



Our year and our work

Summary Annual Report

2018



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

Our mission

Our mission is to advocate for literacy as a right and to collaborate with our partners to influence policy and practice to support the development of literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

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445,800

adults have less than a Leaving Certificate (Level 4) qualification²



1 in **4** adults struggle with everyday maths such as working out a discount or dividing up a bill



1 in **6** adults find everyday text, such as a bus timetable or medical instructions, hard to read and understand



In a recent study¹, Ireland came **17th** out of **24** countries in an adult literacy survey



1. OECD Survey of Adult Skills (2012) also known as the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
2. SOLAS Skills and Labour Market Research Unit analysis of CSO Labour Force Survey data (2017)

About NALA

NALA stands for the National Adult Literacy Agency. We are a charity and we are a membership organisation.

We exist to support people with literacy and numeracy difficulties so that they can fully take part in society and have access to learning opportunities that meet their needs. We are committed to literacy and numeracy development as a human right.

We want to ensure that no adult is left behind. To do this we:

- Lobby for further investment to raise adult literacy levels;
- Help people to develop the literacy, numeracy and digital skills they need to play their full part in society;
- Engage with and respond to the needs of our members;
- Work with education providers, particularly the Education and Training Boards (ETBs), to identify and share best practice in how we teach adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills;
- Help to make learning and courses more accessible to people with literacy and numeracy needs;
- Support organisations and services to be aware of literacy and to communicate clearly; and
- Conduct research into literacy needs and best practice teaching and learning.

Our achievements in 2018

Individuals

We raised awareness of adult education services and helped people improve their literacy and numeracy.



1,000

people got QQI accreditation through our distance learning service

- **2,800 Level 2 minor awards**
- **550 Level 3 minor awards**



1,000

Our information helpline staff referred 1,000 callers to ETB adult education services, NALA's distance learning service and WriteOn.ie

750

We sent 750 information packs about adult education services to members of the public

144 ETB adult literacy centres or services received **1,600** promotional posters during our awareness campaign



3 in 4

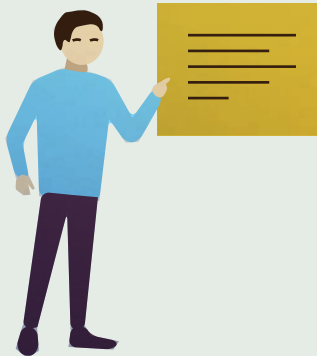
An evaluation of our awareness campaign showed that three in four people who have literacy or numeracy difficulties saw or heard our campaign



We did interviews and raised awareness about literacy on **13** national and regional radio shows, **two** TV shows and in **50** national and regional newspapers



Our social media followers liked, reacted, commented on or shared our stories about literacy **470,000** times



Further Education and Training (FET) tutors

We helped to improve the quality of teaching.

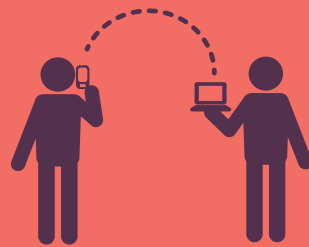


600

people attended our 13 professional development events

300

FET practitioners took part in our integrating literacy workshops



250

learners received 2,270 learning sessions with our distance learning tutors



New online videos were produced to help students with maths and grammar skills

We published 2 new pieces of research and produced 6 resource worksheets for tutors

340

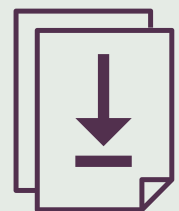
people took part in our literacy awareness training sessions



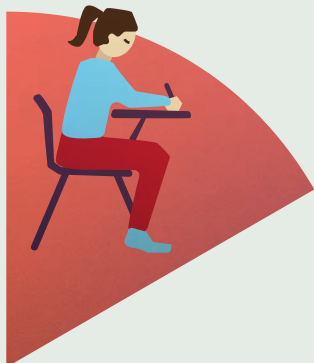
140

tutors from 37 adult education centres received training on how to use WriteOn.ie

We produced 10 distance learning worksheets and they were downloaded 600 times



Our professional development event videos were watched 1,100 times



Students

We represented the views of adult literacy students and supported their learning.

1,840

students took part in learning activities funded by our Student Development Fund



83

adult education centres received grants from our Student Development Fund

160

people attended our student days in Dublin and Galway

13

students contributed to our student subcommittee, a national committee of adult literacy students. The subcommittee held 7 meetings during the year

25

students were involved as learner representatives in awareness raising events and activities



over **95,000**

people watched our promotional videos of students talking about the benefits of improving their literacy skills during our awareness week



Parents

We helped parents support their children's literacy and numeracy development.



200,000

people used our website helpmykidlearn.ie

1,800

people received our monthly helpmykidlearn e-zine



We got **17,000** clicks, reactions, comments or shares on our Facebook page for helpmykidlearn.ie



Organisations

We worked with organisations to help make their services more accessible to people with literacy needs.



80

pharmacies and 5 general practices now have the Crystal Clear mark



75

We received 75 entries from 50 organisations to our Plain English Awards. The launch of the awards resulted in media coverage worth €54,000 in public relations activity



1,400

people took our plain English training and improved their communications skills



We delivered 3 health literacy workshops to healthcare professionals and spoke at 4 conferences about health literacy



We spoke about health literacy at 3 events in Dublin City libraries



120

organisations used our Plain English Editing and Training Service



Policy makers

We worked to make sure the views of adults with literacy and numeracy needs are heard by policy makers.



During 2018 we met with 42 TDs and Senators to advocate for increased investment in raising adult literacy levels in Ireland.

We made 8 written submissions to the government in 2018.

In our submissions we recommended:

- a whole of Government approach to addressing adult, young people and children's literacy, numeracy and digital skills;
- the development of the public library service's role in promoting and supporting digital, health, family and library literacy;
- that the National Training Fund prioritise adults with low basic skills and qualifications, both those in employment and those who wish to acquire skills so they can take up employment;
- that career and guidance services prioritise and proactively engage people with the lowest levels of educational attainment; and
- the development of flexible and innovative digital learning options where adults can access "just enough, just in time" learning about using technology and going online.

Working with stakeholders

In 2018 we worked with many stakeholders, detailed below, to put in place national policies that support adults who want to improve their literacy and numeracy. We did this through:

- meetings,
- briefing papers,
- consultations with the public,
- presentations, and
- workshops.

National strategy	Stakeholder
Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 – 2019 and National Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOLAS • Department of Education and Skills • Education and Training Boards and their staff • Education and Training Boards Ireland • QQI – Quality and Qualifications Ireland • Adult Literacy Organisers Association, Tutors, Adult Education Officers • Students • People with literacy or numeracy needs
National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Children and Young People 2011 – 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools and teachers • Home School Community Liaison officers • Co-ordinators and Tusla • Department of Education and Skills • National Parents Council • Parents
Pathways to Work 2016 – 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

Strategy for Technology Enhanced Learning in Further Education and Training 2016-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOLAS • Education and Training Boards Ireland • Cedefop • RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) Practitioner Network • QQI – Quality and Qualifications Ireland • Adult learners
Healthy Ireland: A framework for improved health and wellbeing 2013 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health • HSE – Health Service Executive • Hospitals • ICGP – Irish College of General Practitioners • Pharmacies • Irish Pharmacy Union • HIQA – Health Information and Quality Authority • South Dublin County Council
Putting People First: Action programme for effective local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities • Local Community Development Committees • Local Development Companies • Libraries
Right to read campaign – Supporting literacy in the local authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) • Department of Rural and Community Development • Dublin City Libraries
European Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPALE – European Platform for Adult Learning in Europe • EAAL – European Agenda for Adult Learning • EBSN – European Basic Skills Network
Community and voluntary groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Platform • Disability organisations • EAPN – European Anti-Poverty Network • Focus Ireland, Dublin Simon and Merchants Quay • Irish Cancer Society • The Wheel • An Cosán

Our vision

Our vision is an Ireland where adult literacy is a valued right, where everyone can develop their literacy, numeracy and digital skills, and where individuals can take part fully in society.

A message from our chairperson

In 2018 the NALA Board continued the work on the objectives agreed in the NALA Strategic Plan 2017-2019. This annual report tells you what has been achieved so far.

The Board had a busy year working on the re-engagement process with Qualifications and Quality Ireland (QQI). This process will ensure that NALA's programmes and services are quality assured. The staff and policy subcommittee and the Board reviewed numerous policies and procedures. A new education, training and assessment subcommittee was set up in June 2018 to approve policies for NALA's distance learning service.

The student subcommittee coordinated student days and raised awareness of literacy issues at the National Ploughing Championships and in numerous media interviews. Michael Duffy chairs this group and Lee Mitchell ensured that the Board was kept up to date on their work. During 2018 NALA Board members and members of the student subcommittee got actively involved in contacting their local TDs about adult literacy. Five students stepped down from the subcommittee this year and I would like to thank them for their work. These students are Liz Corkish, Mary Ward, Noel Phelan, Tanya Byrne and Leonie Sutcliffe.

The audit and finance subcommittee, under the stewardship of Treasurer David Heylin, ensures that financial controls are in place, accounts are audited and that risks are monitored on an ongoing basis.

On behalf of the NALA Board, I would like to thank:

- NALA members for their ongoing support to the organisation;
- SOLAS for their funding and for the recognition of the valuable work that NALA does;

- Education and Training Boards and other service providers for their continuing collaboration in achieving the common goal of improving adult literacy provision;
- NALA Board members for their time and commitment to their role and helping to ensure that NALA operates to the highest possible governance standards. I would particularly like to thank Sonia Weafer, Honorary Secretary of the Board, Ann Nicholas and Olive Phelan who will be leaving the Board at the next AGM. I would also like to welcome our newest member of the Board, Hazel Cryan who joined the Board in January; and
- NALA staff team, led by CEO Dr Inez Bailey, for their professionalism and dedication in meeting our strategic objectives.

Personally, it has been an honour to serve as chairperson of NALA for the past year and previously as vice-chairperson and ordinary member since 2013 supporting the very important work being done to support adults with literacy difficulties. I wish you, the members, the Board and staff of NALA continued success into the future.



Nuala Glanton

Chairperson
National Adult Literacy Agency

An overview from our CEO

NALA's work during 2018 helped people with literacy and numeracy needs and those who provide services for people with literacy and numeracy needs. There were a number of achievements and challenges during the year.

Reaching, serving and listening to people with literacy and numeracy needs

In September, NALA managed an enhanced 'Take the first step' awareness campaign with an increased focus on local and regional ETB learning opportunities. The evaluation of the campaign again showed that our message reached people with literacy and numeracy needs. As a result of our awareness raising activities in 2018, our information helpline staff referred 1,000 callers to educational opportunities, including to ETB adult education centres.

