



**Irish
Hospice
Foundation**

To die and grieve well wherever the place

ESG Commitments Framework

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IHF ESG Commitment Framework



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To work towards the best end-of-life and bereavement care for all

Environmental

Protect Our Planet



Commitments

- Increase responsible consumption and production across the organisation
- Develop ethically responsible policies and collaborations
- Eliminate waste and promote recycling

Social Agenda

Invest in People & Communities



Commitments

- Promote an inclusive culture which values employees
- Promote Community Engagement
- Promote accessible resources and information
- Promote partnerships across marginalised communities
- Promote quality education to promote the ethos of IHF

Governance

Act with Integrity



Commitments

- Protect all data
- Ensure financial accountability
- Promote good corporate governance
- Manage compliance with the regulatory environment
- Manage systemic risk

IHF Vision and Mission

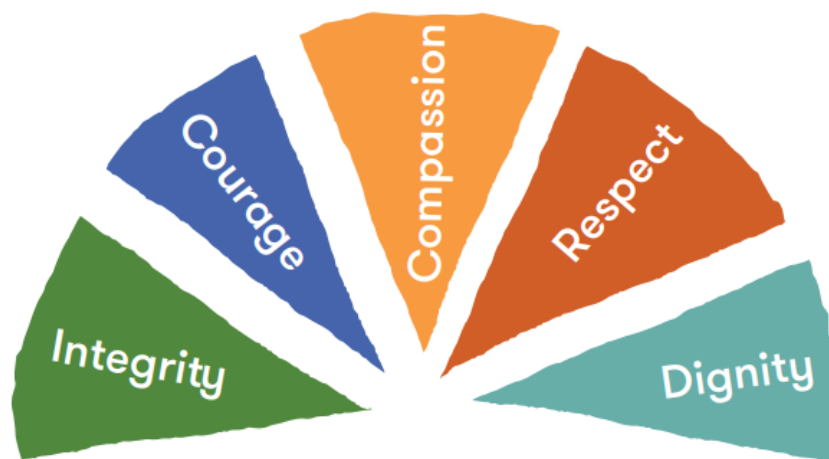
Our Vision

An Ireland where people experiencing dying, death and bereavement are provided with the care and support they need.

Our Mission

To work towards the best end-of-life and bereavement care for all.

Our Values



Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF) was established to benefit individuals, families, communities and society experiencing end of life and bereavement. IHF is committed to creating a culture which nurtures the values identified above to support those people in Ireland experiencing dying, death and bereavement ([see IHF Strategy](#)). These values automatically extend across the key pillars of our ESG framework, which were developed under the following headings:

- Protect Our Planet.
- Invest in Communities & People.
- Act with Integrity.

Overview

Climate change and climate action are increasingly on both personal and professional agendas. Increasingly, Boards are being asked to consider their environmental, social and governance (ESG) impacts – collectively called sustainability.

Sustainability is defined as the practice of meeting *the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

The move towards sustainability came about in response to concerns over:

- Climate change: the environmental threats that accompanied rapid industrialisation and modern lifestyles.
- Adverse social and community impact: the significant income disparity, poverty and social tension arising from population growth, changing demographics and globalisation.
- Corporate governance issues: corporate scandals and economic crises arising from inadequate checks and balances in corporations.

This move towards sustainability has led to political pressure to reprioritise business from exclusively focusing on profit and to better integrate environmental, social and governance issues. This pressure on decision makers has led to global, regional and national prominence with the establishment of the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UN Framework of Convention on Climate Change. EU strategy has established the goal to be carbon neutral by 2050, and Ireland's target is net zero emissions by 2050.

Introduction

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for protecting and improving the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. The EPA has identified those for-profit sectors where carbon emissions are a key concern and as a result introduced an ESG reporting framework to ensure businesses play their part. The focus is not only on environment but governance and social agendas with the overall aim of being responsible businesses.

Charities are not the key focus, but it should be seen as an opportunity for charities to get involved. For charities, donors are becoming more discerning about supporting organisations that are committed to sustainability – seeing it as part of a responsible and transparent governance approach expected within the organisation. In terms of recruitment, staff are increasingly looking at what importance is placed on sustainability within an organisation when considering future employers. By committing to a sustainability agenda, IHF can position itself as an organisation that is committed to acting responsibly whilst demonstrating transparency through its governance and leadership.

Uniquely, Irish Hospice Foundation is concerned with the ways in which people in Ireland respond to and can be supported in the face of dying, death and bereavement. The threat to our climate and environment has been talked about in a range of commentaries as a planet life-threatening issue, and as a cause of grief ('ecological grief') or anxiety ('climate anxiety'). IHF is well placed to consider ways in which the grief, powerlessness or loss experienced by some adults and children can be supported and channelled into ways of developing preventative and positive actions to counteract climate change.

