

Our year and our work

Annual Report

2020



NALA

National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh



Changing life stories 1980 - 2020

Our mission

Our mission is to advocate for literacy as a human 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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Literacy, numeracy and digital literacy in Ireland



415,700

(25–64 years) have less than a Leaving Certificate (Level 4) qualification. ¹



1 in **4** adults

struggle with everyday maths such as working out a 20% 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.



Ireland came

17th out of **24** countries in an adult literacy survey. ²

¹ CSO (2019). Education Attainment Thematic Report 2019

² OECD Survey of Adult Skills (2012) also known as the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies

About NALA

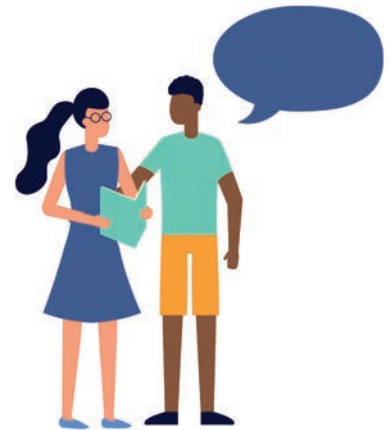
NALA stands for the National Adult Literacy Agency. We are a charity and a membership organisation. NALA membership is open to all people and organisations interested and involved in adult literacy.

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

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

- lobby for further investment to improve adult literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills;
- help people to develop the literacy, numeracy and digital skills they need to fully participate 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, numeracy and digital literacy needs;
- support organisations and services to be aware of literacy, numeracy and digital literacy and to communicate clearly; and
- conduct research into literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs and best practice teaching and learning.

Our achievements in 2020



Individuals with unmet literacy and numeracy needs

We raised awareness of Education and Training Board (ETB) adult literacy services and helped people improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

1,965



1,965 people learned online through our eLearning website Learn with NALA.

455



455 people learned over the phone with our distance learning tutors.

4,882

4,882 sessions were completed by learners with our distance learning tutors.

250



250 learners received 458 QQI awards through the Learn with NALA eLearning website.

420 Level 2 awards

38 Level 3 awards

1,700



Our Freephone staff provided 1,700 callers with information on local ETB services, NALA Distance Learning Service and the Learn with NALA eLearning website.

89%



89% of people who saw our awareness campaigns believed they were effective at encouraging people to seek help to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills.



Adult literacy tutors and centres

We led innovation in the teaching of adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills, supporting tutor training and professional development.

114



114 centres were registered and set up to use Learn with NALA as a co-branded online learning website for use in a blended learning context.



2,857

2,857 people attended our events, webinars and training for literacy practitioners.

336



336 practitioners used our Learn with NALA eLearning website in a blended learning context with their students and or for Professional Development.



Adult literacy and numeracy students

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

78



78 students and 5 adult literacy services benefited from a Student Development Fund and 5 new learning resources were developed for the Further Education and Training (FET) sector.

166



166 people attended our Student Day and Webinar series with recordings receiving 512 Youtube views.

2,700



2,700 copies of VOICES, our easy-read book of short stories, were distributed to students in 138 ETB adult literacy centres.

11



Eleven students contributed to our Student Subcommittee.



Organisations dealing with the public

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



80 healthcare professionals did health literacy training and 79 attended webinars.

16



16 Pharmacies renewed their 'Crystal Clear' quality mark.

454



454 staff were trained in plain English writing skills.

127



127 plain English editing jobs were completed for 100 organisations.

463 participants attended customised Literacy Awareness Training sessions and 327 attended open training webinars.

105 participants attended a Literacy Changes Lives webinar.



Policy makers and the general public

We raised awareness of the views of adults with literacy and numeracy needs and helped parents support their children's development.



We made **5** written submissions including our submission to SOLAS on the new 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland.

344 

344 media pieces highlighted literacy issues, services and NALA's work.

1,972 

1,972 individuals and organisations were members of NALA.

5 political parties committed to support adult literacy and plain English during the 2020 election campaign.

67 people attended our virtual launch of Literacy Now, Literacy for Life and Literacy Impact reports.



184,000 people used the nala.ie website and **28,000** people used NALA's new eLearning website Learn with NALA.



286,000

286,000 people used our helpmykidlearn.ie website.

51 packs of Help My Kid Learn material were sent to **22** schools around the country.

Our vision

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

40 years of NALA



1980s

NALA was established as a membership organisation by volunteers concerned at the lack of response to adults with literacy and numeracy needs in Ireland.

We launched a nationwide awareness raising campaign on adult literacy services.

We pioneered new teaching methods, created policy on good adult literacy work¹ and organised events for adult literacy students and volunteer tutors.

1990s

The publication of the first Irish survey of adult literacy in 1997² was met with shock as it showed that one in four adults had very low levels of literacy.

NALA's funding was increased and we intensified our efforts to get appropriate responses to adult literacy, involving providers of education and training, doing research that influenced policy decisions, and working with the unemployed.

1 NALA (1985) Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work

2 OECD (1997) International Adult Literacy Survey

3 Bailey, I (2006). Review of adult learning and literacy: Volume 6: Connecting Research, Policy, and Practice. edited by Comings, J., Garner, B., Smith, C. National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (U.S.) (NCSALL). pp.197-240



2000s

This decade was marked by our growing expertise in adult literacy, influencing adult literacy policy and our ability to lead and support good practice.

We launched our TV series about adult literacy on RTÉ One that influenced thousands of people to return to education and was followed by eight more TV series.

During this time we supported thousands of adults to learn with tutor support over the phone, and provided exciting new opportunities for people to learn online.³

2010s

We continued to develop innovative teaching and learning resources, and carried out research and campaigns to raise awareness of adult literacy issues in Ireland.

Importantly, we secured learner representatives on the newly formed Education and Training Boards and we worked with SOLAS, the Further Education and Training (FET) authority, to include an improvement in literacy and numeracy outcomes for the adult population in its first five year strategy.

In 2020, we embarked on a new strategic plan - find out more on page 20. We were also delighted to make our contribution to SOLAS on a new 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland. Find out more on page 76.

A message from our Chairperson

2020 was a very busy year. NALA launched our new Strategic Plan for 2020-2022. We lobbied Government to develop a new strategy for adult literacy, numeracy and digital literacy, and to ensure public information is written in plain English.



In September, we were delighted when the Government announced a public consultation for a new 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland, and NALA made our submission to the strategy in December 2020.

Written and digital communications have become ever more important as we all struggle in lockdown. Not only are we having to work and learn at home, but we need to learn new skills to cope with online learning, Zoom meetings, keeping in touch with friends, and being aware of fake news and scams.

NALA staff have been working from home, and have made great efforts to maintain the highest standards of governance and service delivery. The Learn with NALA eLearning website and the Distance Learning Service offered over the phone have seen a big rise in demand. The website is now used as a national resource for both independent learners and those learning through their Education and Training Board (ETB) adult literacy service.

I would like to thank all the staff in NALA for their commitment and hard work. It can be isolating working from home, and they have worked effectively together and with a wide range of stakeholders.

2020 saw the departure of our former Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Dr Inez Bailey, who left in July. We wish her well in her new job and thank her for her invaluable contribution to NALA's work over the years. We also welcomed a new CEO, Colleen Dube, who joined NALA in November, and who has settled in quickly and very ably into her new role. In the interim, NALA's needs were very ably met by its senior management team, who, between them, took on the functions of acting CEO.

We now have a board of 13 members, drawn from the world of students, literacy practitioners, policy makers, and business governance. They have been working hard to ensure that NALA is positioned to serve literacy learners well, now and into the future. I would like to thank them for all their work, and particularly thank David Heylin, Louise Canavan, Liz O'Sullivan, Mary Bambrick and Sinead Ryan who left the board in 2020.

We have four subcommittees who support the work of the board. They have all worked very actively on your behalf to ensure that NALA runs smoothly and effectively. In particular, the Student Subcommittee focused on students' experience of the lockdown, getting used to learning online with centres closed. Students also used their experience in raising awareness of literacy in the media, telling their stories and contributing to NALA's ongoing policy and development work.

The Education, Training and Assessment Subcommittee continued the development of the Learn with NALA eLearning website, adding new courses, supporting Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) assessment and quality assurance, and promoting good literacy practice through research, training and resources. The Literacy and Staff Policies and Governance Subcommittee and the Audit, Risk and Finance Subcommittee ensured we complied with best practice in managing NALA resources, meeting our strategic objectives, and complying with employment, governance and regulatory requirements.

One of the pillars of the Strategic Plan is that NALA will be a learning organisation which continues to adapt, shares best practice and promotes innovation and quality. This will position us to take full advantage of emerging developments in the 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland as it evolves, so that NALA can work with others to promote the best possible service for learners.

Margaret Kelly

Chairperson
National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)

NALA's Direction and Priorities for 2020-2022

The theme for our Strategic Plan 2020-2022 is to make Ireland more inclusive by creating opportunities and pathways for individuals to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. This theme informs the objectives and actions in this plan, and the collaborative approach that we take to our work.

We do this by working with individuals including learners, adult literacy tutors and centres, organisations, policy makers and the general public.

Our strategic plan has three objectives:

Objective 1

To work in partnership to add value to the delivery of the Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2020-2024 as it relates to adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

Objective 2

To create and share supports to improve literacy, numeracy and digital skills in healthcare and community development.

Objective 3

To increase literacy, numeracy and digital skills through research, innovation, and effective communication.

An overview from our CEO

As NALA's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), it is a privilege to provide a quick snapshot of NALA's activities and impact in 2020. Throughout the year, our pioneering tradition persisted.



2020: Challenges, change and continuity

W.B. Yeats' sentiment that "All changed, changed utterly" appropriately describes 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic challenged NALA's activities and services but we responded quickly and creatively so that services not only continued but adapted and improved.

We tailored our phone and Distance Learning Service to support individuals adversely affected by the restrictions. These included learners unable to attend classes, parents who were home-schooling, and individuals who needed help understanding public information or using technology. We not only received more enquiries but phone calls of longer length. Callers confirmed in feedback to us that they appreciated the information and compassion they received from NALA staff.

We also moved all our tutor training online and launched the **Learn with NALA** eLearning website in March 2020. This provided tutors with new Professional Development opportunities and enabled 250 learners to receive 458 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) awards.

An inspiring peer-to-peer literacy project took place with Portlaoise Prison's Education Unit, Waterford Institute of Technology (IT), Laois and Offaly Education Training Board and Dublin Adult Learning Centre. Seven students were supported to complete the NALA and Waterford IT Developing Literacies 1 Module and receive certificates.

VOICES, a highly accessible and popular collection of short stories and essays was launched to mark NALA's 40th anniversary. Edited by Patricia Scanlan and published as part of the New Island Open Door series, the stories are written in plain English to encourage adults to engage in reading.

Raising awareness and increasing access

In April 2020, NALA collaborated with SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority, and RTÉ on a series of television advertisements to reach and support those who were having difficulties understanding COVID-19 information or communicating electronically.

In October, we launched 'Take the First Step', the national public information campaign to encourage those with literacy and numeracy needs to contact NALA or their local Education and Training Board to improve their skills. This resulted in almost 1,700 people contacting our Freephone for advice and information.

Throughout 2020, our Plain English Service completed 127 editing jobs for 100 organisations and provided in person and online training to 454 staff. It also produced a plain English A-Z guide to some of the COVID-19 terms.

Building on a solid foundation

We continued to add to our impressive research and evidence base with five publications in 2020. Two of these publications explore family literacy practices and were done in partnership with the Education and Training Boards and SOLAS. The other three publications: **Literacy Now**, **Literacy for Life** and **Literacy Impact** outline the cost of unmet literacy, numeracy and digital skills in Ireland along with a Whole-of-Government framework for addressing these needs and an outcomes framework for measuring impact. We will build on these reports in our ongoing engagement in the 10-year strategy discussed below.

Throughout 2020, we also engaged in a range of European projects and other research projects. Once completed and published, these will contribute to NALA's advocacy work, policy and understanding of learner engagement, evaluation and practice methodologies.

Influencing policy and strategy

Our policy and advocacy efforts bore fruit in 2020 with five political parties committing to support adult literacy and plain English in their manifestos during the 2020 election campaign. This resulted in a commitment to adult literacy in the new Programme for Government. Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD, launched plans to develop a new 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland, on International Literacy Day in September 2020.

Since then, we have attended meetings of the Technical Advisory Committee and Inter-Departmental Stakeholder Group to inform the strategy's development. We submitted a detailed response to SOLAS by the 31 December 2020 consultation deadline for the strategy.

‘The whole is greater than the sum of its parts’

Our work is not possible without the efforts and expertise of our board, staff and stakeholders. I would like to thank David Heylin, Louise Canavan, Liz O’Sullivan, Mary Bambrick and Sinead Ryan who left NALA’s board in September 2020.

On behalf of NALA, I would also like to acknowledge the enormous legacy of my predecessor, Dr Inez Bailey. We also owe a debt of gratitude to five members of NALA staff who left during the year. These were Finance Officer, Fawzia McGlone, who retired after 30 years, Janet McDermott who contributed to the Help My Kid Learn website for many years, Communications Officer, Patrick Gleeson, along with Internal Support Co-ordinators, Miriam Johnson and Jennifer Duffy.

In closing, I would like to thank **you** for your interest in NALA and welcome you to explore the full extent of NALA’s achievements in the remainder of the 2020 Annual Report.

Colleen Dube

CEO

National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)

About this annual report

2020 marked 40 years of the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA). It was a year we will never forget as we had to adapt quickly to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This annual report tells you about the work we did during 2020. The sections are broken down into our main beneficiaries.

Who we helped:

1. Individuals with unmet literacy and numeracy needs
2. Adult literacy tutors and centres
3. Adult literacy and numeracy students
4. Organisations dealing with the public
5. Policy makers and the general public

You can read our financial statements on pages 105-144. You can read and download information about our strategic plan and all our publications and research reports on our website **www.nala.ie**

To help you, on page 145 we explain some acronyms and specialist terms.

Individuals with unmet literacy and numeracy needs

We raised awareness of Education and Training Board (ETB) adult literacy services and helped people improve their literacy and numeracy skills.



NALA Ambassadors Sinead Moriarty and Catherine Dunne joined Minister Simon Harris and advocate and former adult literacy student Olive Phelan at the launch of the Take the First Step campaign.

Freephone Service

Our information helpline staff referred 1,700 callers to educational opportunities, including to Education and Training Board (ETB) adult education centres, NALA's distance learning service and to Learn with NALA, our eLearning website. This was a 73% increase since 2019 (985 callers) and far exceeded the yearly target of 1,000.

1,700



Our Freephone staff provided 1,700 callers with information on local ETB services, NALA Distance Learning Service and Learn with NALA.

Many people felt overwhelmed by the amount of information about COVID-19, and for the one in six adults with literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs, it was an especially difficult time. The increase in calls to our Freephone was a direct result of our response to meet this need during the pandemic. Our response also included specific awareness campaigns on how to access support.

Our Freephone team adapted very quickly to provide phone support for those who needed it there and then - a quick intervention to help with specific needs, for example using WhatsApp to keep in touch with family, filling in the Pandemic Unemployment Payment Form or helping children with their learning at home. Also, calls to our Freephone service were of a longer duration during 2020 as people felt isolated. We heard from people who had just lost their jobs and were relieved to talk to someone who had the time to listen and offer advice. We referred those who wanted to attend a course to their local ETB and set up those who wanted to learn online or by phone with our Distance Learning Service.

Distance Learning Service

For some learners, it can be hard to find the time to do a course. NALA's Distance Learning Service (DLS) makes it easier to avail of learning opportunities from their own home. It enables people to improve their skills by working with a tutor over the phone or online. The free service provides learning that is designed around the learner's needs and lifestyle.

In 2020, 13 learning support workers and tutors delivered the telephone tutoring service to 455 learners, which was an increase of 107% since 2019. Three new tutors were recruited and trained in May in response to the increased numbers seeking the service.

“ It's helping me prepare to go back to work. The lack of education held me back and over the phone learning has helped. It's changing my life, I'm very happy with phone learning. The tutors are very caring and understanding, phone learning is a massive help. I am more confident now. Thumbs up NALA. ”

Male learner, 45-54 years

455



455 learners engaged with the Distance Learning Service.

