

Benefacts |

Benefacts
Annual Report
2020

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Funding for Benefacts to build a data infrastructure for Irish nonprofits has been received from the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform and from a number of Irish and international philanthropies.



THE IRELAND FUNDS

 **Jerome L. Greene Foundation**



ssgt
st.stephen's
green trust

 **The Community
Foundation for Ireland**

Chairman's introduction

2020 was a seminal year for everyone, challenged as we all were by the impact of Covid-19. In spite of the personal and professional stresses of Covid-19 and the resulting lockdowns, the team at Benefacts displayed exemplary flexibility in moving overnight to fully-remote working, producing as strong a performance as they have ever done in the six years since Benefacts was established, as will be clear from this report.

2020 was a year of particular challenges for Benefacts. The principal source of our funding – a multi-year agreement with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform - concluded at the end of 2020. Much energy, time and resources were devoted to discussions with senior public servants in that Department and others, focussed on charting a way for Benefacts to keep its doors open and its database active and publicly available.

We are grateful to the Minister for the extension of funding for 2021 to enable consideration of how best to integrate Benefacts data solutions within government. We look forward to engaging with him and his officials about a more durable solution to enable the continuation of Benefacts services, including the provision of reliable, extensive data on Ireland's €14 billion social economy to our thousands of users across government, the nonprofit sector, philanthropic donors and the general public.

As the managing director notes in her introduction, Benefacts has created the basis for a data infrastructure serving the entire nonprofit sector and its stakeholders. There are precedents for how government can procure services from a non-commercial company like Benefacts where there is a demonstrable public good of this kind. We will be proactive in putting forward plans and proposals but other voices also need to be heard, including from the sector itself whose work is after all at the heart of the database asset which Benefacts has created. Others with a key stake include our loyal philanthropic co-funders, and all those who value and/or use the services we provide.

As the nonprofit sector continues to deal with the fallout of Covid-19, as e-Government (finally) comes to life in Ireland and as the transposition of EU regulations makes Open Data the law of the land, the need for the continuation of the services of Benefacts has never been more critical.

Facing into 2021 there is much to hope for, in an end to the pandemic and the stress and heartbreak it is causing, followed by a reopening of our society and economy. At Benefacts, we hope too that the year will bring a sustainable future for the services we provide.



Tom Boland
Chairman

Managing Director's introduction

In 2015, Benefacts set out to make Irish nonprofits and their work more accessible and more transparent for policy-makers and analysts, people working in the sector, their funders, and the general public. Six years later we have established the go-to resource for free, publicly-available data on Ireland's €14 billion social economy. Registered users of our web-based services (our APIs, Benefacts Analytics and Who Funds What) grew by 43% in 2020. These are mainly used by public servants to access structured current and historic data in ways that help reduce the overheads associated with €7bn worth of current grant expenditure by the State annually. We have published an annual series of analysis reports, which for the first time rendered to the public an account of the work of the entire sector.

Recycling is at the heart of Benefacts' business model. We re-use data already generated for other reasons - usually to meet some regulatory compliance requirement - and put it to some other purpose. Like all recycling projects, there's a certain amount of ingenuity required, and the finished product depends on the quality of the raw materials. In that regard we are fortunate in Ireland to be among Europe's leading adopters of Open Data principles - the idea that data which doesn't have to be private should be available to anyone to access, use and share.

This report, and the five that preceded it, demonstrates how our work of data mining, cleaning, digitising, classifying and aggregating has created the basis for a data infrastructure serving the entire nonprofit sector and its stakeholders - across government, funders, services users and the general public. Our data is embedded in the National Accounts prepared by the Central Statistics Office, and is relied on by policy-makers, decision-makers, public and private researchers in Ireland and overseas, as well as professional service providers, journalists and commentators. We have now reached the end of the proof-of-concept phase of our project and it is time for our own stakeholders, chiefly our funders, to consider whether and how to take our work to scale.

2020 was a year when people made particular use of our data to support decisions in response to the Covid-19 emergency. We were called upon by public servants, nonprofits and private donors alike to help model the likely impacts of a reduction in revenues, an increase in demand for services and a possible collapse in fundraising income. Next year and in the years that follow, this data will become even more pertinent as charities that rely heavily on fund-raising, and nonprofits whose business involves interaction with the public, come to terms with the losses of '20/'21 and the changing face of the sector at large.



