

FIVE STEP GUIDE TO REIMAGINE



WELCOME

“Welcome to Reimagine. We want to inspire towns across Ireland to tackle vacancy and dereliction through the ‘art’ of telling their story. I’m excited to share what we’ve learned in Cork City with other towns and villages around the country”

Eoghan Ryan & Alasdair Fitzpatrick
Founders of Reimagine Cork



Introduction to the Idea

What is it?

Reimagine is about community led ideas that improve the visual appearance of the local area. It's all about coming together as a community to transform laneways, urban green spaces and derelict buildings. All projects have 3 key components - idea, information, innovators and focus on an area's history, heroes and humour.

Where did it start?

Reimagine (as Reimagine Cork) was originally conceived to tackle vacancy and dereliction. The recession left the island area of Cork City with over 100 vacant, and often derelict, sites/buildings. This high level of vacancy left some areas cut off and isolated from the city. Civic pride was at a noticeable low. The team at Reimagine decided to lead by doing and started in the Oldtown of Cork City. As they grew so did the support of Corkonians and in particular local residents. People stopped to give their views on the work and share their frustrations. It quickly became apparent that an underlying problem of social exclusion was being addressed. They tackled run down

laneways, once deemed unsafe to use, that were cutting communities off from the heart of the city. Local citizens felt empowered and listened to. Reimagine Cork had restored a level of pride and given residents a voice and platform to be heard.

How does it work?

It all starts with building a local organising team, who are passionate about your local area and want to restore pride in the community, engage local residents and artists and tell your community's unique story. The Reimagine Cork Team have been working on various projects in Cork City for a few years and have built up a wealth of experience that they are now ready to share with other towns and villages around the country. You can take inspiration from their work and make it your own, based on your community's unique history and story. This guide provides an overview and framework to get you started.

STARTING REIMAGINE

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

TIME



You'll need up to 4 -6 hours per week to start and maintain this project locally

PEOPLE



Ideally you are an organising team of 3-5 people, so that you can share ideas and divide up the work. You'll need a wider team of volunteers to help with execution of projects.

FUNDING



A small amount of funding is needed for each project to cover paint, materials etc. Depending on the scale and scope, you may need up to €1,000.

Who typically starts this project?

Someone who is:

- Committed to making your community the best it can be
- A leader who can build support around an idea
- Can build a committed and happy team

5 Step Summary

- 1 Complete your 30 Day Jumpstart Challenge
- 2 Build out your team & select 2 projects
- 3 Approach local funders
- 4 Complete training
- 5 Implement and unveil your project

Support and Additional Resources

www.reimageinecork.com | Contact: reimageinecork@gmail.com

www.changex.org/reimageinecork | hello@changex.org | 0864685361

STEP 1: COMPLETE YOUR 30 DAY CHALLENGE



The 30 Day Jumpstart Challenge has been designed to get your project off to the strongest possible start by building momentum in the first month.

- ☐ **Understand the challenge**

Watch the short welcome video on your ChangeX page.

- ☐ **Learn more about the idea you're starting**

This '5 Step Guide' includes all you need to know about the specifics of starting your project.

- ☐ **Find 3-5 interested people**

You already have your own project page on changex.org. Use it to share the project with others and recruit your first supporters.

- ☐ **Set up a casual kick-off meeting**

Host a meeting at your home, a coffee shop or in your workplace and come up with an action plan along with your team. You can use your ChangeX page to set up an event and invite people.

- ☐ **Let us know that you are up and running**

At your event, take a team picture and agree the first step you will take as a group to get started.

STEP 2: BUILD YOUR TEAM

In step 1, you'll have gotten your first group of committed team members together. Now is a good time to consider whether you have all the necessary skills and experience within this group to make the project a success. You don't need to have everyone on board from the very beginning but try to build a small group of committed people who possess some of the skills and experience below and (most importantly) share your passion and enthusiasm for making your town or village the best that it can be!

Some of the jobs that will need to be filled include the following:

The Organising Team

Communications, Design & Marketing - this is the person who'll be responsible for everything communications related. The person who makes sure everyone knows what projects you're planning and how they can get involved as well as telling your story to local media and managing your social media accounts.

Financials & Governance - this is the person that will make sure everything is in order from a finance and legal perspective. This may not seem important at the very beginning but if your group grows and you begin fundraising to cover the costs of projects as well as working with a large group of volunteers, having this stuff in order will save you headaches further down the line.

Project Planning & Leadership - this is the person who loves to plan and organise! It's important to have a project manager who can help plan out the projects and assign volunteers, resources etc.

You may be good at one or all of these things but make sure that across the team you have everything covered. Roles don't need to be too clearly defined from the outset but it'll make your life easier as the project grows.

Partners

These are the local businesses or organisations you'll need on board to help make your projects a success.

Paintshop - your local paint supplier or hardware store where you can get materials, paint, brushes etc. Let them know what you're planning and they might be able to offer you a discount or even give you some old or leftover brushes etc.