95

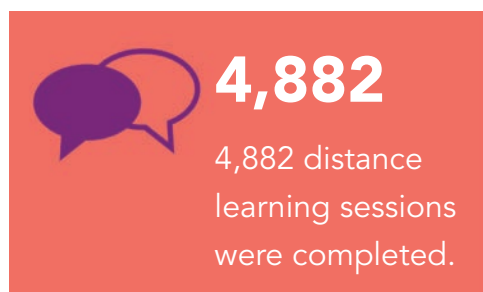
95 people worked with our learning support workers.

360

360 people went on to learn with a tutor.

New learners

The pandemic also led to a wider range of learners, some with serious unmet needs. Learners completed 4,882 learning sessions with their tutors in 2020, nearly twice as many as 2019. 81% of learners were with us for 1 to 30 sessions. Historically we have worked with a higher percentage of men than women. In 2020, 58% of people who accessed the service were women.



“ I find this (DLS) to be brilliant and a big part of this was due to my teacher. She is absolutely fantastic. She suggested a lot of free resources that really helped me out. She also created a Zoom group where we can converse about different topics which helped raise our conversation skills. It really helped my understanding. ”

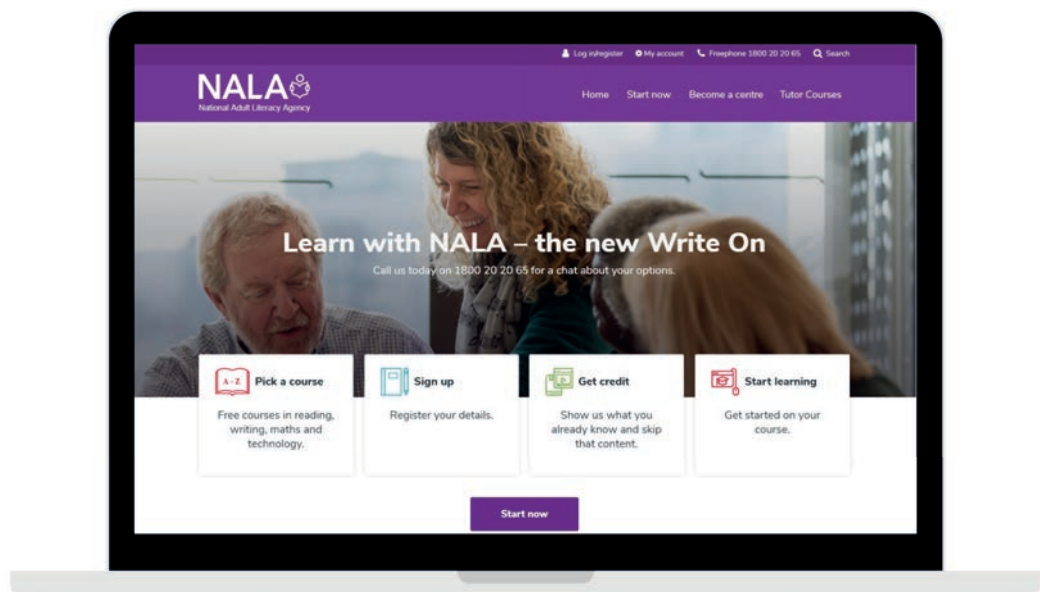
Female Learner, 45-54 years

Previously people have accessed our services when there was a critical incident in their lives such as the death of a spouse, a child starting school or an issue at work that led them to need or want to address their literacy need. The COVID-19 pandemic led to more people than ever needing the service, either for a short-term intervention such as improving digital skills to keep in touch with friends or family, or those who required longer term support.

Learn with NALA

The Learn with NALA eLearning website was launched in March 2020. To create Learn with NALA, we partnered with an eLearning company Desire2Learn (D2L). D2L is a global education company and provide online solutions for all education levels. Their Brightspace eLearning website is used in many educational settings around the world and Ireland including University College Dublin and Technological University Dublin.

At NALA, we prioritise the needs and interests of our learners. Regular and accessible support is crucial for the learners we support. With the Brightspace website, we can see where individuals are in their programmes – it allows for crucial two-way communication.



“ I would like to say the courses have been very helpful to me especially during the lockdown. I have done well with NALA so far. ”

Aisling Arthur, learner

During 2020, 1,965 people learned online through our eLearning website Learn with NALA. The website became particularly important during COVID-19 lockdown when face-to-face learning was not possible.



1,965

During 2020, 1,965 people learned online through Learn with NALA.

- 576 learners were from registered centres.
- 125 were home-school learners.
- 232 were NALA distance learners.
- 1,032 were independent learners.

We launched eight Level 2 courses, seven Level 3 courses and two Level 1 courses. The combination allowed learners to get a major award in Level 2 and Level 3 by the end of 2020.



250 learners received **458** Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) awards through the Learn with NALA eLearning website.

- 420 awards were at Level 2.
- 38 awards were at Level 3.

Check-In, Take-Off

In 2020, NALA continued to work on the development of a new online assessment tool for the ERASMUS+ Check-In, Take-Off (CITO) project. The CITO project is funded by the European Commission under ERASMUS+. It is the only ERASMUS+ funded project with a focus on adult learners. The project will create a free, accessible, motivating online tool that learners can use to self-assess their literacy, numeracy and digital skills and find out about learning opportunities that suit their needs.

Our partners in the project include Malta's Ministry of Education and Employment, Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), and Fønix AS from Norway. In 2020, the CITO project completed a mapping survey report, which surveyed and analysed opportunities and gaps on similar online assessment tools in Malta, Norway and Ireland. The findings were used to inform the design and development of the Check-In, Take-Off web application (CITO App).

Following a ten-month collaboration with Learnovate, an Irish EdTech research and innovation centre, we completed the development of the CITO App for testing in all three countries. In November and December, we tested the CITO App with over 400 learners and organisations, through user surveys and focus groups.

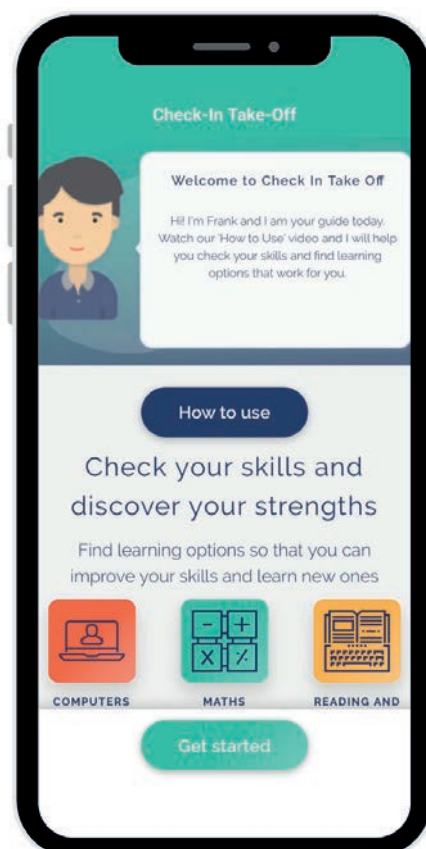


400

Over 400 users tested and trialled the CITO App across Ireland, Malta and Norway.

The aim of the research was to establish the extent to which the CITO App guides the learner towards learning opportunities and to establish the learners' views on their use of the CITO App. In Ireland, we tested the CITO App with the following organisations; Keelings, An Cosán, Louth Leadership Partnership, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) - North East Division, NALA's Distance Learning Service, Galway and Roscommon ETB, Waterford and Wexford ETB, Longford and Westmeath ETB, Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB and Donegal ETB.

The findings from this research phase will inform the final development phase for the CITO App. NALA will also lead the development of a communications outreach model and toolkit, which will be used in the final phase of the project in 2021.



Awareness campaigns

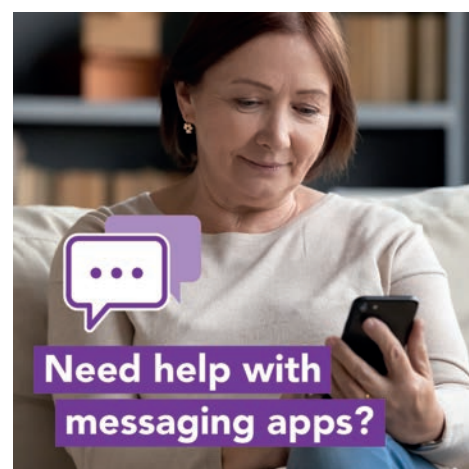
In 2020, we raised awareness of local Education and Training Board (ETB) adult literacy services and other learning opportunities.

Distance Learning campaign

In April 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, NALA worked with SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority, and RTÉ to reach and support those who may find understanding information about COVID-19 or keeping in touch electronically, the most challenging.

RTÉ developed a new television and radio campaign that promoted NALA's free help during COVID-19. The messaging was clear, focusing on helping anyone who was having difficulty understanding vital health information, filling-in important forms such as for social welfare, using technology to keep in touch with loved ones, and help for parents with easy learning activities to do with kids.

SOLAS also supported this work by allocating funding to promote NALA's Distance Learning Service and ETB services through a digital campaign we ran in April, May and June. The initial results showed that over 300 people contacted NALA as a result of these promotions. There was a significant increase in website hits with about 22,000 users and 60,000 page views, which was an 88% increase on the same period the previous year.



Take the First Step campaign

In October, we launched 'Take the First Step', our national public information campaign to encourage those who have unmet literacy and numeracy needs to contact NALA or their local Education and Training Board to get support to improve their skills.

The campaign is a joint initiative between Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), SOLAS and NALA and includes radio and digital advertising.

During this time NALA provided information to 550 individuals who wanted information about improving their literacy, numeracy and digital literacy. This is a significant increase on 2019 calls for the same period.

The campaign in numbers



550

550 people phoned the NALA Freephone and we provided information about improving their literacy, numeracy and digital literacy.

44



44 media pieces featured Take the First Step.

89%



89% of people who saw our awareness campaigns believed they were effective at encouraging people to seek help to improve their literacy, numeracy, and digital skills.



The campaign website **[takethefirststep.ie](https://www.takethefirststep.ie)** recorded **25,000** visits during the campaign.

Promoting local services

In 2020, NALA worked with eight Education and Training Boards (ETBs) to provide additional promotion opportunities including local radio, print, online and social media advertising. These were:

- Cavan and Monaghan ETB
- City of Dublin ETB
- Cork ETB
- Galway and Roscommon ETB
- Laois and Offaly ETB
- Louth and Meath ETB
- Tipperary ETB
- Waterford and Wexford ETB



// Don't be afraid. Everyone is at their own pace. The classes will make you feel so unbelievable. When you start bonding with your class and you have people there trying to help you too, it's unbelievable. It's the best thing you can ever do. **//**

Ann Cordial, Student with Dundalk Adult Learning Service, part of Louth and Meath ETB, speaking to Evoke.ie

NALA would like to thank the ETBs involved, our campaign ambassadors Sinead Moriarty and Catherine Dunne, and students Chris Carthy, Sligo ETB, Michael Duffy, Cavan and Monaghan ETB, Ann Cordial, Louth and Meath ETB and Olive Phelan, a member of NALA's Board.

A full report on the Take the First Step campaign is available on our website: nala.ie/publications

Research

NALA's research projects help us to show the positive impact of literacy and numeracy on Irish society. Our research involves adult learners and further education practitioners and can involve other areas such as workplaces.

This evidence-based approach ensures that our research can be used to help inform and shape policies and practices that will improve the lives of adults with literacy and numeracy needs.

Three new research projects were completed during 2020:

1. Lifelong learning benefits

An evaluation of the benefits of taking part in lifelong learning, in particular the benefits to the working lives of adult learners.

2. Development of an eLearning website

A review and analysis of existing national and international data to inform the development of NALA's online eLearning website.

3. Literacy, numeracy and digital skills models

A review and analysis of existing national and international data on effective literacy, numeracy and digital skills models and policies.

The research participants included all the major stakeholders in adult literacy learning, in particular, adult literacy learners themselves. The findings from the research and recommendations will be disseminated throughout 2021 in written reports, factsheets and, where appropriate, webinars.

Research aims

The views adult literacy learners hold about returning to education, their educational needs and their expectations are of keen interest to NALA and one of the primary reasons for carrying out this research. The research is also aimed at other stakeholders including practitioners, who will benefit from the data in terms of insights of the educational needs and requirements of adults. It will also support the case for sustained and extended investment in local adult literacy services.

The research presents evidence that is of particular relevance to organisations, groups and individuals working with adult literacy learners. It highlights the impact of adult learning on all areas of life including personal, social, health, wellbeing and financial. The research also illustrates the wider benefits of engagement in adult literacy to the community, employers and to other adults interested in returning to education. It is anticipated that the findings will also inform future policy developments. The research provides evidence of the impact of improved adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills on a number of policy areas - over and above education.

Quotes from research participants

// Starting off at Level 1 and then you moved onto 2 and then to 3 and on and on. And standing up in the evening and getting these awards, I was glowing like snow on a mountain. **//**

Literacy student, 2020

“ It’s very important ... not only for me. To show my kids what it’s like if you work hard and keep going with your writing and learning ... keep on learning ... because you get what you want and the goals you want to set in life. You need to have your spelling and your maths behind you ... My daughter can see the difference ... it was hard to do homework with her whereas now it’s easier because I’m doing it weekly. So this programme has helped me to help her also. ”

Literacy student, 2020

“ To be able to stand up for yourself now and to be able to say what you really think. And you’re not afraid ... you don’t think it’s stupid, it’s your opinion. And that’s the biggest part for me. ”

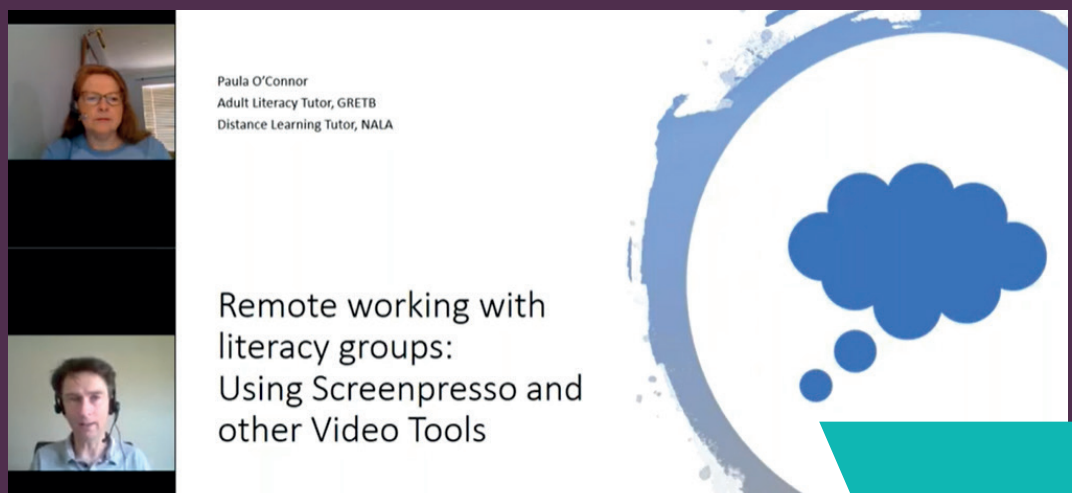
Literacy student, 2020

“ I read my first book within 12 months - that was a fantastic gift to be given. And I found out that I became part of society. I was able to talk to people. ”

Literacy student, 2020

Adult literacy tutors and centres

We led innovation in the teaching of adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills, supporting tutor training and professional development.



Paula O'Connor, Adult Literacy Tutor with Galway and Roscommon ETB and NALA Distance Learning Tutor, joins Fergus Dolan, NALA Literacies Development Officer, for a webinar on remote learning.

Events, webinars and training

There was great demand for the range of specialised professional development events and training we provided for Further Education and Training (FET) practitioners in 2020. In total, 2,857 attended our events, webinars and training.

2,857



2,857 people attended events, webinars and training for literacy practitioners.