A number of people who called us started learning through our distance learning service. They either worked with a tutor over the phone or used WriteOn.ie, our e-learning website. During the year, we also carried out an evaluation of WriteOn.ie and received feedback from 60 learners. This provided us with very useful information about online learning.

Learner-centred focus

As the employment rate improves, it becomes more challenging for people to take up learning opportunities. NALA welcomed the EU's learner-centred focus on upskilling and its encouragement of national governments to assess their existing learning supports for those with literacy and numeracy needs. The action plan that Ireland submitted to

the EU recognised more could be done to provide standalone assessment opportunities so that people can identify their own skills needs. The action plan also recognised that more could be done to help people find flexible learning opportunities that fit into their lives and to find ways they can validate their learning. NALA believes Ireland can do more to meet the aspirations of this upskilling initiative.

Our work updating the guidelines for the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy tuition is an example of how services can expand their accessibility in line with the adult literacy and numeracy strategy. Widening accessibility was also key to NALA's review of our online learning platform, WriteOn.ie. The developments in technology enhanced learning informed our decision to upgrade the system. Helping us to realise our plans to support upskilling, NALA was awarded Erasmus+ funding which will be used to develop and test a new, more accessible online skills checker.

The popularity of our student development days, and our fund for members to provide student development activities, continues to grow and has provided extensive detailed learner feedback on a variety of topics. For a lot of learners, what they want corresponds with the aspirations of the EU's upskilling initiative. This makes us even more determined to work on delivering better services for adult learners.

Supporting members and stakeholders

Alongside our work with learners, NALA also supported ETB staff and other members through a variety of professional development events and seminars. Strong demand and attendance during the year reflected the motivation and commitment of practitioners to learn from their peers about good practice. The resources we give tutors at our events were also very popular during the year. The feedback we received about our events highlights how well-liked they are with tutors.

Throughout the year, NALA worked with many public sector bodies to help them apply plain English standards in their communications. Our approach to increasing the public sector's commitment to plain English

informed our lobbying of all government parties and independents to support the introduction of legislation to make plain English a mandatory standard. Everyone we met was in favour of our proposal. Since our meetings, Noel Rock TD and Senator Aodhán Ó Ríordán have submitted draft Plain Language Bills to the Dáil and the Seanad.

During 2018, NALA also began its re-engagement process with QQI in line with its new arrangements for providers. This work involved an extensive review and development of our policies and procedures. This was timely as we also prepared to apply for a higher level quality assurance standard through the PQASSO system. This year's preparations for the new EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) also required significant policy, practice and staff development.

This was a rewarding year with plenty of challenges. Our achievements during the year were made possible thanks to the ongoing support of our funders and collaborations with learners, practitioners and providers in and beyond the FET sector. I am grateful to them all, as well as the NALA staff team and Board, for their committed service.



Dr Inez Bailey

CEO
National Adult Literacy Agency

About this summary annual report

This summary annual report tells you about the work we did during 2018. The sections follow the same order as our Strategic Plan 2017-2019. They explain how we have worked to achieve our three main objectives under the themes of access, practice and policy. Each objective has a number of actions.

You can read and download information about our strategic plan, accounts and publications at www.nala.ie. To help you, on page 94 some acronyms and specialist terms are explained.

NALA Strategic Plan:

Objective 1

Build awareness of
the importance of
literacy for a more
inclusive Ireland



Why it matters

The OECD Adult Skills Survey shows that one in six Irish adults are at or below Level 1 on a five-level literacy scale. One in four Irish adults score at or below Level 1 for numeracy, and two in five score at or below Level 1 on using technology to accomplish tasks. At these levels, people may not be able to fill in an application form, add up a bill, search the web, vote or help children with homework.

Improving people's literacy skills helps them to take part in a meaningful way in society. It opens up opportunity, enriches life experience and promotes equality.

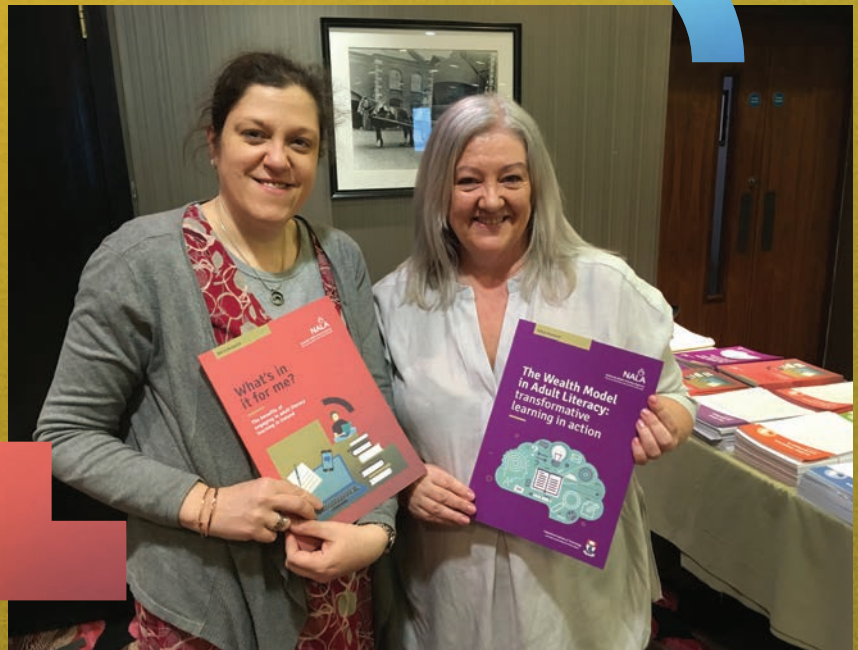
NALA aims to create a more inclusive Ireland where no adult is left behind. We are doing this by working to give everyone, regardless of background, the opportunity to develop and improve their literacy, numeracy, and digital skills.

Under Objective 1 we have five actions:

1. Use research to show why literacy matters to Irish society.
2. Work with our colleagues in the ETBs to make sure that learning experiences are accessible and enjoyable for all learners.
3. Support the ETBs to promote their service as the primary access point for adults.
4. Involve 'champions of learning' to encourage greater engagement in and enjoyment of lifelong learning.
5. Support organisations such as education and training services, health services, local authorities, libraries, private services, utilities, public bodies and charities to provide literacy-friendly services.

Research

We did research to show why literacy matters to Irish society and to ensure that learning experiences are accessible to everyone.



Helen Ryan, NALA policy officer and Tina Byrne, NALA research officer.

Objective 1

Action 1

Use research to show why literacy matters to Irish society.

NALA carries out research studies to show how literacy and numeracy services have a positive impact on Irish society. Our research helps us to raise awareness about the importance of literacy and numeracy to the general public, employers, policymakers and the economy.

In 2018, we did research that explored the benefits for students of engaging in adult literacy and family literacy programmes. The research report is called 'What's in it for me'.

'What's in it for me' research

This research provides a valuable insight into the positive impact of adult learning. We carried out the research with learners through an online survey, focus groups and face-to-face interviews. The learners highlighted three areas of their lives where they have felt the most benefits since returning to education.

Health and wellbeing

The learners said that they feel more confident and have a more positive view of themselves since returning to education. Here's what one learner had to say:

"It takes a toll on your physical and mental health when you're carrying around a big secret such as having poor literacy skills. But when your self-esteem is high you're more able to talk about things and it makes you feel better."

Ongoing education prospects

Learners said that going back to learn basic skills made them realise that they were competent, critical thinking adults. This was a boost to their confidence and they said that it would encourage them to consider continuing with education to try to achieve certification.

Family life

Our research found that for many learners one of the biggest benefits about returning to education is the difference it makes in their family life, especially when it comes to helping their kids with their own education. Here's what one learner had to say:

"Before I used to sit at the back when we had meetings in the kids' school. But now I'm up the front asking questions about their education. That confidence is one of the biggest things that going back to education has given me."

This research report also led to the development of further discussion papers in the areas of:

- health and wellbeing;
- social and community life; and
- employment.

Objective 1

Action 2

Work with our colleagues in the ETBs to make sure that learning experiences are accessible and enjoyable for all learners.

NALA works closely with staff and learners in the ETBs to do research that can help to make sure courses are accessible, enjoyable learning experiences for adults.

The wealth model in adult literacy research

In 2018, NALA published the report, 'The wealth model in adult literacy: transformative learning in action'. This research project was carried out in partnership with the School of Lifelong Learning and Education, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT).

The wealth model explores the idea that adult learners bring many different strengths into the classroom with them. The report presents the practice of 13 tutors from 10 ETBs and it is based on implementing a wealth model approach to adult literacy and numeracy as set out in the NALA Guidelines for Good Literacy Work. The tutors who took part in the research are all experienced in using the wealth model.

Resources for tutors

The research report was accompanied by six action worksheets to help literacy tutors in the classroom.

The worksheets focus on the following areas:

- The tutor's approach
- Learner goals and interests
- Working ethically with different beliefs and cultures
- Learners' knowledge and skills

- The learning environment
- Practical guidelines

Research partnership

In 2019, NALA will continue our research partnership with Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). NALA and WIT research staff will work with our colleagues in the ETBs to carry out research that:

- captures adult learners' perspectives on why literacy matters to them,
- informs and ensures accessible and enjoyable learning experiences for adult learners, and
- demonstrates how this translates to greater benefits to Irish society.

What we discover will be published and will provide a basis for WIT curricular materials.

Family literacy research

During 2018, NALA was involved in research on best practice regarding family literacy. This research will be published in early 2019 and will provide FET stakeholders with a contemporary picture of family literacy activity in ETBs in Ireland against the backdrop of the FET strategy and wider related government policy.

Sharing our findings and impact

To reach as many people as possible with our research, we shared our work in publications and at events in 2018. We presented the findings from our work at the international ELINET Conference in Cologne. We shared our research findings with organisations at home and abroad, including SOLAS, ETBI, RaPAL, EPALE, ELINET and the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research.

Our research has also informed continuing professional development (CPD) workshops and seminars organised by NALA and other organisations.

All of NALA's research reports are available to download free on www.nala.ie

Awareness campaigns

We raised awareness of ETB adult education services and other learning opportunities.



Sinead Moriarty, writer; Eamon Delaney, Tipperary ETB student; Catherine Devlin, Donegal ETB student; and Charlie Bird, journalist.

Objective 1

Action 3

Support the ETBs to promote their service as the primary access point for adults.

In 2018, we implemented innovative communications and marketing tactics to promote free learning opportunities for people who want to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. We delivered awareness campaigns and developed our digital marketing strategy to connect with 'hard to reach' audiences by promoting the benefits of adult education and the local services provided by ETBs.

During this time, we referred over 1,000 people to ETB adult literacy and numeracy services and provided information to thousands more on our website takefirststep.ie.

'Take the first step' campaign

In January and September we ran phase three of an awareness campaign called 'Take the first step'. Phase one happened in 2016 and phase two happened in 2017.