IHF can be part of the collective that is required to allow for positive change (i.e., to protect the planet and have an impact on society). Before delving into the development process, it's crucial to understand the core elements of an ESG framework.

What Is an ESG Framework?

ESG is a framework that helps stakeholders understand how an organisation is managing risks and opportunities related to environmental, social, and governance criteria (sometimes called ESG factors). ESG takes the holistic view that sustainability extends beyond just environmental issues.



A systematic manner of approaching, planning and disclosing the non-financial impacts of any given activity.

Definitions of the ESG pillars

Environmental: Focuses on the organisation's impact on the planet. This includes its carbon footprint, energy efficiency, waste management, and overall commitment to environmental stewardship.



Social: Examines an organisation’s relationship with its employees, customers, communities, and other stakeholders. It involves considerations such as diversity and inclusion, labour practices, human rights, and community engagement.



Governance: Addresses the structure and practices that guide a company’s decision-making processes. This encompasses board composition, board effectiveness, regulatory duties, transparency and disclosure and adherence to ethical business practices.



UN Sustainable Development Goals

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the world’s best plan to build a better world for people and our planet by 2030. Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the SDGs are a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the environment. They recognise that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including

education, health, equality and job opportunities while tackling climate change and working to preserve our ocean and forests.

The SDGs are integrated—that is, they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. Through the pledge to Leave No One Behind, countries have committed to fast-track progress for those furthest behind first.



In considering our ESG framework, IHF completed a SWOT analysis using the 3 ESG Pillars and the UN SDGs. IHF identified 7 of the United Nations sustainable goals as their focus within the ESG strategy. These were chosen following a process of deciding which areas are most material to IHF’s vision and mission and strategic objectives. IHF have identified 3 UN Goals which relate to the primary focus of IHF, and 4 supporting UN goals. They are as follows:

IHF Primary Purpose:



- [3 Good Health and Wellbeing](#): Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being for all at all ages.
- [4 Quality Education](#): Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- [17 Partnership for Goals](#): This goal aims to mobilise resources, knowledge, technology, and expertise from diverse actors to support sustainable development initiatives worldwide.

Supporting Goals:



- [5 Gender Equality](#): To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- [10 Reduced Inequality](#): To reduce inequality within and among countries.
- [12 Responsible Consumption and Production](#): Ensure sustainable consumption and production.
- [13 Climate Action](#): To take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

IHF ESG Strategy

In developing a meaningful ESG strategy, IHF established a “Green team” which consisted of staff members across the organisation. A thorough assessment utilising a SWOT analysis was completed to identify our current status in relation to environmental, social, and governance practices. This process was also aligned with the organisation’s core values and mission. The team engaged other stakeholders within the organisation to ensure that the ESG strategy fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility throughout the organisation to drive meaningful change.

The following plan provides an overview of IHF’s current status and progress as it’s related to the three ESG pillars and associated sustainable goals. The following plan outlines opportunities for IHF for further commitment in the individual areas. The opportunities identified will be further broken down to specific KPIs to inform an operational plan for 2024-2025 which will be incorporated into the business plan for 2024.

Protect Our Planet.

Environmental



Introduction

Irish Hospice foundation is committed to being a responsible climate actor both in terms of its carbon footprint and the practices we encourage our staff and those organisations and companies that work with us to uphold. The following outlines some initial steps which have been taken.

Strengths currently within IHF:

- IHF promote recycling within the organisation.
- IHF’s recent IT investment to SharePoint reduces demand on paper and printing.
- Sustainable partnerships: Partnering with Corporates that promote sustainable living (e.g., Irish Memorial Trees).

- Carbon emissions: Promotion of tax saver commuter tickets, use of public transport, walking and bike to work scheme for travel to work or places of work. Hybrid working practice means less people commuting to the office.
- Property: Current workplace strategy for new building to include ESG considerations.
- Through our core focus on living, dying and grieving, we are sensitive to the losses inherent in climate change and committed to acknowledging how these impact people, and also how they can be used as levers for positive change.
- We encourage the use of public transport over private car use. We do not have carparking spaces for staff/visitors, and our mileage expenses only cover private car use when public transport is not available/viable.

Commitments

IHF collaborate with a range of organisations including hospitals, nursing homes and fundraising partners. IHF will establish IHF sustainable procurement guidelines and look at opportunities to influence those we collaborate with.

