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Learning Hub Limerick Annual Report 2017



HUB
LEARNING HUB LIMERICK



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Funders

"From science with different chemicals and different experiments.. and art bringing out a creative side they never knew they had..."

Parent

"I hope the Learning Hub will always be there to inspire children to follow their dreams with an abundance of budding kickboxers, scientists, artists and musicians."

Karen Kiely, Parent

"We did experiments with explosions, gooey stuff, runny stuff, things we would never dare do in school! It was 10 out of 10 all round"

Ms. Frawley, Thomond Primary School

"They love trying different instruments. They often come home singing lyrics of songs I love."

Parent of child in Music Hub

"Well done to all the staff. Everybody was courteous, polite, kind to the children, patient and very enthusiastic about their work. We had a wonderful time. Mile buíochas!"

Teacher, Nicker NS

"I love the Art Hub because it's so much fun. I get to meet new friends and I learn new art techniques. There is also something different every week"

Student, Age 9

"I like coming to the Hub because if I wasn't I'd be bored... when I come to the Hub I make loads of friends and do lots of fun stuff!"

TJ Power, Age 10, Afterschool Participant

"I suppose when I was in Primary School we fit into the curriculum, rather at the Hub the programmes fit around the children. You know it's just different. It's so innovative. It's thinking outside the box. It's what education should be all about"

Mr Tiernan O'Neill, Principal, Corpus Christi Primary School

"Kids loved the science, fun and interactive and delivery was very respectful towards all levels of ability."

Teacher, Roxborough NS

“Retaining high governance standards and quality education focused programming remain our focus. Supporting families and young people to reach their potential remain our board’s mission in 2017”.

It has been a very rewarding first year as Chairperson of Learning Hub Limerick. I took over the post mid way through the year following the departure of Eamonn Moran. The board is extremely grateful to Eamonn for the great work and insight he brought to the project during his time as board member and chairperson.

The Board acknowledges the ongoing challenges faced by many families living locally and our goal in 2017 and beyond has been to continue to live up to our promise of offering practical resources, support and encouragement to both families and children. The interlinking issues of social exclusion and educational disadvantage remain high on our agenda; and facilitating a response to families right in the heart of the community continues to be our focus.

The Learning Hub celebrated 10 years fully operational in Nov 2017. The 10 year anniversary party in LIT Millennium Theatre was a special celebration of that achievement. The board acknowledges the complex blend of learners who attend the Learning Hub and the challenge of providing professional and innovative responses to young people. We particularly acknowledge the work of the staff and volunteers in attending to all young people in a professional and holistic manner; and are continually impressed by the imagination and flexibility shown by them in meeting these challenges each day.

During the last year the LHL has continued to be bustling with activity thanks to the hard work of the staff and volunteers. Together they support footfall of over 24,000 each year.

This is no mean feat and the grounds and site have been wonderfully maintained thanks to the staff and the support of the TUS programme also in 2017.

Third level student volunteers donate thousands of hours to the work of the Learning Hub and together with the core staff work hard to deliver effective holistic education focused programming to children from age 5 upwards. Our facilities were also hard at work serving over 23 external organisations during 2017 and again our LHL staff support this in many ways, seen and unseen. The board thanks the team for the hard work employed to support all these visiting organisations on site.

Our partners are also vital to our success. The Learning Hub has worked hard over the last 10 years to build relationship and strong partnerships with local schools, third level institutions, industry partners, city and county council and statutory bodies. Without these key partnerships we cannot deliver on our targets each year. In 2017, we were delighted to remain fully funded and to develop a new and exciting partnership with Regeneron who have committed to supporting our Science Hub programme since 2015. Science Hub and Digihub centres continue to grow and achieve enhanced targets each year with an increase in schools and students accessing our programmes this year.

As outlined in our strategic plan our focus on STEAM education for primary schools serving Limerick and its environs has proven to be very popular with programmes fully booked out by schools across the region. We continue to build expertise in the key areas of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) education. The Board is keen to develop our capacity in this area in 2018 with focused funding and impact targets set for this strategic goal

The Health Hub also continues to grow with the Kickboxing club continuing to produce national champions from the local community thanks to the drive and commitment of staff member Paul O’Brien. We also welcomed Munster Rugby on site to support Health Hub activity during 2017 and we look forward to developing this partnership in 2018. Our health, music and arts programmes continue to thrive thanks to the input of funders such as Limerick City and County Council, Limerick and Clare ETB and the JP McManus Charitable Foundation.

As Chair of the Board, I am also delighted that our organisation has committed to meeting the standards as set out by the Governance Code and this commitment to the highest standards of governance remains consistent on our Board’s agenda. The Board commits to ensuring that the many children experiencing social and educational exclusion will continue to have access to a well-supported, welcoming and educationally inspiring learning space for 2018 and beyond.

Gillian Barry

Chairperson



facebook

4-5 Grade C... que

“The Learning Hub team are committed to maintaining a high quality of service to the wide range of young people accessing our services. Young people and their families are the local community’s most valuable resource. We hope to play our role in nurturing and encouraging that potential in every way we can during 2018.”

Jennifer Moroney-Ward

Overview

During 2017 we welcomed over 24,000 visitors on site thus maintaining the very high footfall rate we achieved during 2016. Our campus is thriving and thanks to a committed team of education specialists, caretakers, administrators and volunteers we have successfully completed the goals outlined in our action plan during the year while also innovating and developing new programmes.

We also continue to invite new partners and visitors to use our facilities and as Manager, I congratulate the staff and volunteers who work in partnership, welcoming and supporting external organisations to benefit from the campus here in Kileely.

Our 10 year anniversary showcase in November was a great opportunity to showcase how the Learning Hub has tapped into the expertise of the staff and volunteers to provide innovative and exciting learning outcomes. Our vision is to provide a holistic educational experience and watching the show with our partners, funders and families was a wonderful moment in a very busy year.

Our challenge in 2018 is to develop this capacity while also retaining the ability to service the high volume of visitors to our campus especially during the term time. We know that after school facilities are of huge benefit both socially and educationally to children and young people who live in communities where poverty and inequality of opportunity continue to be an issue.

For this reason, our costs remain low and access universal. We also endeavour to provide access to the campus during holiday and out of school time throughout the year and only close fully for 3 weeks of the year in August and December.

Volunteering

As Manager of the Learning Hub, I am incredibly proud of the commitment shown by staff and volunteers who continue to deal with the range and complexity of needs presenting at the Learning Hub. During 2016 volunteers donated over 12000 hours to the Learning Hub and without this commitment we would have failed to maintain services at normal levels. This level of volunteering is crucial to our ability to deliver on our action plan and illustrates an impressive commitment by students attending UL, LIT, MIC, LCFE and Transition Year.

Other highlights

During 2017 we were also moved by the support of many funders. We continue to receive support from both Limerick City and County Council and the JP McManus Charitable Foundation, without which we could not leverage further funding from other sources. From our STEAM education partner, Regeneron in Limerick to the continuing support from Science Foundation Ireland and our third level partners we were heartened to see commitments renewed in 2017. We were also delighted to be supported by local fundraising efforts such as the wonderful Ger McDonnell Memorial cycle and from the MBA Class Act group in UL.

The support of the community for our local Kickboxing Club and the funds raised by the club to enhance the gym was also a highlight and showed the esteem in which Paul O’Brien, our Health Hub Coordinator, is held locally, and also showed the pride members have in their club.

