

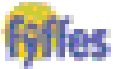
ready, willing and able

an employers guide to hiring people with a disability

further information about the ability conference can be found at www.abilityconference.ie



ability

-  **AIB**
-  Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
-  **IBEC**
-  **CommunityOne**
-  **AIB**
-  **Irish Farmers**
-  **accenture**
-  **TEXT 500**
-  **eircom**
-  **Mylife**
-  **GREENCORE GROUP**
-  **SMURFIT GROUP**
-  **WILLIAM FYFE**
-  **Irish Motorway Services**
-  **Jas Gawronski**
-  **Fyffes**

support for the Aisling Project has come from a number of leading Irish business organisations

Ability in business

"We know employers have a willingness to accelerate the employment of people with a disability. With your crucial directive and understanding, we need you to become role models and catalysts for other organisations, to begin first steps and demonstrate the importance of employment for all.

The private sector needs to lead in this area. As leaders of organisations, you have the capability to change. Your HR directors can implement it for you.

We want you to be inspired by the strengths of this community. By removing some of the myths and concerns that surround disability, through showcasing capability, you can now look at the individual first and not see disability, see tangible business benefits and see Ability."

Caroline Casey, Founder, The Aisling Project

What is disability?

Disability is a restriction in performing one or more major life activities as a result of an impairment. Major life activities include walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, performing manual tasks, or socialising with others.

The term "disability" can cover a wide range of circumstances, including visual impairment, hearing deficits, physical disability, specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia), and mental health difficulties. However, no two people with a disability have the same needs. The same condition may have a major effect on one person, but a minor effect on another. While there are occasions when disability can affect a person's employment potential, a great many people with disabilities are fully effective employees and make a valuable contribution to their employers' businesses.

Why is it important to accelerate the numbers of people with disabilities in the workforce?

In the last few years many thousands of people have been recruited from outside Ireland and yet there was a major untapped resource of well trained Irish people available to work. Each year:

- Over 2,000 people with disabilities receive skills training, through FAS, to prepare them for the labour market,
- There are over 800 people with disabilities studying in Third Level education institutions, and
- Many more students with disabilities complete second level education.
- In spite of this highly trained and educated source of labour, only a small percentage of people with disabilities are currently employed.

Your questions

We recognise that, as an employer, you may have questions and concerns about hiring people with disabilities. Some of the frequently asked questions are:

1. Does the person have the ability to do the job?
2. Will there be health and safety implications?
3. What about absenteeism?
4. Won't it be expensive?
5. Will my insurance liabilities increase?
6. What about existing employees' attitudes to taking on someone with a disability?

Our answers

1. Does the person have the ability to do the job?

Look at the person's training, skills and experience rather than his or her disability, as you would when recruiting a person who does not have a disability. People with disabilities need to be resilient to overcome many obstacles in their daily lives and international studies have shown that people with disabilities are productive, reliable and valuable employees.

2. Will there be health and safety implications?

A safe and healthy workplace is important for all employees and customers and is required by law. Simple adjustments and adaptations to the workplace can facilitate a person with a disability, and many companies have found that adaptations they have made for employees with disabilities benefit the whole workforce and external customers.

3. What about absenteeism?

The experience of Irish and international employers is that people with disabilities have excellent attendance records. Having a disability does not necessarily mean that a person has poor health.

4. Won't it be expensive?

There are often no extra costs involved in recruiting or employing people with disabilities and not all people with a disability need adaptations or specialised equipment. However, FAS provides assistance to employers to help with costs which may be incurred in employing people with disabilities, adapting the workplace, or providing specialised equipment to facilitate a person with a disability in their work. Funding is also available to employers to retrain employees who acquire disabilities during their working lives.

5. Will my insurance liabilities increase?

A review of the Irish insurance market found that insurers are prepared to provide cover for people with disabilities at no additional premium. It seems there is little difficulty in obtaining insurance at normal rates once a safe working environment is provided.

6. What about existing employees' attitudes to taking on someone with a disability?

Working alongside people with disabilities is no different than working alongside anyone else. People with disabilities want to be treated in the same way as people who do not have a disability. Funding is available from FAS for Disability Awareness Training in the workplace, which can help to overcome misconceptions about working with people with disabilities.



What are the business benefits for you?

There are many proven benefits of employing a person with a disability.



Increased Productivity

A number of international studies have demonstrated that employees with disabilities have attendance, punctuality and productivity levels equal to, if not better than, their able bodied peers.

Accumulated skillsets

By retaining staff who acquire a disability you hold on to accumulated skills experience and commitment.