The 'Take the first step' awareness campaign featured students from local ETB adult education centres around the country sharing their experiences of returning to education. Each person's story focused on what they gained from doing classes to improve their literacy, numeracy or digital skills. Each person's story also emphasised that the service was free.

The campaign included national and regional radio advertising as well as video, digital and outdoor advertising. It also included print and public relations (PR) activity.

All national advertising and PR activity directed people interested in improving their reading, writing, maths or digital skills to call the Freephone number 1800 20 20 65, text LEARN to 50050 or log onto takefirststep.ie

NALA then put them in contact with their local ETB adult education centre or told them about other free services that would help them improve their skills.

The 'Take the first step' campaign, which is funded by SOLAS, is managed by NALA with support from ETBI. The campaign is a key action in Ireland's Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2014-2019 which is designed to meet the training needs of Ireland's labour market and society.

Focus on local ETB services

This year NALA produced five new videos promoting local learners and ETBs in Tipperary, Carlow, Waterford, Cavan and Dublin. Each video featured learners in their home town talking about how going back to education has benefited them.

The videos showed them going about their daily routines in their local communities – working, volunteering, doing hobbies and attending their local ETB adult education centre. The videos showed how the learners had gained more confidence and were able to do more with their life since improving their literacy and numeracy skills.

It also gave us an opportunity to use local voices, accents and locations so that viewers would be able to identify their local ETB service.

We also broadcast regional radio ads again this year. The local ads were 40-second interview style vox pops with students from each ETB talking about how going back to education has changed their life. The ads promoted local ETB services and local phone numbers.

The ETBs that were promoted were:

- City of Dublin ETB on FM104;
- Cork ETB on 96FM;
- Limerick and Clare ETB on 95FM and Clare FM;
- Galway and Roscommon ETB on Galway Bay FM; and
- Waterford and Wexford ETB on WLRFM.

Posters and public relations for adult literacy centres

Similar to other years, NALA sent all ETBs and adult literacy centres or services bespoke posters with local contact phone numbers, websites and corresponding ETB logos. In total, 75 centres received bespoke posters with local contact details while 69 centres received generic posters with national contact details.

NALA also offered all ETBs and adult literacy services public relations (PR) support to promote local services. We set up media interviews and talks for students and their tutors.

Reaching younger people

This year we continued to improve how we raise awareness of services among younger people. To achieve this, we worked with 30-year-old City of Dublin ETB student Robert Shannon and Adult Literacy Organiser Fionnuala Carter for an interview about the benefits of returning to education. It was accompanied by a video featuring Robert and two other CDETB students Brian Flannery and Thomas Murphy. The interview and video were shared on several radio stations' websites and social media.

NALA also invested in a paid Facebook campaign to support the promotion of services among younger people.

The campaign in numbers

600

NALA answered **600 calls** from people who wanted information about improving their literacy and numeracy skills. This is over twice as many as last year and each person was given details of their local ETB adult literacy service.

38%

An independent evaluation showed that **38%** of the adult population in Ireland recall the campaign. More importantly, the evaluation found that **three in four** people who have literacy or numeracy difficulties saw or heard our campaign.

9 in 10

Among the people who saw the campaign, **9 in 10** believe it was effective at encouraging people to seek help to improve their literacy, numeracy, and digital skills.

51%

Awareness that free courses are available in local ETB adult education centres has increased from 47% to **51%**.

42,000

The campaign's website, takethefirststep.ie, received **42,000** views.

1,600

1,600 promotional posters were sent to literacy services around the country.

95,000

Promotional videos of students sharing their stories were watched **95,000** times on YouTube.

200

After chatting to students at our stand at the ploughing championships, **200** people signed up to request information about local adult education options.

Digital marketing

In 2018, we continued to implement a digital marketing strategy that started in late 2017.

The aim of this strategy was to increase awareness of, and participation in, adult literacy and numeracy courses. To achieve this we also put a lot of effort into growing the interaction and engagement with people in our Facebook community.

We did this by using the following tactics:

- Video testimonials
- #MondayMotivation – encouraging students to share stories
- Geo-targeted course sign-up ads
- Promoting unique selling points
- Course locator tool
- International Students Day
- Mobile click to call ads
- Symbology (emoji language created in NALA style iconography)

Similar to last year's successful approach, we also focused on driving traffic to the takethefirststep.ie website and encouraging contact. We did this through boosted content, paid ads and remarketing that focused on promoting the benefits of the service such as free ETB group or one-on-one tuition and our Distance Learning Service. We also promoted, through videos and articles, success stories of students who improved their lives by returning to education.

To drive website traffic we ran:

- a mixture of geo-targeted adverts (specific to chosen ETB locations);
- display and remarketing ads (to users who had already visited the site); and
- lookalike ads (targeting users who have similar characteristics to those in our main target audiences).

Results

As a result of our digital marketing strategy, there was a significant increase in 2018 in the number of people going to the takefirststep.ie website and interacting with us online.

We recorded 38,500 users, 49,500 sessions and 91,700 page views on our website - this is more than a 100% increase on 2017.

We also recorded 44,200 views on our Facebook page, and the videos we shared on our page were shown over 4,500,000 times.

This increased activity gave us new online audiences to target as part of our awareness campaigns.

Students raising awareness in the media

We arranged media interviews with students, to raise awareness of literacy issues and services, and received lots of fantastic coverage throughout the year. Some of the highlights include:

- **Eamon Delaney** from Kilkenny ETB appeared on RTÉ's Six One News following his talk at our conference on International Literacy Day. Eamon spoke about how going back to education improved his confidence and gave him the skills to take part in his children's education. Eamon's interview was also syndicated on RTÉ's Twitter account where it was very popular with RTÉ's followers.
- **Chris Carthy**, an adult learner from Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB, was interviewed in the Irish Independent where she said that going back to education opened up a whole new world for her.
- **Tanya Byrne**, a learner from Kildare and Wicklow ETB, spoke in the Wicklow People about her plans to get a degree in psychotherapy.
- **Michael Duffy** and **Michelle Johnston**, both from Cavan Monaghan ETB, and **Maurice Sammon**, from Waterford and Wexford ETB, spoke about the benefits of adult education on RTÉ's Marian Finucane show in June.

- In September, **Michael Duffy** appeared on Virgin Media One's Weekend AM show alongside literacy ambassador and author Sinead Moriarty. That same month he also featured in articles in the Irish Examiner and the Anglo Celt and was interviewed on Shannonside FM with local Adult Literacy Organiser **Regina Clarke**.
- **Joann Power**, Adult Literacy Organiser in Waterford Wexford ETB was interviewed, alongside student **Maurice Sammon**, on their local station WLRFM.
- **May Churm**, a learner from Galway and Roscommon ETB, was interviewed alongside Adult Literacy Organiser **Kevin Kelly**, on Galway bay FM.
- **Brian O'Donnell**, from Kilkenny and Carlow ETB, was interviewed with Adult Literacy Organiser **Tara Kelly** on KCLR. Brian, who spoke about how he no longer avoids reading and writing, was also interviewed by Ryan Tubridy on his morning radio show on RTE. An article about Brian also appeared in the Kilkenny People.
- **Fionnuala Carter**, an Adult Literacy Organiser in City of Dublin ETB was interviewed was interviewed on Q102 about the free services available to adults who want to improve their literacy skills.
- **Gerard Maher**, a learner from Tipperary ETB, was interviewed on Tipp FM. Gerard, who appeared alongside local Adult Literacy Organiser Mary Roche Cleary, spoke about how he goes to the library now in his spare time because he enjoys reading so much.
- **Charlie Bird**, journalist and literacy ambassador, spoke about coping with dyslexia on Today FM's show The Last Word with Matt Cooper.

Students raising awareness with the public

During 2018, 15 students shared their stories and raised awareness of ETB services with members of the public and political representatives. Some highlights include:

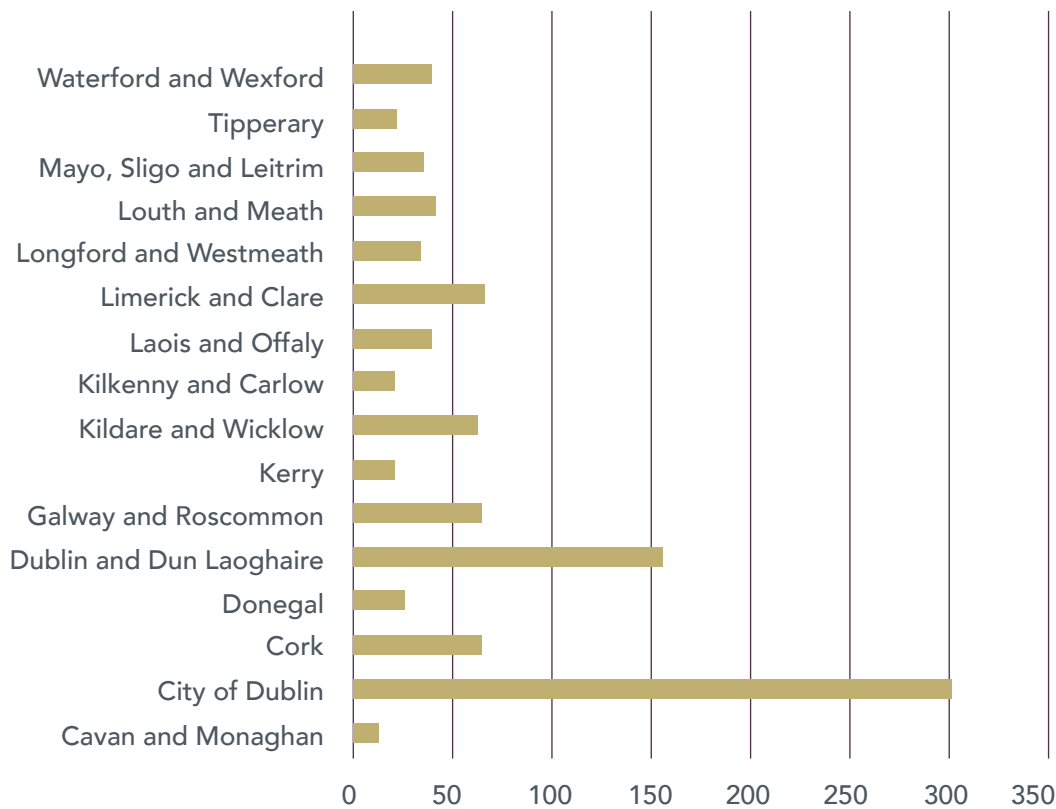
- **Eamon Delaney**, from Tipperary ETB, shared his story about returning to education with 170 people at our conference to celebrate International Literacy Day.
- **Michael Duffy** and **Michelle Johnston** from Cavan and Monaghan ETB, spoke to people who visited NALA's stand at the Virginia Agricultural Show in Cavan.
- **Michael Duffy** also shared his inspirational story with an audience of 150 people who came to a graduation event for Cavan learners.
- **Gerard Maher**, from Tipperary ETB, shared his story with people who attended an open day event about adult education and training opportunities.
- **Brian O'Donnell**, from Kilkenny and Carlow ETB, spoke to 25 students and members of the public at an event to celebrate the launch of his video during National Adult Literacy Awareness Week.
- Many students, including **Joe McDonagh**, from Limerick and Clare ETB, **Tanya Byrne** from Kildare and Wicklow ETB, **Lisa Banks** and **Martina Kiely** from Kilkenny and Carlow ETB and **Catherine Devlin** from Donegal ETB helped out at NALA's stand at the **National Ploughing Championships** in September.
- Following his first successful talk in 2017, **Michael Power**, from Tipperary ETB, was invited back to speak to prisoners in Cloverhill Prison.

