

2022

AONTAS ADULT LEARNERS' FESTIVAL

7th – 11th March

Festival Communications Toolkit

#LearnYourWay



@aontas



@AONTASAdultLearning



@aontasireland



@aontas



The Voice of
Adult Learning

Supported by:



Riailtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



SOLAS
learning works



Festival Communications Toolkit

#LearnYourWay

Welcome to the AONTAS Adult Learners' Festival Toolkit 2022. We're delighted that you are thinking of getting involved in the 16th **Adult Learners' Festival**. The Festival gives all those in the adult learning community across Ireland the opportunity to encourage adults to try something new and showcase the learning opportunities available to them.

Building on last year's theme of 'Better Together' which focused on collaboration and fostering partnerships, this year's theme is '**Learn Your Way**' - **#LearnYourWay**.

We know that recruitment is a priority for adult and community education providers as a result of the pandemic. With that in mind, we want to support groups to highlight the variety of learning options available to prospective learners to share that you can **#LearnYourWay** in your local community.

The Aim of the Adult Learners' Festival:

- To **celebrate** adult learning and the achievements of adult learners
- To **promote** the work of further, adult and community education
- To **showcase** the important work of adult learning providers
- To **ensure** that the adult learner is at the centre of adult learning policy

Why should you get involved?

The Festival is a wonderful opportunity to get involved in a national celebration of adult learning and to promote your organisation. By holding an event as part of the Adult Learners' Festival and submitting it on the **One Step Up** website:

- **You can highlight** your organisation's work and commitment to adult learning
- **You can raise** awareness about adult learning opportunities in your local area and encourage adults to take the first step back to learning
- the AONTAS Adult Learners' Festival we will share and promote your events across our communications channels which had a reach of over **2.5 million** people during the 2021 festival

How to Get Involved!

Everyone can get involved in the AONTAS Adult Learners' Festival. Whether you already have a passion for learning or are thinking about learning something new, why not attend a local event!

Are you part of an Education and Training Board (ETB), a community education centre or a higher education institute involved in organising learning activities or courses? Hold an event as part of the festival to showcase your work.

Festival Toolkit

We at AONTAS have put together this Festival Toolkit to help you to:

- Hold an online or in-person event as part of the Adult Learners' Festival 2022
- Spread the word on social media through our online campaign
- Raise public, and political, awareness of the importance of adult learning



Support from AONTAS

As well as the useful tips and information in this toolkit, AONTAS will support you to take part in the Adult Learners' Festival by:

- **For AONTAS** members: Offering €50 grants to help you set up and run an event. These will be limited and offered on a first come, first served basis so it's a good idea to get planning as soon as possible! For more information, please contact Giuliana Peña, AONTAS Projects Officer, at: gpena@aontas.com
- Providing a digital/poster toolkit to help you promote your event – whether in person or online
- Providing online event promotion through [onestepup.ie](https://www.onestepup.ie) where you can register your event for free and be included in our national online campaign
- Holding dedicated information sessions online where we'll share updates on the Festival programme, opportunities to collaborate with others and to find out how your event planning is coming along! Find out more at: <https://www.aontas.com/events/>



Use our FREE Promotional Materials to Support Your Event

AONTAS has designed a range of **FREE** promotional material that can be used to support your adult learning event.

- Click [here](#) to download a free Promotional poster
- Click [here](#) to download a Festival styled **PowerPoint** Template file which maybe used during virtual events.
- You might like to use the images below to promote your event and festival participation. Please click on the images to download a copy for your own use.

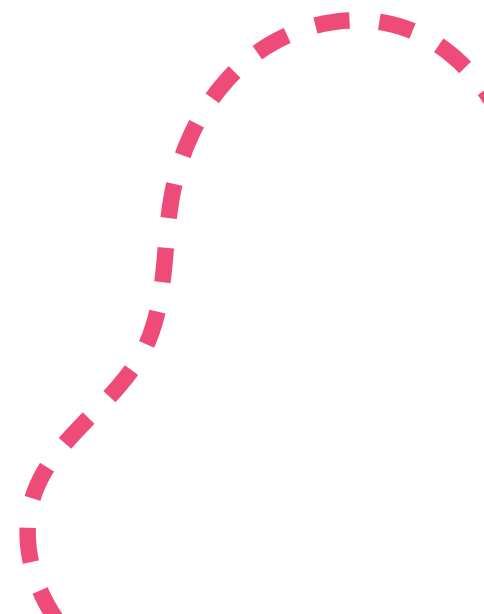
Email footer



Twitter header



Facebook Graphic



This year, we're delighted that in-person events will be possible again and we can continue bringing even more people together through online events. We encourage you to host an event during the Festival too. Maybe you would like to organise a **taster session** or **open day event** that showcases your organisation's work or the courses available. You may like to invite your learners to attend a **virtual coffee/tea morning**.