- IHF will reduce our carbon footprint: IHF have an opportunity to analyse and understand our environmental impact by commissioning a carbon footprint/environmental impact report and from there targeting the actions with the greatest opportunity to impact our score. Additionally, once IHF have established their score, IHF can request the companies they work with for their ESG rating as part of the tender process outlined in the procurement policy:
 - IHF merchandise made from sustainable materials.
 - Responsible printing policies
 - Practical resource suppliers
 - Include ESG considerations as part of tendering, bid analysis and grant applications.
- IHF will review and monitor implementation of our ethical policy for fundraising to ensure it reflects our commitment to ESG.

- IHF are committed to reducing digital pollution: IHF will work smarter to reduce excess data storage.
- IHF will raise awareness/scoping of the green funeral options – such as what are the most environmentally friendly funeral options.
- IHF will include concepts such as “climate grief” in our advocacy, community, and education programmes and in our childhood programmes.

Invest in People and Communities.

Social Agenda / Good health and wellbeing



Introduction

At IHF, we recognise the value of prioritising the health and wellbeing of all our stakeholders, including our employees, our volunteers, our supporters, healthcare workers and the wider community.

IHF have and continue to invest in our people through seeking regular feedback via staff surveys, promoting staff development through performance appraisal and investment in the IHF training budget.

We have established sector leading policies such as our Bereavement Leave policy, which go beyond legislative mandate and establish best practices models for workplaces. IHF recognise the importance of providing our people with a physical work environment which is functional, comfortable, and safe. The development of our current workplace strategy demonstrates the organisation’s commitment to aiming to achieve the right fit for the organisation as we transition to a new building in the near future. Equally, we recognise that impact of the psychosocial work environment on employee health and wellbeing, and, as per guidance by the Health and Safety Authority, aim to minimise potential psychological, social and environmental risk factors to employees to create a safe and supportive working environment.

Our hybrid policy and flextime procedures recognise the importance of work-life balance and being family friendly. The establishment of a social committee endeavors to strive to create a workplace that values the emotional connection and wellbeing between IHF employees.

Our People

Strengths currently within IHF:

- Strong organisational policies including a robust Sick Leave Policy and Bereavement Leave Policy based on best practise going beyond legislative mandate.
- Organisational awareness and promotion of employees' rights to different leaves including carers leave, parental leave, force majeure, and domestic violence leave.
- The introduction of a Hybrid Working and Flexible Working Policy.
- Benefits such as Permanent Health Insurance, Death in Service Benefit, Pension and access to the Employee Assistance Programme.
- Social club for interpersonal connection and relationship-building.
- Seeking regular feedback through staff surveys.
- Recognising the importance of the working environment and through the current workplace strategy continuing to improve on this.
- The provision of a kind and compassionate workplace culture that allows employees to bring their full selves to work.

Commitments:

- To continue to implement and improve programmes and policies to support mental and physical health, work-life balance and overall wellbeing of staff.
- To promote diversity in hiring, ensuring equal opportunities, and fostering an inclusive workplace culture.
- Investing in employee training, career development opportunities and succession planning to retain top talent and promote internal mobility.
- Continue to ensure fair remuneration, benefits and working conditions for all employees, as well as employment law and regulations.

- IHF will support community initiatives, volunteering, and corporate social responsibility efforts to make a positive impact beyond the workplace.

Investing in Communities

As IHF's mission speaks to our commitment to the wider community and their health and wellbeing as it relates to dying, death and bereavement (i.e., an Ireland where people experiencing dying, death and bereavement are provided with the care and support they need).

IHF have established a strong foundation of good health and wellbeing through our programmes, which we are committed to growing. Programmes such as the Bereavement Support Line, Nurses for Night Care and Grief in the Workplace provide direct services and supports to those in our community. Bereavement Networks engage relevant stakeholders and provide varying levels of supports to collectively address to the bereavement needs of communities ensuring an appropriate response.

IHF healthcare programmes such as Hospice Friendly Hospitals and Caru provide staff with training to deliver compassionate care but also training which incorporates the staff members' wellbeing and that of their families when working in the area of dying and death.

Our creative and cultural engagement programmes such as Compassionate Culture Networks and our range of Seed Grant projects seek to engage under-represented communities by providing creative environments in which to engage on topics which are important in the area of dying, death and bereavement and empowering communities to respond to their own needs.