Patricia Quinn
Managing Director

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General information

Directors	<p>Tom Boland (Chairperson)</p> <p>Rory Coveney</p> <p>Bernie Cullinan (resigned 28th March 2020)</p> <p>Emma Lane-Spollen</p> <p>Stephen Kinsella (appointed 28th May 2020)</p> <p>Bob Ottenhoff (USA)</p> <p>Patricia Quinn (Managing Director)</p> <p>Philip Smith (UK)</p> <p>Anne Vaughan (appointed 7th February 2020)</p>
Secretary	Geraldine Sweeney
Company Number	553387
Registered Office	<p>6 Merrion Square</p> <p>Dublin D02 FF95</p>
Auditor	<p>KPMG</p> <p>1 Stokes Place</p> <p>St. Stephen's Green</p> <p>Dublin D02 DE03</p>
Bank	<p>Bank of Ireland</p> <p>St. Stephen's Green</p> <p>Dublin D02 HF62</p>
Solicitors	<p>O'Connors Solicitors</p> <p>8 Clare Street</p> <p>Dublin D02 E021</p> <p>Linda Scales and Associates</p> <p>Castleview House</p> <p>Sandymount Green</p> <p>Dublin D04 DF29</p>

Directors' Report

The directors present their report for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Benefacts' purpose and key objectives

Benefacts was established to make the work of civil society organisations in Ireland more transparent and more accessible - to themselves, to their stakeholders and to the public at large. This means improving information about and understanding of the work of all Irish nonprofits

- promoting greater public confidence in the use of the public's money
- providing decision-makers with timely access to reliable data, collected and classified in a way that facilitates analysis
- devising and developing web-based services to help reduce bureaucratic overheads and support administrative reform, specifically in line with the Government's public service reform agenda
- providing the sector with data and informational tools that will support business planning at the level of organisations and sub-sectors

Principal activities

The principal activity of the company is the creation, maintenance and deployment of an extensive database derived from the public regulatory disclosures (including the financial statements where available) of Irish nonprofits and public sector bodies, and the provision of data, information, analysis and analytic services derived from the database.

Review of 2020

Using Open Data to build and maintain the Database of Irish Nonprofits

Benefacts harvests data on nonprofits from many public sources, mainly under Open Data licence terms. Data from Public Participation Networks, which are administered through 31 local authorities in Ireland, is generally not available under Open Data regulations, and - like the data from church bodies - is collected by Benefacts for research purposes only.

Very little of the data harvested by Benefacts is published by public sector bodies in machine-readable form.

Review of 2020

(continued)

In 2020, to support our new web-based directory of Government grant decisions *Who Funds What*, we began to access the reported grant decisions of 9 public sector bodies (PSB's) that are the principal sources of funding at scale to the nonprofit sector. The data is accessed from the PSB's in multiple formats. Funding data for The Arts Council & Sport Ireland is available on the State Body's own website while data for Department of Foreign Affairs, the Health Services Executive and Tusla - Child and Family Agency can be found in their Annual Reports. Data for the Department of Rural & Community Development was found in press releases and on Pobal's website. Data for the remaining three funders, the Department of Social Protection, the Department of Further & Higher Education and the Department of Justice was volunteered or furnished directly to Benefacts on request. Sources of data newly added in 2020 are highlighted in the table overleaf.

The degree to which public sector bodies are ready (or not) to provide the public with ready access to current grant expenditure data will become more pertinent following the adoption into Irish law of the latest EU Open Data directive (2019/1024).

Review of 2020

(continued)

Sources of the data in Benefacts Database of Irish Nonprofits

Source	Number of Entities	Machine-readable?
Companies Registration Office	9,970 companies limited by guarantee; 91 public benefit designated activity companies; 40 private or public limited companies; 55 trade unions; 666 friendly societies	Some
Charities Regulatory Authority	11,310 registered charities	Some
Department of Education	3,920 Schools	Yes
Department of Foreign Affairs*	Reported grant expenditure to 44 nonprofits in Ireland and 170 nonprofits overseas	No
Department of Further and Higher Education*	Report grant expenditure to 36 nonprofits	No
Department of Justice*	Reported grant expenditure to 370 nonprofits	Yes
Department of Rural and Community Development*	Reported grant expenditure to 480 nonprofits	No
Department of Social Protection*	Reported grant expenditure to 896 nonprofits	Yes
Health Services Executive*	Reported grant expenditure to 34 S.38 and 455 S.39 bodies	No
Housing Agency	287 Approved Housing Bodies signed up to the Voluntary Regulation Code (The Code)	No
Library of the Houses of the Oireachtas	26 charter bodies	No
Public Participation Networks in 23 counties	13,000 registered local nonprofits especially associations, clubs and societies	No
Representative Church Body	800 churches, dioceses, parishes of the Church of Ireland	No
Revenue	6,335 charities eligible for tax relief on donations	Yes
Revenue	7,179 charities eligible for tax relief	Yes
Revenue	2,652 Sports bodies eligible for tax relief	Yes
Roman Catholic Church in Ireland	2,340 churches, congregations, dioceses, parishes and other bodies of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland	No
Sport Ireland*	Reported grant expenditure to 90 nonprofits	No
Standards in Public Office Commission	26 political parties	No
The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon*	Reported grant expenditure to 225 nonprofits	No
Tusla - Child and Family Agency*	Reported grant expenditure to 711 nonprofits	Yes

* Sources of data newly added to WFW for 2020

Review of 2020

(continued)



The Benefacts database is a very welcome and an extremely user-friendly publicly accessible source of knowledge and facts about the non-profit sector in Ireland. The ability to track changes over multiple years is a significant value-add over everything else that has been or is available to policy-makers, academics and the sector. The knowledge base that the data creates has been of huge benefit to The Wheel in our work to promote public and political understanding of the non-profit sector's value and importance. I sincerely hope that it remains available to the public, to the sector and to policy-makers for years to come.