It must also be acknowledged that without the support of the Community Services Programme and TUS schemes many of our Hubs of activity would not have been fully resourced. Maintaining these support schemes is vital to our success and we thank all those staff who support us via these schemes in particular. Investing in the potential of our young people is crucial to the future of our city. Limerick’s young people are its best human resource. Keeping young people engaged in learning, feeling good about themselves and positive about their futures is everyone’s job and the Learning Hub is committed to playing its role in supporting this vision into 2018.

Jennifer Moroney-Ward



Mission Statement

CORE GOALS OF THE LEARNING HUB

Create an active learning environment that extends the learning experience beyond the traditional school day

Creatively embed technology and the core skills of literacy and numeracy into active learning projects

Provide a positive social environment that inspires us as individuals and as a community by recognising the potential and the talents of young people and learners

Work in partnership with key stakeholders to maximise the resources available to the community by harnessing volunteers, resources and energy for the development of the Hub

Create an environment that promotes the positive development of physical and mental health among young people and the community

Harness the resource potential of third level volunteers to act as mentors and subject experts in our educational programmes

Prevent early school leaving and raise the educational aspirations of families, schools and the wider community

Work in partnership with other agencies to provide support to children identified as most in need of additional social, cultural and educational resources

Provide volunteers and third level mentors with real world civic engagement experience that will enhance their social, academic and professional development.

Develop and maintain high quality governance and operational standards that support the sustainability of Learning Hub Limerick.



Why Limerick needs a Learning Hub

We strongly believe that programmes which focus on educational attainment and civic engagement are key to the development of regeneration areas and the city as a whole. Indeed, the recent and wide-ranging report by Limerick Children's Services Committee entitled "How Are Our Kids?" clearly identifies the key educational difficulties issues facing young people and families:

"Parents are early school leavers themselves. Low parental education affects a child in various ways, most directly by limiting their educational outcomes in the future".

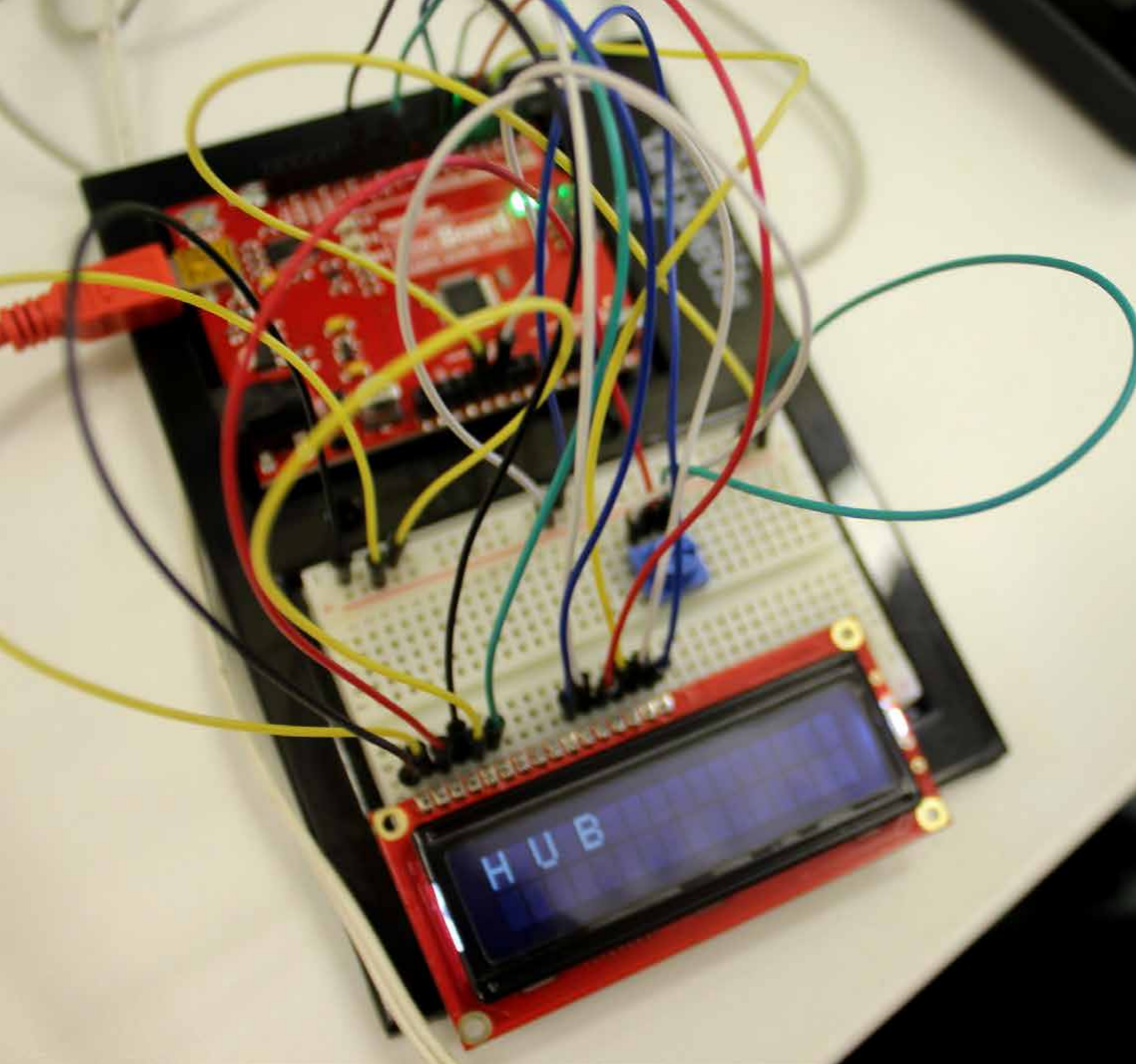
For instance, parents with low education themselves are unable to help their children with homework, particularly as the children advance through primary into secondary school. In addition, low parental education tends to affect parents' aspirations for their children's educational progression and their expectations of success. Moreover, as they have not themselves experienced success within the educational system, they tend to lack understanding of the support and conditions required in the home environment to that lead to successful outcomes in education, including successful completion of second level, transition to, and progression within, third level education. In addition to its direct effects on the child's education, low parental

education *is also* associated in this research with greater total difficulties in the child."

How Are Our Kids (2012), p. 46.

- **Children spend as little as 18% of their time in full time education.**
- **How and where they spend the rest of their time effects their ability to reach their potential as individuals and as citizens.**
- **The Learning Hub provides a safe, welcoming and inspiring environment where young people can work to reach their potential in education, in society and as individuals.**

- **Limerick city still has the highest level of early school leaving in the country and below-average educational attainment in many areas of the city.**
- **Almost half of young people in Limerick are currently unemployed. We must provide young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking skills to find and create meaningful work in the future.**
- **We are working to raise aspiration levels by forging unique relationships that link communities and higher education in the city.**



1. This year the Learning Hub celebrated its 10th year serving the children and young people of limerick.



2. STEAM curriculum expands with over 1,200 children accessing programmes in 2017.



3. A total of 24,784 children, young people, adults, parents and teachers visited the Hub this year.



4. This year a total of 38 schools from all over Limerick City and County visited the Hub our highest number to date.



5. The Learning Hub benefitted from funding partnership with the Ger Mc Donnell cycle and UL's MBA class.



6. The Science Hub group visited both Vistacon and Atlantic Aviation Group. Both trips were supported in part by project partners, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.