This was a 194% increase since 2019 (971 people) and far exceeded the yearly target of 800. We also continued to build our relationships with SOLAS and Education and Training Boards Ireland to confirm priorities and actions during the year.

National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors

In January, 110 tutors attended our National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors. The event was held in Dublin City University and chaired by Michael Duffy, Adult Literacy Ambassador. The theme of the event was innovative and creative ways of tutoring in adult education. This included a morning of talks on a vision for literacy, strategies for teaching adults with dyslexia and using activities and creativity in teaching. Participants were also able to take part in workshops.

“ I attended a workshop on ways to engage literacy students that was really excellent. We were given new websites to use as resources to make literacy fun for the students and I plan to use all of them. ”

Tutors Forum attendee

Numeracy Conference

In March, prior to restrictions being introduced, 50 tutors attended our Numeracy Conference held in Trinity College Dublin. The theme of the conference was 'What really counts in numeracy practice?' and included talks and workshops. Some of the topics attendees learned about included numeracy activity in ETBs, making algebra work for you, the impact of maths anxiety and problem solving.

// I will be more aware about the language and terms I use in Maths classes. I will also be more aware about students who may have maths anxiety and I will change my approach to teaching. **//**

Numeracy Conference attendee

English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL)

In May, 644 people attended our webinar series which focused on teaching ESOL students. These covered a range of topics including seeking asylum in Ireland, learner friendly technology tools, materials and resources, challenging, motivating and using a flexible language portfolio.

// Wise suggestions to support the needs of ESOL literacy learners, such as teaching how to be a student, using help of a volunteer tutor in the small class, not writing instructions on worksheets to keep them as simple and clear as possible, and keeping focused on the students' needs. Also the recognition of small progress steps and the importance of the learning journey. **//**

ESOL webinar series attendee

Remote Learning webinar series

In May, we provided additional support for tutors during the pandemic by holding a series of webinars about how to teach remotely. Demand was high with almost 600 people attending them. Topics covered were good practice and delivery, using vocabulary.com, video tools, a guide to Zoom and using the Learn with NALA eLearning website as a blended learning tool.

“ In these challenging times all our work lives have changed and become more challenging. The webinar gave me tools that I can use to try to engage learners. ”

Remote Learning webinar series attendee

Media and digital literacy

In March and June 2020, NALA and 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World (an Irish-based registered charity that promotes education on human development and human rights) ran face-to-face and online webinars with adult literacy tutors and practitioners on digital literacy and critical thinking. These were attended by 108 people in total, with 21 people having also attended the workshop during the Tutors Forum in January.

We also facilitated a webinar for nine students on the Student Subcommittee in June, see page 54. As a result of all of these workshops NALA and 80:20 wrote Facts Matter, an introductory guide for adult literacy and adult education practitioners who wish to build their students' knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence in critical thinking, media and digital literacy. It will be published in early 2021. These webinars form part of a wider critical thinking project, find out more on page 74.

Reading webinar series

To celebrate International Literacy Day, on 8 September we held a week long webinar series for literacy tutors on reading. These webinars were attended by 250 people and looked at areas such as building reading relationships, family reading and strategies for teaching reading.

Maths Week webinar series

In October, 130 people attended our webinar series on numeracy, held as part of Maths Week 2020. Each day a different theme was covered by presenters. These included financial maths, algebra, strategies for teaching fractions, real life contexts for numeracy and area and perimeter.



Family Learning webinar series

In November, 315 people attended the Family Learning webinar series. These covered topics such as creating a mindful classroom, fairytales and folklore, reading and using the library, telling stories via Zoom and building resilience for you and your child.

Building Literacy Equality

In 2020, we commenced an innovative and thought provoking webinar series, Building Literacy Equality. The idea for the webinar series was prompted by discussions with literacy practitioners around the country who had identified a need for spaces for critical reflection on practice.

The webinars also aimed to raise awareness of literacy as an equality and human rights issue. They garnered a lot of support and attention on social media and raised the profile of the work of NALA.

// I think these seminars have been a great development. So many tutors are looking to explore deeper elements in their practice. //

Building Literacy Equality series participant

To date three webinars have focused on the theory of learning care, the practice of learning care during the time of COVID-19 and the importance of building collaborative care practice to sustain tutors in their work. The webinars were attended by 105 people and NALA plans to continue to develop them in 2021.

// I am very impressed at the thinking and practice shared by the Adult Literacy Organisers. Really useful and encouraging conversation. //

Building Literacy Equality series participant

Peer-to-Peer Literacy Tutor Training

This unique project with Portlaoise Prison began in 2019, following discussions between Laois and Offaly ETB, NALA and teachers from the Prison's Education Unit. NALA provided training sessions to support the development of a peer-to-peer literacy ambassador programme. The project involved the students raising awareness of literacy and its benefits among their peers and promoting the Prison's Education Unit.

// Because of the publicity we did around the prison (the posters and leaflets we designed and distributed) we now have a significant increase in prisoners coming to the Education Unit. The fact that we went out and explained what we were doing helped to remove the stigma so that the lads on the landings felt more comfortable asking for help. //

Peer-to-Peer Literacy Tutor

Following this, teachers in the Education Unit encouraged the students to consider training as peer-to-peer literacy tutors. In 2020, seven incarcerated men were supported to further develop their skills as literacy tutors and to submit their portfolios to complete the NALA and Waterford Institute of Technology (IT) Developing Literacies 1 Module.

Despite the "COVID-19 lockdown" and the closure of the Prison's Education Unit, six of the seven students fully completed their assignments and were awarded their certificates. The seventh student was awarded his certificate in January 2021.

Studying in an unprecedented context, where students worked alone in their cells, they produced a body of work that demonstrates their commitment to widening access to their peers through thoughtful and learner centred practice which is informed by adult learning theory.

// It has shown me I can do anything and I have the courage to be a great teacher! //

Peer-to-Peer Literacy Tutor

The Peer's assignments provide clear evidence of the transformative nature of the learning they have been involved in. Besides the skills and knowledge they have acquired as fledgling literacy tutors, many described a shift in their perspective of themselves, one which has moved them towards a more positive and hopeful concept of themselves as able lifelong learners. These literacy ambassadors are currently working with literacy learners in the prison system.

// I never thought during the course that I would look back with so much appreciation, fondness and pride when I finished it. I would do the course again in a heartbeat. //

Peer-to-Peer Literacy Tutor

NALA and Waterford IT certificates were awarded to the students and these official markers of their achievements are highly valued by the men and their families.

As a result of cross team collaboration within NALA the pilot gained recognition on social media including from Minister for Further and Higher Education, Simon Harris TD, who congratulated the graduates and spoke about the project in an Oireachtas debate. Recognition of their success at this level has meant a lot to the recently qualified tutors, bolstering their identities in the eyes of their families and in the wider prison community.

// My friends and family have both said that I seem more confident and my brothers and sisters said I can help my nephews and nieces with their homework when I get home. //

Peer-to-Peer Literacy Tutor

NALA has recently facilitated further collaboration between the Dublin Adult Learning Centre and the Prison's Education Unit where resources are shared and distributed to incarcerated people who are not currently engaging in learning in the Education Unit. It is hoped that through this work and the work of the literacy ambassadors that more people will begin to engage with the Prison's Education Unit.

Learn with NALA for Tutors and Centres

We launched our new and improved eLearning website in March called Learn with NALA. It has unique features for education centres and tutors to support their students through blended learning, inside and outside of the classroom. We were delighted that 114 centres registered in 2020.

114 

114 centres were set up on the Learn with NALA eLearning website by the end of 2020 to use as a blended learning tool.

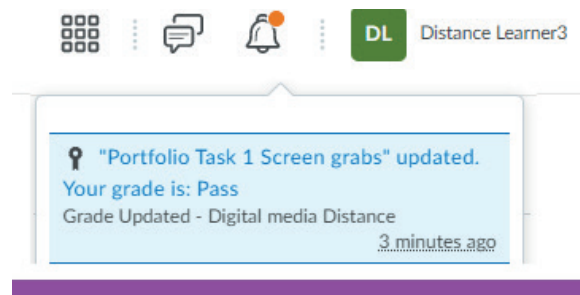
When a centre is registered on Learn with NALA we create a dedicated area for them and their tutors to view their learners' progress and grades. This area is branded with the centre's logo and learners can dip in and out of course work on a range of subjects and levels. Importantly, there is more video instruction, portfolio feedback directly to the learners and all activities have text to speech functionality.

In 2020, 250 learners received 460 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) awards using Learn with NALA. We also held seven webinars during the year to support centres on using the website. These were attended by 295 tutors.

Branded centre banner



Portfolio feedback goes directly to the learner



“ I know that extensive work has been ongoing in developing the new Learn with NALA resource. We look forward with anticipation to the new levels and functionalities that are being developed. It looks like an easy to navigate Virtual Learning Environment and the personalisation is especially relevant to help give it a ‘local’ feel. ”

Ester Mackey, Tipperary North Adult Literacy and Numeracy Service, part of Tipperary ETB

“ I do have to say that the platform is fantastic. With regards to our participants, the platform is engaging, simple language, audio option and is very visual. It has increased individuals confidence too as for many, it is their first QQI course and therefore their first QQI Qualification that they can add onto their CV which is amazing. So thank you to all the team who continue to put the work into the platform, choice of courses and the accreditation process. ”

Donna Brannigan, WALK

Online Professional Development

NALA's range of training programmes include workshops that are offered at a local level in the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in various relevant areas such as integrating literacy, numeracy, blended learning certification and family learning. These targeted inputs on specific topics, are designed to help practitioners to enhance their practice.

The new Learn with NALA eLearning website also supports Professional Development (PD) for tutors and learning professionals. In 2020, NALA expanded our range of training programmes and started the development of these courses for tutors.

As highlighted in the **Further Education and Training (FET) Professional Development (PD) Strategy** the flexibility of online and blended delivery can potentially overcome some of the barriers to accessing professional development that have been described by FET staff.

The first courses developed in 2020 focused on Integrating Literacy. Addressing literacy and numeracy issues has been highlighted in the FET PD Strategy as an area for development. We created four online courses during the year:

- Introduction to Integrating Literacy
- A practical guide to Integrating Literacy
- Integrated literacy lesson planning workshop
- Preparing Learning Materials

Integrating Literacy

The **Introduction to Integrating Literacy** course was launched in September 2020. The **Practical Guide to Integrating Literacy** course was launched in December 2020 and will be followed by a live workshop in February 2021 to create an integrated literacy lesson plan.

88



88 participants in our Professional Development courses on Integrating Literacy.

The first two courses are fully online and can be accessed at any time by practitioners. They take, on average, one hour to complete.

“ This was an insightful and practical course with lots of practical templates that can be used. ”

Course participant

“ I learned how integrating literacy is part of our care of learners. ”

Course participant

Additional Professional Development courses

NALA also developed an online course in 2020 on Preparing Learning Materials. This is based on the Preparing Learning Materials book which has been updated alongside the online course. Both of these will be available in 2021. We plan to continue adding to the range of Professional Development courses on Learn with NALA. Topics of courses will include Literacy Awareness, Numeracy, Family literacy, Health literacy, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Plain English.

Briefing Papers and Marking Progress Projects

Briefing Papers

The goal of this project is to develop a series of supportive Briefing Papers to inform decision making and leadership on literacy and numeracy in the Further Education and Training (FET) sector over the coming years. During 2020, NALA contracted researchers from the Centre for Research into Adult Learning and Education, Maynooth University, to develop the briefing papers in close collaboration with Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), SOLAS and the National Advisory Committee on Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Skills. To date, the themes of six briefing papers have been agreed as has a consultative process to extend the reach of the work. Drafts of the first two briefing papers will be finalised in early 2021.

Marking Progress

The Marking Progress project focuses on supporting each ETB to maximise inclusion, access, participation and outcomes for adult literacy learners in their locality through the development of a Marking Progress tool. This is being developed in collaboration with ETBI and SOLAS partners and will be a 'go to' supportive guide and checking device to scaffold all aspects of adult literacy learning from planning and delivery to evaluation and further planning. During 2020, we employed three subject experts who developed an implementation plan for the project which will be rolled out over 2021. The plan includes the creation of a shared space where relevant resources, success stories and voices from FET can be stored and accessed by practitioners. A series of engagement webinars will be designed to inform the development of the tool.

Adult literacy and numeracy students

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



Members of the NALA Student Subcommittee take part in the 2020 General Election campaign.

Student subcommittee

The NALA Student Subcommittee gather and discuss adult literacy student issues and provide feedback on those issues to NALA's Board through the Subcommittee Chairperson, Michael Duffy who is also a NALA Board member. The Student Subcommittee held six meetings in 2020. The first was held in person in January and from May onwards meetings were held online.

NALA Student Subcommittee members in 2020 were:

1. Catherine Devlin
2. Chris Carthy
3. Chris King
4. Lisa Banks
5. Mark Daly
6. Martina Kiely
7. Maurice Sammon
8. Michael Duffy
9. Michelle Johnston
10. Patrick Sutton
11. Thomas Campbell

// It's lovely to give something back and NALA's Student Subcommittee helps me achieve that. //

Catherine Devlin, Student Subcommittee member

2020 was dominated by students' experience of the lockdown, getting used to learning online with centres closed. Students also used their voices in other NALA work, raising awareness in the media and contributing to NALA's policies and project developments.

Student experiences also informed the content of the student webinars and the Subcommittee were involved in at least twelve other activities as outlined below.

Student Subcommittee representing NALA

Patrick Sutton took part in the launch of the VOICES anthology which was featured in The Irish Times. He also contributed to the consultation to improve the use of Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work.

Mark Daly spoke to candidates during the 2020 General Election campaign and took part in the launch of the VOICES anthology. He wrote a piece on living with dyscalculia for NALA's website and also contributed to the consultation to improve the use of Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work and the consultation on the Check-In, Take-Off (CITO) project.



Student Subcommittee members Mark Daly and Patrick Sutton launch VOICES.

Michael Duffy spoke at the Tutors Forum, to election candidates and at webinars on Fake News and Literacy Awareness Training. He did media interviews including Morning Ireland on RTÉ Radio One and FM104. He also took part in the consultation to improve use of Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work

Chris Carthy spoke to election candidates during the 2020 election campaign. She was interviewed on The Last Word with Matt Cooper on Today FM and Today with Claire Byrne on RTÉ Radio One with author Sinead Moriarty as part of the Take the First Step campaign. She took part in the consultation to improve use of Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work and the consultation on the development of the Learn with NALA eLearning website.

Chris King and **Michelle Johnston** took part in a webinar on Fake News.

Catherine Devlin took part in the webinar on Fake News and spoke at Literacy Awareness Training. She took part in the consultation to improve the use of Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work and the consultation on the CITO project.

Lisa Banks took part in the Fake News webinar and was interviewed alongside NALA Board member **Lee Mitchell** by the Irish Independent for International Literacy Day.

Maurice Sammon took part in the Fake News webinar and the consultation to improve the use of Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work.

Thomas Campbell took part in the consultation to improve the use of Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work and the consultation on the CITO project.

Student days

Our annual student days are a relaxed and fun opportunity for students from different education centres to meet each other and learn new things. Our student day in Cork was attended by 125 adult literacy students.

125 

125 people attended our Student Day in Cork.

These included 84 from Cork city and county, 9 from Kerry, 9 from Tipperary and 5 from Waterford. Just over half the students attending were English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) students.

Two students gave talks and the Chief Executive of Cork Education and Training Board, Denis Leamy, attended and gave a talk. Students attended one workshop in the morning and one in the afternoon. The workshops were on shopping and everyday maths, building confidence and self-esteem, climate change in plain English and tips about other learning opportunities.



Students at the NALA Student Day in Cork in February 2020.

Feedback from students

Students really appreciated that the services are adult-orientated. For many, the respect shown to them was different from their experience of school. Students at the plain English workshops said they found social welfare forms, census forms, pension documents and ETB forms hard to read.

Many students were not aware of the NALA Distance Learning Service. Similarly many students were not aware they could use the Adult Guidance Service so the student day provided an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of these services.

// Excellent student speakers and people in NALA.
Hope you have more days and updates for more learning and to teach us more each month and year to year. **//**

Student Day attendee



Catherine Devlin from NALA's Student Subcommittee, Denis Leamy, Chief Executive of Cork Education and Training Board, Tony Moloney, Student and Learner Ambassador from Youghal and Margaret Murray, NALA's Student and Membership Officer at the Cork Student Day.

