

BIM EMFAF Work Programme Project Report 2022

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| BENEFICIARY: | Bord Iascaigh Mhara |
| PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER: | 22/SCBS/DIS-BG010-BR050 |
| NAME OF PROJECT: | Aquaculture Remote Classroom (ARC) |
| IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD: | 1st January to 31st December 2022 |

Project Scope

The Aquaculture Remote Classroom (ARC) is a mobile classroom which has been procured on a hire basis by BIM via an appropriate tender. The Farmed in the EU (ARC) project is operated, supported, and managed by a private sector service provider which has been procured via an OJEU tender process. (Contract commenced 1st January 2020). The classroom is staffed by two highly competent and enthusiastic tutors with advanced and relevant academic specialisations in Marine Biology and Sport and Nutrition, they are supported by a Driver/Mechanic who accompanies them on deployment.

Objectives

The ARC has been designed to travel throughout Ireland and accommodate up to 30 young learners at a time and provide one full day of an interactive learning experience. The learning experience is focused on positively engaging young people about aquaculture and related topics with the express objective of fostering knowledge and understanding of aquaculture and how it relates to learners and their community. The content addresses strand of SESE Science, SESE Geography and SPHE Education curriculum as set down by the Department of Education and Skills, this ensures that the learning day contributes to knowledge of aquaculture while meeting some other requirements that have been set down by the Department of Education.

The programme has been planned with a target of delivering to approximately 25 learners per day for the bulk of the primary school year, the project operates to a target of no less than 13 teaching days per month for the school year, but with the expectation that operational performance above this level in normal circumstances. It should be noted that there is a need to allow for travel between schools, set-up times, vehicle reconfiguration and occasional cancellations by schools, therefore 20 day per month deployments would not be considered deliverable with one vehicle.

A mobile classroom is absolutely necessary for the delivery of the project because many Irish primary schools operate at or close to capacity in terms of space and may not be able to facilitate activities like those provided by the ARC. Therefore, this project can overcome this issue by way of the mobile classroom, this ensures that no schools are disadvantaged, and that participation can be as widespread as possible. The successful delivery of any learning content is most effective where there are no more than 30 pupils in a single group being supported by two tutors. These factors have contributed to the design of the project in terms of the scale of engagement that is realistic and manageable in terms of logistics and costs.

There is also significant variation in the quality of technologies and resources that are available to schools. Therefore, to enable effective and timely delivery, the mobile classroom must be fully equipped with all



necessary learning tools, seating, tables, audio visual and computer equipment as relying on schools to provide these would be impractical and set up times would reduce the amount of time that could be utilised for learning activities. The mobile classroom has been developed with a view to providing all necessary space, learning tools and technologies for young learners while ensuring that each young participant has adequate opportunities for one-to-one interaction with the tutors.

The ARC visits schools on the basis of 'Expressions of Interest' submitted via the www.bim.ie website, operations are scheduled in a manner that seeks to minimise travel and specific areas that demonstrate high demand are timetabled to maximise impact and reduce cost.

The programme requires the following resources for effective implementation.

- A suitable provider to effectively deliver the project 'on-the-ground' to schools. The provider is expected to carry out all project management activities, receiving and managing requests from schools, scheduling operational activities, liaising with schools, conducting all activities required for day-to-day delivery of learning outcomes to pupils. Further activities like content development, managing the competition and follow up activities with schools will also be necessary.
- A mobile classroom of appropriate size and capability, fully equipped with all necessary seating, tables, learning tools, computers and audio-visual equipment.
- Production of additional learning materials/technologies and course content for schools and for public engagement events.

Outcomes

In 2022 the online ARC programme achieved the following:

- 8 online webinars delivered to 5,825 students across 10 counties.
- 59 separate schools visits to 1,509 pupils
- 10 public outreach events to 7,885 participants
- A total of 15,219 participants were engaged by the ARC project during 2022.
- The ARC now offers content for primary schools (5th & 6th class), secondary schools (Aquaculture and Careers for Transition Year, 5th & 6th year), online videos and quizzes, live webinars.
- The ARC was in attendance at large educational events (Schools Summit 2022) and industry/stakeholder events including Irish Farmers Association Conference (7th April) Access2Sea, Co. Galway (17th May), Mission Oceans and Waters event at Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork. (27th November)
- The ARC engaged with pupils for World Oceans Day on June the 8th at Realt na Mara Primary Schools, Kilkee, Co. Clare. This involved bringing special guests including IFA representatives and local dive club members and a local marine conservation activist to speak to pupils.
- The ARC team delivered a field trip for over 50 Transition Year students from Presentation School, Listowel, Co. Kerry on 13th May 2022. The field trip was conducted at Castlemaine Harbour, Co. Kerry and involved a talk on the Harbour, Geographic and Marine Conditions and aquaculture in Co. Kerry, the trip also involved visiting a local shellfish processor and packer.
- The ARC attended the Cork Carnival of Science (Fitzgerald Park, Cork) on the 11th and 12th of June 2022 and engaged the public about aquaculture and marine topics.
- In addition to the work of the ARC in Ireland, two presentations have been made to the European Commission and the Committee of the Regions in Brussels. The object of this was to engage with other nations in the EU who want to develop a similar programme.
- During 2022 the four specially made online videos were updated and amended to provide a better online experience from students based on feedback.



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- Enhanced linkages were created with Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. MIC is a leading teacher training institute. The project has begun to use these linkages to create positive engagement with large numbers of trainee teachers to encourage them to bring aquaculture and marine focused learning to the fore when they are working teachers. During November 2022, the ARC visited the MIC campus in Limerick and engaged 220 trainee teachers about Irish aquaculture.
- The ARC participated in SFI 'Science week' 13th – 20th November 2022. The ARC participated in the south west region delivering workshops in Co. Limerick and Tipperary during Science week.

Summary of Project Spend

| Summary of Spend | |
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| Total Approved Costs | €350,000 |
| Total Eligible Expenditure | €350,000 |
| EMFAF Eligible Expenditure | €175,000 |
| Exchequer | €175,000 |

Report by: Richard Donnelly

Date: January 2023



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