Music classes, in their current format, have been running now for nearly seven years here at the Learning Hub. The programme, supported by Limerick School of Music, was set up to provide the opportunity to begin learning music to children from the surrounding community. Never envisioned as taking the place of any music-teaching institution in the city or county, the programme was designed to get children interested in learning music, to see if music was something that they wanted to pursue and help them to move on to other more formal music learning if they found this was the case. Children from the area are encouraged to give it a go. Music is not everybody's cup of tea but one can only know this if one has the opportunity to learn music in the first place.

There are a number of stages to a young person taking on music lessons at the Hub. When they begin, we don't ask students to purchase instruments, where possible we lend them instruments or ensure that they can borrow one from a friend or relative. Parents or guardians should not purchase an instrument until they know that their child is interested in keeping up the classes.

The young person then begins lessons, learning the basics and going through the physically and mentally tiring process of learning that practice makes everything easier. Many families need to understand that their child, no matter how disciplined or talented they may be in other fields, will need total support at home both to establish a practice routine and to be supported to do that practice and, more likely than not, make a lot of noise.

Not only is the child learning a new instrument, they are also learning the values of practice, self-discipline and overcoming the discomfort while training themselves to do something new, they are also learning to stick with something that is hard and that will only pay off if they put in the work. In the case of music, the pay-off usually comes quite slowly and progress is slow.

The value of hard work, the importance of overcoming setbacks and the resilience that comes with it, the rewards of making progress, however incremental, and the role of baby steps as they improve (that ultimately result in great leaps?), are all skills acquired by the children. They learn to be patient with themselves while still being demanding and they appreciate that some positive outcomes can only be achieved in the long-term.

It is true that they get a lot of joy and have a lot of fun as well! Practice can often be a solitary activity but the social value of playing music with peers cannot be underestimated. As well as enjoying the company of other young, budding musicians, children will help one another and pass on hints and tips, encouraging each other and enjoying their own progress and that of their peers.

The children who stick with the classes will reach a point, after two or three years, when they outgrow what the Hub has to offer. It is at this point that they are ready to pursue their instrument in a more formal environment.

Some students decide very early that music is not for them. Many others show great promise and make immediate progress but then need encouragement to persevere when harder work and longer hours of practice are required. For others, progress is slow initially then followed by rapid progress. All of our students must necessarily leave us for other more formal classes if they wish to learn their instrument more formally. Some of our students will find music playing an important, or even central, role in their later lives. Others will find it plays a smaller role and others will make no use of it. However, all of them enjoy the experience of having the opportunity to learn music where there was none before and this is something we are delighted to provide here at the Hub.

For further details contact

james@learninghub.ie



2017 was a great year for Music Hub Studios. Over 200 bands and individual musicians came to use our facilities to both rehearse and record and we also played host to several schools, community groups and choirs. This last year led us to set our current record for musicians performing at one time with 58 simultaneous singers from Milford National School.

We have also expanded our range of activities to include recording and supporting live sound off-site. We helped to host several gigs in Limerick city as well as facilitating panel discussions, debates and speeches. This included supplying and operating the sound system for a tournament hosted by the Learning Hub's own Kickboxing club.

We have built a lasting relationship with the Living Out Loud Youth Group from Ballynanty and Moyross. They are coming in to the studio every second Monday and we are very proud to help nurture the talents of some truly brilliant young singers.

Noise removal and audio editing are two other income strands that we have added to our business activities. Field recordings that need repairing and podcasts that need editing; all can now come to Music Hub Studios.

2017 was the first year that we brought placement students directly to the studio rather than to the Learning Hub as a whole. Two students from IT Tralee's Music Technology undergraduate program spent 12 weeks at the studio and helped us immeasurably with all of the Music Hub activities – they will be greatly missed.



For further details contact

musichubstudios@gmail.com

www.musichubstudios.ie





The Learning Hub always encourages the local community to become actively involved in civic life. Where possible we also get children, families and schools involved in decision making within the organisation in terms of curriculum development as well as activity planning.

Participatory Budgeting

During 2017 we carried out a participatory budgeting project with Thomond Primary and Corpus Christi schools. A portion of our annual budget was set aside and we gave the children from 5th and 6th class in these schools the opportunity to decide how it was spent. This project aimed to introduce children to the key ideas behind the democratic process. Each child had a say in how the money was to be spent, which resulted in the creation of the Gaming Hub – a project which links computer games and education. A youth committee comprising of representatives from each voting class was also set up to develop the Gaming Hub curriculum

Work Placements

Similarly to previous years, we welcomed several former Learning Hub students back to us on their Transition Year work placements. It was fantastic to see the progression these young people have made since their time here as learners to excellent classroom assistants and co-leaders across all of the Hubs. Their experience and point of view is always invaluable to us as they have unique insight into what it is like to attend activities here at the Learning Hub.

Positive Life Skills TY Course

In 2017 we developed and piloted a Positive Life Skills course with TY pupils in Thomond Community College. The aim of the course was to provide participants with useful tools to promote positive mental health both for themselves and within their peer groups and families. The pilot was a great success, with over 40 teenagers completing it. As a result, the programme will also be run with a Primary school group in 2018.

Community Visits and Facility Use

The Hub acts as a central space both for provision of facilities and tailored activities for community groups. Each year, over 20 different community groups use the space to add value to their own services. From primary school age afterschool groups to adult learners, The Hub acts as a very important resource to the community as a whole.

To book facilities contact caroline@learninghub.ie





The Art hub

The core principles of the Art Hub are to nurture the creative ambition of young people and create an environment of learning and fun. Through visual practices we aim to tap into the endless supply of creative energy within the children. We constantly strive to find innovative ways to challenge our students which inspire original work, independent learning, self-initiated projects and experimentation.

St Patricks Day

2017 was an exciting year for the Art Hub. The junior and senior groups began the year preparing for the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Our theme this year was based on the legend of a sea monster that was apparently sighted in the Shannon in the 1920's. Together with volunteers from LIT, MIC & UL, young people designed costumes and props for the parade. This year more than sixty children, parents and volunteers participated on the day.

External Agencies

The Art Hub has succeeded in maintaining strong relationships with external organisations for the past number of years and 2017 saw these partnerships being developed even further. Bedford Row Family Support Project completed work through the Art Hub in conjunction with the Health Hub during the year.

Building on the successful relationships with Limerick Youth Service in 2017, the group focused on mapping the old city walls and wider Limerick area. The completed project was then shared with a Youth group in Sweden as part of an exchange programme and both groups thoroughly enjoyed participating.

Through the Youth Reach work experience programme, the Art Hub welcomed several students as volunteer mentors. During their time here, the students researched materials for the St Patricks Day float and aided in its design.

Third Level student volunteers were very active in the Art Hub this year. Volunteer mentors from both LCFE and LSAD worked on both our Junior and Senior Art programmes offering their expertise to our budding artists.

Little Inventors

The Art Hub piloted a new program this year as part of our STEAM Summer Camp. Little Inventors was the first of its kind to be run in Ireland and was modeled on the Little Inventors programme which has been extremely successful in the UK. The pilot program ran for 10 weeks culminating in the finished inventions being showcased at the Hub's 10 year anniversary.

STEAM Programs at the Hub

Art and Science joined forces to develop a new curriculum in September. During the summer we piloted our initial ideas for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) workshops with a group of children from the locality and based on the success of the camps, we rolled out a 6 week STEAM programme to local schools in September.

Over the course of this programme, participants learned about various aspects of science and engineering including construction, materials studies and prototype design. By the end of the programme the pupils had learned a significant amount and their completed work (a giant wooden glucose molecular model) is due to be on display in their school in early 2018!