Student webinars

Due to COVID-19 restrictions we could not hold our second student day in 2020. Instead we organised five student webinars in October. The webinars were on:

- Using Zoom and WhatsApp;
- Building critical thinking skills;
- Climate change in plain English;
- Visiting the doctors; and
- Shopping and everyday maths.

512



The Student Webinar series was viewed 512 times on Youtube during 2020.

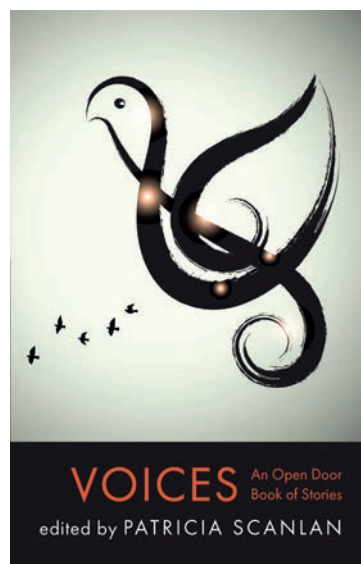
These webinars were attended by 41 people. We knew from feedback from the Student Subcommittee that many students would struggle to attend a webinar so we made the recordings available on YouTube so that students could view them. By the end of the year the student webinars were viewed 512 times on the NALA YouTube channel, the most popular being being the webinar on Zoom and WhatsApp.

You can view a full report about NALA's student days and webinars at nala.ie/publications

Opening a door to reading: Launch of VOICES

In October, to mark the 40th anniversary of NALA, we launched VOICES, a wonderful new collection of short stories by 27 of Ireland's finest authors.

VOICES was edited by Patricia Scanlan and published as part of the New Island Open Door series. The stories are written in plain English and are designed to encourage adults who do not read often, or find reading difficult, to discover the joy of books.



“ I’d like to pay tribute to all at NALA for their invaluable, ongoing support, and in particular a huge thanks to Helen Ryan, whose commitment and enthusiasm for this project, played a huge part in its success. I look forward to commissioning VOICES 2. ”

Patricia Scanlan, Series Editor

The Department of Further and Higher Education and SOLAS funded copies of books for adult literacy students in 120 ETB adult literacy centres around the country.

- “ VOICES was the chosen book for our book club. It captured the students interest right from the start. We could relate to the stories, as one student said, ‘they are talking about us, it is real life’. The language is manageable, and the adult nature of the content really engaged the students.
- “ After we read a story students would share their opinion of it and this sharing was eye opening as they each took something different. Everyone loved to express an opinion which hasn’t really happened with other books before. There is a wonderful mix of short stories covering different genres, some had us laughing, others crying and some head scratching - which meant there was never a dull moment!
- “ The stories are so well written and engaging – I have started to make plans to use it in other classes not just our book club. The group got so into VOICES that we had to set up a marking system and even had an awards night at the end of term. “

Sharon Brabazon, Adult Literacy Tutor, Coolock Darndale Adult Literacy Service, part of City of Dublin Education and Training Board (ETB)



Students in Dundalk Adult Learning Service, part of Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, with their copies of VOICES.

The Department of Rural and Community Development funded copies of books so they are available to borrow in every library in Ireland. An Post, a long-time supporter of NALA and adult literacy initiatives, broadcast virtual readings by some of the authors of VOICES that were viewed on An Post Social Media Channels throughout October.



An Post broadcast virtual readings of authors Emily Hourican, Patrick Freyne, Christine Dwyer Hickey and Dermot Bolger at Coolock Library.

Student Development Fund

Each year NALA uses a Student Development Fund to support extra-curricular activity that encourages student empowerment and enjoyment of learning in the community. We also use the Fund to gather and share students' views.

In 2020, due to COVID-19 restrictions, just five centres made use of the fund, with 78 students taking part in activities. We received feedback from the five centres and they provided NALA with information about students' experiences of COVID-19.



Youthreach Mahon used the Student Development Fund for a climbing wall to build trust and highlight the importance of working together in teams.

// Our Living with History project capturing learners' experiences of COVID-19 pandemic gave us an insight into the social, mental and physical experiences of our learners and by default their families. This enabled us to focus on the feedback and structure the programme for each of our learners. This had a huge impact on all our "Nenagh CTC Family" and the wider community, the funding enabled us to have a practical element by creating and designing the time capsule box. **//**

Nenagh Community Training Centre (CTC)

// First term back is always tough on students both old and new. By providing a fun way for students to interact and finish off the term (online quiz) was very beneficial. They were able to showcase their new IT skills through the use of Teams and Office 365, whilst having fun with their fellow classmates and staff. **//**

Youthreach Balbriggan

// The fund allowed us to hold a series of socially distanced events (movie days and coffee mornings) which gave the students an opportunity to bond and regroup after the events of the year and to discuss what they saw as challenges and hopes for their learning in the coming year. **//**

Youthreach Blanchardstown

// The impact on our centre was very positive. The fund gave our students the opportunity to come together and participate in a very well-run Creative Writing course with the content adapted to the individual needs of the participants. It came at a very good time as students were just returning to the centre after lockdown. **//**

National Learning Network, Wexford

A report on the Student Development Fund is available on NALA's website nala.ie/publications

A different use for the fund

The pandemic restrictions meant that fewer education centres used the Student Development Fund compared to previous years so we reallocated some of the funding to produce new workbooks for students. These include:

Digital Matters: A workbook on being wise online, how to search online, getting the most from your phone, apps, social media and podcasts.

"That's Interesting!": A compilation of some of The Distance Learner worksheets NALA produced from 2016-2020.

Voices Matter: A workbook to accompany the VOICES book of short stories.

Family learning: At Home with Family Learning and Help My Kid Learn booklets and leaflets to help parents to support their children's learning at home.

Organisations dealing with the public

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



Plain English and Literacy Advisory Service

Plain English is a way of writing and presenting information that helps someone understand it the first time they read or hear it. It involves short clear sentences and using everyday words.

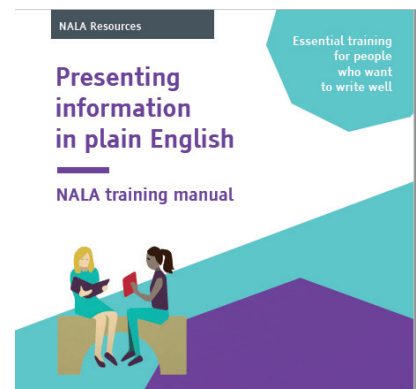
Our Plain English Service aims to help organisations communicate more clearly with their customers or people accessing their services, including those who have literacy and numeracy needs.

Plain English Resources

In 2020, to provide additional support to people with literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs, during the height of the pandemic we produced a plain English A-Z guide to some of the terms relating to COVID-19 (coronavirus).

This was available on our website and was very well received by the public, health and support services sectors, as well as by the media where it received extensive coverage.

We also worked to develop a new version of our training manual for our training services.



Plain English training

During 2020, we delivered plain English training to 454 people. We moved our plain English training online quickly during the pandemic lockdown so as not to disappoint clients who had booked our service.



454

454 staff were trained in plain English writing skills.

Since then our online training has been in high demand and has grown from strength to strength in 2020. We now regularly give online training to people working in the public sector which we have no doubt will benefit the one in six people who have literacy needs in Ireland.

Some examples of organisations who attended our tailored training include:

- An Garda Síochána
- The Commission for Regulation of Utilities
- Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
- Dublin Bus
- The European Anti-Poverty Network
- Gov.ie content writers
- The Health Service Executive (HSE)
- The Law Reform Commission
- Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board (ETB)

“ The training was excellent and the feedback from colleagues was outstanding. The researchers in particular gained a lot from it. We are very grateful and the training will stand to them as they progress in their legal careers. ”

Rebecca Coen, Law Reform Commission

Some examples of organisations who attended our open training include:

- An Bord Pleanála
- The Disability Federation
- The Housing Agency
- The Irish Hospice Foundation
- Maynooth University
- The National Learning Network
- See Change

“ The trainer made it easy to participate. He welcomed contributions and engaged with everyone. You could see that he was reading the comments. There was a good atmosphere, despite the fact that it was an online course. It was also nice to be able to discuss material we had contributed prior to the workshop. ”

Angela D’Arcy, National Learning Network, Sligo

Plain English Editing Service

We had 127 editing jobs from over one hundred clients. Some important national editing jobs included our work with the Houses of the Oireachtas on a glossary of climate terms, our work on COVID-19 information, including vaccine information, and work on specific sectoral documents for clients in the financial, legal, insurance, health, housing and planning, and other sectors.

“ NALA helped me to develop a patient booklet. My knowledge in the use of plain English, and how to present medical information to inform and educate the patients I am caring for has significantly improved with his expert guidance.

“ The team’s eye for detail, patience and affable natures added to the positive experience of what had seemed like such a daunting task at the beginning of this project. I would highly recommend the services of NALA and look forward to working with them again in the future. “

Kim Hayden, Clinical Nurse Specialist

We worked with Kim to develop a plain English guide to Palliative Radiotherapy for St Vincent’s Hospital.

// I would like to thank you on a personal level for taking so much time and care to not only make the document more accessible to the people who need it, but also improving it in areas I never would have been able to. You have given it incredible attention to detail and it's a much better piece of work because of it.

// There were times when I was putting it together where I felt it would never get into the hands of our learners and seeing it as it is now, I couldn't be more excited to get it into circulation. Your support and contribution has been invaluable and I am beyond grateful for how much effort you have put into making it as close to perfect as is possible. //

Laura Gannon, Cork Simon Community

We worked with Laura to develop a guide for people returning to work.

European plain legal language course

Alongside 14 other countries, we took part in a European Commission-funded plain legal language project called “Demystifying Justice: Training for justice actors on the use of plain language and developing clear and accessible Letters of Rights”.

In Ireland, when a person is arrested and taken into custody, they are informed of their rights by a member of An Garda Síochána and given a c72 form that explains their rights. Unfortunately the document was not written in plain language and overlooks fundamental human rights such as the right to silence.

In this project, we:

- helped to design an eLearning training module that was customised for the Irish criminal justice system;
- organised online training to improve participants plain English editing skills; and
- wrote a Letter of Rights in plain English.

The eLearning resource is freely available to those in the legal profession and others. Why not try it yourself? Go to <https://elearning.helsinki.hu/> and choose ‘Plain Language in Criminal Procedure’.



Plain language advocacy and development

We successfully advocated for the inclusion of a plain English commitment in the Programme for Government in 2020.

We kept up to date on plain language developments internationally including attending a virtual international conference on plain legal language. Here we learned about exciting new developments in plain legal language and work on existing projects such as the International Standards Organisation's (ISO) work on developing plain language standards (due to be published in 2021).

We assisted and contributed to consultations and forums by the Road Safety Authority, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities and the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

In addition, we were pleased to provide pro-bono support to worthwhile projects such as work on Age Action leaflets for older people to help them use technology like iPhones and WhatsApp during the national lockdown earlier in 2020.


We also participated in an expert consensus group meeting on the preparation of clinical research patient information leaflets and informed consent forms. This involved NALA providing expert guidance to researchers in University College Dublin (UCD) who were working on guidelines to help healthcare professionals when creating patient information leaflets and consent forms. The research will be published in the academic journal, Research Involvement and Engagement.

Literacy Awareness

During the year, we worked closely with healthcare professionals to improve health literacy across the sector. We also provided Literacy Awareness Training to public facing organisations.

Crystal Clear mark for pharmacies

In 2020 we renewed 16 pharmacies with the Crystal Clear mark. This is Ireland's first health literacy quality mark for pharmacies. It is free to apply and get the quality mark and it is given for three years.

16 
16 Pharmacies renewed their 'Crystal Clear' quality mark.

The Crystal Clear Mark is awarded to pharmacies that show their commitment to providing a health literacy friendly service to patients. This means they take account of the literacy and numeracy needs of their patients. We now have 103 pharmacies who have received the Mark. In 2021, we will offer 20 new awards to pharmacies.

Health Literacy Training

Three organisations and 80 healthcare professionals completed health literacy training with us. We were also able to bring this training online resulting in 79 healthcare practitioners attending health literacy webinars.



80 healthcare professionals did health literacy training and 79 attended webinars.

Working with the Irish Cancer Society and MSD

In 2019, NALA, the Irish Cancer Society and Merck Sharp and Dohme (MSD) Ireland did a survey on the health literacy needs of patients with cancer and nurses working with cancer patients. In 2020, based on the survey results, we identified the need for patient information videos to raise awareness of key health literacy issues for people affected by cancer. Work has begun on developing these and will continue in 2021.

Improving Patient Engagement

NALA sits on the Behavioural Advisory Group to the Department of Health on Improving Patient Engagement through Correspondence. In 2020, work continued to research better ways to communicate with patients for hospitals. Research papers from this group are available here: <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/3c5bc8-health-research-and-statistics/#behavioural-insights-and-patient-public-engagement>

We are part of the Chameleons project with University College Dublin (UCD) where we will deliver health literacy and plain English training to PhD students working in Connected Health. Find out more at <https://www.chameleonsproject.eu/>

Literacy Awareness Training

We facilitated Literacy Awareness Training in the Law Society of Ireland, in the University of Limerick and across the public, private and community sector through online webinars during 2020.



463 participants attended customised Literacy Awareness Training sessions and 327 attended open training webinars.

Literacy advocacy

Working with libraries

NALA sits on the Right to Read Steering Group – this group oversees the roll out of the Right to Read Campaign in local libraries. The campaign initially focused on helping children become better readers and is now expanding the campaign to focus on young people and adults. In 2020, the Department of Rural and Community Development gave funding to purchase more easy readers for emerging adult readers.

In 2020, we began working on a media literacy project with the Libraries Unit in the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) and Facebook. This project aims to improve media literacy skills for adults through the public libraries during 2021.

NALA also worked with Carlow Library to support their project to develop a Literacy Friendly County. The project aims to identify the key literacy issues and supports in the area and develop a media campaign to raise literacy awareness. This will continue into 2021.

Media and digital literacy

80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World (an Irish-based registered charity that promotes education on human development and human rights) and NALA continued working together in 2020 on a project to develop greater critical thinking and media and digital citizenship skills. It is funded by Irish Aid. NALA also participates in the Media Literacy Network, which is facilitated by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI).

External links

Community links

NALA is a member of a number of groups and attends meetings and webinars to highlight and progress the issue of adult literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs. These are:

- Better Europe Alliance (12 Irish civil society organisations working for a social and sustainable Europe);
- Coalition 2030 (an alliance of civil society organisations working together to ensure Ireland keeps its promise to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals);
- Community Platform; and
- European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN) Ireland Policy Group.

European links

NALA continues to work with our European colleagues in:

- European Basic Skills Network (EBSN): supporting EBSN colleagues in their work with Spanish Government Ministry; and
- Malta: currently working with the Maltese Ministry for Education and Employment to help develop a Framework for Basic Skills.

Policy makers and the general public

We raised awareness of the views of adults with literacy and numeracy needs and helped parents support their children's development.



Clare McNally (NALA), Andrew Brownlee (SOLAS) and Paddy Lavelle (ETBI) join Minister Harris at the launch of plans to develop a new 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy. Photo courtesy of the Department of Further and Higher Education.

Policy

In 2020, we focused all our attention on working with politicians and policy makers to secure a new 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland.

In January and February, NALA and our members worked hard on our pre-election campaign calling on all political parties to prioritise adults with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital skills needs and develop a Whole-of-Government approach. Following this five political parties committed to support adult literacy and plain English in their manifestos.

In June 2020, the new Programme for Government committed to:

- Develop and implement a new 10-year Strategy for Adult Literacy, Numeracy, and Digital Skills within the first year of the Government; and
- Introduce a plain language requirement for all public service communication, so that people can understand information the first time they read or hear it. Using plain language saves time and money and reduces mistakes and complaints. We will consult with NALA.