Strengths currently within IHF:

- National leader in bereavement awareness, policies and programmes such as the Bereavement Networks, National Grief Awareness Week, and the Irish Childhood Bereavement Network.
- Direct service and social prescribing through the Bereavement Support Line.
- IHF advocates on a national level for best practice guidance for Bereavement Leave with Grief in the Workplace .
- Longstanding healthcare programmes build systems of care that support individuals, carers and supporters, and professionals, including Hospice Friendly Hospitals and Caru.
- Public and patient involvement is expanding through programmes such as Dying Well at Home.

- Diverse community engagement is activated and supported through our Arts and Cultural Engagement programmes, such as Compassionate Culture Network, Seeds Grants, and Roots and Shoots continuing support programme.
- Reduced-cost talks and workshops are offered through the grief in the community initiatives.
- Fundraising actively engages with small communities across the country.

Commitments:

- To prioritise the health and wellbeing of marginalised groups during end of life and bereavement, utilising co-design/personal and public involvement in creation of materials and programmes.
- To develop and deliver culturally appropriate training for healthcare professionals.
- To expand creative engagement methods to ensure accessible health/death literacy, including visible communication, translated materials, and different media/outreach channels.
- To develop an organisational approach to identify and work with key demographics.
- Specific cultural and diversity training for staff to equip them with skills to appropriately engage with communities in a meaningful way.

Quality Education



Introduction

IHF currently develops and delivers a wide range of education and training in the area of dying, death and bereavement. IHF aims to provide consistently high-quality education and training which will build knowledge and skills in the areas of dying, death and bereavement to a wide audience. This includes but is not limited to healthcare professionals and support staff in hospitals, nursing homes and community settings; healthcare trainees and students; teachers,

managers and other professionals; staff and volunteers providing bereavement support; professional and family carers; and members of the general public.

High-quality education and training is designed with the needs of the Irish context. However, as part of the IHF constitution, we seek to provide grants and funds to develop and progress hospice, palliative, end-of-life care and bereavement. This is done through funding research, education and clinical practice both nationally and internationally.

Current Strengths:

- IHF education and training strategy vision is ‘that learning opportunities are available and embraced by people and their organisations so that dying, and bereavement are a cherished and ongoing part of life.’
- IHF education and training is built on principles of adult education which specifically acknowledge learners’ prior experience and its relevance and promotes interaction and sharing.
- Highly evaluated training initiatives are embedded across all our bereavement and EOL programmes.
- Delivery across a range of settings to educate both professionals and the general public (healthcare, workplaces, communities).
- Provision of Level 9 education in death, dying and bereavement to build the knowledge and skills of professionals who work in the area (in partnership with RCSI).
- Annual grant programme to increase to access/reach of postgraduate courses to those who have financial challenges.
- Rigorous and quality-driven education and training development approach across all IHF programmes.
- The normalisation and promotion of death literacy and death conversations across our networks and community work.
- While IHF are primarily an Irish-focused organisation, our constitution commits “to fostering relationships with those working in the fields of hospice, palliative and end-of-life care” including the provision of funds and grants for the development of hospice, palliative and end-of-life and bereavement care. Africa has the highest per capita need, so IHF have chosen to fund two education programmes in Africa through Hospice Africa

Uganda and through the African Palliative Care association (currently on year 2 of a three-year commitment).

- Our quality training is aligned to the Palliative Care Competence framework, ensuring training at an appropriate level, achieving agreed learning outcomes.
- Training in end-of-life and palliative care is part of Department of Health policy, and our training supports this, particularly for the Level 1 and 2 Palliative Care Needs.
- IHF engage in international partnerships to promote networking and training opportunities. This year sees IHF co-host the European Grief Conference with its active participation.

Commitments:

- To ensure that learning on death, dying and bereavement is accessible, inclusive and appropriate by focusing on needs analysis, content development, delivery and facilitation, cost, targeted outreach.
- To complete and publish our Education Quality Policy.
- To evaluate the impact of our educational programmes and resources in the short and long term (embedding criteria to ensure the needs of more marginalised groups are also met).
- To continue to integrate death, dying and grief education into both formal (educators and professionals in health and social care) and non-formal (unpaid carers, family caregivers, community members) settings.
- To provide education and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for IHF employees to help them deliver quality education that is relevant, inclusive and accessible and ensure we are always responding to the evolving needs of our communities.
- To promote education equality through IHF internal hiring and promotional processes (recruitment and promotion of people from non-formal education backgrounds).
- To identify and contribute to appropriate initiatives in developing countries that work towards supporting people to die and grieve well.

Partnership for Goals



Introduction

IHF as a national organisation recognises the importance of partnerships in moving the dial in relation to dying, death and bereavement. Therefore, the partnership for goals is one which is central to the work of IHF. IHF makes its impact through developing networks between like-minded organisations to share learning, advocate for change, increase impact and raise funds. IHF works collaboratively on research, policy and in defining gaps in dying, death and bereavement that needs to be addressed.

