

## INFORMATION BRIEFING

### National Early Years Access Initiative

The National Early Years Access Initiative is a collaborative partnership between The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Mount Street Club Trustees, the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMYCA), Early Years Education Policy Unit, (DES) and Pobal.

It is a tailored initiative to fund a select number of local demonstration projects that collectively have the capacity to:

- Demonstrate innovative inter-agency responses to the provision of early years care, education and development;
- Improve access to early childhood care and education services;
- Increase participation in early childhood care and education services;
- Inform a community-based model to underpin the local delivery of joined up services to children and families;
- Involve children and families as active participants in the programme;
- Contribute to the development of robust evidence-based evaluation;
- Influence early years' mainstream practice and provision;
- Contribute to the ongoing development of early years' policy.

The primary target population is 0-6 year old children and families residing in socio-economically disadvantaged areas. The secondary target population is early years service providers; Children's Services Committees (CSCs), City and County Childcare Committees (CCCs), educational establishments, local, voluntary and community organisations and local communities.

The Initiative is based on a recognition that Síolta, The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education (CECDC, 2006) and Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2009) are the fundamental bedrocks and reference points for the future growth and development of the early years care and education sectors. Together they provide the strategic quality frameworks for the early years care and education sectors. Therefore it is essential that all projects are designed in ways that reflect various aspects of these frameworks but tailored to local needs.

Additionally the following activity areas apply:

- The promotion and dissemination of quality improvements through the use of the Síolta and Aistear frameworks;
- Upskilling the early childhood care and education workforce;
- Fostering improved health/ learning and school readiness outcomes among young children;
- Developing parent's skills and improved parenting support;
- Demonstrating a continuum of services for the 'whole child' linking and integrating the child, family, local services and the community.

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### Outline of Application and Appraisal Process

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
<b>15<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Briefing and networking workshop</li><li>▪ Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI's)</li></ul>
<b>16<sup>th</sup> August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Deadline for submission of EOI's</li></ul>
<b>Mid-August to mid-October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Screening of EOI's</li><li>▪ Selection of applicants for progression onto full application stage</li><li>▪ Communication of decisions to applicant groups</li><li>▪ Identification of supports required by applicant groups</li><li>▪ Commencement of capacity-building of applicant groups</li></ul>
<b>Mid-October to mid-November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Submission of full applications</li><li>▪ Commencement of appraisal process</li><li>▪ Recommendations to the NEYAI Steering Group and Pobal Board</li></ul>
<b>December - January 2011</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Communication of funding decisions to all applicants and commencement of contractual process with successful applicants</li></ul>