaluations.

No harm arises from these purposes.

Incidental benefits may arise from transferable skills training offered to Board members to fulfil their duties.

This is what TWN does: -

- The preparation, provision and dissemination of information about the training of women and other disadvantaged groups
- The provision of advice and assistance with regard to the training of women and other disadvantaged groups.
- The organisation and maintenance of a network whereby all bodies, organisations or individuals, either involved in or interested in providing or receiving training for women can liaise and co-operate with each other with regard to the training for women and exchange information and ideas on the training of women and other disadvantaged groups.
- The holding of activities and events relating to the training of women and other disadvantaged groups
- The promotion and Development of projects principally in areas where there is an identified need for greater training for women to facilitate the training of women and other disadvantaged groups.
- The promotion and/or support of regional initiatives designed to satisfy local needs with regard to the training of women and other disadvantaged groups throughout Northern Ireland and Beyond.
- The establishment of links with European and other world networks
- The monitoring of European Union funding for women's training and that of other disadvantaged groups.
- The access to/ raising of funding to accomplish the above,
- The support of anybody, organisation or individual having objects altogether or in part similar to those referred to above.

4 Achievements and Performance

Regional Infrastructure Support Programme (RISP) for women in rural and disadvantaged areas.

The RISP Consortium is comprised of the following organisations:

- Training for Women Network (TWN) – Project Lead
- Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA)
- Women's Support Network (WSN)
- Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network (NIRWN)
- Women's TEC
- Women's Centre Derry (WCD)
- Foyle Women's Information Network (FWIN)

The Consortium is the established link and strategic partner between Government and statutory agencies and women in disadvantaged and rural areas (D&RA), including all groups, centres and organisations delivering essential frontline services, advice and support. The Consortium ensures a continuous two-way flow of information between the Government and the sector. It ensures that organisations/centres and groups are made aware of consultations, government planning and policy implementation. In turn, the Consortium ascertains the views, needs and aspirations of women in D&RA. It takes these views forward to influence policy development and future government planning,

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ultimately resulting in the empowerment of local women in disadvantaged and rurally isolated communities.

TWN oversees the work of the Consortium, which conducts research, carries out consultations, develops lines of engagement, bottom-up and top-down and operates as one point of contact between Government, statutory agencies, local partnerships and women in disadvantaged and rural areas. It continues to provide support, guidance, and signposting for strategic Development and delivery of services for women in disadvantaged and rural areas and promote the work and services of these specialist organisations/centres/groups. The Consortium supports funding bids to maximise specialist localised delivery for women in disadvantaged and rural areas. It actively works to widen the regional support to those women, groups and organisations operating in isolation in some of the most disadvantaged and rurally isolated areas of Northern Ireland who previously did not have the opportunity to avail strategic support, guidance and engagement through regional organisations.

Employability Training Programmes

GEMS NI were contracted through Belfast MET (funded by the Department for the Economy) to deliver the Step-Up Programme and TWN were sub-contracted by GEMS to work on 2 Strands of the Programme, namely College Connect+ & WRAP. College Connect+ is for young women aged 16-24 not in employment, education or training and WRAP is for Women Returners aged 24+.

TWN provided 1-2-1 mentoring sessions, CV building, communication skills, teamwork, time management, interview skills and mental health and well-being sessions to all participants. The 6 women returners availed of sewing classes and learned new skills to equip them to do clothing alterations. The young women completed a Professional Brow Course and an Innovation and Enterprise course.

On leaving the programme 9 progressed on to further training programme with 2 of these becoming self-employed and 3 gained employment.

DFA- Strategic Partnership

TWN made significant strides during the project year by advancing tailored reconciliation and training initiatives for women. The completion of six training modules, including Conflict Transformation and Leadership for a Shared Future, was a notable achievement. The pilot phase engaged 20 participants from diverse backgrounds, fostering skills in conflict resolution, cross-community understanding, and active participation in peacebuilding efforts. The development of a digital learning platform and psychometric questionnaire empowered participants to co-design their learning paths, ensuring that training met individual needs. This approach not only increased participants' knowledge but also promoted long-term community cohesion, breaking down barriers and initiating sustainable partnerships.

DFA Unsung Hero's

The "Unsung Heroes" project has made significant progress, celebrating the vital yet often overlooked contributions of women to the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) and society at large. To date, six out of seven interviews with prominent female politicians and six out of seven interviews with grassroots community women have been completed, with their stories edited for inclusion in both a book and an exhibition. These efforts aim to preserve their narratives for future generations and counteract historical erasure. The project's outreach has sparked keen interest from participants who valued the opportunity to share their impactful experiences, ensuring their legacies are recorded and recognized. Portrait photography is nearly complete, and the project's comprehensive digital platform and coordination efforts, including engagements with the Department of Foreign Affairs, pave the way for a high-profile dual launch in Belfast and Dublin. This project has already begun fostering a greater understanding of women's roles in peacebuilding and political leadership across the island, aligning with the Reconciliation Fund's mission to promote dialogue, education, and a united civil society.