Haunted Basement

In what is now an annual fixture in our calendar, second only perhaps to the St. Patrick's Day Parade, the Art Hub team transformed our basement into one of the most frightening Haunted Houses we have ever had. The senior art class designed the Haunted basement and their designs were made a reality by our team of Co-OP students.

For further details contact

cronan@learninghub.ie



Scoil
an
Spiora Dúibh

2017 has been a really busy and successful year for the Learning Hub Limerick Kickboxing Club.

Daily and weekly training continued throughout the year. Little Ninjas, Juniors and Cardio went from strength to strength. Highlights of the year included taking a group of juniors to the IKF national championships held in Athlone and taking home numerous medals with 2 of club members being crowned National Champions. We travelled up and down the country all year round to many tournaments and competitions to help further the development of the young people and adults in Martial arts. We have also travelled to England competing for international titles.

This year, one of our young people that has trained and been part of the Learning Hub Limerick for the last 8 years received a Limerick Garda Divisional Youth Award. She also received an award from the Mayor of Limerick City. This young person has excelled in her sport and also at school. She has won 2 National kickboxing titles, a National K1 title and a silver medal at the World Championship. She has become a star within the local community and a very positive role model to everyone.

Demand within the community for more classes was growing significantly towards the end of 2016 and this continued into 2017. However LHL Kickboxing Club was limited in its capacity to offer more due to the size of the facilities on-site. In order to meet this demand, we needed a bigger gym. We organised a charity white-collar kickboxing tournament to raise funds to expand our gym.

The tournament was a resounding success. As well as raising enough money for redevelopment of the gym, a senior adult kickboxing class arose from this tournament.

In July we extended our gym area facilitating the increased demand for Martial Arts in our local area. Since then, we have introduced new classes such as Boxercise, Boxing, Elite kickboxing/K1, Cardio Kickboxing, Junior kickboxing, Strength and Conditioning, Pilates and Little Ninja's. We have seen the number of participants grow rapidly.

We have invited clubs from Limerick and beyond to come and train and spar with us which helps young people and adults socialise with others and meet new friends. We also ran numerous workshops for schools, after-school clubs and other external organisations such as Thomond Primary, St Augustine's, Our Lady of Lourdes and Bedford row. Some of our workshops are based on general health and well-being and include healthy eating workshops.

Other activities included a girls' 6 week multisport programme for 8-12 year-olds run by LIT students, delivering a wide range of sports such as basketball, dodgeball, football, tag Rugby etc. We also had Munster Rugby Development Programme run a 6 week project which turned out to be very successful. During the darker winter evenings Ballynanty Rovers trained on our AstroTurf facility on a weekly basis.

2017 has been a successful year Health Hub. Our club members have won tournaments (national and international) and hope to compete in more in 2018. We have raised funds and grown our ability to reach more and more people. We are in a position to continue to grow in our expanded facility. How much more could we deliver if we had more funds?

**For further details contact
paul@learninghub.ie**



The Science Hub project is aimed predominantly at Junior Infants to 6th class primary schools pupils, particularly those in schools with designated disadvantaged status (DEIS). Statistics suggest that pupils in these schools are less likely to choose STEM subjects at post primary level. This in turn decreases the likelihood of these people placing value on STEM later in their lives.

The Science Hub works to combat this trend by introducing the Primary Science Curriculum to pupils and teachers in a fun, interactive learning environment which increases interest and engagement in science from an early age.

Science and Engineering faculties, as well as individual academics and students, from the University of Limerick (UL) and Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) support this project. Science Foundation Ireland and Regeneron are also key supporters of the Science Hub. The Science Hub is based on the Learning Buddies model which partners young people with undergraduate mentors. This partnership is one which spreads the message of 'Science for all', through the involvement of all involved partners; third level institutions, pupils and teachers in partner schools, the Learning Hub, industry and the community.

Science Hub Schools Project

Following on from the success of this element of the project in 2017, we continued to develop workshops for primary schools this year piloting 6 new programmes in total. The format of this strand also changed moving away from offering "one-off" workshops and instead offering schools 6-8 week courses which have had a significantly greater educational impact. These included Forensic Science, increased levels of technology/engineering and STEAM programmes which incorporate the Arts into STEM curricula. A total of 1,297 children interacted with this element of the project during the year making it our busiest for the project to date.

Science Magic Shows

This strand of the project allows younger children (and adults!) to engage with the Science Hub. These groups are not typically suited to attend our schools or after-school workshops so the magic show aspect allows us to extend our target audience greatly. During the year, 1,108 primary school children, teachers and members of the public in Limerick city and county attended one of our Science Shows. Our senior afterschool group performed their own Magic Show in LIT.

After School Club

Our After-School workshops remained very popular throughout the year with footfall of 373 children. Our retention rate for this aspect of the project was quite high also and currently stands at approximately 80%. We altered this element slightly in 2017 to offer more "real life" examples of STEM to the users bringing them on 2 industry visits (Johnson & Johnson and Atlantic Aviation Group) which helped to link the Science they had learned in the Hub to real world applications. In the second half of 2017 we added a second afterschool slot to our timetable which means we are now able to run activities for new users (Junior Group) as well those who have completed an introductory science course before (Senior Group)

STEAM Summer Camps

This year the focus of our summer activities was STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics). 30 children took part in the camps during which they learned basic programming and animation through Scratch, used Arduino board to build circuits and created physical art pieces which contained interactive electric circuits. The camp was a great success and due to this we decided to integrate STEAM into our term time curriculum.

Limerick Festival of Science

For the second year in a row, the Science Hub was a partner in the Limerick Festival of Science, which took place during Science Week. There was an action-packed week of activities at the Hub, which got people of all ages involved with STEM. From the Science of Baking to technology based activities, it was a very successful week.

Plans for 2018

We already have a number of school groups booked in to take part in long-term Science, Technology and STEAM programmes during the first term of 2018. This element of the project will remain relatively unchanged until the summer holidays when the content will be updated for the September to Christmas term.

The Magic show strand will remain active during the year however, it will be likely that numbers reached will decrease due to more of a focus being placed on longer term (6 – 8 week) programmes.

In terms of public engagement with STEM, the Science Hub will continue its involvement in major public events in and around the city such as Limerick Festival of Science and Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival.

Relevant Links:

Web: <http://www.learninghub.ie/hub/science-hub>
My Kids Time: <https://www.mykidstime.com/things-to-do/the-best-places-to-discover-science-for-kids-in-ireland/>

For further details contact

STEAM co-ordinator

sean@learninghub.ie





The Digi Hub plays a key role in integrating ICT and digital technology into all of the activities that run at the Hub. As well as being a stand alone project with its own set of activities, the Digi Hub is used frequently by many other Hubs as well as by External Organisations.

STEAM Workshops

Through our programme of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) activities, ICT was integrated successfully across our projects. The Digi Hub was used for online research, scratch animation, Arduino workshops, Digital design and digital photography as elements of projects taking place in the Science, Art, Music and Health Hubs.

STEAM Camps

This year we integrated Science, Music, Art and Technology into the summer camps. The children learned about programming, electricity and circuit building and used this knowledge to create Art pieces with integrated electrical components such as LED lights and buzzers.

Workshops with Schools

Over the course of 2017 we ran courses in Scratch programming and digital photography/editing with 3 local DEIS primary schools and 1 local DEIS secondary school. These courses lasted approximately 6 weeks and feedback from these was very positive.