In July we launched three new documents to contribute to the development of a new strategy. These reports are all available on our website nala.ie/publications

Literacy Now

A report examining key policy and practices in adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

Literacy for Life

A Whole-of-Government approach for investing in adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills – written by Think Tank for Action on Social Change (TASC) and commissioned by NALA.

Literacy Impact

An Outcomes Framework for measuring the impact of improved literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

In July, we met the new Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD. The Minister was eager to progress the Government's commitment and told us that adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills was a big priority for him.

67 people attended our virtual launch of Literacy Now, Literacy for Life and Literacy Impact reports.

On 8 September, International Literacy Day, we were thrilled when Minister Harris announced his plans to develop a new 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy. The Minister gave SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority, the responsibility to develop the strategy and asked them to report back within six months. The strategy will adopt a Whole-of-Government approach and provide a framework to support individuals to improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

// We need to ensure we do everything we can to assist and improve those skills for people. To build an inclusive Ireland we must ensure services are accessible for everyone, whether that be through assisted digital innovations or access, support and information in your local area. We must develop innovative and creative ways to reach and support adults with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs. //

Minister Simon Harris

In October, the Minister set up and chaired an Interdepartmental Stakeholder Group on the 10-year strategy.

In November, the Minister launched the public consultation for the strategy, under the guidance of the Department of Further and Higher Education and SOLAS. NALA spent a number of weeks engaging with our members, students, staff and Board on what should be included in a new 10-year strategy. We put in a submission in December and you can read our submission on our website nala.ie/publications

Working towards the 10-year strategy: A timeline

February

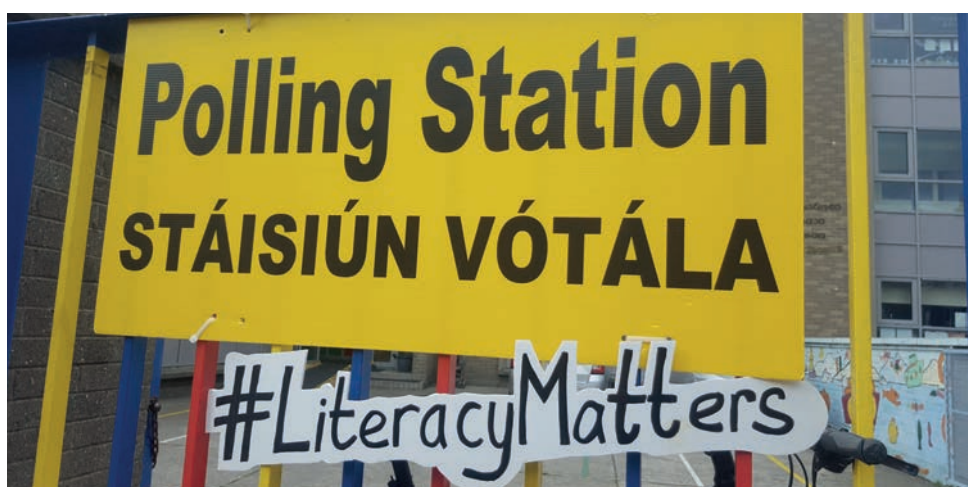
NALA and our members worked hard on our pre-election campaign calling on all political parties to prioritise adults with unmet literacy needs.

June

A commitment to adult literacy and plain language was secured in the Programme for Government.

July

We launched our three reports, Literacy Now, Literacy for Life and Literacy Impact and met with Minister Simon Harris.



Promoting adult literacy, numeracy and digital literacy during the 2020 General Election.

September

October

December

Memo brought by Minister Harris to cabinet on 8 September (International Literacy Day) on plans to improve literacy, numeracy and digital literacy among adults.

Minister Harris set up an Interdepartmental Stakeholder Group in October and SOLAS opened their public consultation on the strategy in November.

NALA made our submission to SOLAS on the 10-year Strategy for Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy for Ireland. The consultation closed on 31 December 2020.

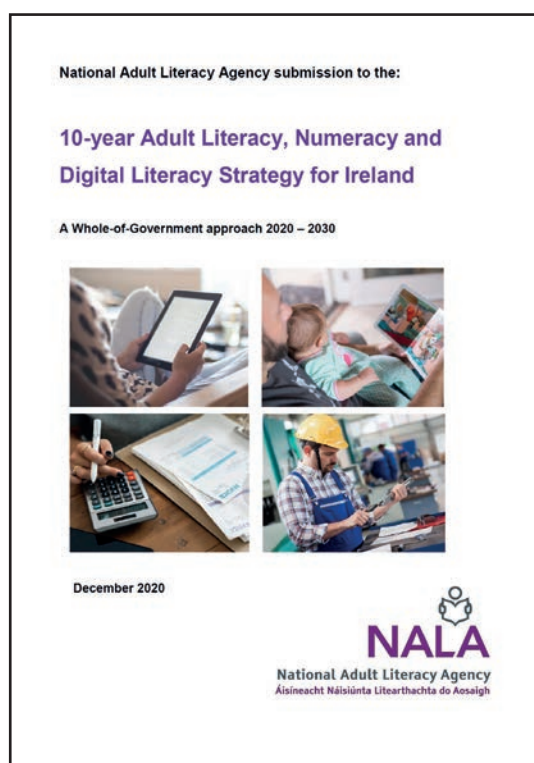


Outgoing NALA CEO Dr Inez Bailey with Minister Simon Harris and NALA Policy Officer Helen Ryan.

Policy Submissions

We made five written submissions in 2020 to:

- The Apprenticeship Action Plan 2021 – 2025
- The Department of Education Statement of Strategy
- The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Statement of Strategy
- The National Economic Plan
- SOLAS on the 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland



Parents and families

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

Help My Kid Learn

Our online resources for parents and their children were particularly important during the pandemic when schools were closed. We promoted the Help My Kid Learn website as well as daily updates on Facebook and a monthly e-zine. 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. In 2020, this resulted in:

- Over 286,000 people using helpmykidlearn.ie which is a 19% increase on 2019. There was a peak of users in March and April, coinciding with the closure of schools and media promotion.
- The age group that got the most visits were:
 1. 5-7 years
 2. 10-12 years
 3. 8-9 years
 4. 3-4 years
 5. 0-2 years
- The most popular activity on Helpmykidlearn.ie was Spot the Difference game for ages 3-4 years.



286,000

286,000 people used
our helpmykidlearn.ie
website

Help My Kid Learn in schools and community projects

In May 2020, NALA sent 51 packs of Help My Kid Learn resources to 22 schools around the country following a notice in the Principals' Circular to schools in April 2020.

51 packs of Help My Kid Learn resources were sent to 22 schools around the country.

We also sent material to a Family Resource Centre in Finglas and to Tipperary Education and Training Board (ETB) for distribution among Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) schools. In Tipperary, the adult literacy centre distributed 200 packs to Home School Liaison Coordinators for distribution to Junior Infants classes in Clonmel, Tipperary Town and Carrick-On-Suir.

We also sent a substantial amount of resources to the Genesis Programme in Drogheda, who distributed the Help My Kid Learn promotional material to twelve primary and secondary schools in County Louth.

Thank you to Janet

NALA wishes to thank Janet McDermot who has recently retired and had worked on content for the Help My Kid Learn website over several years.

Family digital learning

This project between Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and NALA proved to be both responsive and flexible during COVID-19 and to be a relevant and important partnership for NALA. The project team in TCD devised some very engaging and practical webinars to support parents in coping with home literacy and numeracy challenges during lockdown. The webinars provided quick tips on supporting children's development of literacy and numeracy confidence and skills and were viewed by a range of parents, teachers and family literacy practitioners.

NALA supported this work through consultation and promotion of webinars amongst our network. We gave input on supporting schools to communicate more effectively with parents in most disadvantaged communities. We also worked with TCD on a video and booklet on plain English and clear communication with parents.

National survey

The COVID-19 crisis highlighted the impact of the digital divide and the education and wider inequalities which impact on how many people, families and communities are left with their literacy needs unmet.

NALA contributed to the design and development of the first national survey into parents' perspectives on teaching and learning during the school closures as a result of COVID-19. This survey provides a unique insight into the experience of home learning and family literacy learning carework.

The survey provides evidence about the digital divide and the lack of devices available to families with unmet literacy need. A significant finding was that the range of literacy practice at home was equivalent between parents with and without 3rd level qualifications. This evidence reinforces recent research by NALA and SOLAS about all parents wanting the best education for their children.

A further unexpected outcome from NALA's involvement in the project was an enhanced relationship with the Home School Community Liaison scheme and with Barnardos. NALA Family Literacy support materials were distributed in care packs to a number of DEIS schools across the country and to families who were being supported by Barnardos.

The report can be viewed at **nala.ie/publications**

Strengthening our effectiveness as an organisation

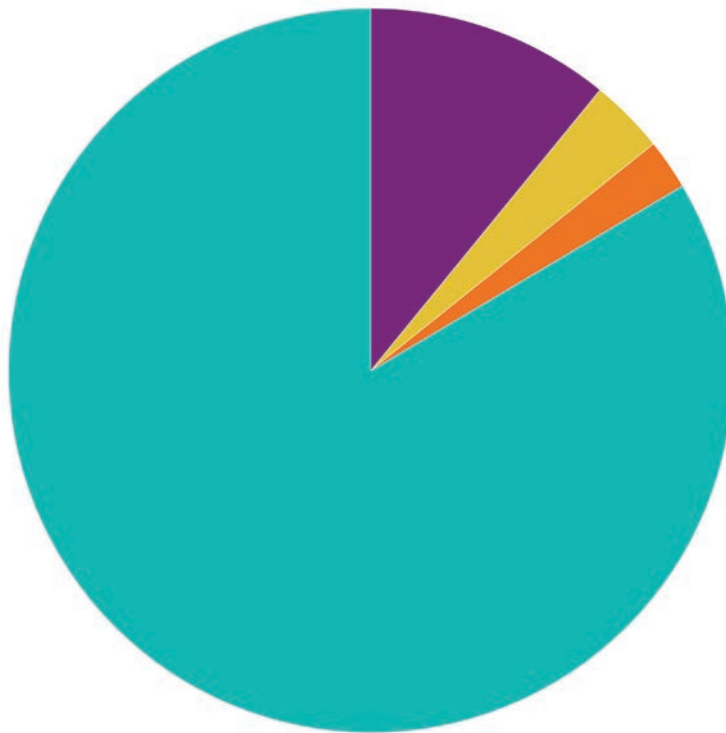


Membership

NALA had **1,972** members in 2020.

The income from membership fees was **€20,991**.

NALA membership in 2020:



● **1, 647** Free Members

● **215** Small Organisation Members

● **44** Individual Members

● **66** Large Organisation Members

Our individual and free members in 2020 were:

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

Our small organisation members in 2020 were:

- Adult literacy centres;
- Youth services and Youthreach centres;
- Disability services and Special Schools;
- Community Training Centres;
- Community Education;
- National Learning Networks;
- Schools (both primary and secondary);
- Probation services;
- Traveller organisations;
- Homeless organisations; and
- Prison services.

Our large organisations members in 2020 were:

- County Libraries;
- Education focused national or county wide organisations;
- Local Education and Training Boards;
- Community and Voluntary sector, including Partnership Companies;
- Banking, insurance and regulatory authorities; and
- Health and disability focused service providers.

Our small organisation members in 2020 were:

70 Adult literacy centres

ABLES (Cork)
Altrusa Adult Literacy Scheme
Arklow/Carnew Adult Literacy Scheme
Athy and Crookstown Further Education and Training Centre
Ballaghaderreen Adult Education Centre
Ballinacollig Adult Basic Education Service
Ballymun Adult Read & Write Scheme CLG
Baltinglass Adult Education Centre
Bandon Further & Training Education Centre
Bantry Adult Learning Service
Beare Adult Literacy Scheme
Blessington Adult Literacy Centre
Boyle GRETB FET Centre
Bray Adult Education Centre
Breacadh
Buncrana Further Education Training Centre
Cabra CDETB Adult Literacy Scheme
Carlow Adult Learning Centre
Carrigaline Adult Basic Education Centre
Cashel and Glinsk Further Education Training Centre
Castlerea Adult Learning Centre
Clonakilty Adult Education Centre
Coolock/Darndale Adult Literacy Service
Crumlin Adult Literacy Service
Dingle Adult Basic Education Service Dingle (An Daingean)
Donegal Town Further Education Centre (South Donegal)
Dungarvan Adult Literacy Scheme
East Galway (Loughrea) Adult Learning Centre
Fermoy Adult Literacy Service
Finglas CDETB Adult Education Service
Finn and Laggan Valley and Raphoe Further Education Centre
Further Education Training Centre (Milford)
Galway Adult Basic Education Service
Gort Further Education & Training Centre
Gortahork Further Education Centre
GRETb Further Education & Training Centre Dunmore
Headford Adult Learning Centre
Ionad Foghlama (Connemara)

Kanturk/Newmarket Adult Education Centre
Kenmare Adult Literacy and Basic Education Service
Kildare Education Training Centre
Kilkenny Adult Learning Service (Wordaid) - Kilkenny
Killarney Adult Literacy and Basic Education Service
Killorglin Adult Literacy and Basic Education Service
Leitrim Education for Adults Program (LEAP)
Letterkenny and Milford Further Education Training Centres
Liberties and Rathmines Adult Literacy Scheme
Listowel Adult Literacy and Basic Education
Macroom Adult Literacy Centre
Mahon Adult Learning
Mallow Adult Learning Centre
Mallow Return to Education Centre
Mayfield Write-On
Maynooth Adult and Education Training Centre
Millstreet Adult Learning Centre
Mitchelstown Adult Learning Centre
Monksland Further Education and Training Centre
Moycullen GRETB West Galway Adult Learning Centre
Read Write Now - Ballyphehane/ Togher
SIPTU Basic English Scheme
Skibbereen/Schull Adult Learning Service
Sligo Adult Learning and Education Centre
South West Dublin Adult Learning Centre (Ballyfermot)
Target Adult Education
Tralee Adult Literacy and Basic Education Service
Tramore Further Education and Training Centre
Tuam Adult Learning Centre
West Cork North Adult Literacy Scheme (Dunmanway)
Wicklow Adult Education Centre
Write Together (Churchfield)

7 probation services

Ballinasloe Training Workshop (Canal House)
Churchfield Community Trust
Dochas don Oige
Fusion Garda Youth Diversion Project. Midland Regional Youth Services
PACE Training for Employment Services
The Tower Programme
Tivoli Training Centre

9 Youth projects

Blakestown Mountview Youth Initiative
Cox's Demesne Youth and Community Project
Foroige Early School Leavers Blanchardstown
Foroige Tallaght
Kilkenny Employment for Youth CLG (CTC)
NYPD Foroige
Rialto Youth Project
Waterford Youth Training and Education Centre (WYTEC)
YMCA STEP Programme Ballincollig

26 Youthreach

Youthreach Arklow
Youthreach Ballaghaderreen
Youthreach Ballinasloe
Youthreach Ballincollig
Youthreach Ballymun
Youthreach Bantry
Youthreach Cabra CDETB
Youthreach Cappawhite, Tipperary
Youthreach Cootehill
Youthreach Dundalk
Youthreach Kells
Youthreach Killarney
Youthreach Laytown Bettystown
Youthreach Macroom
Youthreach Mahon
Youthreach Mallow
Youthreach Navan
Youthreach Roscommon GRETB
Youthreach Roscommon Town
Youthreach Roscrea
Youthreach Sligo
Youthreach Swords
Youthreach Templemore Ceim Eile
Youthreach Tramore
Youthreach Transition Centre CDETB
Youthreach West Wicklow (Blessington)

22 Disability organisations

Ability@Work Cope Foundation
Apple Tree Centre, Brothers of Charity (Loughrea)
Bonnington Training Centre (BTC) Cope Foundation
Carriglea Cairde Services
Cope Foundation - DORAS
Cope Foundation, Cork - BTC
County Roscommon Disability Support Group CLG
Frontline Magazine Limited
Headway Limerick
Irish Wheelchair Association Wexford
Kingsriver Community
MooreHaven Centre
Mountbellew Resource Centre
National Rehabilitation Hospital, Dun Laoghaire
Orchard Services, Gort
Room 60, Tullow Community School
Saint John of God Kerry Services
Shine, Supporting People Affected by Mental Ill Health
St Joesph's Foundation Mitchelstown
St. John of God Carmona Services (Dun Laoghaire)
The Village Project / Cope Foundation
WALK