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Belfast City Council – Capacity Building Grant.

During the reporting year, TWN successfully advanced multiple impactful work streams. The organisation delivered comprehensive training that supported community organisations in adapting to the evolving educational and funding landscapes post-Brexit, ensuring staff development and readiness. Notably, 10 participants completed the Level 3 Award in Education and Training, awaiting certification, while new cohorts were recruited for further training. TWN also facilitated health and wellbeing workshops, engaging 38 participants who reported enhanced mental health and personal growth. Collaborative efforts included assisting smaller organisations in funding applications and offering governance and financial management support, bolstering their resilience amid funding transitions. Additionally, TWN championed policy engagement, enabling groups to actively respond to consultations and shape strategic community discussions.

Review of the Impact of Brexit

The Peace plus programme has been agreed upon and its multi annual project open calls are in progress. A funding diversification strategy has been implemented to source additional non-EU funding streams to support the work of the charity in the future.

5. Financial Review

The results for the year are set out on pages 14 to 23. The charitable company recorded a net deficit of £117,144 for the year (compared to £10,725 in 2023). As of March 2024, the total funds of the charity amounted to £45,797 (2023 - £162,941) comprising restricted funds of £9,570 (2023 - £63,003) and unrestricted funds of £36,227 (2023 - £99,938).

Reserves Policy

TWN maintains a prudent level of reserves to manage financial risks and fulfil its commitments. The aim is to ensure the organisation can continue its work while adapting to changing circumstances. The reserves policy is designed to prevent service disruption due to sudden funding shortages or unforeseen expenditure increases.

The policy ensures that reserves are neither higher than necessary nor held for longer than required. This approach allows time to seek alternative funding, restructure, or reduce costs over a minimum of three and a maximum of six months if funding decreases. Compliance with this policy is monitored regularly, and the Board reviews its appropriateness annually.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

Risk Policy and Internal Control Framework

TWN has implemented a comprehensive risk management process to identify and mitigate risks in line with its agreed risk appetite. The Management Committee has delegated the oversight of the Risk Register to the Governance, Audit, and Finance Sub-Group, which regularly reviews the key strategic and operational risks facing the organisation. The trustees confirm that effective controls and reporting systems are in place to assess risks and mitigation measures.

Financial Risks

The primary financial challenge is income generation. TWN relies heavily on securing funding from government and other grant-making bodies. Trustees recognise the significant challenges ahead, as the fundraising environment remains difficult and short-term funding complicates long-term planning.

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The immediate priority is to secure funding to sustain projects and posts into the future. TWN will also work to control costs and ensure services are delivered as efficiently as possible.

Management and Operational Delivery

TWN has robust governance structures, policies, and procedures to ensure sound decision-making and accountability. In response to the evolving external environment, the Senior Management Team and Management Committee maintain structured oversight of operations and regularly review risks.

Staff development is a priority, with ongoing training and performance management to strengthen the team. The safety and well-being of TWN's staff and beneficiaries remain paramount, and the organisation has comprehensive policies covering Data Protection, Health and Safety, Safeguarding for Children and Adults at Risk, and Customer Care.

System Security

TWN is committed to maintaining secure systems that comply with data protection legislation. All systems are protected by passwords and firewalls, with data access restricted to those who need it for their roles. Regular data backups (daily, weekly, and monthly) ensure that, in the event of a system failure or data breach, the organisation can recover data with minimal risk of loss.

Compliance, Regulation, and Legal Risks

Failure to comply with legal, regulatory, or best practice standards could cause significant reputational damage to TWN. To mitigate this risk, the organisation follows established policies and procedures aligned with best practices. These policies undergo an annual review to ensure compliance with the latest legal and regulatory frameworks.

External Risks

TWN continuously monitors the external environment to anticipate political, social, and economic challenges. The organisation has robust procedures to develop plans that mitigate potential negative impacts on its activities and reputation.

Despite these challenges, TWN remains confident in the continued need for its services. The organisation is committed to strengthening partnerships and ensuring high-quality training provision that meets the needs of its beneficiaries. TWN will continue working with government departments to secure funding for training and development programmes that support women in rural and disadvantaged areas across Northern Ireland.

6- Plans for future periods:

TWN has secured the following future funding:

- Department for Communities- Regional Infrastructure Support Programme for disadvantaged and rural women.
- DFA Strategic Partnership
- DFA- Contentious objects
- Belfast City Council- Capacity Building Grant.

7: Future training and Development

- Diversity and transgender awareness training
- ILM suite of training from levels 3- to 7 in Leadership and Management on a commercial basis.
- TQUK Level 3 Award in Education and Training.
- TQUK level 3 Meditation