Gaming Hub

Following on from our Participatory Budgeting event held in Corpus Christi & Thomond Primary in the first part of the year, we piloted Gaming Hub. This new project aims to use gaming and consoles such as PlayStation and virtual reality to provide users with an educational experience.

The committee for Gaming Hub consists of staff members as well as representatives from 4th to 6th class in both schools. The project is still in its early phases but it has the potential to be a great success with 132 children taking part in the pilot phase from September to December of 2017.

RESTART Project

Learning Hub Limerick partnered up with RESTART Limerick (an SFI funded project based out of UL), to host several Iphone repair events at the Hub. The purpose of these events, aimed at teenagers, was to upskill people in phone repair and spark an interest in the recycling of technology. Qualified technicians walked the teenagers through the process of the repair from start to finish and at the end the participant left with a phone in perfect working order as well as the basis for learning more about repairing technology if they wished to do so.

External Organisations

Various external groups made use of the Digi Hub facility throughout the year including Foroige Tech Space and the Limerick Youth Service for various technology related projects. Digital mapping, Digital photography, animation and general computer literacy were just some of the projects carried out by these organisations. St Augustines School made use of the facility extensively throughout the year also as a base for their Driver Theory Test preparations course.

Story Hub

This year, the Story Hub programme ran from January to June welcoming 266 children from primary schools in Limerick City and County as well as from County Clare through our doors. As always this programme was a big hit with our participants.

We had a total of 11 schools visit for the programme publishing a total of 22 story books which they wrote and illustrated with the help of our team of 3rd level student volunteers. During the second half of the year, due to a greater focus being put on STEAM projects at the Hub and a significant drop in our numbers of placement students, we decided to put this programme on hold. However, this programme is still being offered as an option to visiting schools and there is definitely scope for it to be reintegrated into our regular timetable in the future.

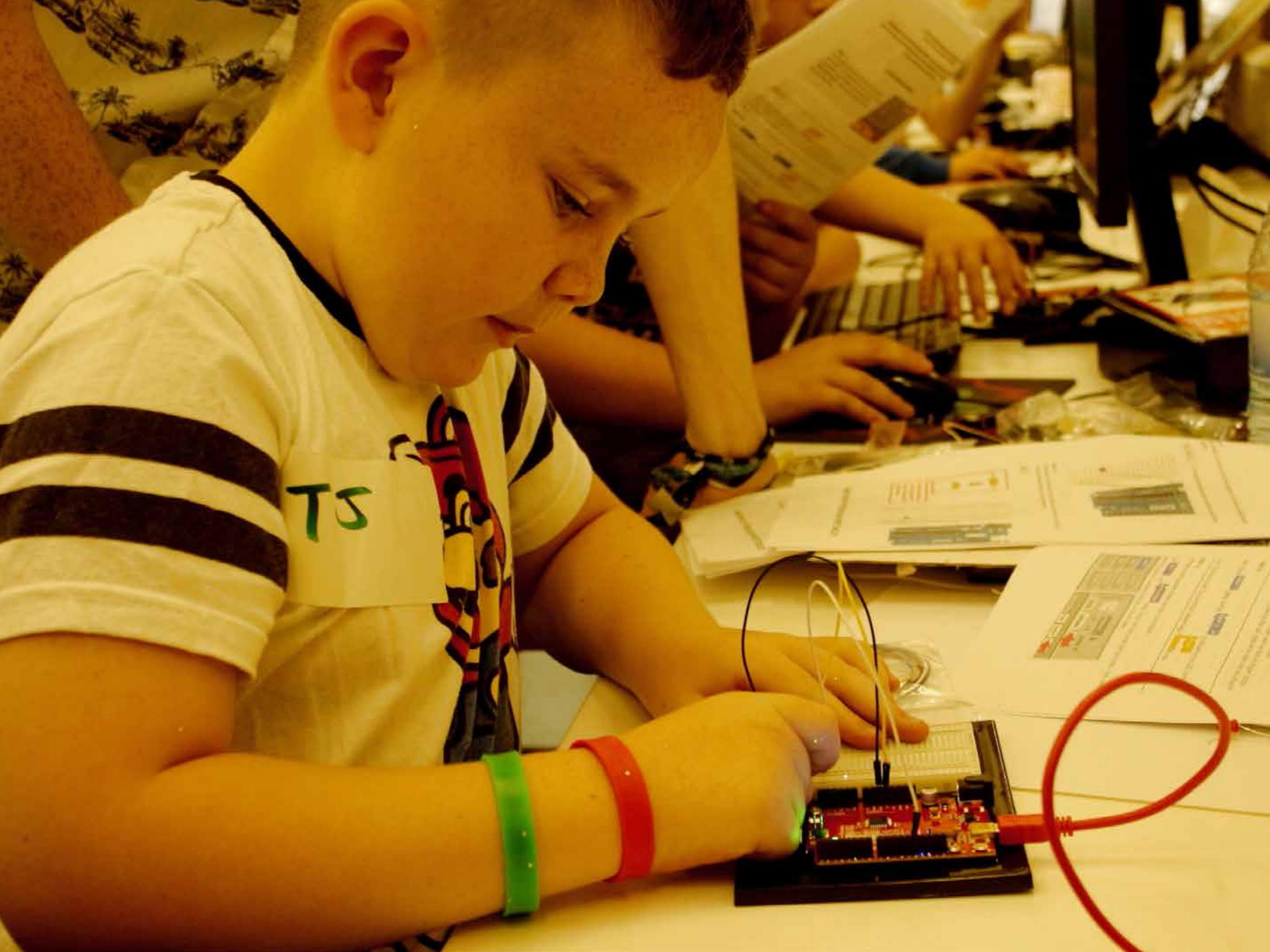
Plans for 2018

During 2018 we will continue to provide local schools, community groups and other organisations with ICT based educational activities. We already have a school group booked in to take part in a 10 week Digital Media course at the Hub as a Science/Art link up project.

Due to the fact that we have had a technology based TUS worker on staff for the past year, we have significantly developed the range of activities we can offer in the DigiHUB. We have developed resources to include more hands on coding workshops including a short Arduino course.

A new afterschool club has been set up which will focus on Digital product design. Children will learn how to use tools like 3D Paint to design models of their own inventions which they can then build physical prototypes.

Finally, several adult learning groups have signed up for activities in the Digihub in 2018 including a computer literacy course for adults with additional needs.