Organising Your Event – A Step-by-Step Guide

1	<h3>Decide on a Theme</h3> <p>This year, to encourage prospective learners to get involved, our theme is 'Learn Your Way'. However, you can choose any theme that works for you and your local community. Working closely with local partners is a great way to find the right theme for your event.</p>
2	<h3>Plan your Event</h3> <p>We recommend holding an event that will last for between 30 minutes and 1 hour and 30 minutes. If you're holding an in-person event, you might make it a drop-in session over a longer period of time so that there's plenty of opportunities for prospective learners to join in.</p> <p>Or, if you're planning an online event, it's a good idea to include a tea break and to give attendees time together in 'breakout rooms' to share their thoughts with each other.</p>
3	<h3>Book your Venue and Host</h3> <p>If you're planning an in-person event you will need to factor in latest public health guidance in relation to COVID-19. Make sure the venue is easily accessible and think about how you can signpost people to find you when they arrive. If you're planning on holding your event online this year, decide which platform you'll use (eg Zoom, Google Hangouts or Microsoft Teams).</p>
4	<h3>Open Registrations and Promote your Event!</h3> <p>Do you want learners to register for the event in advance? If so, you could use Eventbrite or provide an email address or phone number for people to contact you directly. This can be very important for online events so you can send an event reminder and share the link for them to join on the day.</p>

- Then it's time to start shouting from the rooftops about your event! To help prospective learners find out all about your event and to be part of our campaign, you can add it to the **One Step Up** Calendar. Please note events must be free of charge.

Event ideas:

This year, festival activity will continue to be held online AND return to in-person events. These ideas include a range of online, in-person and outdoor event ideas:

- **Walk and Talk with a Learner** – Arrange an outdoor walk where potential Learners could join Learners and Providers to hear about their experiences, the opportunities available and discover how they can **#LearnYourWay!**
- **Coffee Morning** – An event that can work online or in-person, using tables or breakout rooms is a great way to bring people together to celebrate the Adult Learners' Festival either in their local community or from the comfort of their own homes.
- **#LearnYourWay Quiz** – Another option that can work online or in-person, hosting a quiz either on Zoom or in a local community space is a great way to bring people together. You could also involve learners who could share their experiences in-between rounds, or even host a round on their favourite subject!
- **Try Something New Taster Session** – Provider short taster sessions to introduce people to different courses can be a fun way to attract potential learners. Inviting attendees to bring a friend or come along as a group can encourage people to come along and to get more involved with a practical or group activity.
- **Virtual Celebrations on Social Media** – If you want to join this year's festival celebrations but can't commit to an in-person or online event, there are lots of ways to get involved on social media instead. You could share a Learner Story (as either a video or blog), you could hold a mini quiz using Twitter Polls or Instagram Stories, or take part in our **Social Media Photo Challenge!** Tell us how learning has changed your life and share a photo which captures that feeling – eg: Show us how learning has made you healthier, given you new confidence, helped you develop new friendships or a new passion.



Spread the Word Online

As part of the AONTAS Adult Learners' Festival 2022 we will be using our online platforms to promote local events and create a fun and exciting Festival. Here are some quick tips to help **spread the word about your event** in the Adult Learners' Festival:

- **Follow Us For Latest Updates** - Follow [@AONTAS](#) on Twitter, [@aontasireland](#) on Instagram, and 'like' us on [Facebook](#)
- **Share Your Event** - Use the **#LearnYourWay** hashtag to share details of your own online events or events in your local community. Encourage your followers to share your events and information
- **Tag AONTAS** - Tag AONTAS on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram so that we can share and promote your posts across our social media platforms
- **Help to Spread the Word** - If you don't have the resources to hold an event but would still like to be a part of the Festival, help us to spread the word about the Adult Learners' Festival by sharing online events, information about learning opportunities in your area and everyday learning on your social media platforms, tagging us and using the **#LearnYourWay** hashtag!



Example Tweet:

This week, we're celebrating the **@AONTAS** Adult Learners' Festival which brings together learners & future learners from communities across Ireland.

Get involved, try something new & discover how you could **#LearnYourWay** through Adult Education! <https://www.aontas.com/> **#ALF2022**



Example Facebook Post:

This week, we're celebrating the annual **@AONTASAdultlearning** Adult Learners' Festival which will bring together learners and future learners from communities across Ireland.

There is a wide range of learning opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds available across the country helping you to **#LearnYourWay!** Get involved and try something new!

Visit: <https://www.aontas.com/> **#ALF22**



Example Instagram Post:

This week, we're celebrating the annual @aontasireland Adult Learners' Festival which will bring together learners and future learners from communities across Ireland.