6 traveller organisations

Involve Partnership with Travellers, Athlone
National Traveller MABS
Offaly Traveller Movement
Travact CPD Outreach Centre
Travellers of North Cork
West Cork Traveller Centre

6 homeless organisations

Bruac, Good Shepherd Cork
Focus Ireland - PETE Limerick
Focus Ireland - PETE Service Dublin
Focus Ireland - PETE Waterford
Midwest Simon Community
Peter McVerry Trust

17 Community Training Centres (CTCs)

Athlone Community Training Centre
Blackpool Glen Farranree Community Youth Training Centre
Blanchardstown Community Training Centre
Discovery CTC
Dun Laoghaire Community Training Centre
Finglas Community Training Centre
Galway City Community Training Centre
Kylemore Community Training Centre
Magnet Community Training Centre
Nenagh Community Training Centre
Newbridge Youth Training and Development Centre
Stoneybatter Community Training Centre
Tolka Valley Community Training Centre
Tralee Community Training Centre Ltd
Tuam Community Training Centre CTC
Tullamore and District Youth Endeavour Ltd. (CTC)
Youth Train Wexford (CTC)

13 special schools

Ballydowd Special Care School
Ballytivnan Training Centre
Benincasa Special School
Boyne Community School, Trim
Cairde Activation Centre CLG
Linn Dara School
Mother of Fair Love School
St Brigid's Special School
St Joseph's Foundation Charleville
St Joseph's Training Services (Galway)
St. Bernadette's Special School
St. Hilda's Special School
St. Joseph's Special School

4 prison services

Dochas Centre
Education Unit - Portlaoise Prison
Education Unit, Mountjoy Prison
Shelton Abbey Prison

8 schools

Scoil Eoin
Scoil Mhuire, Strokestown
Scoil Mochua
South West Wicklow HSCL Cluster
St Audoen's NS
St Nathy's College
St. Aidan's CBS
St. Jarlath's College

15 Community education services

Duagh Family and Community Resource Centre Ltd
Focus Family Resource Centre CLG
An Cosan
Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre
Christine Buckley Centre for Education and Support
Clare Immigrant Support Centre
Croi na Gaillimhe
D8 CEC
Doras Luimni Ltd.
Dublin Adult Learning Centre (DALC)
Kinsale College of Further Education
Northside Partnership
Warrenmount C.E.D Centre
Waterford Women's Centre (Access 2000)
Womens Community Projects

12 National Learning Networks

National Learning Network Ballyfermot
National Learning Network Bray
National Learning Network Carlow
National Learning Network Castlebar
National Learning Network Castlerea
National Learning Network Dundalk
National Learning Network Kildare, Maynooth
National Learning Network Kilkenny
National Learning Network Limerick
National Learning Network Monaghan
National Learning Network Swords
National Learning Network Wexford

Our large organisation members in 2020 were:

16 libraries

Carlow County Library Service - headquarters
Cork City Libraries
Donegal County Library
Dublin City Public Library and Archive Services
Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown Library Services Headquarters
Fingal County Council Library
Kildare Library and Arts Service
Kilkenny County Council Library Service
Laois County Library - Headquarters
Louth County Library
Meath County Council Library Service
Offaly County Library
Roscommon County Library
South Dublin County Library Service
Tipperary County Council Library Service
Waterford City and County Library Service

12 Education and Training Boards (ETBs)

Cavan and Monaghan ETB
Cork Education and Training Board
Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB
Kerry Education and Training Board
Kildare and Wicklow ETB (Head Office)
Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board
Laois and Offaly ETB
Limerick and Clare ETB
Longford and Westmeath ETB
Louth and Meath ETB
Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board
Tipperary Education and Training Board

6 Partnership Companies

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership Company
Clare Local Development Company
Louth LEADER Partnership
Meath Partnership
South Dublin County Partnership
Wexford Local Development

13 Adult education focused organisations

Adult Education Officers Association (AEOA)

ALOA c/o Aidan McCloskey, Donegal ETB

AONTAS

Central Remedial Clinic - Adult services

Dyslexia Association of Ireland

Educational Research Centre

Exchange House Ireland National Travellers Service

FET Centre Letterkenny

INTO Irish National Teachers' Organisation

Leargas

Limerick Youth Service

National College of Ireland

Seetec Employment and Skills Ireland

11 Banking and insurance and regulation

Adoption Authority of Ireland

AIB Bank

Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU)

Data Protection Commission

Health Information and Quality Authority HIQA - Dublin

Institute of Public Health in Ireland

Irish Banking Culture Board

Link ASI Limited

Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI)

Zurich Insurance PLC

6 Community and Voluntary sector

Dublin Simon Community

EAPN Ireland

National Women's Council of Ireland

Ruhama

SPIRASI

The Wheel

2 Health disability focused providers

Nua Healthcare

Talbot Group

Members' Area on nala.ie

A new members' section on NALA's website went live in September. Members can now renew their membership online, change their contact details, passwords and let NALA know their preferences for post and emails.

Membership benefit – becoming a Learn with NALA centre

Becoming a registered centre on the Learn with NALA eLearning website, means students from the centre see their own logo on the website and students in that centre can get Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) certificates sent directly to the centre – NALA does all the administration for the certificates. Also tutors can see how students are progressing with using the website.

Membership benefit – NALA's Student Development Fund

The NALA Student Development Fund is a subsidy towards a non-tuition group activity for students. Centres around the country avail of this funding and go on trips such as to the Dáil, visiting historic sites or other activities such as paintballing. The centres also give NALA feedback from students on topics set by NALA.

In 2020, 48 organisations were offered the benefit of the NALA Student Development Fund – 37 of those were small organisation members of NALA. Eleven were not members in their own right but came in under the membership of a large organisation member (all ETBs). Staff in NALA promoted membership, with organisations and in correspondence. There has been an increase in the number of large organisations that have joined NALA who are using the Plain English Service.

Communicating our work

Our 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 2020, 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 Spring and Winter.

Websites

- 184,000 people used the nala.ie website, a 17% increase since 2019.
- 28,000 people used our new eLearning website Learn with NALA.

Social Media

We continued to increase our engagement on social media. By the end of 2020 we had:

- 9,079 followers on Facebook, a 9% increase during the year;
- 5,388 followers on Twitter, a 22% increase during the year;
- 3,136 followers on LinkedIn, a 12% increase; and
- videos on our Youtube channel had received 74,596 views, a 60% increase since 2019.

Media Coverage

In 2020, NALA's public relations activity resulted in our activities receiving coverage in 344 media pieces during the year, including:

- 109 broadcast;
- 121 online; and
- 114 print.

Veronica Poole returns to the An Post Book Awards

You might remember the inspiring Veronica Poole, a student with Coolock and Darndale Adult Literacy Service, part of City of Dublin ETB, who shared her story of returning to education at the 2019 An Post Book Awards.

At the end of 2020, the award winning director Ken Wardrop produced a short catch-up film with Veronica which was broadcast during the virtual An Post Book Awards and also during the Book of the Year show on RTÉ One.

“ People don’t realise how much it means to have an education. It has given me my life back and I will definitely write that book. ”

Veronica Poole

Visit nala.ie/watch-veronicas-story-one-year-on to watch Veronica’s story.

Huge thank you to our partners An Post for 13 years of support and continuing to raise awareness of adult literacy services around the country.



Governance and quality

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. We completed the 2020 statutory filings for NALA: Companies Registration Office Annual Return, Register of Beneficial Ownership filings, Charities Regulatory Authority Annual Report and Lobbying reports.

CRA Charities Governance Code

A review of NALA's compliance with the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) Governance Code was completed at the end of 2020. Charities will be required to report on their compliance with the code in 2021. NALA will be working towards full compliance throughout the year.

Level 2 Trusted Charity Mark

In 2020, NALA was delighted to have achieved the NCVO Level 2 Trusted Charity Mark. Trusted Charity is part of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO). NALA was assessed against the 11 standards of effective practice in Trusted Charity. These included governance, leadership and management, managing staff and volunteers and managing money, and proved to meet all standards.



Human Resources

In 2020, we successfully recruited a new Chief Executive Officer, Communications Officer, Corporate Services Officer, Professional Development Experts and Field Researchers. We worked on introducing a new Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) that will be rolled out in 2021.

Administration

- The administration team managed the NALA Freephone, provided support with event and webinar organisation, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) awards certificates, invoicing and membership renewal and recruitment. The team also maintained the membership database as well as supporting the Board and subcommittees.
- The administration team managed the move to remote working, supporting staff and Board members where needed, and ensuring hardware and systems were in place that NALA's services were not interrupted while the office was closed.

2020 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

At our Annual General Meeting (AGM), members elect a Board that oversees our work. NALA postponed our AGM in the Spring because of the pandemic and rescheduled it after receiving advice from Mason Hayes and Curran. On 2 September, the 39th AGM was held in NALA's Dublin office with a quorum of three members and broadcast virtually to members online. At this event, members heard about our work in 2019, and about our campaign in 2020 to secure a Whole-of-Government approach for investing in adult literacy, numeracy and digital skills for an equal and resilient Ireland.

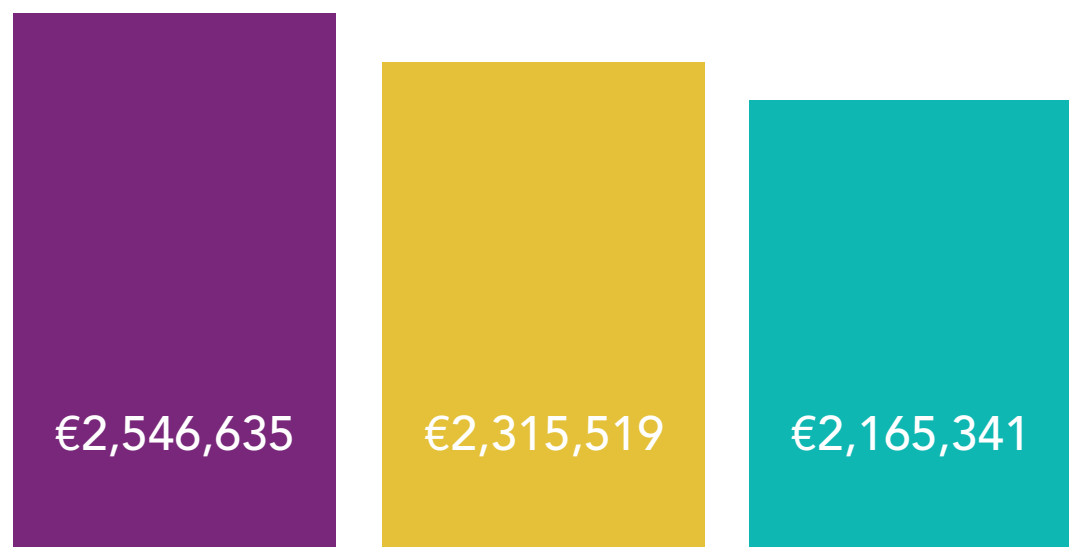
During this time Mason Hayes and Curran also noted several areas of our constitution that needed to be revised in the future particularly the 90 day notice period for the AGM. The process to amend the constitution was commenced in September 2020. We worked with Mason Hayes and Curran on the amendments and presented a draft proposed constitution to the Board in December 2020. They approved the amendments with minor changes and a submission was made to the Charities Regulator Authority. The proposed constitution (subject to CRA changes) will be presented to the members of NALA at the 2021 AGM.

Structure and finances

NALA is a company limited by guarantee, domiciled and incorporated in the Republic of Ireland with company registration of 342807 and is a registered charity.

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.

Income 2020

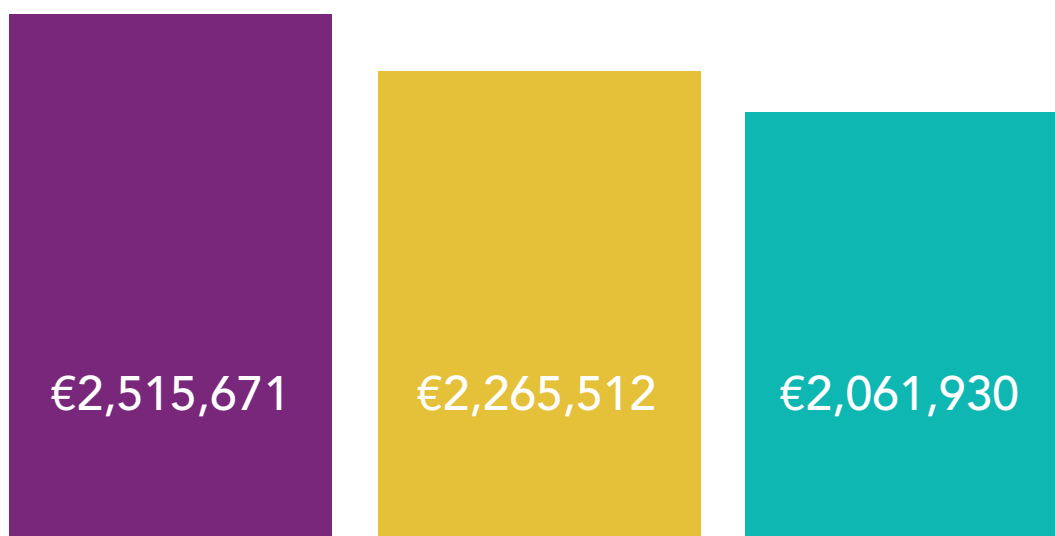


● Income 2020 - **€2,546,635**

● Income 2019 - **€2,315,519**

● Income 2018 - **€2,165,341**

Expenditure 2020



● Expenditure 2020 - **€2,515,671**

● Expenditure 2019 - **€2,265,512**

● Expenditure 2018 - **€2,061,930**

Audited accounts

Please find our financial statements on pages 105-144. You can view or download a copy of our annual report, audited accounts, details of our organisation's structure and Board members, staff and all our publications from our website **www.nala.ie**

Patron: Michael D Higgins, President of Ireland

Chairperson: Margaret Kelly

CEO: Colleen Dube

Registered company number: 342807

Registered Charity Number (RCN): 20020965

Charity reference number (CHY): 8506

Financial statements

Company Registration No. 342807 (Republic of Ireland)

CRA No. 20020965

CHY No. 8506

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS AND OTHER INFORMATION
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

Directors/Trustees

Margaret Kelly (Appointed 02/09/2020)
Anna Tuohy Halligan
Ciaran Casey (Appointed 05/02/2020)
Olive Phelan
Kevin Kelly
Patricia Ayton
Lee Mitchell
Maria O’Gorman
Hazel Cryan
Michael Duffy
Elma Teahan (Appointed on 09/12/2020)
Gwen Redmond (Appointed on 02/09/2020)
Francis Ward (Appointed on 09/12/2020)

Secretary	Patricia Ayton
Company Number	342807
Charity Number	8506
CRA Number	20020965

Registered office and business address	Sandford Lodge Sandford Close Ranelagh Dublin 6
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Auditors	Mazars Harcourt Centre Block 3 Harcourt Road Dublin 2
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Bankers	A.I.B Bank 37 Upper O’Connell St. Dublin 1
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NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

The Directors present the audited financial statements of National Adult Literacy Agency for the year ended 31 December 2020.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

See page 17.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE IN 2020

See pages 6-10.

NALA is funded primarily by SOLAS who provide core funding and also additional funding for specific projects. The application for funding each year is made in one submission which includes both the project and core funding requests. The application for funding is made in the month of December prior to the commencement of the grant year.

The remainder of NALA's income is derived from other sources as follows:

- a. Other specific project grants from various other institutions
- b. Plain English services income
- c. Membership subscriptions

NALA – a learning organisation

As part of our 2020-2022 strategy NALA will focus on further developing the attributes of a learning organisation that will assist us in aligning our resources, our development opportunities and our decisions with our strategic objectives.

This focus on embracing the attributes of a learning organisation reflects our wish to improve and to develop the methods we use to approach our work as our organisation evolves.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income

Total income for 2020 was €2,546,635 (2019: €2,315,519). Income from our primary funder Solas was €2,216,619 (2019: €1,985,739).