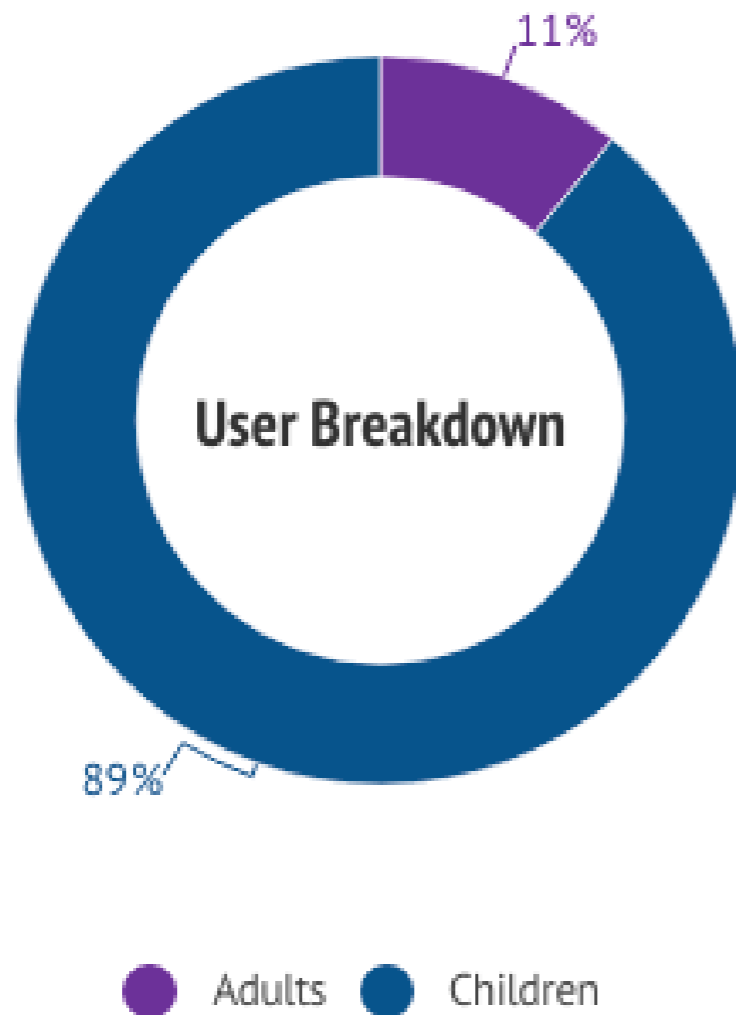




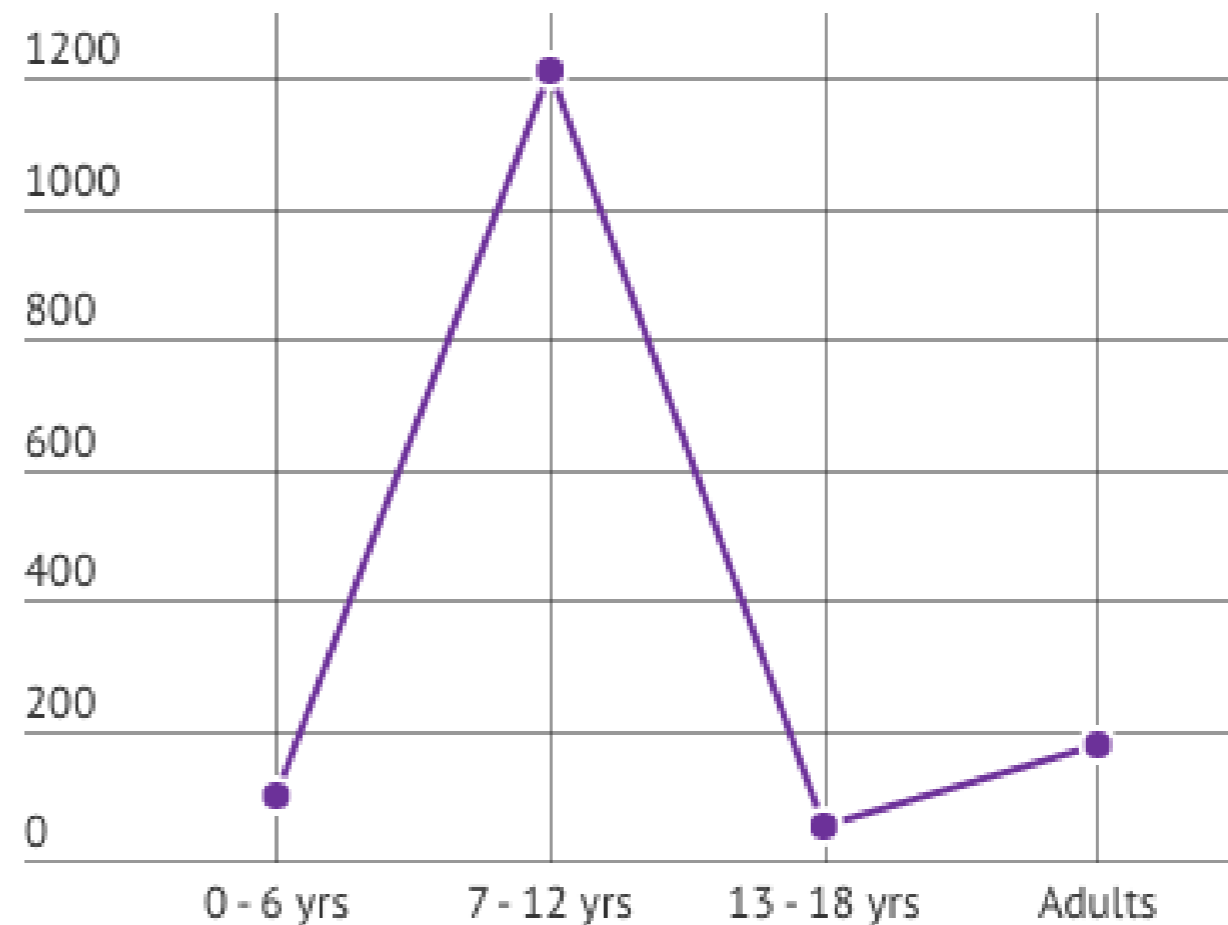


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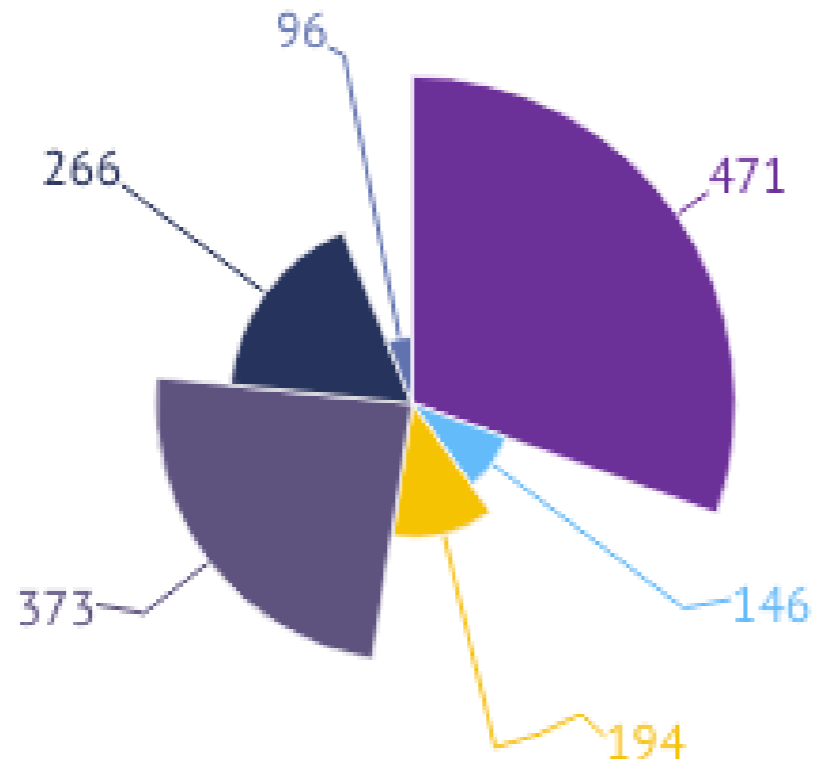
24,784 people used the Learning Hub in 2017