There is a wide range of learning opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds available across the country helping you to **#LearnYourWay!** Get involved and try something new!

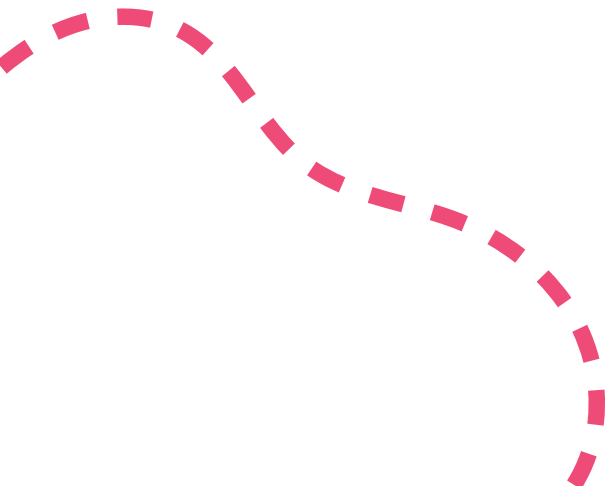
Follow @aontasireland to find out more!

#ALF22



Raise Awareness

Through the Adult Learners' Festival, we hope to give a voice to adult learners and to raise awareness of the learning opportunities available across Ireland. A powerful way to do this is to reach out to community leaders and well-known figures in your local community who can help to spread the word about your event, about the festival in general and about the opportunities available all year round.



A Step-by-Step Guide to Raising Awareness:

1	<p>Make a list of community leaders and people of influence in your local area</p> <p>This might include your local TD, Councillors, or City Mayors. It may also include leading figures from business (such as your local Chamber of Commerce), sport (such as your local GAA or soccer club) or the arts (such as well-known local musicians or actors).</p>
2	<p>Identify your ask</p> <p>Request that they raise awareness of your event by sharing it on their social media or in a newsletter. Invite them along to the event to meet learners and find out more about the opportunities available locally.</p>
3	<p>Reach out to them directly</p> <p>You could do this through social media, email or by contacting their local office, to let them know about your event, make your ask, and share the learner story or the event details they'll need.</p>
4	<p>Say thank you!</p> <p>Make sure to thank anyone who helps to raise awareness by sharing details of your event online, and if anyone attends, don't forget to get a photograph of them with learners or attendees to share on social media and thank them publicly for coming along.</p>

What AONTAS are doing

As part of the Adult Learners' Festival, we'll host 3 key events during the week of the festival. For the latest update on these events please click [here](#).

1	<p>AONTAS STAR Awards – Monday, 7th March 2022</p> <p>The online awards will be hosted by a well-known face and include special entertainment. A total of 29 groups have been shortlisted for this year's awards. Find out more about the shortlisted groups here.</p>
2	<p>Learners as Leaders Event – Wednesday, 9th March 2022</p> <p>Hosted by and featuring Learners as Leaders participants, this event will put their experiences at the centre to show the range of ways that every can #LearnYourWay.</p>
3	<p>AONTAS Policy Day – Friday, 11th March 2022</p> <p>This event will focus on the potential of community education to tackle educational disadvantage and the opportunities for change as we build a new picture of normal post-pandemic.</p>

For More Information

Keep in touch with all the latest Adult Learners' Festival news and find out more here:

www.aontas.com/community/adult-learners-festival/

For more details on how to get involved in the 2022 Festival, please contact AONTAS Projects Officer, Giuliana Peña at: gpena@aontas.com

About AONTAS

AONTAS is the National Adult Learning Organisation. Its mission is to advocate for the right of all adults in Ireland to quality learning throughout their lives, and to promote the value and benefits of lifelong learning. AONTAS over 500 members including Education and Training Boards, community education centres, further education institutions and individual members. Visit www.aontas.com for more information.



Contact Us

Keep in touch with all the latest Adult Learners' Festival news and find out more [here](#).

For more information, please contact Giuliana Peña, AONTAS Projects Officer at: gpena@aontas.com

Email bdolan@aontas.com

Phone 01 406 8220

Website <https://www.aontas.com/>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/aontas>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/AONTASAdultlearning>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/aontasireland>

Linked in <https://ie.linkedin.com/company/aontas-the-national-adult-learning-organisation>

About AONTAS

AONTAS is the National Adult Learning Organisation. Its mission is to advocate for the right of all adults in Ireland to quality learning throughout their lives, and to promote the value and benefits of lifelong learning. AONTAS has nearly 500 members including Education and Training Boards, community education centres, further education institutions and individual members.

Visit www.aontas.com for more information.