- **Tony Moloney**, from Cork ETB, was the guest speaker at an event for students at the National Learning Network in Cork.
- **Jude Holt** and **Thomas Campbell**, from Laois and Offaly ETB, spoke to members of the public who visited an information stand in a shopping centre in Tullamore.
- **Liz Corkish**, from Kildare and Wicklow ETB, and **Michael Duffy**, from Cavan and Monaghan ETB, shared their stories about returning to education with TDs in Leinster House.

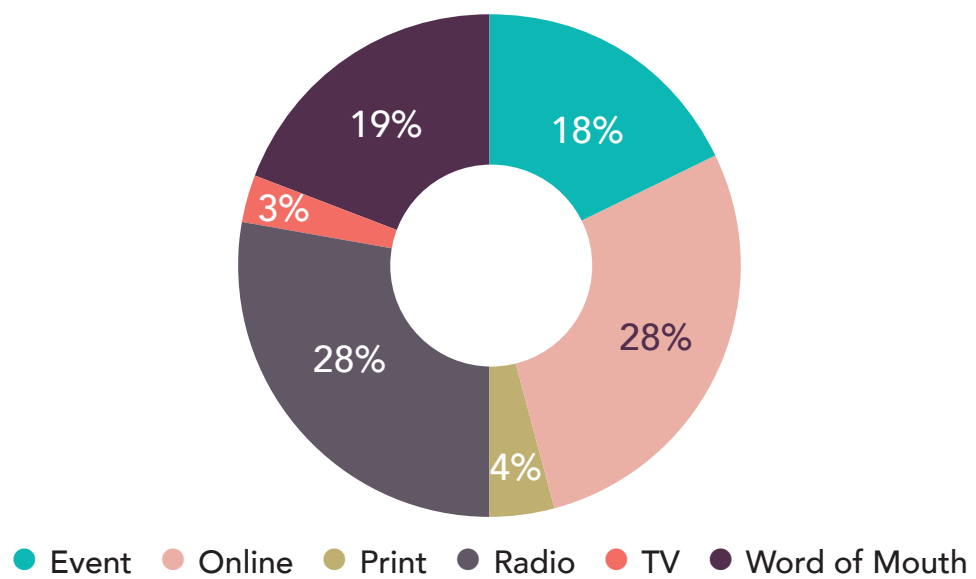
Impact of our awareness work

In 2018, NALA referred over 1,000 people to educational opportunities, including to ETB adult education centres, NALA's distance learning service and to WriteOn.ie. See next page for more information.

Referrals to ETBs



Where people heard about us?



Student work

We represented the views of adult literacy students and supported their learning.



Patrick Sutton, Martina Kiely, Lee Mitchell, Catherine Devlin, Thomas Campbell and Lisa Banks are all members of NALA's student subcommittee.

Objective 1

Action 4

Involve 'champions of learning' to encourage more people to engage with and enjoy, lifelong learning.

The views and experiences of adults with literacy and numeracy difficulties informs all of the work that we do. Through our student development work we work closely with students from around the country. We hear their views and share them with educators and policy makers.

The feedback we get from students also supports the learner voice element of the Further Education and Training Strategy.

This year our work included two student days and a student development fund which was steered by the members of our student subcommittee.

NALA student days

Over 160 adult literacy students from 35 ETB adult education centres attended our student days in Galway and Dublin this year. We had to postpone our Dublin event in March thanks to snow during Storm Emma, but thankfully it didn't prevent 65 enthusiastic students from coming along to the rescheduled day in June!

The student days provide a relaxed and fun opportunity for students from different education centres to meet each other and learn new things during workshops.

The theme for the student days was 'Literacy in the different parts of your life' and at each event there was a variety of workshops for students. These included workshops on health, technology, distance learning and career opportunities. The topics for the workshops were chosen following suggestions and feedback from students themselves. NALA was also delighted to have David Leahy, Chief Executive of Galway Roscommon ETB, as guest speaker at the student day in Galway.

The student days are also a platform where students can give feedback about their experience of adult education.

This year students gave feedback under the following themes:

- Access and participation;
- Teaching and learning; and
- Progression.

Access and participation

All of the students who gave feedback spoke very highly about tutors. Indeed, many students said that their new love of education was all down to their tutors. The students also said that fear, stigma and embarrassment are still an issue for many literacy students.

Teaching and learning

Students said that one-to-one tuition is crucial for some people. They also said that they would like more tuition hours.

Progression

Concerns were also raised about a lack of recognition of prior learning. The feedback also shows that there is a lack of awareness among students about the Adult Guidance Service while some students are unaware of grants available to them.

NALA shares this feedback with other stakeholders in adult education. Together we hope to put in place a number of actions arising from this feedback so that we improve the quality of our work and respond appropriately to the needs of learners.

In their own words

"It was a great day. I enjoyed doing the workshops and I learned a lot"

"I met loads of people from other centres. I am looking forward to attending more of these events."

"The student days are a great way to find out about what's happening in adult education."

NALA published a short report on the student days in 2018. This report is available on NALA's website.

The success of our student days is down to the people who come along and make them such enjoyable and useful occasions. We are very grateful to all learners who come along and contribute to the events. NALA also appreciates the work adult literacy organisers, resource staff and tutors do in encouraging students to attend the days. And of course a big thank you to the NALA student subcommittee for the work they do in organising and facilitating the student days.

NALA's student subcommittee

NALA's student subcommittee gather and discuss adult literacy student issues and provide feedback on those issues to NALA's Board. Students from the subcommittee contributed to both internal and external consultations and workshops during 2018.

Five new students joined NALA's student subcommittee in 2018. Five students stepped down from the committee at the end of their term and NALA would like to say a big thank you for their tireless work over the last five years.

These students are Liz Corkish, Mary Ward, Noel Phelan, Leonie Sutcliffe and Tanya Byrne.

Tanya says that taking part in NALA's subcommittee was a great experience:

"I loved being involved with the subcommittee and I will continue to encourage adults to go back to education because it changed my life."

Over 1,800 students take part in events funded by NALA

In 2018, 84 ETB centres were paid small grants from our Student Development Fund. The grants meant that 1,840 students were able to take part in new learning development activities outside the classroom. The students give suggestions as to what the money should be used for which always leads to lots of interesting trips and activities. For example, in 2018 the fund was used for everything from a trip to the Bloom gardening festival to rap music workshops!

Organisations that receive the grant have to gather student feedback on topics set by NALA. This year, students told us about how they use the library service.

Almost 46% of students said they had used the library service in the past year. As well as borrowing books, students said they went to use computers and to attend talks and exhibitions. They also went for the social space, to enjoy a quiet place, to use noticeboards and to read newspapers and magazines. The 54% who had not used the library said that they would have considered going if they were shown how to get a library card. Students also said that they would have used the library if they had known it was ok to look through the books without having to take one out.

In their own words

Here's what staff from some of the ETB centres had to say about the positive impact of the Student Development Fund:

"This fund enables us to meet and get to know each other outside of the classroom."

Roscommon adult literacy centre

"The fund allows us to think outside the box when planning events that may not be within our budget normally."

Crumlin adult literacy centre

Plain English and Literacy Advisory Service

We worked with organisations to help make their services more accessible to people with literacy needs.



Dr Inez Bailly, CEO, NALA; Declan Black, managing partner, Mason Hayes and Curran; and Conor Pope, journalist.

Objective 1

Action 5

Support organisations such as education and training services, health services, local authorities, libraries, private services, utilities, public bodies and charities to provide literacy-friendly services.

Our plain English service aims to help organisations communicate more clearly with their customers, including those who have literacy and numeracy difficulties. Plain English is a way of writing and presenting information that helps someone understand it the first time they read or hear it.

We also work closely with many organisations to remove literacy-related barriers in their organisation. Barriers might include unclear signage, unclear documents or a lack of awareness about what customers with literacy difficulties need.

Plain English editing and training

Our editing and training service was very busy this year which means more organisations are aware of the benefits of providing information in plain English.

During 2018, 120 organisations used our dedicated Plain English Editing and Training service. The organisations are from several different sectors including the financial, regulatory, health and public sector. The health sector is the biggest user of our editing and training services.

Plain English Mark

Our Plain English mark is a logo that organisations can include on their websites or printed documents to show that their information meets international plain language writing and design standards. Among the organisations who were awarded our Plain English Mark for documents during 2018 were:

- The Law Society of Ireland
- The Health and Safety Authority
- The Health Service Executive
- The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
- Tusla
- Limerick County Council
- The Environmental Protection Agency

Training

During 2018, NALA delivered plain English training to 1,400 people. This is an increase of 7% since 2017. This means that more people than ever have a basic knowledge and understanding of our plain English guidelines. Trainees evaluate the service they have received after training and consistently show high satisfaction levels.

Some examples of Government departments and other organisations who used our training services in 2018 include:

- The Department of Foreign Affairs
- The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
- The Residential Tenancy Board

- UCD (Higher Diploma in Safety and Health at Work)
- Gov.ie, a central portal for online government services
- The Department of Justice and Equality
- Irish Naturalisation Immigration Service
- The Adoption Authority of Ireland

Plain English resources

We help many organisations that communicate with the public to produce documents that can be easily understood by their target audiences. Two examples from 2018, both of which feature NALA's Plain English Mark, include:

- Carlow County Council's Right to Read Literacy Action Plan. This plan shows how Carlow's library service aims to support children and families to develop and maintain strong literacy skills for life.
- The Law Society of Ireland's series of leaflets on common legal issues. These include buying a home and starting a business. The leaflets provide information for the public and encourages readers to seek professional advice from their solicitor.

Plain English Awards

NALA once again teamed up with leading law firm Mason Hayes & Curran for the national Plain English Awards. The aims of the awards are to reward organisations that communicate clearly and to promote the use of plain English in all public information.

Building on the success of the 2017 awards, the 2018 awards had five new categories, including one for the public called 'Best letter or email rewritten in plain English'. This category was open to members of the public to rewrite in plain English a confusing letter or email they received

from an organisation. There were also four categories that organisations or businesses from any sector could enter. These were:

- Best use of plain English by an organisation
- The impact of plain English
- Champions of plain English
- Plain English in the digital world

Following the launch of the awards, NALA CEO Dr Inez Bailey was interviewed on RTÉ's Morning Ireland and on Newstalk's The Hard Shoulder. The awards were promoted with paid advertising on social media as well as with direct email advertising using Mailchimp to NALA's plain English clients and previous entrants. The advertising and promotion resulted in 77 entries from organisations which is a 48% increase in entries compared to the previous awards. The winners of the awards will be announced at a special ceremony in February 2019.