Age Profile of Users



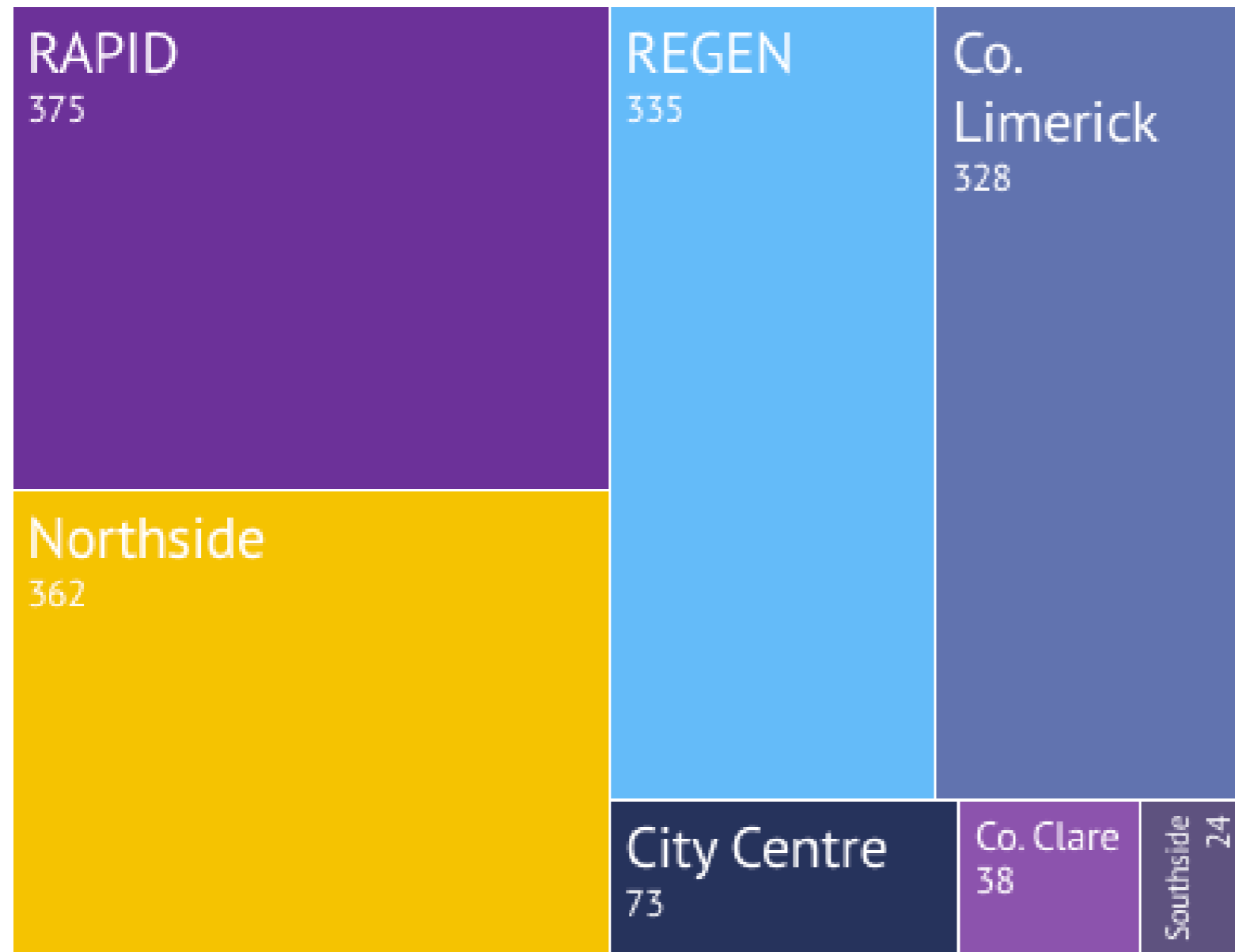
User Breakdown by Activity



● Male (1010) ● Female (536)

