

Benefacts Editorial Oversight Group 2017-2018

Terms of reference

Introduction

In April 2017, Benefacts produced its first Sector Analysis Report. This was launched as the first in an annual series, and set out to

1. identify the field and describe some of its main features: define the scope, promote wider public understanding of the character and scale of Irish nonprofits as a “sector” in Ireland including charities as a subset of all nonprofits
2. explain Benefacts methodology and business model - which is to extract from regulatory documents the greatest possible volume of reliable regulatory, narrative, governance and financial data from the public disclosures of nonprofits and build a continuously renewing database derived from this “full population” data (and explain some of the limitations to the data)
3. identify some of the big numbers that can be extracted from the available data and begin to indicate annual trends (based on 2013, 2014, 2015 data available before Q1 2017), specifically
 - the numbers of nonprofits of different kinds and sizes (by turnover),
 - the profile of their employment numbers and remuneration practices,
 - the sources of their revenues,
 - the patterns of philanthropic giving including the profile of fundraising charities
4. Benefacts plans to build on that first analysis in a number of ways with the second report to be published in April 2018. Besides having another year of data (i.e. 2016) to add to the trend evidence, it is proposed that the second report will be augmented/enhanced inter alia by
 - a new section providing more information on the data – sources, features including weaknesses, trends in disclosure
 - a more detailed analysis of charity data across all reported variables
 - an augmented section on philanthropic giving, highlighting previously unavailable data about non-Irish philanthropic giving

Membership of the group

5. The Board of Benefacts has asked one of its Directors to chair the group and invite appropriately qualified/experienced people to serve. Members of group are chosen to provide a spread of knowledge and experience, to ensure there is rigour and consistency in the methodology and analysis, and otherwise to support the purposes and deliverables of the project.
6. Individuals who serve may have been selected because of their professional role/function but their contribution is in a personal capacity. No alternates may attend.

7. The term of membership of for twelve months from appointment, renewable at the discretion of the Board.
8. The names of the editorial oversight group will be published in the Sector Analysis Report.

Documentation and record keeping

9. Papers for meetings including draft materials will be circulated by means of a secure project portal.
10. Records of meetings and decisions taken will be recorded and circulated following each meeting.

Meetings

11. The group will set its own schedule for meetings.