(Deirdre Garvey, CEO, The Wheel)

The data and insights generated by Benefacts helps bring Ireland in line with that available in other countries. As well as contributing to the overall knowledge and understanding of the sector in Ireland, they enable comparisons and even benchmarking with nonprofit sectors internationally – which can in turn help improve the performance and impact of our organisations.

(Siobhán McGee, CEO, ActionAid Ireland)

Free public website including Third Sector and Philanthropy Analysis Reports

In Q4, we produced our first analysis of the sources, scale and targets of [philanthropic giving in Ireland](#). To augment the available disclosures of 46 philanthropic organisations, we asked 74 more to share a report of their awardees, and 24% responded positively. We hope to improve on this in 2021.

We also published the first Benefacts [analysis of charitable giving](#) derived from responses over 35 years to the Central Statistics Office's 5-yearly Household Budget Survey. The report was produced by Prof Oonagh Breen (Professor of Law at the Sutherland School of Law, University College Dublin) and Dr James Carroll (Research Fellow, School of Economics, Trinity College Dublin). Its findings are concerning for charities, many of which rely on public donations to a considerable degree.

We launched an upgrade to benefacts.ie in Q1 and saw a growth in all website performance metrics. The launch of our 5th annual report on the nonprofit sector in May attracted an increase in visitors our free public website, with 361,000 unique page views across the year, up 24% on 2019.

According to a survey circulated in Q4, most users of Benefacts free public website work for nonprofit organisations or serve on their Boards. 98% of respondents told us that they trusted the content 'absolutely' or 'a lot' and 89% found the website 'easy' or 'very easy' to use. Asked about the one thing that would improve the site, they said more geo data, and more governance and narrative information including evidence of beneficiary impacts.

Review of 2020

(continued)

Benefacts data is core to verifying and interrogating governance and financial data for both applicants to Rethink Ireland and existing awardees. The ability to commission information on specific topics is a huge help to us in ensuring that we are fulfilling our own due diligence and government requirements as we make grant decisions.

(Deirdre Mortell, CEO, Rethink Ireland)

Data, information and analysis services

We continued to provide the quarterly feed of c.12,000 nonprofit accounts data to the Central Statistics Office, and daily feeds to the State's Open Data repository data.gov.ie and to the screens of Revenue analysts. Custom data, analysis or information services were provided during the year to 2into3, Appian Asset Management, Carmichael, the Department of Health, the Department of Rural & Community Development, the Department of Social Protection, Irish Life, National Council for the Blind of Ireland, Philanthropy Ireland, Pieta House, Rethink Ireland, Tusla, and The Wheel. 17 nonprofits availed of our new service providing a 5-year analysis of their own data to any nonprofit that wants it.

Web services

During the year, Benefacts built and launched a new web service providing a single digital point of access to grant decisions totalling €7bn from 9 funders under 40 grant programmes to more than 2,700 nonprofits. Benefacts *Who Funds What* (BETA) was a proof-of-concept project, co-funded by six public sector bodies to demonstrate the utility of a one-stop shop for information on all State grants to the sector.

Future Plans

Ready access to accurate data is of primary importance in governance over entire sectors. Benefacts has recognised this importance and has provided a critical support to government agencies and others in both monitoring performance and analysing cross-sectoral data. Policy-making needs to be driven by factual data and Benefacts has provided systems to facilitate this.

(Martin O'Sullivan, Deputy Director, The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon)

In Q2 2021, Benefacts will produce a special report on Charities and Covid-19, in cooperation with sector lead bodies, which will be released to coincide with our 2021 sector analysis report.

An updated Philanthropy in Ireland Report will be released in Q4 with fresh data, and Benefacts Report on Charitable Giving will be updated once the 2021/22 CSO Household Budget Survey data is available. In the next phase of our project to make giving in Ireland more transparent, we hope to augment our philanthropy analysis with the benefit of legacy and bequest data held by the Charities Regulator, and with additional disclosures from Irish and international philanthropies.

We will update Benefacts *Who Funds What* to incorporate 2020 grants data including special Covid payments to the sector from Government, and we will promote the use of Benefacts Analytics more widely among funders and regulators.

We will cooperate with Government to review our governance and structures, and take practical steps in consultation with all of our stakeholders to support the consolidation of our data, processes and technologies in a way that secures their ongoing availability to the widest body of users into the future.