- STEM
- Art
- Music
- Kickboxing
- Story Hub
- Summer Camps/Other

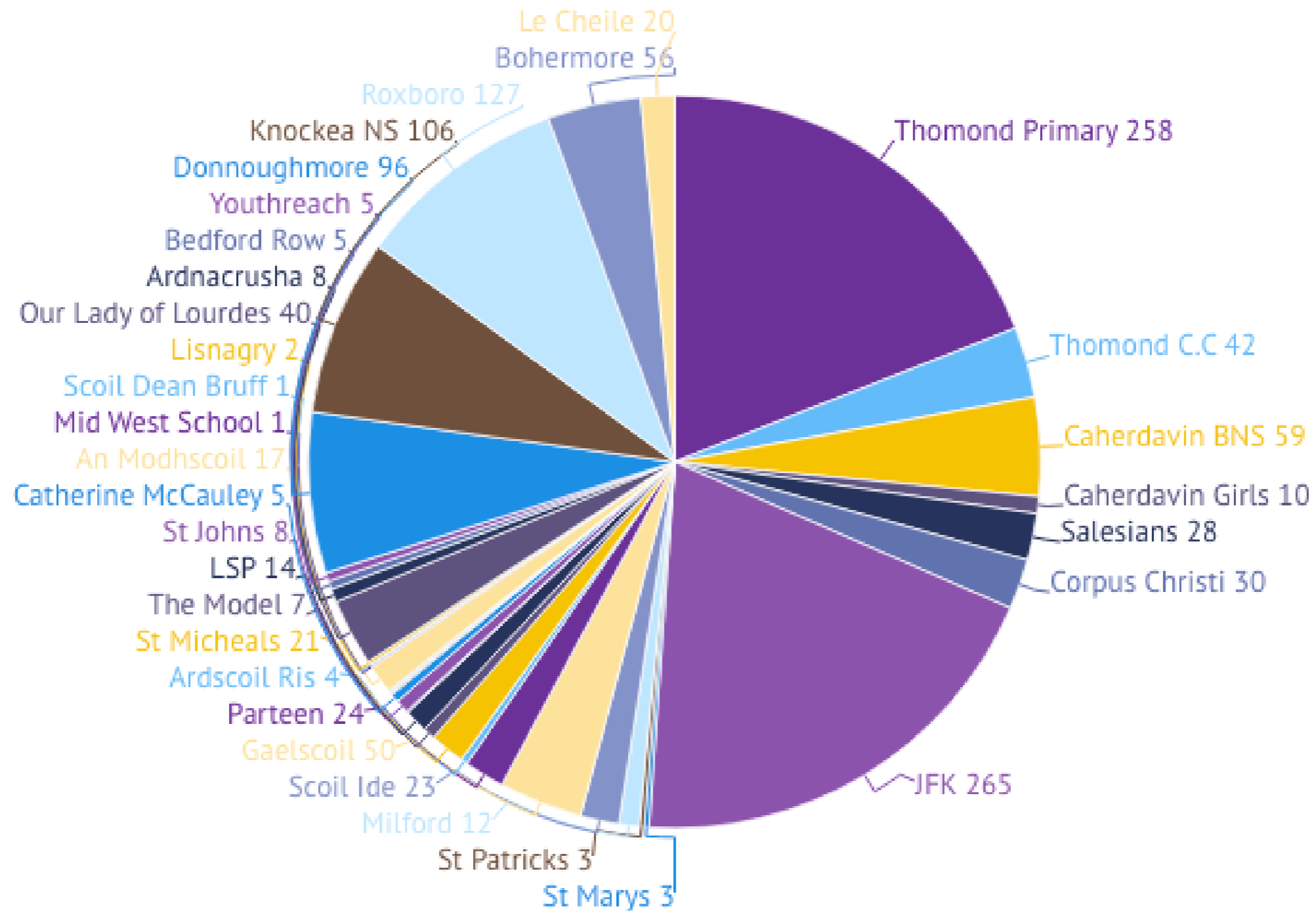
User Breakdown by Region



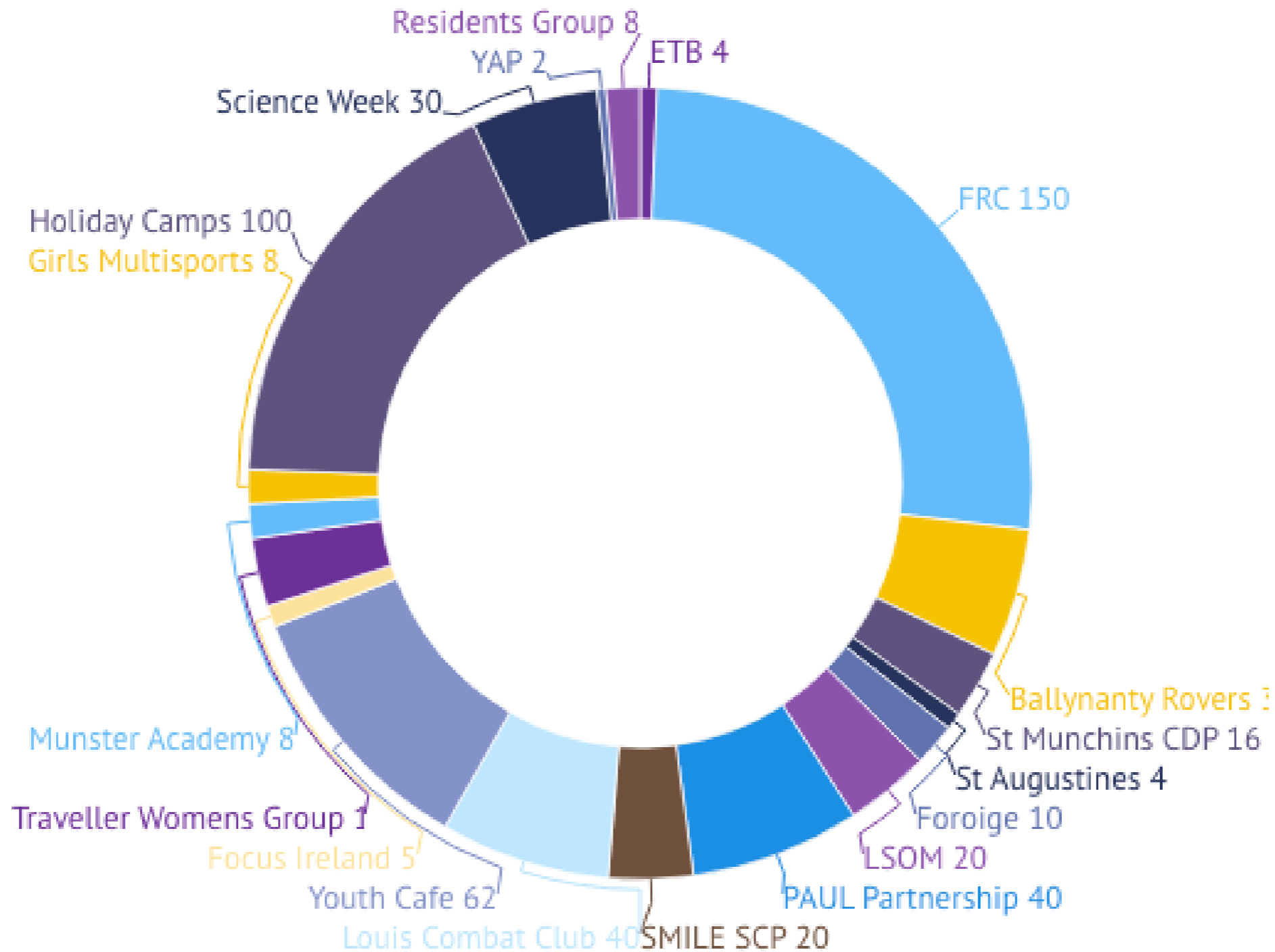
8,280* Volunteer hours donated by 3rd level student volunteers

*Co-op placements increasing in 2018 to normal levels.

38 Schools used the Learning Hub in 2017...



... as well as 20 external organistaions



A special thank you to all of our Student Volunteers!



DIRECTOR'S AND COMPANY INFORMATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017

Eamonn Moran (retired mid- year as Chair)

Gillian Barry (elected Chair during 2017)

Marcus Horan (elected Vice Chair during 2017)

Yvonne Lane

Padraig McDonald

Tiernan O' Neill

David O' Connell

Susan O' Neill

Bridget O' Connell

Gary O' Brien

AUDITORS & ACCOUNTANTS

Liston, Lonergan and Associates,

Fifth Floor, Cornmarket Square, Limerick

SOLICITORS

Dundon Callanan

17 The Crescent

Limerick

SECRETARY & REGISTERED OFFICE

Yvonne Lane

Kileely House,

New Road, Thomandgate,

Limerick

REG NO: 427243

ACCOUNTS

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 2017

INCOME	2017	2016
Social Intervention fund (Limerick City and County Council)	59,455	44,100
JP McManus Charitable Foundation	40,000	40,000
POBAL - CSP	37,418	38,066
PAUL Partnership	23,209	23,209
Limerick Institute of Technology	20,000	24,300
Science Foundation Ireland	24,000	22,500
TUSLA Child and Family Agency	21,756	21,756
Regeneron	20,000	20,000
Limerick City Council - Astro Turf	-	31,900
University of Limerick	10,000	10,000
University of Limerick (Presidents Dinner)	15,000	-
Fundraising and Donations	23,538	1,509
Energy for Generation Fund - Electric Ireland	10,000	-
Internally Generated Income:		
Minibus Sale/Hire	-	4,750
Project Income - Music Hub & Facilities Hire	37,786	23,498
Total	332,162	305,588

** Limerick & Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) continue to support Learning Hub Limerick by providing funding in the form of paid teaching hours. The value of these teaching hours has not been recognised in euro terms in the income statement.

Income is recognised on a cash receipts basis, as a result not all income relating to 2017 is included as income in the financial statements.

OPERATING EXPENDITURE

2017

2016

STAFF COSTS	224,028	203,302
STAFF TRAINING	-	589
OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	75,341	69,690
PROJECT FUNDING	21,638	23,912
DEPRECIATION	55,638	55,346
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	376,645	352,929
	<hr/>	<hr/>

LEARNING HUB LIMERICK LIMITED BALANCE SHEET

	2017	2016
	€	€
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	53,346	108,174
	<hr/>	<hr/>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	350	75
Cash at bank and in hand	63,014	60,631
	<hr/>	<hr/>
CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FAILING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	14,285	21,972
	<hr/>	<hr/>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	49,079	38,734
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	102,425	146,908
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Members' Funds	102,425	146,908
	<hr/>	<hr/>



Thanks to all of our Donors in 2017

SUPPORT US

To find out how you can donate to or volunteer at Learning Hub Limerick please contact jennifer@learninghub.ie or visit www.learninghub.ie

ACKNOWLEDEMENTS

Thanks to all of you who work so hard to help us make the Learning Hub the very special place it is!



Coláiste Mhuire gan Smál



Mary Immaculate College



The Learning Hub would also like to thank the many individual donations and private supporters of our work during 2017.

LEARNING HUB LIMERICK