The rollout of the EU Erasmus grant secured at the end of 2018 resulted in income of €116,884 in 2020 (2019: €96,951).

Our main source of unrestricted income is derived from our plain English services. The demand for these services in 2020 resulted in income of €167,630 (2019: €151,304). This steady increase reflects the increased awareness of the plain English service and the resultant increased demand for the service. Membership income of €20,991 (2019: €24,451) was down during 2020 and is attributable in part to the COVID19 restrictions which made interaction more difficult for members. The remainder of our income was derived from small grants for specific projects and other income.

Expenditure

The nature of NALA's funding and operating model ensures that our income and expenditure are closely aligned and consequently the increase in income during 2020 is reflected in a corresponding increase in expenditure.

Total expenditure for the year was €2,515,671 (2019: €2,265,512). All expenditure in 2020 was directed towards the achievement of NALA's charitable objectives. This includes governance, administration and other indirect support costs which have been proportionately allocated to our charitable activities.

Total support costs for the year of €339,053 (2019: €308,737) show an increase of €30,316 as set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Total expenditure funded by Solas in 2020 was €2,216,619 (2019: €2,113,042) while the EU Erasmus grant had expenditure of €71,925 (2019: €63,069). Plain English expenditure of €153,350 (2019: €53,546) reflects the increased efficiencies in processing the work that has allowed the NALA plain English team to complete more of the work internally. The increase includes both internal and external editing costs for the Plain English service.

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

Financial position

Having considered all income and expenditure, the result for the year was a surplus of €30,964 (2019: €50,007).

NALA's year-end financial position shows a total net assets value of €677,860 (2019: €646,896).

The net assets position includes fixed assets with carrying amount of €130,125 (2019: €155,815) and net current assets of €547,735 (2019: 491,081). Net current assets are primarily made up of bank and cash balances of €676,754 (2019: €525,112) with the balance comprising our debtors and stocks balances. The closing bank position of €676,754 is due in part to an increase of €100,318 in creditors at year end, which will be discharged in early 2021. The movements in the bank balances during 2020 is set out in the statement of cash flows on page 124.

Reserves

NALA holds both restricted and unrestricted reserves.

Restricted reserves

Restricted reserves balances represent the unexpended balances of funds recognised in our financial statements which have restricted terms and conditions as to their use. Funds that are granted that can only be used for specific purposes are monitored and reported upon separately each year and the remaining unspent balances on these funding grants are identified separately in our financial statements as restricted grants.

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

Unrestricted reserves

The purpose of the unrestricted reserves policy for NALA is to ensure the stability of the mission, programmes, employment and ongoing operations of the organisation. The reserve is intended to provide an internal source for situations such as a sudden increase in expenses, one-time unbudgeted expenses, unanticipated loss in funding, or uninsured losses. The reserves are not intended to replace a permanent loss of funds or eliminate an ongoing budget gap. The Board of NALA judges that it needs to have a prudent reserves level that allows it to:

- meet its obligations as an employer by paying redundancy payments to its staff at the statutory minimum level.
- continue to implement its activity plans should an important income stream cease unexpectedly or be delayed.
- address an appropriate level of cost associated with maintaining an office premises.

The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the organisation's planning, budget and forecasting cycle.

The policy seeks to keep a reserve fund equivalent to the monetary value of (1) Minimum redundancy payments for NALA staff and (2) an amount equivalent to two months expenditure. The policy was last reviewed in 2019 and the calculations to meet the policy requirements indicated a required target of €520,000.

This policy will be reviewed in 2021 by the Audit and Finance sub-committee of the Board. Changes to the policy are recommended by the Audit and Finance sub-committee to the Board.

The 2021 review will consider the appropriateness of the method of setting the unrestricted target and will subsequently calculate a new target either using the same or still to be decided new criteria.

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

The overall level of reserves at 31 December 2020 are as follows;

Unrestricted Reserves: €590,074 (2019: €597,571)

Restricted Reserves: €87,786 (2019: €49,325)

The unrestricted reserves of €590,074 (2019: €597,571) show a decrease of €7,497 during 2020. The closing unrestricted reserves balance remains in excess of the level targeted at the last review in 2019 however the Directors are satisfied with the current level of unrestricted reserves pending their 2021 review.

The overall financial position at the year-end was considered satisfactory by the Directors.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

NALA is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 8 August 1992. A new Constitution pursuant to the Companies Act 2014 was adopted in April 2016. In the event of the company being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding €1.27 per member of the company.

NALA's goals and approaches are guided by its charitable objectives as laid out in its Constitution.

Recruitment and Appointment of the Board

NALA is a members-based organisation. Its members are individuals and organisations interested and involved in adult literacy. At the Annual General Meeting members elect a Board that oversees the work. All members of the Board give their time voluntarily and receive no financial benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the Company are detailed in Note 5 of the notes to the financial statements. The Board seeks to ensure that the needs of learners are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the Board. To enhance the potential pool of the Board members, the charity has sought to identify adult learners who would be willing to become members of NALA and use their own experience to assist the charity. The more traditional business and educational skills are well represented on the Board. In an effort to maintain this Board skill mix, individuals are approached to offer themselves for election to the Board.

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

Organisational Structure

NALA has a Board of up to 14 Directors who meet eight times a year and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At present, the Board has 13 Directors from a variety of backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity. A scheme of delegation is in place and day-to-day responsibility for the provision of the services rests with the CEO. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that the charity delivers the services specified and that key performance indicators are met. The Directors are committed to maintaining the highest standards of Corporate Governance.

NALA is currently reviewing their compliance with the new CRA Governance Code in accordance with the relevant CRA guidelines and templates. We are working towards full compliance with all requirements of the CRA Governance Code by 31 October 2021.

Board Induction and Training

New members of the Board are invited and encouraged to attend a training session to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context within which it operates. It covers:

- the obligations of Board members;
- the main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity including the Constitution;
- resourcing and the current financial position, as set out in the latest published accounts; and
- future plans and objectives.

A document called Functions and Duties of NALA Board and its officers is distributed to all new members of the Board, along with the Constitution and the latest financial statements.

The Board has four sub-committees, each with their own terms of reference;

- 1) Audit and Finance sub-committee
- 2) Staff and Policy sub-committee
- 3) Student sub-committee
- 4) Education, Training and Assessment sub-committee.

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

Directors

The following Directors held office during 2020:

- Anna Tuohy Halligan
- David Heylin (Resigned 02/09/2020)
- Mary Bambrick (Resigned 02/09/2020)
- Margaret Kelly (Appointed 02/09/2020)
- Ciaran Casey (Appointed 05/02/2020)
- Olive Phelan
- Kevin Kelly
- Sinead Ryan (Resigned 14/02/2020)
- Louise Canavan (Resigned 24/06/2020)
- Patricia Ayton
- Lee Mitchell
- Maria O'Gorman
- Hazel Cryan
- Liz O'Sullivan (Resigned 21/04/2020)
- Michael Duffy
- Elma Teahan (Appointed 09/12/2020)
- Gwen Redmond (Appointed 02/09/2020)
- Francis Ward (Appointed 09/12/2020)

The Directors endorse the approach and objectives of the 2020-2022 Strategy document and believe it provides the focus to continue NALA's work in improving Literacy, Numeracy and Digital skills to alleviate disadvantage and help empower segments of our population. The Board of Trustees retain overall responsibility for the strategic development of the Charity in close liaison with the CEO and other key management personnel.

There is clear division of responsibility at the Charity with the Board of Trustees retaining control over all major decisions. The charity trustees delegate executive authority for the charity's operations to the CEO, who in turn delegates the day-to-day management of specific functions of the organisation to the senior management team. It is a reserve function of the Board of Trustees to approve all staff appointments and the remuneration of any new appointee. The Board of Trustees are responsible for approving the charity's compensation framework and for approving any changes to the charity's compensation strategy and framework.

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

Key Management Personnel

Colleen Dube is the current CEO of NALA having taken up the post of CEO on 9 November 2020. The previous CEO, Dr. Inez Bailey, was in post from the beginning of 2020 until the end of July. The senior management team of Clare McNally, Elaine Cohalan and Paul Cahill jointly served as CEO in an acting up capacity during the inter regnum period from 1 August to 9 November. The key management personnel of NALA during 2020 were the two serving CEOs and the senior management team.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The principal risk facing the organisation in the coming year is the level of funding it will receive from SOLAS and other sources. In the current economic climate, it is difficult to assess whether and to what extent required funding levels needed to achieve our objectives will be available to the Agency.

Risk Management

A risk register has been established. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Significant external risks to funding have led to the development of a strategic plan which will allow for the diversification of funding and activities. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects.

Health and Safety

Procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of staff and visitors. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board has reviewed and approved a NALA COVID-19 Response Plan as well as a Working from Home Protocol.

Accounting Records

The directors are responsible for ensuring that proper books and accounting records, as outlined in Section 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014, are kept by the company. The directors have appointed appropriate accounting personnel in order to ensure compliance with those requirements. The books and accounting records of the company are maintained at the company's registered office.

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

Taxation status

The company is a registered charity CHY 8506.

Auditors

The auditors, Mazars, Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm, have expressed their willingness to continue in office in accordance with Section 383 (2) of the Companies Act 2014.

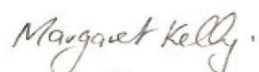
Statement on relevant audit information

In the case of each of the persons who are directors at the time this report is approved in accordance with Section 332 of the Companies Act 2014:

- a) so far as each director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's statutory auditors are unaware, and
- b) each director has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's statutory auditors are aware of that information.

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors, authorised for issue on 3 March 2021 and are signed on its behalf by:

By order of the board



Margaret Kelly

Director



Ciaran Casey

Director

Date: 6.3.21

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

The Directors are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with Irish law and regulations.

Irish company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the Directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" issued by the Financial Reporting Council, and promulgated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

Under company law, the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at the financial year end date and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that financial year and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014.

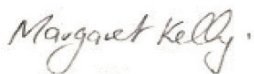
NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
DIRECTORS' REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY

In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reason for any material departure from those standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Directors are responsible for ensuring that the company keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the company, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and surplus or deficit of the company to be determined with reasonable accuracy, enable them to ensure that the financial statements and Directors' Report comply with the Companies Act 2014 and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

By order of the board



Margaret Kelly
Director



Ciaran Casey
Director

Date: 6.3.21

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the National Adult Literacy Agency ('the Company') for the year ended 31 December 2020, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including the summary of significant accounting policies set out in Note 2. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is Irish Law and FRS 102 [The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland](#) issued in the United Kingdom by the Financial Reporting Council (FRS 102).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at 31 December 2020 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard for Auditors (Ireland) issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- the information given in the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements;
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements;
- the accounting records of the Company were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited; and
- the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

We have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, are necessary for the purposes of our audit

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the Company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified any material misstatements in the directors' report. The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the requirements of any of Sections 305 to 312 of the Act, which relate to disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions are not complied with by the Company. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Respective responsibilities

Responsibilities of directors for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the directors' responsibilities statement set out on pages 116-117, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework that give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

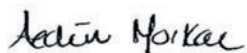
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority's website at: http://www.iaasa.ie/getmedia/b2389013-1cf6-458b-9b8fa98202dc9c3a/Description_of_auditors_responsibilities_for_audit.pdf. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities

Our report is made solely to the Company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Aedín Morkan
for and on behalf of Mazars

Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm
Harcourt Centre
Block 3
Harcourt Road
Dublin 2.

Date: 16 March 2021

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (including an income and expenditure
account)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 December 2020

		Restricted Funds 2020 €	Unrestricted Funds 2020 €	Total Funds 2020 €	Total Funds 2019 €
	Note				
Income from:	3				
Charitable activities		2,334,403	212,002	2,546,405	2,314,863
Donations		-	168	168	585
Investments		-	62	62	71
		2,334,403	212,232	2,546,635	2,315,519
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	4	2,295,942	219,729	2,515,671	2,265,512
Net (expenditure)/ income	6	38,461	(7,497)	30,964	50,007
Net movement in funds		38,461	(7,497)	30,964	50,007
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		49,325	597,571	646,896	596,889
Transfer of funds		-	-	-	-
Total funds carried forward	12	87,786	590,074	677,860	646,896

There were no other gains and losses other than those presented above.

All income and expenditure are in respect of continuing activities.

The notes on pages 124 to 144 form part of these financial statements.

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 December 2020

	Note	2020 €	2019 €
Fixed assets			
Intangible assets	7	100,002	135,367
Tangible assets	8	30,123	20,448
		130,125	155,815
Current assets			
Stocks	9	1,190	1,190
Debtors	10	62,717	57,387
Cash at bank and in hand		676,754	525,112
		740,661	583,689
Creditors			
Amounts falling due within one year	11	192,926	92,608
Net current assets		547,735	491,081
Total assets less current liabilities		677,860	646,896
Funds	13		
Restricted funds		87,786	49,325
Unrestricted funds		590,074	597,571
Total Funds		677,860	646,896

The notes on pages 125 to 144 form part of these financial statements.

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors, authorised for issue on 3 March 2021 and are signed on its behalf by

Margaret Kelly

Margaret Kelly
Director

6.3.21

Ciaran Casey

Ciaran Casey
Director

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 December 2020

	Note	2020 €	2019 €
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net income		30,964	50,007
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation and amortisation		46,433	14,031
Interest income	3	(62)	(71)
Operating income before working capital changes		77,335	63,967
Increase in debtors		(5,330)	(15,330)
Increase in creditors		100,318	10,441
Decrease in stocks		-	1,086
Cash generated from operations		172,323	60,164
Interest received		62	71
Net cash provided by operating activities		172,385	60,235
Cash flows from investing activities			
Acquisition of intangible assets	7	-	(49,625)
Acquisition of tangible assets	8	(20,743)	(9,097)
Cash used in investing activities		(20,743)	(58,722)
Net increase in cash at bank and in hand		151,642	1,513
Cash at bank and in hand at beginning of year		525,112	523,599
Cash at bank and in hand at end of year		676,754	525,112

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AGENCY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 December 2020

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

These financial statements comprising the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes constitute the individual financial statements of the National Adult Literacy Agency for the financial year ended 31 December 2020.

Company information

National Adult Literacy Agency (the "Company") is a company limited by guarantee, domiciled and incorporated in the Republic of Ireland with company registration of 342807 and is a registered charity. The Company is a public benefit entity. The nature of the Company's operations and its principal activities are set out in the Directors' Report on pages 107-117. The registered office and principal place of business is Sandford Lodge, Sandford Close, Ranelagh, Dublin 6.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (FRS 102). The financial statements have also been prepared in accordance with Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities".

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is the Companies Act 2014, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" issued by the Financial Reporting Council and promulgated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP (FRS102)) as published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator which are recognised by the UK Financial Reporting Council (FRC) as the appropriate body to issue SORPs for the charity sector in the UK. Financial reporting in line with SORP is considered best practice for charities in Ireland.

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The financial statements are prepared in Euro, which is the functional currency of the Company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest €.

Income

Income is recognised when the Company has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably. Income is deferred where the charity is limited by specific performance related conditions that are evident in the funding agreement, where there is a specification of a time period that limits the Company's ability to recognise the income until it has performed an activity and when there are specific terms or conditions within an agreement that have not been met and are not within the control of the Company at year end.

Income from charitable activities

Income from charitable activities, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the Company has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income from donations

Public donations are accounted for when received.

Income from investments

Income from investments is included when interest is receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Company. This is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the Company. Restricted funds are funds which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the Company's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the Company

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

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Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Company in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the Company and include the audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the Company.

Allocation of support costs

Support costs are incurred on those functions that assist the work of the Company but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Salaries and associated costs which can be attributed to specific projects are charged accordingly.

Intangible assets

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Website development	25% Straight Line
---------------------	-------------------

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Office equipment	25% Straight Line
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	25% Straight Line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is credited or charged to surplus or deficit.

Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting period end date, the Company reviews the carrying amounts of its fixed assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any). Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the Company estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

Recoverable amount is the higher of fair value less costs to sell and value in use. In assessing value in use, the estimated future cash flows are discounted to their present value using a pre-tax discount rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the asset for which the estimates of future cash flows have not been adjusted.