Strengths currently within IHF:

- We are advocating with like-minded organisations and as a key contributor to progress the launch and investment of the new Adult Palliative Care Policy.
- We currently work in partnership with the HSE, our partners in primary care, with the voluntary hospice movement, our age sector partners, the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP), representative healthcare bodies and other agencies to strengthen services and build capacity in end-of-life care in the community.
- In response to the Expert Panel Review completed on Nursing Homes during COVID, we have collaborated with the HSE and AIIPC to lead on a quality improvement program over the next 5 years.
- We are the lead organisations in the development of national and regional networks. These include the Irish Childhood Bereavement Network, national and regional bereavement networks, Caru networks and end-of-life co-ordinator networks.
- IHF has established academic partnerships to deliver an MSc in Loss and Bereavement and a Professional Certificate in Children and Loss, as well as funding academic post graduate courses in palliative care with National University of Galway (NUIG) and the delivery of Palliative Care and bereavement modules with ICGP.
- International Membership with like-minded organisations (e.g., EAPC).
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) partnerships in place with organisations that fundraise for an agreed period of time.

- Delivery of the European Grief Conference in 2024.

Commitments:

- To increase partnerships with marginalised and unrepresented groups.
- Improve opportunities to share our educational programmes and resources to progress the agenda of dying, death, and bereavement.
- Continue to strengthen relationships with strategic partners/stakeholders to build awareness, education and capacity in death, dying and bereavement and embed it into the public health and health promotions agendas.

Act with Integrity.

Governance

Introduction:

Irish Hospice foundation is committed to governance ensuring accountability, leadership, integrity, and transparency across the organisation. IHF is compliant with all provisions of the Charities Governance Code issued by the Charities Regulator. IHF is operating to Charities Institute Ireland's Triple Lock Standards - transparent reporting, good fundraising and governance. Our financial statements are prepared in accordance with Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice). In recent years, IHF have further invested in its governance as part of a continuous quality improvement cycle. This is reflected in our business plan and annual report.

Strengths:

- IHF produces a high-quality annual report. In 2021 and 2022, IHF were shortlisted for the Carmichael Centre's Good Governance Awards for Non-Profit Organisations.
- IHF completed an independent evaluation of the Board of IHF in 2021/22. The overall assessment was that the IHF Board is currently positioned as a "Strong board with the potential to become over time a high-performing board" with the evaluator acknowledging that this was the first time an Irish Charity/Non-Profit board has been awarded a rating either in the Strong or High performing categories.

- IHF appointed a third party to provide internal audit services on an outsourced basis for a three-year period. The role of the internal audit is to provide independent, objective assurance over the organisation's risk management, internal control and governance, and the processes in place for ensuring effectiveness, efficiency and economy in the execution of its operations.
- IHF has a donor charter recognising our gratitude for all donations and fundraising, on which we are reliant and our high standards of donor care.
- Appointment of external DPO shows that IHF is committed to GDPR/Data Protection compliance.
- Membership of the Wheel and Charities Institute Ireland as well as representation on the Institute of Chartered Accountants Charity and Not for Profit Group ensures IHF is kept up to date on sectoral regulatory developments.

Commitments:

- Data protection: To protect all data held by the organisation within GDPR regulation.
- Corporate governance: To ensure compliance with the appropriate regulatory bodies and be aware of any changes in the sector which require a change.
- To ensure policies are developed in line with the ESG Commitment Framework.
- To increase diversity at a Board and sub-committee level.
- To include ESG outcomes in the annual report.
- Include ESG in our next 5-year strategy to show how IHF plans to operate responsibly, drive positive change and remain resilient in a changing world.

References / Resources

Climate Toolkit 4 Business: <https://www.climatetoolkit4business.gov.ie/carbon-calculator/>

Environmental Protection Agency: www.epa.ie

EPA Carbon Footprint Calculators: <https://epa.ie/take-action/in-the-home/climate-change/carbon-footprint-calculators/>

EU Climate ADAPT: <https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/>

Public Sector Climate Action – DECC: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/337b6-public-sector-climate-action-mandate/>

SEAI Energy Academy: <https://www.seai.ie/energyacademy/>

SEAI Tools and Calculators: <https://www.seai.ie/tools/>

Skillnet Ireland Climate Ready – climate training courses for business:
<https://www.skillnetireland.ie/climate-ready/>

UN 2015 Sustainable Goals: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>



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