Governance and Organisation

Company Information

Benefacts is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee without share capital. Its constitution provides for an “asset lock” meaning in the event of its wind-up, any residual assets will be distributed to other organisation(s) with like public benefit purposes. Its directors are appointed by the members of the company under the provisions of its constitution.

Benefacts normally operates from its registered address in central Dublin although for most of 2020, because of Covid-19 restrictions, all of its staff worked remotely.

Directors’ service on the board is voluntary (unpaid). The managing director is remunerated in her capacity as chief executive officer (Note 6). No other executive serves as a Director of the company. Senior managers regularly attend meetings of the Board and its sub-committees as required.

The Company Secretary is Geraldine Sweeney.

Directors of the company

The current directors are listed above in General Information (page 3) and below under the Meetings Schedule & Attendance (page 9). Non-executive Directors serve for a three-year term and for up to three successive terms.

Biographical information on all directors is published on the company’s [website](#).

Competencies

Directors of Benefacts are recruited in line with a competency framework that takes account of the company’s mission and values. Specifically, the company seeks to ensure that its Board has expertise in information technologies especially in the context of start-ups; in the work of nonprofits and philanthropies; in public communications; and in public governance with particular reference to the current policy and regulatory environment.

On appointment, each Director receives a copy of the governance handbook as well as a detailed briefing on the work of the company, and meets team leads to familiarise themselves with its technologies and processes.

Meetings

During 2020 the Board of Benefacts met 12 times, with all meetings after March held remotely. A table setting out the attendance of directors at meetings of the Board is given below. One member retired and two members joined the Board in the course of the year.

Non-Executive Director	Joined the Board	Retired from the Board	Meetings attended in 2020 (possible meetings)
Tom Boland	19th Dec 2016		12 (12)
Rory Coveney	4th May 2016		12 (12)
Bernie Cullinan	1st Dec 2015	28th Mar 2020	2 (2)
Stephen Kinsella	28th May 2020		7 (10)
Emma Lane-Spollen	27th Sept 2018		11 (12)
Bob Ottenhoff (US)	2nd April 2015		12 (12)
Philip Smith (UK)	28th Nov 2014		11 (12)
Anne Vaughan	7th Feb 2020		11 (11)
Executive Director			
Patricia Quinn	28th Nov 2014		12 (12)

Company Information

(continued)

Governance standards

Between 2015 and 2019 Benefacts complied on a voluntary basis with the provisions of the Governance Code, which was a governance standard for nonprofit organisations promulgated by sector leaders.

During 2019, by agreement with its principal funder the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the company transitioned to a compliance regime in line with the provisions of the Governance Code for the Boards of State Bodies. This was in effect in 2020 and it provides, among other things, for Directors to provide the company with an annually-updated statement of interests, and a statement of compliance with the company's ethical and business codes of conduct.

An external Board governance review undertaken in Q4 found that in their work as Directors of the company, Board members are honest yet constructive; they are ready to ask questions and to challenge the MD; they respect one another and actively seek out other Directors' views and contributions, and they appear to spend the appropriate amount of time on important matters.

The external reviewer said that these represented important aspects of an engaged culture. He commented that there may be a need for building the board further depending on the results of the strategic review and, in particular, the possibility of entering a more entrepreneurial phase.

The Chairman reports annually to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform about the company's governance standards including its compliance with the Code where appropriate. Formal quarterly meetings provide for assurance as to the company's compliance with the terms of its funding agreement – including its governance standards – which is published on the company's website.

In line with emergent changes in strategy and in dialogue with the lead funder and others, the Directors will review the constitutional and governance arrangements for the company in the course of the year.

Audit, Governance and Risk

The Audit, Governance and Risk Committee met 3 times during the year. The work of the Committee is chiefly concerned with financial strategy and oversight, review of management accounts, approval of financial and other business procedures, governance standards, and the review of business risk and mitigation. The Committee also monitors governance compliance reporting. The terms of reference of the Committee are published on the company's website.

		Meetings attended in 2020 (3 possible meetings)
Bernie Cullinan	Retired 28th March	1 (1)
Philip Smith		3
John McNamara		3
Emma Lane-Spollen		2 (2)
Tom Boland	Acting Chair	2 (2)

The Committee includes one non-Director with senior audit experience in the nonprofit sector, John McNamara. The other members are Philip Smith and Emma Lane-Spollen. Bernie Cullinan was the Chair of the Committee and subsequent to her resigning as a Director in March 2020, Tom Boland (Chairperson) took on the role as acting Chair of the Committee. In her capacity as Head of Finance, Paula Nyland attends every meeting of the Committee.

Company Information

(continued)

People

During 2020, Benefacts had an average of 14 full-time equivalent staff:

- five with specialist data management, programming and IT skills, who are responsible for the design and quality of the database, the production and maintenance of the website and web-based services;
- seven full-time equivalents (11 people working part-time) with financial accounting expertise, who are responsible for harvesting information from financial statements and analysing the data;
- two with sectoral, general management, external engagement and project governance experience, who manage the project and deliver on its accountabilities to funders and other stakeholders.