Home truths from the Attorney General

Attorney General Seamus Woulfe had some home truths to share about plain English when he spoke at our conference on International Literacy Day in September. The conference looked at how individuals and organisations can be more effective in meeting the needs of those who use their services.

Mr Woulfe highlighted the legal system as one area where the language used can be confusing for people.

"Low literacy levels are much more common than is often thought, and this should be more widely recognised in the legal system. The law and legal system can be confusing for individuals, whether due to unfamiliar phrases or unusual practices. While accuracy and precision must be achieved, wherever possible plain language should be used," he said.

Plain English in the media

- Articles about our conference on International Literacy Day were published in the Irish Examiner and The Sun.
- A letter from Dr Inez Bailey about the benefits for organisations of communicating in plain English appeared in the Irish Times in April.
- An article about health literacy and communicating clearly by Dr Inez Bailey was published in the Medical Independent and the Irish Pharmacist in September.

Sharing our expertise

During 2018, our plain English coordinator continued to work closely with the Board of the Plain Language Association International (PLAIN). There were eight meetings with PLAIN's Board and subcommittees where we were able to share our own expertise on plain language. Our involvement with PLAIN also enabled us to keep abreast of planned international plain English initiatives and projects. Our plain English co-ordinator will provide support for the next PLAIN Conference which will be held in Norway in 2019.

Our plain English coordinator also attended two international conferences in 2018. The European Conference on Information Literacy was held in Finland. This event provided us with updates on information literacy – how information is sourced and how you know how reliable it is. The other conference, Clarity, was held in Canada. It provided us with new research and insights into developments in plain legal language such as proposed new international standards. We will use these to improve and grow our plain English service.

We spoke at several national events about the importance of plain English such as those hosted by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

NALA also contributed feedback to two new draft Plain Language Bills submitted to the Bills Office in late 2018 See page 83.

Students have their say

Following recommendations from students who took part in the National Adult Learner Forum, we are working with SOLAS, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and the ETBs to improve the clarity of some of their documents. This includes the new application form that learners have to fill out when they attend classes in ETBs.

We also involve students in talks about plain English at important high-profile plain English events. For example, in 2018 Michael Power, a learner from Tipperary ETB, spoke at the launch of the HSE's new plain English guidelines for communicating clearly. Students were also involved in promoting NALA's Plain English Awards.

Plain English tenders won

This year we were successful in bidding for a plain English editing and training tender contract with the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP).

Over the next three years, this will involve NALA providing training to DEASP staff on how to write and present information in plain English. We will use DEASP materials and exercises to make our training relevant and transferable to staff's day-to-day work. We will also provide plain English writing and editing supports to ensure the DEASP produce clear communications.

Health literacy

During the year, we worked closely with healthcare professionals to improve health literacy across the sector. Health literacy is the ability to read, understand and act on health information. Effective health literacy and numeracy involves a healthcare provider communicating clearly so the person receiving the information understands it correctly.

Crystal Clear Mark

In 2018, **33** pharmacies applied for our Crystal Clear Mark. By the end of the year, **13** had achieved it and **20** were in the process of doing so.

The mark is Ireland's first health literacy quality mark and has been developed as part of our Crystal Clear Pharmacy and General Practice Programme. The mark is awarded to pharmacies and general practices that show their commitment to providing a health literacy-friendly service to patients. It was developed by NALA, MSD and the Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU) in discussion with the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP). It is supported by Healthy Ireland.

There are now **80** pharmacies and **five** general practices that have achieved the mark. A full list of the pharmacies and general practices that have received the mark is available on our website.

In 2018 we identified some areas of the Crystal Clear programme where changes can be made to improve the service. This review was based on research carried out by Doris J Ravotas, a researcher with Western Michigan University in the United States. For example, the booklets we produce for pharmacies now need to be revised and updated and more examples could be added in. These changes will be carried out in 2019 and the programme will then be relaunched.

Healthy Ireland

NALA's CEO, Dr Inez Bailey continued to attend Healthy Ireland Council meetings and contributed to the health literacy commitment in the HSE Implementation Plan for Healthy Ireland. NALA was also involved in supporting the Healthy Ireland initiative in the libraries and local community. We did this by delivering **three** health literacy talks, called 'What was it the doctor said?', in Dublin City libraries during the year.

Improving awareness of health literacy

This year NALA spoke about health literacy at several conferences and seminars including:

- 5th Health Literacy UK Conference;
- Irish Community Health Nursing Annual General Meeting;
- Department of Health research seminar series;
- The Irish Gerontological Society Interdisciplinary Symposium; and
- Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association.

We also delivered health literacy workshops and gave staff inputs to staff from:

- Tallaght Hospital;
- Irish Heart Foundation;
- National Patient Safety Conference;
- Blanchardstown Hospital; and the
- National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP).

We also provided health literacy information at our stand at the Tallaght Health Fair in September and we sit on the Irish Cancer Society's support committee.

We linked in with a number of stakeholders to progress the area of health literacy. These included:

- Department of Education and Skills;
- Department of Health;
- Department of Rural and Community Development;
- Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation;
- Local Government Management Agency (LGMA);
- South Dublin County Council;
- Community Platform and member bodies;
- University Hospital Limerick Group;
- Southside Partnership;
- Broadcasting Commission of Ireland; and
- Trinity College Dublin.

Well Now!

In partnership with SDCC and Áras Chrónáin in Clondalkin, we delivered a Well Now! course for older people. Well Now! is a 10-session 'literacy friendly' course on health and wellbeing for adults. It was developed in partnership with SDCC and An Cosán. The programme aims to facilitate adults to explore health and wellbeing topics and to increase awareness, knowledge, understanding and skills to support healthy choices.

We designed this as a follow-up course in 2018 for participants who had completed previous NALA-SDCC Well Now! courses. People who took part in the course said that they were able to take away a lot of learnings from it. The additional resources developed for the new course also complement those in the Well Now! facilitator guide.

Media coverage of health literacy

During the year, there were over 15 articles in medical magazines, local and national newspapers about health literacy.

Working with local authorities

In 2018 NALA continued to work with a number of local authorities. We worked with Carlow County Council to help develop their Right to Read Literacy Action Plan. We also worked with South Dublin County Council (SDCC) to deliver Well Now!, our literacy friendly health and wellbeing course.

Working with libraries

This year NALA was asked to sit on two library groups:

1. Right to Read Steering Group

This group is overseeing the roll out of the Right to Read Campaign in local libraries. The campaign is initially focussing on helping children become better readers and is currently promoting 'family time at your library'. We are talking to the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA), who lead out on this campaign, about supporting libraries in expanding the campaign to focus on adults.

2. Dublin City Literacy Network

This group is chaired by Dublin City Library and is made up of organisations who work on child, adolescent and adult literacy. NALA is involved with mapping all literacy services in the city and then looking at potential partnership projects.

Literacy awareness training

We delivered a literacy awareness training session to 20 staff from SDCC during Social Inclusion Week in November. We also delivered literacy awareness training in September to 200 students from the Law Society.

Family literacy

Family literacy is about the way families use and develop literacy and numeracy skills together in the home. When parents are involved in their child's learning, it positively affects the child's performance at school. It impacts on early years literacy and educational outcomes into the teenage and even adult years.

More and more parents are using the internet to find out about fun things they can do to help their child learn.

Our online activity involves delivering information through daily updates on Facebook, a monthly e-zine and regular updates on www.helpmykidlearn.ie. This website was developed as part of the Department of Education and Skills' national strategy to improve literacy and numeracy among children and young people. We worked with our stakeholders to promote the website and we also promoted it through Facebook and Google advertising. This has resulted in:

- 200,000 people using helpmykidlearn.ie which is a 12% increase on 2017;
- 1,800 people receiving our e-zine; and
- 19,000 likes and 18,800 followers for the helpmykidlearn.ie Facebook page.

Supporting primary schools

NALA was asked by Scoil Aoife in Citywest to offer Well Now! to interested parents. Scoil Aoife is a multi-denominational DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) primary school under the patronage of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB).

The school's Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) Officer was aware of our Well Now! course and thought that it would be a great opportunity for some parents.

Following consultation with DDLETB, it was agreed that NALA would deliver an adapted Well Now! course as a pilot and document the development, delivery and feedback.

The course, which was designed in collaboration with the parents, was promoted as a health and wellness club and took place in the parents' room in the school. We delivered a 90-minute session each week for five weeks, with a different theme each week. We delivered two extra sessions at the request of the participants. The themes of the sessions were:

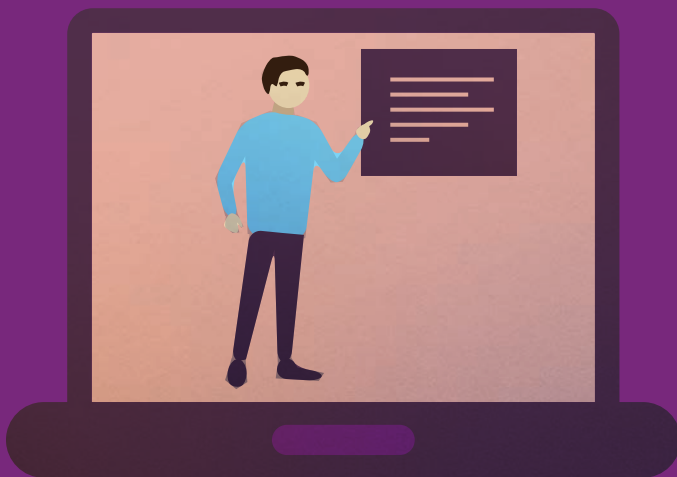
- A healthy mind
- A healthy body
- Being active
- Personal development
- Technology
- 'What the doctor said?'
- Trip to the library

In February we gave a talk to third year trainee teachers in St Patrick's teacher training college at DCU. We also gave an input at the continuous professional development event for new HSCLs in April. In June we sent helpmykidlearn information packs to 50 schools.

NALA Strategic Plan:

Objective 2

Lead innovation in the teaching and learning of adult literacy, numeracy and basic digital skills.



Why it matters

Society is changing at a rapid pace and the tools and resources available to people involved in adult literacy, both tutors and learners, needs to reflect this. Increasing our attention on innovation in practice and practice-driven research is part of our mission to be the leader in literacy and numeracy skills development across education and training.

Under Objective 2 we have five actions.