Space to store your materials - maybe a **local hardware store or garage** that has some extra space.

Media Partners - local radio, local newspaper, community groups on social media e.g. Tidy Towns and resident's associations.

Local artists - when it comes to executing the projects locally, artists will be vital to help you design and make things look good. It's also a great way for them to show-off their talent!

OTHER ROLES



Photographer

It's always good to have a good hobbyist photographer on hand to capture events and your projects.

The Techie

Also always handy to have a techie on board who can help with updating social media, websites etc.

Support and Additional Resources

Check out this blog on building a team of volunteers for a very similar project in County Mayo:
<https://www.changex.org/blog/how-to-build-a-team-of-volunteers/>

STEP 3: SELECTING YOUR PROJECTS

Once you have your team in place and you've started recruiting local partners, the next step is to select your first two projects to reimagine the neglected or dilapidated areas of your town. Maybe you've already identified areas that could do with a refresh or you're not sure where to start?

Either way, getting your team together and spending some time walking around your town scoping out buildings, laneways, bridges and alleys will provide the inspiration you need to get started.

It's best to start with ideas that aren't too big or demanding and that you know you can make a success.

The selection process should be as democratic as possible so it might be a good idea to arrange a workshop outlining some options and then letting your team vote. This way everyone will feel involved, engaged and ultimately proud of what you achieve together.

Based on the experience of Reimagine Cork, a good place to start might be a Mural or Electricity Boxes. See some pics on the right hand side for inspiration.

Scoping out a number of projects and then presenting them to the whole team and voting can be a good way to ensure everyone is on the same page. As you scope out the project, think about budget, time and complexity.

Keeping things simple for your first project is always a good place to start!



STEP 4: PLANNING, TRAINING & FUNDING

YOUR PROJECT PLAN

Some things to consider when designing your plan:

Ensure that the owners and invested stakeholders are contacted and permissions granted e.g. for the area you have identified. You might need to speak with the owner of the building or the local council. Have these conversations early so that they don't derail things further down the line.

While this is happening, begin to think about how you'll incorporate local history and humour into your project. Have a brainstorming session, getting as much input from local residents as possible. You might discover things about your local area you never knew before!

The execution will involve everything from lining up the materials, making sure you have all the manual skill and the resources needed (e.g. painters, carpenters, brushes, covering for the ground.)

All tasks require different skillsets and subsequent innovators to ensure the idea is delivered to the high standard it was conceptualised.



FUNDING

This might sound like the scary part but once you get started and begin improving your town, you'll realise that lots of people will want to join that journey with you! Local businesses are always looking for opportunities to contribute to the area and supporting a project of your Reimagine team is a pretty great opportunity! The costs are relatively low (approx. €1,000 - 2,000 per project) and the impact will be very clearly visible making the town more attractive for everyone.

There are seed funds available through changex.org to get started, depending on your location. In July 2018, there will be seed funds available to community groups across County Cork. If this is available in your location, it'll provide a great boost to allow you build a local funding base from and show other local funders the impact you can have locally.

TRAINING & PRACTICE

Before you complete your first project, it's a good idea to have a practice session so that when it comes to the real deal of painting those electricity boxes or that mural you and your team are pros!

Tadhg from the Reimagine Cork team will be your Reimagine mentor. He has been through this whole process before so he'll come and visit for a day's training. You'll cover some of the basics like stencils, how to use masking tape and painting on different surfaces.

The training will also help you and your team to organise most efficiently to make sure that everything runs smoothly on your first project day.



STEP 5: IMPLEMENTATION & UNVEILING

Your first project day

It generally works well to assign a day to complete the project. Saturday or Sunday work well to get as many volunteers together as possible. You'll always have to remain flexible as you'll need dry weather conditions for any outdoor painting.

Once your first project is complete, you'll be dying to unveil it to the local community! It can be nice to hold a small launch event on the evening of your project day, inviting along all of your key partners, local businesses, the local council etc. This allows you and your team to show off your hard work, bring to life your vision for Reimagine in your town and celebrate all that's great about your town or village.

An event like this will be a great way to build more support and awareness of your work which will help in recruiting volunteers, funders and partners for your next project!

After the event

Following up with people after the event is just as important as the event itself. You've created some excitement, don't wait too long to follow up. Use the momentum to pull people into more conversations online and grow their commitment to the new project.

FOLLOW UP CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Invite people to your Reimagine page on ChangeX**
Using the "Invite Friends" functionality you can invite people to your page on ChangeX.
- ☐ **Create an email list or text chain group**
Depending on what you agreed on how people want to stay in touch, you might want to add additional tools.
- ☐ **Post an update to your page**
Share some photos of the event.
- ☐ **Encourage people to share ideas.**
Hopefully people will feel inspired and want to get involved themselves in making your town a better place to live.

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