Before the pandemic-related lockdowns began in Q1, up to half of Benefacts staff already worked remotely. After March, all staff were supported with IT, furniture, other facilities and professional support to work from home.

Staff are encouraged to maintain their skills and professional networks, and are supported to do so. Staff performance is reviewed and managed through a formal process.

Funding

Benefacts funding during the year was in the form of grants (in core funding and project funding) and fees for services.

Core funding

2020 was the third and final year of Benefacts' second three-year funding agreement with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, whose value totalled €2.85m between 2018 and 2020, or €950,000 per annum (note 3).

Project funding

Tusla provided funding of €85,395 towards phase two of the Benefacts Analytics project, for support in data analysis and analytics (note 3).

Philanthropic Funding

2020 was the second of a two-year donor-advised gift of €92,443 from the JL Greene Foundation (New York) received via the Ireland Funds (note 3).

Earned revenues

Service fees for the provision of datasets, analysis reports and due diligence services for public, private and nonprofit sector clients generated €49,284 in earned revenues (including €9,990 from the Department of Rural and Community Development).

Financial review

Income

During 2020, Benefacts received a core grant of €950,000, project funding totalling €85,395, philanthropic funding of €92,443 and earned revenues of €49,284. As costs incurred in the year exceeded income received, deferred grants of €164,095 were recognised in the Income & Expenditure Account. The ratio of core funding, project grants and other services from the State compared to revenues from other sources was 87:13, and this is the pattern that Directors consider likely to be sustained, with donations and fee earnings unlikely to exceed 20% of total income for the foreseeable future. This is because of the high level of State funding in the sector, and the very marginal net value of philanthropic income to Irish nonprofits.

Financial review

(continued)

Expenditure

The expenditure of €1.34m in 2020 detailed in Note 4 was mainly associated with the costs of keeping the database up to date during the year; maintaining and further developing the free public website; producing and promoting analysis reports on the nonprofit sector and on giving in Ireland; and developing, testing and delivering a range of data services and web applications.

Risk profile, reserve policy

Aside from the business risks associated with data production and publication, the main financial risks to the company in 2020 were associated with uncertainties concerning the future plans of the company's principal funder, the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (DPER). Given the high reliance on this source of funding, the combination of foreseen and unforeseen strategic risks (the change of Government following lengthy coalition negotiations, the public health emergency arising from Covid-19), meant that negotiations to reverse the previous decision to terminate funding and to provide further funding in 2021 only matured at the end of Q4 as DPER decided to ensure continued development of data, analysis and analytic solutions derived from the database.

Business risk flowed chiefly from the uncertainty surrounding future funding, and led a number of potential funding partners in Government to withhold project funding pending clarification of this. Operational risk was mitigated by quality assurance and verification processes. Financial risk was managed by means of detailed performance/ reporting arrangements and payment schedules with all funders, and provision for a cash reserve equivalent to an average of six weeks expenditure. This is less than the provision in the company's reserve policy (three months expenditure) but given the profile of contractual arrangements and cash funding from the lead funder was considered adequate.

Financial Plan

Benefacts start-up costs – the establishment of its systems, processes and database assets – were co-funded between 2015 and 2017 by the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform, the Atlantic Philanthropies and the Ireland Funds. Thereafter, project funding from a group of Government departments and agencies supported the development of new web-based information and analytics solutions. These have been released to registered users in the public service and include

- Benefacts Analytics, which supplies digital access to up to 200 fields of financial, governance, compliance and risk data for five years per entity (derived from financial statements and compliance returns)
- Benefacts *Who Funds What*, which is a single platform for publishing all of the current grants provided under any programme by every public sector body (PSB).

Currently, core funding is provided only to maintain the Benefacts database, publish the free public website, and meet the data needs of the CSO, Revenue and the Irish Government's open data portal Data.Gov.ie.

In the future, Benefacts proposes to continue to fund its operations on a cost recovery basis, with core funding to maintain the delivery of essential data services to the CSO and others, co-funding from multiple PSBs to take Benefacts Analytics and *Who Funds What* to scale, project funding from public and private sources to meet the costs of further development and new initiatives, and fee earnings to cover the costs of delivering bespoke services.

Financial review

(continued)

Based on the interest shown in its work and the value placed on the continuation of its services by funders in government, philanthropies and elsewhere, the Directors are confident that the company can trade as a going concern in 2021 and beyond.

Results for the year

The financial results of the company for the reporting period are set out in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and in the related notes.

Research and development

The company continued to develop database systems and data analytical tools during the year.

Events since the balance sheet date

No significant events have occurred since the year end.

Accounting records

The directors believe that they have complied with the requirements of sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014 with regard to maintaining adequate accounting records by employing accounting personnel with appropriate expertise and by providing adequate resources to the financial function.