1. Work with SOLAS and the ETBs to implement the adult literacy and numeracy strategy as set out in the FET Strategy 2014-2019.
2. Support SOLAS in agreed aspects of work such as the Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy, the Learner Forum and the FET Framework for Workforce Development.
3. Create self-directed, peer, blended, distance and eLearning programmes and supports that help people with literacy and numeracy needs to use everyday technology and digital media.
4. Provide continuous professional development (CPD) for tutors and other professionals involved in literacy and lifelong learning in line with the FET Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019.
5. Provide opportunities for those interested in literacy and numeracy to gather, discuss and share best practice.

Integrating literacy

We supported students with literacy difficulties to learn.



Tipperary ETB tutors Marie Clancy, David Golden and John O'Driscoll chatting to NALA's Fergus Dolan at our Tutors Forum.

Objective 2

Action 1

Work with SOLAS and the ETBs to implement the adult literacy and numeracy strategy as set out in the FET Strategy 2014-2019.

At NALA, we believe that people who want to take up education and training programmes should not be excluded because of the literacy and numeracy demands of the course. To help us achieve this, we work with organisations to show them how to integrate literacy development into vocational courses and training.

Courses and resources

Integrating literacy workshops

In 2018, 300 FET practitioners took part in NALA workshops on integrating literacy and numeracy with vocational and other learning. These workshops were based on NALA's Guidelines on Integrating Literacy. The participants shared examples of good practice from their experience of supporting learners with the literacy and numeracy demands of vocational courses. They also identified practical ways to make their courses and centres even more literacy-friendly.

We also worked with Maynooth University (MU) to provide a workshop on integrating literacy for tutors working towards the Higher Diploma in Further Education.

Including people with intellectual disabilities

In co-operation with SOLAS and ETBI, we produced 'Guidelines on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in adult literacy services'. We launched the guidelines at the ETBI FET conference in March. We have initiated a SOLAS-funded research project linked to supporting ETBs in using the guidelines. The project will be carried out and completed in 2019. The guidelines are available on our website www.nala.ie

Training the trainers

We provided a one-day **facilitator training course** for **46** tutors from ETBs who wished to enhance their capacity to deliver literacy-friendly health and wellbeing courses for adults. The training was based on our Well Now! course.

At the training day, we shared learning from the pilot courses and familiarised tutors with the Well Now! facilitator guide and resources. When the training was complete tutors said they felt more confident to facilitate this kind of health literacy programme in their local ETBs.

Objective 2

Action 2

Support SOLAS in agreed aspects of work, such as, the Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy, the Learner Forum, and the FET Framework for Workforce Development.

Throughout 2018, NALA worked closely with SOLAS to help the organisation achieve the objectives set out in the FET Strategy 2014-2019. Part of the strategy is about SOLAS listening to and consulting with learners in FET. NALA's student day and fund (see page 40 for student work) contributes to that part of the strategy. We also contribute to National Learner Forum and the meeting of Learner Representatives on ETBs.

Advisory Group for the National Learner Forum

The third National Learner Forum, which is led by AONTAS, took place in April 2018. NALA participated on the Advisory Group for the National Learner Forum with other stakeholders. The Advisory Group met three times in 2018. At the Advisory Group, NALA shared its experience of hearing students' views and gathering student feedback. The Advisory Group helped to shape the Forum and there were extra regional meetings with FET learners in ETBs organised in 2018. AONTAS shared findings directly with ETBs and worked closely with SOLAS to write up overall findings from the National Learner Forum. NALA had a stand at the National Learner Forum in 2018.

Meeting of Learner Representatives in June 2018

NALA, together with AONTAS, brought learner representatives from the ETBs together in June 2018. At that meeting the learners discussed what they would like to have known before becoming a learner representative and they identified future supports to be put in place.

Distance learning

We helped people to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.



Students at NALA's student day in Galway.

Objective 2

Action 3

Create self-directed, peer, blended, distance and e-Learning programmes and supports that help people with literacy and numeracy needs to use everyday technology and digital media.

NALA's distance learning service (DLS) makes it easier for adults with literacy and numeracy difficulties to avail of high quality learning opportunities. It enables people to improve their basic skills by working with a tutor over the phone or online. The free service is designed to fit in with the needs of each individual learner.

In 2018 our DLS supported **250** learners to improve their basic skills through one to one tuition over the phone. This is a **16%** increase on 2017. The service also enabled **1,000** learners, an increase of **9%** on 2017, to achieve Level 2 and Level 3 QQI accreditation through WriteOn.ie. This is an interactive learning website that learners can use at home on their own, with the help of a distance learning tutor, or through blended learning in an education centre.

Learners also now have the option to gain a NALA certificate of achievement for learning at Level 1 on WriteOn.ie. Our DLS uses a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) tool that uses assessment to allow learners receive qualifications for what they have previously learnt but never received formal accreditation for. This RPL tool is available at Level 2 and Level 3.

Table 1 outlines how the DLS supported learners in 2018.

Table 1: 2018 Summary of Distance Learning Work	
Initial assessment	<p>3 Learning Support Workers involved in initial assessment.</p> <p>165 initial assessments were done with potential learners. If this assessment shows that a learner is suitable for distance learning, they are matched with a Distance Learning Tutor.</p> <p>125 learners were matched with a distance learning tutor.</p>
Distance Learning	<p>9 Distance Learning Tutors worked with learners over the phone, email or by post.</p> <p>248 learners availed of 2,271 learning sessions with a Distance Learning Tutor.</p>
Accreditation	<p>1000 learners received awards.</p> <p>There were 3,350 minor awards in total. This includes 2,800 Level 2 minor awards and 550 Level 3 minor awards.</p>
Adult Education Centres using our DLS	Learners from 101 centres received awards using writeon.ie
Writeon.ie	<p>7,650 new learning accounts set up.</p> <p>26,176 different visitors to the website.</p> <p>18 minutes and 24 seconds was the average time on the website.</p>
Training	<p>14 free training sessions provided.</p> <p>140 tutors provided with training.</p> <p>37 centres across six different counties.</p>

WriteOn.ie Upgrade

During 2018, there were many developments to support learners that participate in e-learning. These developments include the new European Union General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the increased use of SOLAS and ETBI Programme Learner Support Service (PLSS) and a new EU directive designed to make public sector websites and mobile applications more accessible.

To support these developments, NALA began the process of redeveloping WriteOn.ie to ensure the e-learning service we offer continues to meet the needs and expectations of learners. As part of this process, we held workshops with learners on our student subcommittee to gather their thoughts and feedback on WriteOn.ie and e-learning.

We also used research on e-learning that we gathered through our partnership with Trinity College's Learnovate centre, a hub of excellence for research and innovation in learning technologies.

NALA also met with 11 e-learning providers during July and August as part of a market soundings exercise to identify and understand the current trends in e-learning.

Following this research, we published a tender request for an e-learning provider to design, develop and deliver a new e-learning system in 2019

As a result, our current e-learning platform WriteOn.ie will no longer be available after 2019. Learners will have until 2019 to finish off any work on WriteOn.ie. NALA will support all learners and centres in the transition to the new e-learning platform.

Tutor training and professional development

We led innovation in the teaching and learning of adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills.



Roisin Doherty and Ivica Milicevic from the Active Inclusion unit at SOLAS; students Catherine Devlin and Eamon Delaney; and Siobhan McEntee, ETBI Further Education and Training enhancement co-ordinator.

Objective 2

Action 4

Provide continuous professional development (CPD) for tutors and other professionals involved in supporting literacy and lifelong learning in line with the FET Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019.

Action 5

Provide opportunities for those interested in literacy and numeracy to gather, discuss and share best practice.

During 2018 we continued to develop the range of specialised professional development events that we offer. All of the events provide participants with practical information on the best and most effective ways to teach. In total, **600**, an increase of **12%** on last year, tutors, resource workers, co-ordinators, managers and adult literacy organisers attended **13** different events. As well as the events, we also organised and hosted **three** webinars which **36** people participated in.

The topics and workshops covered at our events and webinars are based on feedback and suggestions from literacy, numeracy and ESOL workers. The impact of each event is measured through anonymous online surveys which are carried out afterwards.

We are delighted that almost everybody who attended said that they learned something new at the events. Participants also said that the events are very useful as a networking platform where they can meet other further education practitioners and share ideas and expertise. Almost all participants said that the event inspired them to make some changes to their work practices.

Here is a summary of each event in 2018.

National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors

Ninety-six tutors attended our National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors in January. The theme of the forum was 'Reading, writing and technology: Strategies to enhance the learners' experience'. The conference was chaired by Fiona Maloney, Director of Further Education and Training Support with ETBI.

Many important and useful topics were discussed including practical steps that can be taken to take the fear out of using technology both for tutors and students. We also examined the importance of ensuring all subjects are learner-centred. Participants were also able to take part in workshops that covered a variety of areas including digital media and dealing with sensitive topics.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) conference

In March, **72** tutors attended our ESOL conference. The title of our conference was 'Methodologies and resources for ESOL'. The conference was chaired by Eileen Condon, Director of Further Education and Training, Tipperary ETB.

There were presentations on many useful topics including how ESOL can better meet the social and economic needs of low-skilled migrants.

Numeracy conference

In May, **60** tutors attended our numeracy conference. The conference looked at the requirements needed for numeracy in the 21st century. The keynote speaker was world-renowned maths expert Professor Marilyn Goos, Professor of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education at the University of Limerick.

Merrilyn discussed how improving our numeracy skills isn't simply about numbers, it's about developing the everyday problem-solving skills we all need for life in the 21st century. She also explored how numeracy skills are more important than ever in the modern workplace.

International Literacy Day conference

In September, **170** people attended our International Literacy Day (ILD) conference. This was a **40%** increase on the number of participants for 2017. The theme of the event was 'Adult literacy in Ireland: Challenges and solutions for communicating effectively with the public'.

Conor Pope, consumer affairs correspondent with The Irish Times chaired the conference. The Attorney General Seamus Woulfe was the keynote speaker and during his talk he emphasised the importance of organisations communicating in plain English.

Eamon Delaney, a student from Tipperary ETB, was also a guest speaker and his inspirational story about returning to education received a great reception from the audience.

Other guest speakers at the event included MB Donnelly from the Data Protection Commission, Jennifer Hanrahan from the Office of the Ombudsman and Rob Waller from the Simplification Centre in the UK.

Numeracy workshops

During Maths Week in October, **84** people took part in **eight** numeracy workshops that were organised by NALA. The events, which were run in conjunction with local ETBs, took place in Nenagh, Loughlinstown, Tallaght, Carlow, Mallow, Ennis, Coolock and Tralee. The themes of the workshops included financial maths, measurement, trigonometry and using technology in the numeracy classroom. The topics of fractions, percentages, interest rates and budgeting were also covered.

Family literacy conference

In November, 115 people attended our conference on practical approaches to family learning. This was a 130% increase on the number of participants in 2017.

The event was chaired by Noel Kelly, Director of Educational Welfare Services in Tusla.