If the recoverable amount of an asset (or cash-generating unit) is estimated to be less than its carrying amount, the carrying amount of the asset (or cash-generating unit) is reduced to its recoverable amount. An impairment loss is recognised immediately in surplus or deficit, unless the relevant asset is carried at a revalued amount, in which case the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation decrease.

Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell. Cost comprises direct materials and, where applicable, direct labour costs and those overheads that have been incurred in bringing the stocks to their present location and condition. The method used in measuring stocks is FIFO. At each reporting date, an assessment is made for impairment. Any excess of the carrying amount of stocks over its estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell is recognised as an impairment loss in profit or loss. Reversals of impairment losses are also recognised in profit or loss.

Prepayments

Prepayments are expenses paid in advance and recorded as assets before these are utilised. Prepayments are apportioned over the period covered by the payment and charged to profit or loss when incurred. Prepayments that are expected to be realised no more than 12 months after the reporting period are classified as current assets. Otherwise, these are classified as noncurrent assets.

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Deferred income

Deferred income consists of membership fees, other income and grants received in advance which will be recognised as income in the year to which these are attributable and upon fulfilment of conditions.

Financial assets

The Company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the Company's balance sheet when the Company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Cash at bank and in hand. Cash at bank and in hand are basic financial assets and include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts.

Debtors. Debtors (excluding prepayments) are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered.

Financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors are classified as debt and are initially recognised at transaction price. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Creditors. Creditors (excluding deferred income and tax and social insurance) are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Taxation

The Company has obtained exemption from the Revenue Commissioners in respect of corporation tax, it being a Company not carrying on a business for the purposes of making a profit.

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Employee benefits

The costs of short-term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the Company is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

Retirement benefits

The Company operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. Contributions payable are charged to the statement of financial activities in the year in which they are payable.

Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases, including any lease incentives received, are charged to income on a straight-line basis over the term of the relevant lease except where another more systematic basis is more representative of the time pattern in which economic benefits from the lease asset are consumed.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income and expenditure. The accounting estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgements about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

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Going concern. The directors have prepared budgets and cash flows for a period of at least twelve months from the date of the approval of the financial statements which demonstrate that there is no material uncertainty regarding the company's ability to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and to continue as a going concern. The key judgement applied in the preparation of budgets and cash flows is that SOLAS funding will continue for 2021 and 2022. On this basis the directors consider it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. Accordingly, these financial statements do not include any adjustments to the carrying amounts and classification of assets and liabilities that may arise if the company was unable to continue as a going concern.

Determining lease commitment – Company as a lessee. The Company holds a lease for its business premises at Sandford Lodge, Sandford Close, Ranelagh, Dublin 6. The Company has determined that the risks and benefits of ownership related to the leased property are retained by the lessor. Accordingly, the lease is accounted for as an operating lease.

Estimating useful lives of intangible assets and tangible assets. The Company reviews annually the estimated useful lives of intangible assets and tangible assets based on the asset's expected utilisation, market demands and future technological development. It is possible that the factors mentioned may change in the future, which could cause a change in estimated useful lives.

There were no changes in the estimated useful lives of intangible assets and tangible assets during 2020

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3. INCOME

Current Year	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds €	Total Funds €
Income from charitable activities			
Solas Core Grant	1,619,544	–	1619,544
Solas Write-on	330,456	–	330,456
Solas National Awareness Campaign	200,000	–	200,000
Solas CPD Implementation	24,493	-	24,493
Solas Briefing Papers	31,343	-	31,343
Solas Numeracy	10,783	-	10,783
EU ERASMUS Grant	116,884	–	116,884
EAEA	900	–	900
Better World Books	–	6,201	6,201
Other Income	–	13,005	13,005
Plain English	–	167,630	167,630
Membership Fees	–	20,991	20,991
Conference Fees	–	980	980
Health MSD	–	1,600	1,600
Training	–	880	880
Resource Room	–	715	715
	2,334,403	212,002	2,546,405
Income from donations	–	168	168
Investment income			
Interest income	-	62	62
	2,334,403	212,232	2,546,635

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Prior Year	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds €	Total Funds €
Income from charitable activities			
Solas Core Grant	1,521,096	–	1,521,096
Solas Write-on	268,899	–	268,899
Solas National Awareness Campaign	160,000	–	160,000
EU ERASMUS Grant	96,951	–	96,951
Solas Numeracy	35,744	–	35,744
Family Literacy Digital Research	11,900	–	11,900
Portlaoise Prison	9,340	–	9,340
Mason Hayes Curran	8,554	–	8,554
EBSN	5,000	–	5,000
Irish Aid Fake	3,037	–	3,037
EEAL Income	2,000	–	2,000
Plain English	–	151,304	151,304
Membership Fees	–	24,451	24,451
Conference Fees	–	6,850	6,850
Health MSD	–	5,950	5,950
Training	–	3,490	3,490
Resource Room	–	297	297
	2,122,521	192,342	2,314,863
Income from donations	–	585	585
Investment income			
Interest income	–	71	71
	2,122,521	192,998	2,315,519

4. ANALYSIS OF CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE

Current Year	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds €	Total Funds €
Solas Core Grant	1,619,544	65,809	1,685,353
Solas Write-on	330,456	301	330,757
Solas National Awareness Campaign	200,000	–	200,000
Solas Marking Progress Project	24,493	584	25,077
Solas Briefing Papers Project	31,343	(315)	31,028
Solas Numeracy Research Project	10,783	–	10,783
EU ERASMUS Grant	71,925	–	71,925
Plain English	–	153,350	153,350
Irish Aid	1,500	–	1,500
Portlaoise Prison	5,898	–	5,898
	2,295,942	219,729	2,515,671

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Prior Year	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds €	Total Funds €
Solas Core Grant	1,544,716	–	1,544,716
Solas Write-on	348,364	–	348,364
Solas National Awareness Campaign	160,077	–	160,077
EU ERASMUS Grant	63,069	–	63,069
Solas Disability	30,000	–	30,000
Solas Numeracy	15,527	–	15,527
Family Literacy Digital Research	15,321	–	15,321
Solas Family Literacy	14,358	–	14,358
Plain English	–	53,546	53,546
Mason Hayes Curran	8,554	–	8,554
EBSN	5,000	–	5,000
Portlaoise Prison	3,442	–	3,442
EEAL Income	2,000	–	2,000
Irish Aid Fake	1,538	–	1,538
	2,211,966	53,546	2,265,512

Included within the above are support costs as follows

	General cost €	Governance cost €	Total 2020 €	2019 €
Wages and salaries	28,558	22,715	51,273	54,289
Audit	–	9,225	9,225	9,225
Rent and utilities	140,019	–	140,019	128,674
Other office cost	138,536	–	138,536	116,549
	307,113	31,940	339,053	308,737

5. Employees

The average monthly number of persons employed by the Company is as follows:

	2020	2019
Tutors	12	11
Other NALA staff	22	23
Average number of staff	34	34

Breakdown of wages and salaries is as follows:

	2020 €	2019 €
Wages and salaries	1,228,302	1,105,227
Social security cost	132,779	118,335
Pension costs	65,421	62,091
	1,426,502	1,285,653

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer's pension cost and PRSI) is greater than €60,000 is 4 (2019: 6) as follows:

	2020	2019
€60,000 to €70,000	2	1
€70,001 to €80,000	2	-
€80,001 to €90,000	-	-
€90,001 to €100,000	-	-
€100,001 to €110,000	-	1
€110,001 to €120,000	-	-

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The total employee benefits (including employer's pension cost) of the key management personnel of the Company in 2020 amounted to €355,509 (2019: €261,044).

The key management personnel include the two employees in the role of CEO during the year, Inez Bailey and Colleen Dube, and the three members of the senior management team, Elaine Cohalan, Clare McNally and Paul Cahill.

The Directors were not paid and did not receive any other benefits from employment with the Company in the year (2019: €nil). Reimbursement to Directors for vouched travel expenses to Board Meetings amounted to €nil in 2020 (2019: €3,495).

In 2020, the CEO received employee benefits (including employer's pension cost and PRSI) of €108,543 (2019: €120,376). This represents total employee benefits for the CEO position which had two employees in post at different times during 2020.

6. Net Income for the Year

	2020 €	2019 €
Net income for the year is stated after charging:		
Depreciation and amortisation	46,433	14,031
Rent	110,000	110,000
Auditor's remuneration for external audit services	9,225	9,225

7. Intangible Assets

	2020 €	2019 €
Cost		
Balance at beginning of year	141,461	91,836
Addition	-	49,625
Balance at end of year	141,461	141,461
Accumulated Amortisation		
Balance at beginning of year	6,094	-
Amortisation	35,365	6,094
Balance at end of year	41,459	6,094
Carrying Amount		
At 31 December	100,002	135,367

8. Tangible Assets

	Office Equipment €	Fixtures, fittings and equipment €	Total €
Cost			
At 1 January 2020	148,201	32,590	180,791
Additions	20,743	–	20,743
At 31 December 2020	168,944	32,590	201,534
Accumulated Depreciation			
At 1 January 2020	130,331	30,012	160,343
Depreciation	10,396	672	11,068
At 31 December 2020	140,727	30,684	171,411
Carrying Amount			
At 31 December 2020	28,217	1,906	30,123
At 31 December 2019	17,870	2,578	20,448

9. Stocks

	2020 €	2019 €
Raw materials and consumables	1,190	1,190

The replacement cost of stock is not materially different to the balance sheet values.

The amount of stock recognised as an expense in 2020 amounted to €nil (2019: €1,085).

10. Debtors

	2020 €	2019 €
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	26,450	40,334
Prepayments	35,637	7,515
Accrued income	-	5,000
Other debtors	630	4,538
	<hr/> 62,717	<hr/> 57,387

Trade debtors and other debtors are due within the company's normal terms, which is 30 days.

Prepayments mainly pertain to advance payment for the maintenance of website.

11. Creditors

	2020 €	2019 €
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade creditors	64,556	4,919
Accruals	37,864	28,403
Deferred income	50,484	15,772
Other creditors including tax and social insurance	40,022	43,514
	<hr/> 192,926	<hr/> 92,608

Trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are payable at various dates in the next three months in accordance with the suppliers' usual terms and conditions.

Deferred income comprises payments received in advance for membership fees that are attributable to year 2021 and grants for which terms and conditions have not yet been met.

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Movements in deferred income are as follow:

	2020 €	2019 €
At 1 January	15,772	15,513
Credited to Statement of Financial Activities	(1,696,011)	(1,175,218)
Deferred during the year	1,730,724	1,175,477
At 31 December	50,485	15,772

Tax and social insurance are repayable at various dates over the coming months in accordance with the applicable statutory provisions.

12. Movement in funds

Current Year	Balance at beginning of year €	Income €	Expenditure €	Transfer of funds €	Balance at end of year €
Restricted funds					
Charitable activities	49,325	2,334,403	(2,295,942)	–	87,786
Unrestricted funds	597,571	212,232	(219,729)	–	590,074
Total funds	646,896	2,546,635	(2,515,671)	–	677,860

Prior Year	Balance at beginning of year €	Income €	Expenditure €	Transfer of funds €	Balance at end of year €
Restricted funds					
Charitable activities	44,350	2,122,521	(2,211,966)	94,420	49,325
Unrestricted funds	552,539	192,998	(53,546)	(94,420)	597,571
Total funds	596,889	2,315,519	(2,265,512)	–	646,896

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Restricted funds are attributable to the following projects. These are expected to be completed in the subsequent years.

	Balance at beginning of year €	Income €	Expenditure €	Balance at end of year €
Projects/ activities				
EU Cito	32,011	116,884	(71,925)	76,970
Portlaoise Prison	5,898	-	(5,898)	-
Irish Aid	1,500	-	(1,500)	-
TCD Research	9,916	-	-	9,916
Solas Core Grant	-	1,619,544	(1,619,544)	-
Solas Write-on	-	330,456	(330,456)	-
Solas FET Awareness	-	200,000	(200,000)	-
Solas Briefing Papers	-	31,343	(31,343)	-
Solas Numeracy	-	10,783	(10,783)	-
Solas Marking Progress	-	24,493	(24,493)	-
EAEA	-	900	-	900
Total funds	49,325	2,334,403	(2,295,942)	87,786

13. The Funds of the Company comprise the following:

Current Year	Unrestricted €	Restricted €	Total 2020 €
Fund balances at 31 December 2020 are represented by:			
Intangible assets	100,002	-	100,002
Tangible assets	30,123	-	30,123
Stocks	1,190	-	1,190
Debtors	62,717	-	62,717
Cash at bank and in hand	588,968	87,786	676,754
Creditors	(192,926)	-	(192,926)
Total net assets	589,171	87,786	677,860

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Prior Year	Unrestricted €	Restricted €	Total 2019 €
Fund balances at 31 December 2019 are represented by:			
Intangible assets	135,367	–	135,367
Tangible assets	20,448	–	20,448
Stocks	1,190	–	1,190
Debtors	57,387	–	57,387
Cash at bank and in hand	475,787	49,325	525,112
Creditors	(92,608)	–	(92,608)
Total net assets	597,571	49,325	646,896

14. Members' Liability

The Company is limited by guarantee, not having a share capital and consequently the liability of members is limited, subject to an undertaking by each member to contribute to the net assets or liabilities of the Company on winding up such amounts as may be required not exceeding €1.27.

15. Financial Instruments

	2020 €	2019 €
Carrying amount of financial assets		
Financial assets measured at amortised cost	703,834	574,984
Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	106,061	45,758

16. Operating Lease Commitments

Lessee

The Company has a lease of ten years relating to its business premises at Sandford Lodge, Sandford Close, Ranelagh, Dublin 6. Rent expense recognised in 2020 amounted to €110,000 (2019: €110,000).

The total future minimum lease payments to be paid under non-cancellable operating leases as at 31 December are as follows:

	2020 €	2019 €
Within one year	110,000	110,000
After one year but no more than five years	440,000	440,000
More than five years	174,167	284,167
	<hr/> 724,167	<hr/> 834,167

17. Related Party Transactions

There were no related party transactions during the year which are required to be disclosed.

Transactions with Key Management Personnel

Other than as set out at Note 5 there were no transactions with key management personnel during the current or previous financial year.

18. Control

The Company is controlled by the board of directors.

19. Subsequent Events

There have been no significant events affecting the company since the year end.

20. Approval of Financial Statements

The directors approved the financial statements on: 3 March 2021

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

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.

Cedefop

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

CITO

Check-In, Take-Off is a NALA project that aims to identify and test a scalable approach to providing skills assessment for adults with unmet literacy needs.

COVID-19

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease. View our Plain English guide to COVID-19 terms on our website **www.nala.ie**

DE

Department of Education

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.

DEASP

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

DFHERIS

Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

EAAL

European Agenda for Adult Learning

EAPN

European Anti-Poverty Network

EBSN

European Basic Skills Network

EPALE

European Platform for Adult Learning in Europe

ESOL

English for Speakers of Other Languages

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

Fønix AS

Fønix AS are the largest organisation in Norway providing support to adults accessing and returning to employment and language 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.

NOU

Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed

Léargas

Léargas manage international and national exchange programmes in education, youth and community work, and vocational education and training.

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 and 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.

PQASSO

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

PPN

Public Participation Network

Plain English

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

Professional development (PD)

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.

Policy

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

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.

STEM

STEM is a term used to group together Science, Math, Engineering and Technology.

WIT

Waterford Institute of Technology

Published by:

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)

Sandford Lodge

Sandford Close

Ranelagh

Dublin 6

D06 YF65

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ISBN 978-1-907171-45-1

Looking ahead to 2021

In 2021, we will work:

- in partnership to add value to the delivery of the Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2020-2024 as it relates to adult literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy;
- to create and share supports to improve literacy, numeracy and digital literacy in healthcare and community development;
- to increase literacy, numeracy and digital literacy through research, innovation, and effective communication; and
- with our partners to support the delivery of the new 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland.

Registered Charity Number: 20020965

Charity Number: 8506

Company Number: 342807

National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)

Sandford Lodge

Sandford Close

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Adult Literacy is co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Social Fund as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020.