The accounting records of the company are maintained at 6 Merrion Square, Dublin D02 FF95.

Disclosure of Relevant Audit Information

So far as each person who was a director at the date of approving this report is aware, there is no relevant audit information needed by the auditor in connection with preparing its report, of which the auditor is unaware. Having made enquiries of fellow directors and the company's auditor, each director has taken all the steps that he/she is obliged to take as a director in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

Auditor

In accordance with Section 383(2) of the Companies Act 2014, KPMG, Chartered Accountants, will continue in office.

This report was approved by the board and signed on its behalf by:



Tom Boland (Chair)



Emma Lane-Spollen (Director)

9th February 2021

Statement of directors' responsibilities in respect of the directors' report and the financial statements

The directors are responsible for preparing the directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law they have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

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 and of its profit or loss for that year. 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 applicable Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- assess the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern; and
- use the going concern basis of accounting unless they either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2014.

They are responsible for such internal controls as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

The directors are also responsible for preparing a directors' report that complies with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

On behalf of the board



Tom Boland (Chair)



Emma Lane-Spollen (Director)

Independent auditor's report to the members of Benefacts

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Benefacts ('the Company') for the year ended 31 December 2020 set out on pages 17 to 27, which comprise the Statement of Income & Expenditure; the Statement of Financial Position; the Cash Flow Statement and related notes, including the summary of significant accounting policies set out in note 2. The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in the United Kingdom by the Financial Reporting Council.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Company as at [date] and of its profit [loss] for the [period/year] then ended;
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland; and
- the financial statements 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 ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard 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.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information presented in the Annual Report together with the financial statements. The other information comprises the information included in the directors' report. The financial statements and our auditors report thereon do not comprise part of the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or, except as explicitly stated below, any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether, based on our financial statements audit work, the information therein is materially misstated or inconsistent with the financial statements or our audit knowledge. Based solely on that work we have not identified material misstatements in the other information.

Based solely on our work on the other information, we report that:

- we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report
- in our opinion, the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements;
- in our opinion, the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014.

Independent auditor's report to the members of Benefacts (continued)

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

We have obtained all the information and explanations which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit.

In our opinion 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.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions required by sections 305 to 312 of the Act are not made. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Respective responsibilities and restrictions on use

Responsibilities of directors for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the directors' responsibilities statement set out on page 14 the directors are responsible for: the preparation of the financial statements including being satisfied that they give a true and fair view; such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; 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 they either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

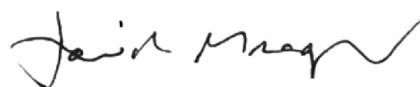
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 fuller description of our responsibilities is provided on IAASA's website at <http://www.iaasa.ie/Publications/Auditing-standards/International-Standards-on-Auditing-for-use-in-Ire/Description-of-the-auditor-s-responsibilities-for>

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.



David Meagher
for and on behalf of KPMG
Chartered Accountants, Statutory Audit Firm

1 Stokes Place
St. Stephen's Green
Dublin 2

9th February 2021

Statement of Income and Expenditure

for year ended 31 December 2020

	<i>Note</i>	Year ended 31 Dec 2020	Year ended 31 Dec 2019
		€	€
Income	3	1,341,217	1,347,365
Cost of operations	4	<u>(994,602)</u>	<u>(942,118)</u>
Gross surplus		346,615	405,247
Administrative expenses	4	<u>(346,483)</u>	<u>(404,867)</u>
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation		132	380
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	7	(132)	(380)
Surplus for the financial year		<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>

Statement of Financial Position

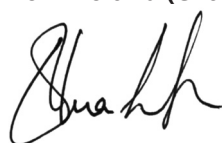
as at 31 December 2020

	<i>Note</i>	31 Dec 2020	31 Dec 2019
		€	€
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	8	<u>18,201</u>	<u>20,002</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	9	14,656	48,174
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>257,432</u>	<u>380,717</u>
		272,088	428,891
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	<u>290,289</u>	<u>448,893</u>
		(18,201)	(20,002)
Net current liabilities		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net assets		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Reserves			
Income and expenditure account		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>

On behalf of the board



Tom Boland (Chair)



Emma Lane-Spollen (Director)

9th February 2021

Cash Flow Statement

for year ended 31 December 2020

	<i>Note</i>	Year ended 31 Dec 2020	Year ended 31 Dec 2019
		€	€
Cash flows from operating activities			
Surplus for the year		-	-
<i>Adjustments for:</i>			
Depreciation		9,282	5,785
Decrease/(increase) in trade and other debtors		33,518	(1,269)
Decrease in trade and other creditors		(158,604)	(20,452)
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(115,804)	(15,936)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible assets	8	(7,481)	(17,956)
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(7,481)	(17,956)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(123,285)	(33,892)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		380,717	414,609
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year		257,432	380,717

Notes

(forming part of the financial statements)

1. Basis of preparation

Benefacts (the 'company') is a company limited by guarantee and incorporated and domiciled in Ireland. The registered number of the company is 553387 and the registered address of the company is 6 Merrion Square, Dublin, D02 FF95.