Neil Griffiths, founder and creator of Storysacks was the keynote speaker. Neil, who is passionate about stories and reading to children, gave a very inspiring talk about the many benefits of helping children develop a love of reading. Neil also gave a workshop on how tutors can use Storysacks to help children engage in reading.

Tutors were also able to take part in workshops on developing children's social and emotional language and fun ideas with maths, science and art.

What is the impact of our events?

Table 1 shows that the vast majority of the participants who attended our events in 2018 learned something new. There was also a very large number of participants who said that our events had inspired them to make changes to the way they worked. This offers good evidence that our professional development events improve the quality of teaching and learning in Ireland.

Table 1: Impact of NALA conferences in 2017

	Learned something new	Inspired changes to work
National Tutors' Forum	91%	97%
ESOL conference	92%	96%
Numeracy conference	100%	100%
ILD conference	95%	97%
Numeracy workshops	100%	96%

Our surveys were done anonymously using Survey Monkey.

In their own words

Here's what some of the tutors who attended our conferences during 2018 had to say:

"I got lots of useful teaching ideas from the event."

"It was wonderful to be in the company of so many passionate and interesting people!"

"The event gave me lots of new ideas and materials for working with learners."

"I learned lots of ways that I can incorporate technology into the classroom."

"The speakers gave lots of helpful suggestions that I will use for teaching people with dyslexia."

"I learned about what's going on in other education centres around the country and got to share teaching tips and success stories."

"I will be able to apply what I've learned to improving the quality of my work with learners."

"It gave me a new slant on how to present grammar. The event also gave me a better understanding of some of the behaviour in the classroom."

"The workshops were all very useful. I can't wait to start using Storysacks in my work with parents and children."

"I learned lots of new techniques for teaching maths."

Promotional videos

In 2018 we produced a series of promotional videos to encourage people to attend our events and to then give people a taste of what to expect. We produced videos for our Tutors Forum and our ESOL, numeracy, ILD and family learning conferences. These videos, which are all available on our YouTube channel, were watched over a **1,000** times.

NALA Strategic Plan:

Objective 3

Seek further
investment in raising
adult literacy levels
in Ireland.



Why it matters

Literacy and adult education are deeply connected with the rights of individuals and communities. Having literacy skills enables a person to have a voice in society and to access the same opportunities as everyone else. People with the lowest skill levels have low educational attainment, earn less and are more likely to be long-term unemployed.

To encourage more people to get involved in learning opportunities, we need to adopt new and creative policy measures. The EU Skills Agenda through its Upskilling Pathways agenda encourages countries to prioritise adults with the least education, offering them an assessment and a customised learning programme, as well as a chance to get recognition for their achievements.

However, Ireland is below the EU average for participation by adults in lifelong learning. Ireland needs more investment to create the structures needed to involve more people in adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills learning.

Under Objective 3 we have four actions:

1. Deepen appreciation by politicians and policy-makers of how improving literacy and numeracy skills can impact positively on Irish society.
2. Make the case, to politicians and policy-makers, for increased long-term funding for literacy, numeracy and digital skills.
3. Collaborate with organisations which can help us achieve lifelong learning policy and practice in line with the targets set out in the National Skills Strategy 2025.
4. Define and support the measurement of the positive effect of literacy strategies and initiatives.

Policy work

We made the case to policy makers and politicians to improve literacy and numeracy skills to positively impact on Irish society.



Students Michael Duffy and Liz Corkish with NALA's Helen Ryan for a presentation to TDs in Leinster House.

Objective 3

Action 1-4

Seek further investment in raising adult literacy levels in Ireland.

Through our policy work, NALA raises awareness of adult literacy issues and campaigns for increased vision and investment. In order to ensure that no adult is left behind, we believe that social policies on health, education, employment and active citizenship must be integrated and not separate. We propose that the government should develop a creative, ambitious and aligned Whole-of-Government Strategy for literacy, numeracy and digital skills over the next 10 years.

In 2018, we worked with a range of stakeholders to implement and integrate national policies that support adults improve their literacy and numeracy skills. These national policies include:

- Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2014-2019;
- National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Children and Young People 2011-2014;
- Right to Read campaign;
- Pathways to Work;
- Healthy Ireland;
- Putting People First; and
- National Skills Strategy 2025.

A new, ambitious vision for literacy

NALA is creating a vision for improving adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills over the next decade. As part of this, we have met with political representatives to advocate for increased priority and investment in literacy. During 2018, NALA contacted all TDs and Senators to discuss adult literacy, numeracy and digital skill needs. We met with 42 of them and they all agreed that it is an important issue and the State should make it a priority.

The TDs and Senators that we met are:

- Aodhán Ó Ríordán, Senator, Labour
- Jan O'Sullivan, TD, Labour
- Bríd Smith, TD, Solidarity-People Before Profit
- Charlie Flanagan, TD, Fine Gael and Minister for Justice and Equality
- Carol Nolan, TD, Sinn Féin
- Fiona O'Loughlin, TD, Fianna Fáil
- Thomas Byrne, TD, Fianna Fáil
- Lynn Ruane, Independent Senator
- Kathleen Funchion, TD, Sinn Féin
- Róisín Shorthall, TD, Social Democrats
- Tony McLoughlin, TD, Fine Gael
- Richard Bruton, TD, Fine Gael and Minister for Education and Skills (when we met)
- Ciarán Cannon, TD and Minister of State, Fine Gael
- Catherine Martin, TD, the Green Party
- Maureen O'Sullivan, Independent TD
- Eoin Ó Broin, TD, Sinn Féin

- Sean Sherlock, TD, Labour
- Kevin Humphries, TD, Labour
- Noel Rock, TD, Fine Gael
- Alan Farrell, TD, Fine Gael
- Joan Collins, Independent TD
- Paul Gavan, Senator, Sinn Féin
- John Curran, TD, Fianna Fáil
- Gino Kenny, TD, Solidarity-People Before Profit
- Jim O'Callaghan, TD, Fianna Fáil
- Eamon Ryan, TD, the Green Party
- John Paul Phelan, TD and Minister of State, Fine Gael
- Michael Collins, Independent TD
- Alice Mary Higgins, Independent Senator
- Kate O'Connell, TD, Fine Gael
- Lisa Chambers, TD, Fianna Fáil
- Seán Ó Fearghail, TD, Fine Gael and Ceann Comhairle
- James Browne, TD, Fine Gael
- John Lahart, TD, Fianna Fáil
- Thomas Pringle, TD, Fine Gael
- Finian McGrath, Independent and Minister of State
- Kevin Boxer Moran, Independent and Minister of State
- Bobby Alyward, TD, Fianna Fáil
- Tim Lombard, Senator, Fine Gael
- Tommy Broughan, Independent TD
- Gerry Horkan, Senator, Fianna Fáil
- Mary Butler, TD, Fianna Fáil

NALA submissions

NALA made eight written submissions to the Government in 2018. We made submissions to the:

- Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland
- Strategy for Public Libraries 2018-2022
- Independent Review of the National Training Fund 2018
- Consultation on the new National Action Plan and Integrated Framework for Social Inclusion
- Submission to the European Semester 2018 – National Reform Programme
- Public Consultation for the Career Guidance Review
- QQI's Green Paper on Assessment
- Consultation on national digital strategy

In our submissions we recommended:

- a whole of Government approach to addressing adult, young people and children's literacy, numeracy and digital skills. As literacy and numeracy issues contribute to poverty and social exclusion we need cross-departmental co-ordination to develop, implement and evaluate a national plan for adult, young people and children's literacy. This should include community, cultural, digital, family, financial, health, media, sport and workplace literacies.
- that the role of the public library service be developed to promote and support the many literacies in society such as digital literacy, health literacy, family literacy and libraries literacy.
- that the future direction of the National Training Fund (NTF) should prioritise adults with low basic skills and qualifications, both in employment and those who wish to acquire skills for the purposes of taking up employment.

- that the National Reform Programme (of the European Semester process) suggest that the NTF introduce a targeted paid learning leave programme for employees in work with less than a level 4 qualification to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills if they wish to do so.
- that people with the lowest levels of educational attainment be prioritised and proactively engaged by career and guidance services.
- the development of more flexible and innovative digital learning options where adults can access “just enough, just in time” learning about using technology and going online.

Cross-party support for new Plain Language Bill

In 2018 we worked hard to promote plain English with all political parties. We know that both citizens and governments benefit from clear information, written in plain language. Citizens are more likely to understand their rights and governments are more likely to make better use of their resources. In Autumn we were delighted to get cross-party support from Fine Gael TD Noel Rock and Labour Senator Aodhán Ó Ríordáin for introducing a Plain Language Bill.

We will continue to work with Fine Gael and Labour to get this Bill introduced to the Dáil and Seanad in 2019. If enacted it would mean that all information for the public from Government and State bodies is written and presented in plain language.

Other highlights from 2018

Learners in Leinster House

In September Gino Kenny TD from People Before Profit invited us to give a presentation to TDs and Senators on why literacy matters. Adult literacy students Liz Corkish and Michael Duffy shared their story and experience of literacy and returning to learning. NALA then talked about the extent of Ireland's literacy and numeracy issue, why the government needs to invest more in the area and what TDs and Senators could do to support this.

Meeting with the Minister for Education and Skills

In May we met Richard Bruton, the then Minister for Education and Skills. We had a good discussion on innovative measures to address adult literacy and numeracy that could be part of the Upskilling Pathways action plan. NALA's CEO, Dr Inez Bailey, sits on the Upskilling Pathways Steering Committee which is chaired by the Department of Education and Skills.

Budget submission

Over the summer we prepared a pre-budget submission for the Department of Finance and Education and Skills. We made the case that strong literacy skills are good for everyone – the individual, community, family and society. We asked for increased investment to improve literacy, numeracy and digital skills to achieve a better and more equal Ireland. Our budget submission is available on our website www.nala.ie

Two political parties, the Social Democrats and People Before Profit, included adult literacy in their pre-budget documents. In 2019 we will follow up with other political parties to make sure adult literacy is included in their education policies and upcoming manifestos.

Literacy and numeracy in the workplace

We attended a meeting of the Food and Drinks Skills implementation group. This came about from the report of the expert group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) in the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation. We also attended the Community and Voluntary Pillar Bi-lateral meeting with the Department of Education and Skills. At both meetings, we raised concerns about adult literacy resources, lack of intensive programmes and family literacy.

Adult Literacy in Europe

NALA works closely with stakeholders involved in literacy policy at a European level including the European Basic Skills Network (EBSN). NALA CEO, Dr Inez Bailey contributes to the Board of EBSN.

NALA also contributes to the AONTAS Project Advisory Group (PAG) for the European Agenda for Adult Learning (EAAL) project. As part of this, NALA will organise a half-day seminar in March 2019 on the role of critical literacy in teaching and learning.

Erasmus+ Programme

In January NALA applied for funding to Léargas to invest in professional development for NALA staff and student volunteers. We were allocated €19,000 to send staff to 12 literacy conferences, events or training sessions. So far we have attended eight. When staff return from the conference, the staff member gives a presentation to all NALA staff and highlights any learnings that can be applied to our work.