These financial statements were prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland ("FRS 102"). There have been no material departures from the Standard. The presentation currency of these financial statements is Euro.

Going Concern

After reviewing the company's forecasts and projections, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company will have resources to enable it to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The company therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 Income

Income is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure when the effect of the transaction or other event results in an increase in the company's assets. Income from grant agreements is recognised when the activity has been undertaken. Income already received in relation to future years but not yet expended is shown in creditors as deferred income.

2.2 Operating leases

Rentals in respect of operating leases are charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure as incurred.

2.3 Taxation

Taxation on income and expenditure is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure. Corporation taxation for the period is up to date. The company is in compliance with Circular 44/2006 "Tax Clearance Procedures: Grants, Subsidies and Similar Type Payments".

2.4 Basic financial instruments

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash balances and call deposits.

2.5 Employee benefits

Retirement benefits for members of the company's defined contribution scheme are funded over employees' period of service by way of contributions which are charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure as they become payable.

2. Accounting policies continued

2.6 Government grants

Government grants are credited to the income and expenditure account in periods in which the related costs are incurred. Because the company is in receipt of government funding, these financial statements have been presented according to the standards set out in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 "Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds".

2.7 Tangible assets

Tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost less estimated residual value of all tangible fixed assets over their expected useful lives using the straight-line method. The rate applicable for computer hardware is 3 years and the rate applicable for furniture is 10 years.

2.8 Impairment of assets

At each reporting period fixed assets are reviewed to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If there is an indication of possible impairment, the recoverable amount of any affected asset is estimated and compared with its carrying amount. If the estimated recoverable amount is lower, the carrying value is reduced to its estimated recoverable amount, and an impairment loss is recognised in the statement of income and expenditure.

2.9 Judgements in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with FRS 102 requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that effect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. Actual results may differ from these estimates. Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimates are revised and in any future periods affected. No material estimates have been made in the preparation of these accounts.

3. Income

Income was derived from government and philanthropic grants, and from fees for services.

All Government grants are restricted to the delivery of the project goals as specified within the contracts between the company and its respective funders.

Two separate government grants were received in 2020. According to the terms of the respective funding agreements:

- 1) the grant from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform funded the maintenance and development of a database of Irish civil society organisations; the design, creation, production and maintenance web-based services including a free public website; and uploads to www.data.gov.ie and data services for institutional users including the Central Statistics Office.
- 2) the grant from Tusla funded the Benefacts Analytics pilot project in 2020.

Income was received from the following:

Sources	Term of funding	Purpose	Full Commitment	2020	2020	2020	2020	2020	2019
				€	€	€	€	€	€
Grants									
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)	2018-2020	Nonprofits DB and Website	2,850,000	297,642	950,000	182,497	1,065,145	963,032	
Department of Health	2018-2019	Analytics Pilot - Phase 1/Grant	50,000	-	-	-	-	25,000	
Department of Social Protection	2018-2019	Analytics Pilot - Phase 1/Grant	50,000	-	-	-	-	25,000	
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	2018-2019	Analytics Pilot - Phase 1/Grant	50,000	-	-	-	-	24,999	
Tusla	2018-2019	Analytics Pilot - Phase 1/Grant	50,000	-	-	-	-	25,000	
Tusla	2019-2020	Analytics Pilot - Phase 2/Grant	98,669	-	85,395	-	85,395	13,274	
Kildare County Council	2018-2019	Analytics Pilot - Phase 1/Grant	50,000	-	-	-	-	25,000	
Fingal County Council	2018-2019	Analytics Pilot - Phase 1/Grant	50,000	-	-	-	-	25,000	
Fees for Services									
Department of Rural and Community Development	2020	Analysis of Social Enterprise in Ireland	9,990	-	9,990	-	9,990	-	
The Housing Agency	2018-2019	Data Analysis Report/Fee	400	-	-	-	-	400	
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	2019-2020	"Digital First Project"/Fee	7,200	-	-	-	-	7,200	
Kildare County Council	2019	Training	600	-	-	-	-	600	
Other Earned Income		Data Analysis Report/Fee	-	-	39,294	-	39,294	24,519	
Philanthropic and Corporate Donations									
The Ireland Funds		Philanthropic Grant	-	48,950	92,443	-	141,393	168,341	
The Community Foundation		Philanthropic Grant	-	-	-	-	-	10,000	
St Stephen's Green Trust		Philanthropic Grant	-	-	-	-	-	5,000	
Katharine Howard Foundation		Philanthropic Grant	-	-	-	-	-	5,000	
			3,266,859	346,592	1,177,122	182,497	1,341,217	1,347,365	

4. Expenditure

Expenditure comprises:

	2020	2019
	€	€
Cost of Operations		
Database production	424,152	454,971
Website and Database development	357,382	268,133
Data analysis	213,068	219,014
	<u>994,602</u>	<u>942,118</u>
Administrative Expenses		
Core management & governance	180,718	207,578
Communications & engagement	66,203	93,682
Fixed overheads	93,412	97,457
Auditor's remuneration	6,050	6,150
	<u>346,483</u>	<u>404,867</u>
	<u>1,341,085</u>	<u>1,346,985</u>

5. Directors

No director received or is due fees for services as a director. In respect of the costs of participating in meetings of the Board, no expenses were reimbursed to any director in 2020. One director was reimbursed for expenses in 2019 of €2,152.