European collaborations

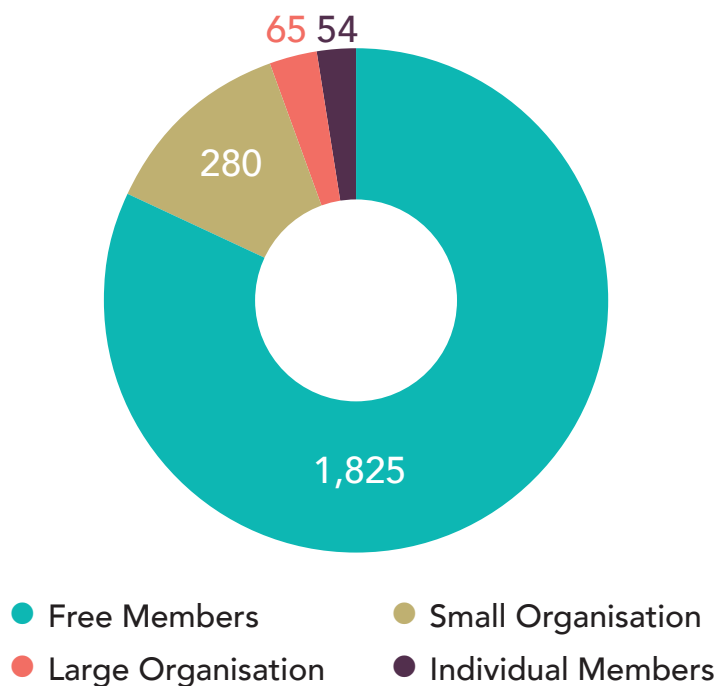
NALA applied this year to, and was successful in getting Erasmus+ funding for a project in collaboration with Malta and Norway. The project - **Check In, Take Off (CITO)** - aims to identify and test a scalable approach to providing skills assessment for adults with low skills.

Strengthening our effectiveness as an organisation

Membership

NALA had **2,000** members in 2018 and the income from membership fees was **€22,800**.

NALA membership in 2018



Our individual and free members are:

- adult literacy students;
- tutors;
- people working in education; and
- members of the public who are interested in literacy and numeracy;

Our small organisations members are:

- adult literacy centres;
- youthreach centres;
- schools and community training centres;
- prison, probation or Garda projects;
- National Learning Networks;
- disability support organisations; and
- traveller organisations

Our large organisations are:

- ETBs;
- county libraries;
- non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- education-related national organisations; and
- organisations that are engaged in work with NALA through the Plain English Service, Literacy Awareness Training and solidarity work in the community and voluntary sector.

You can see a list of our large and small organisation members on www.nala.ie

In November and December NALA carried out a survey with current and past members. The results from the survey will inform our membership strategy for 2019. NALA very much appreciates the support of all its members.

Communicating our work

Our online communications work allows us to keep our members, education partners and the general public up to date with changes in the sector and the work we do.

In 2018, we continued to provide information through our social media platforms, our website www.nala.ie, our monthly e-zine and our Literacy Matters magazine which is sent to members in Summer and Winter.

	2018	2017	% increase
www.nala.ie unique visitors	174,000	150,000	16% increase
www.nala.ie page views	570,000	568,000	0.4% increase
E-zine – sent monthly to 2,000 members	In 2018 26% of members opened the e-zine and 6.1% clicked to read articles	In 2017 27% of members opened the e-zine and 7.9% clicked to read articles	Slight decrease in open and click rate but both above industry average of 24% open rate and 2.5% click rate
Facebook followers	8,010	7,020	14% increase
Twitter followers	3,670	3,052	20% increase

Our interactions with people on Facebook and Twitter

In 2018 we continued to implement a digital marketing strategy to help us increase our engagement with our Facebook audience. As a result, our posts on Facebook were clicked on, reacted to, commented on or shared **470,000** times by our fans. The videos we posted on Facebook promoting adult literacy were shown almost **five million** times, an increase of 61% on 2017.

In 2018, NALA's tweets were shown **273,600** times and engaged with, **6,400** times by our followers – that means they were clicked on, liked, retweeted or replied to.

Impact of our media work

In 2018, NALA's public relations activity resulted in the following coverage:

- **50** times in national and regional newspapers,
- **10** times in trade media publications,
- **13** national and regional radio shows, and
- **2** TV shows.

For what it's worth

During 2018 we were able to put a monetary value on our media work. The direct advertising value of our print, radio and TV work was **€240,000**. This coverage was also worth the equivalent of **€720,000** in public relations.

Administration

- Our administration team provided event support to over 880 delegates at 20 events in 2018.
- Our information helpline staff referred 1,000 callers to educational opportunities, including to ETB adult education centres, NALA's distance learning service and to WriteOn.ie, our e-learning website. On average, each caller was given information on two routes to learning.
- The administration team provided support with event organisation, QQI awards certificates, invoicing and membership renewal. The team also maintained the membership database as well as supporting the Board and subcommittees.
- The team sent out 750 information packs to individuals looking for details of learning and tutoring opportunities. They attended awareness raising events including the Ploughing Championships where they worked alongside students providing information to the public.
- The administration team prepared nearly 1,900 packs and other materials for distribution at training and events, an increase of 19% on last year's figures.
- As part of our ongoing strategy to streamline our services and increase efficiencies, the administration team oversaw the installation of a new server and phone system. The new phone system gives us greater control over our Freephone service and will provide savings in the region of 60% annually.

Structure and funding

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is a member-based organisation. Our membership is open to all people and organisations interested in adult literacy and numeracy development.

At our annual general meeting, members elect a Board that oversees our work. The Board includes students and tutors, people involved in adult and further education and training, and the private sector. In 2018, the Board met seven times.

NALA is a registered company with limited and charitable status. We receive a grant from SOLAS that enables us to staff our office in Dublin and carry out our work. SOLAS, along with other Government departments, state bodies, the European Union and the private sector, also funds specific research and development work.

Governance and compliance

NALA has always sought to operate to the highest standards and complies with the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations. Even before the Governance Code was published in 2012, the organisation was engaged in benchmarking to best practice. NALA is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association and a Constitution which you can view at www.nala.ie

A new level of quality

In 2016, NALA was awarded the PQASSO quality mark at Level 1. This widely recognised award verifies the quality and credibility of an organisation. It enables us to improve the services we provide to adult literacy students, members, funders and staff. In 2018 we continued to work to achieve Level 2 of the PQASSO quality mark.

Our work on data protection

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was introduced in May 2018. GDPR significantly changes data protection law in Europe. It gives people greater control over how their data is used and governs the way in which every business and organisation must handle consumer and employee data. We have taken a number of steps to help us comply with the new legislation. We have updated our policies and procedures on all areas of data management including data requests, retention and destruction. NALA staff are also being provided with training to ensure they are familiar with GDPR and understand its requirements.

Audited accounts

You can view or download a copy of our full audited accounts, details of our organisation's structure and Board members, staff and all our publications from www.nala.ie

Patron: Michael D Higgins, President of Ireland

Chairperson: Nuala Glanton

CEO: Dr Inez Bailey

Registered company number: 342807

Charity number: CHY 8506

Some acronyms and terms explained

Advocacy

Actively supporting or arguing for a cause, idea or policy, which may involve raising awareness, recommending particular actions and, or, speaking up for individuals' rights.

AGM

Annual General Meeting

ALOA

Adult Literacy Organisers' Association

AONTAS

The national adult learning organisation

Blended learning

This refers to a mix of different teaching and learning techniques. For example, a blended learning approach can combine face-to-face tuition with computer based learning.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

This is the way members of professional associations maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives.

DES

Department of Education and Skills

DEASP

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

DPER

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Distance learning

Distance learning occurs when learners and tutors are separated by either space or time. For example, a student can follow an online computer programme from their home while their tutor is in another location.

EAAL

European Agenda for Adult Learning

EBSN

European Basic Skills Network

ELINET

European Literacy Policy Network

EPALE

European Platform for Adult Learning in Europe

ESOL

English for Speakers of Other Languages

ETB

Education and Training Board

ETBI

Education and Training Boards Ireland – the national representative association for Ireland's 16 Education and Training Boards.

EU

European Union

Evaluation

A process of studying something carefully and measuring its features against certain standards to see what is good or needs to be improved.

FET

Further Education and Training

HSE

Health Service Executive

ICGP

Irish College of General Practitioners

Implement

Put something into place, for example carrying out the recommendations.

Integration of literacy and numeracy

Designing and delivering education and training programmes in a way that develops the course-related language, literacy and numeracy as part of the core subject.

INOUE

Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed

Learning opportunities

The range of literacy learning options, such as individual and group tutoring, workplace literacy programmes and distance education.

Level (1 – 10) qualification

One of the 10 levels of qualifications a person can get in Ireland.

Mission

An aim of a group, an organisation or a person.

MSD

Merck Sharp & Dohme Ireland (Human Health) Ltd

NGO

Non-Governmental organisation

Numeracy

A life skill that involves the competent use of everyday mathematical skills and the confidence to manage the mathematical demands of real-life situations.

Objectives

Planned results to be achieved within a stated period.

Outcome

Outcome means what happened or the result of something.

Partnership

Two or more people or groups working together on an activity or to reach a particular goal.

Plain English

Plain English is a way of presenting information that helps someone understand it the first time they read or hear it.

Policy

A course of action adopted or proposed by an organisation or person.

PQASSO

PQASSO, or Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations, is a performance evaluation system and quality mark for charitable organisations.

Putting People First

An Irish Government plan to improve local Government.

QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

A process used to evaluate skills and knowledge acquired outside the classroom to recognise competence against a given set of standards.

SOLAS

The authority for further education and training

Stakeholder

A person or group with an interest (a stake) in the actions or policies of an organisation, which means that they may affect the actions or policies and or be affected by them.

Strategic

Something that forms part of or relates to a long-term plan to achieve an aim.

Survey Monkey

Survey Monkey is an online survey tool.

Vision

A description of what an organisation hopes to achieve in the future.

WIT

Waterford Institute of Technology

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NALA website: www.nala.ie

Literacy learning websites:

www.writeon.ie

www.helpmykidlearn.ie

Plain English website:

www.simplyput.ie

Freephone support line:

1800 20 20 65

Looking ahead to 2019

In 2019, we will work to:

- build awareness of the importance of literacy for a more inclusive society;
- lead innovation in the teaching and learning of adult literacy, numeracy and basic digital skills;
- seek further investment in raising adult literacy levels in Ireland; and
- strengthen our organisational capacity to deliver on our strategic objectives.



National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

www.nala.ie



Ireland's European Structural and
Investment Funds Programmes
2014-2020

Co-funded by the Irish Government
and the European Union



European Union
Investing in Your Future
European Social Fund

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