6. Employees

In respect of services as an executive, the total remuneration of the managing director for the year ended 31 December 2020 was €135,759 (2019: €135,759), including a retirement benefit contribution of €7,077 (2019: €7,077). The number of full-time equivalents fell by two in 2020 from 16 to 14 due to some internal restructuring which is reflected in the payroll cost. Total staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2020	2019
	€	€
Wages and salary costs	805,339	849,427
Social security costs	83,887	91,037
Retirement benefit costs	37,242	37,981
	<u>926,468</u>	<u>978,445</u>

6. Employees (continued)

The number of staff whose total remuneration was in excess of €60,000 was as follows:

	2020	2019
	Number	Number
€60,000- €70,000	-	1
€70,001 - €80,000	2	3
€80,001 - €90,000	-	-
€90,001 - €100,000	-	-
€100,001 - €110,000	-	-
€110,001 - €120,000	-	-
€120,001 - €130,000	1	1
	3	5

Benefacts operates a defined contribution scheme for its employees, to which the company makes an employer contribution. The assets of the scheme are invested with an independent pensions provider which is also the scheme's registered administrator. Retirement benefit payments recognised as an expense during the year amount to €37,242 (2019: €37,981) and no amounts were due to the scheme at 31 December 2020.

Total compensation of two key management personnel (including retirement benefits) in 2020 amounted to €210,574 (2019: €211,378).

The number of full-time and part-time employees ranged between 17 and 25 during the year. The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year was as follows:

	2020	2019
	Number	Number
Full-time	6	7
Part-time	8	9
	14	16

7. Tax Charge

The tax charge is based on the surplus for the year and represents:

	2020	2019
	€	€
Effects of:		
Expenses not deductible for tax purposes	81	246
Other	50	120
Interest income charged at 25%	1	14
	<u>132</u>	<u>380</u>
Tax charge for the year	<u>132</u>	<u>380</u>

8. Tangible assets

	Computer hardware	Furniture	Total
	€	€	€
Cost			
At 1 January 2020	42,234	828	43,062
Additions	7,481	-	7,481
At 31 December 2020	49,715	828	50,543
Depreciation			
At 1 January 2020	22,936	124	23,060
Charge for the year	9,199	83	9,282
At 31 December 2020	32,135	207	32,342
Net book amount			
At 31 December 2020	17,580	621	18,201
Net book amount			
At 1 January 2020	<u>19,298</u>	<u>704</u>	<u>20,002</u>

9. Debtors

	2020	2019
	€	€
Trade Debtors	6,412	738
Prepayments	8,082	44,828
Other Debtors	162	2,608
	<u>14,656</u>	<u>48,174</u>
	<u>14,656</u>	<u>48,174</u>

10. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020	2019
	€	€
Trade Creditors	3,189	2,214
Other Creditors	26,258	30,672
Accruals	78,345	69,415
Deferred Income	182,497	346,592
	290,289	448,893

The deferred income represents grant income received which exceeded the costs incurred in the reported period. This deferred income will be fully released to the statement of income and expenditure in 2021.

11. Contingent liabilities

Grant income could be repayable to the funders, were the company to fail persistently to comply with the terms of the funding agreements in any material respect.

12. Related parties/ transactions with key management personnel

FRS102 Section 33.2 (iii), requires the company to disclose transactions with “related parties”, the definition of which includes key management personnel.

In 2020, the company’s key management personnel comprised the seven non-executive directors of the Board and two employees of the company namely the managing director and the head of finance. As set out in Note 5, no fees were paid to directors for services as directors, and none of the employees received any compensation outside of the remuneration set out in Note 6.

There were no other related party transactions during the reporting period to 31 December 2020.

13. Approval of financial statements

The directors approved the financial statements on 9th February 2021.

Data for social good

Benefacts Database of Irish Nonprofits has been created using public data harvested from many sources and is a unique and authoritative source of regulatory, financial and governance data on Ireland's Third Sector.

Extracts from the database including a profile of every listed nonprofit and an analysis of the sector are freely available on www.benefacts.ie

Working with partners in all sectors, Benefacts provides data, information and analysis to meet the needs of Irish nonprofits and their stakeholders.

Contact us at:

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