Enhanced Staff Morale

Staff morale and commitment to the organisation throughout the workforce has been found to increase when an organisation makes a visible commitment to employing a person with a disability.

Increased Customer Loyalty

Benefits are also noticed at a customer level: customers respond favorably towards organisations which are positive towards disability and reflect the diversity of the community.

Enhanced public image

Clear evidence that you are an equal opportunities employer projects a more positive image and promotes your business.

"We can maximise the available potential with a focus on the diverse abilities of people rather than assumptions about what they might not be able to do." Bank of Ireland

Did you know the State provides assistance?

A range of State supports is available to employers and jobseekers to help the integration of people with disabilities into the workplace. Not all employers or people with disabilities will require these supports, but it is helpful to know that they are available.

1. Disability Awareness Training Support Scheme

Disability Awareness Training assists in eliminating mistaken perceptions about people with disabilities and their capacity to be productive and effective colleagues and employees. It covers topics such as the use of appropriate language and preparing existing staff when they are being joined by a new colleague with a disability. Funding is available from FAS to companies in the private sector at a level of 90% of costs in the first year and 80% of costs in subsequent years. The maximum funding available is €20,000 in any one calendar year.

2. Job Interviewer Interpreter Grant

FAS will pay for an Interpreter to attend a job interview with a person who has a hearing or speech impairment.

3. Workplace/Equipment Adaptation Grant

A grant of up to €6,350 is available from FAS towards the cost of making the workplace more accessible to a person with a disability.

4. Employment Support Scheme (ESS)

This FAS scheme provides a wage subsidy to employers who recruit a person with a disability on a full-time basis (20 hours or more), if that person's productivity is 20% to 50% lower than the average productivity levels of other employees. It is important to stress that many people with disabilities have productivity levels equal to their work colleagues who do not have a disability.

5. Personal Reader Grant

Available from FAS for blind or visually impaired people in employment who need assistance with job related reading.

6. Employee Retraining Grants

This new grant will be available from FAS for employers to re-train workers who acquire a disability in the course of their working lives so that they can continue to work in the same company.

7. Employer's PRSI Exemption Scheme

This scheme is available from the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs to employers who recruit a person with a disability for at least 4 days' work per week for a minimum of 20 hours per week. The scheme exempts the employer from his/her share of PRSI contributions in respect of the additional worker for the first two years of employment.

How do I apply?

Further details and Application Forms for FAS schemes are available from any of FAS's Employment Services Offices throughout the country.

Contact details are in the Appendix. Further details and Application Forms for the Employer's PRSI Exemption scheme are available from:

PRSI Exemption Scheme
Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, Gandon House, Amiens Street, Dublin 1.
Phone: (01) 7043000



Common sense

Your concerns and those of your employees can be alleviated with your directive and visible leadership. When dealing with anyone with a disability, common sense is the biggest asset. People with a disability are just that - people.

The message to employers is: select the best qualified applicant, regardless of disability.

How will you make a difference for the future?

We urge you to proactively:

1. Be the leader - see ability before disability.
2. Empower your managers and employees to facilitate the employment of people with disabilities.
3. Be ambassadors to other companies in your industry and in your supply chain - show them disability in action, share experiences.
4. Encourage people with a disability to apply to your company for upcoming positions.
5. Implement work experience programmes for those with a disability, and see these benefits in action.
6. Encourage learning about disability within your workforce.
7. Make every effort to keep employees if they become disabled.
8. Review your own commitment on a yearly basis.

Having a disability policy is the beginning. Implementation of the policy is what will make the crucial difference.

Next steps

The Appendix contains useful contact points for:

1. General information on issues relating to the employment of people with disabilities.
2. Sourcing people with disabilities for employment .
3. Information on technical aids.
4. Information on specific disability issues.

"People with disabilities are keen to show that, given a fair chance and the appropriate support, they can make a real contribution to the workplace.

It is important to our society not to lose the benefits of their abilities and potential contribution to the economic and social development of Ireland." IBEC

see
ability

not
disability

Useful contacts:**The Aisling Project**

21 Seafort Villas, Sandymount, Dublin 4.
01 4652880 / 086 804 6260
www.theaislingproject.org

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Employment & Training Strategy Unit,
Davitt House, 65a Adelaide Road, Dublin 2.
01 6313101
www.entemp.ie

FÁS

Disability Policy and Development Unit,
Head Office, 27/33 Upr Baggot Street, Dublin 4.
01 6070500
www.fas.ie

Association for Higher Education Access & Disability (AHEAD)

Newman House, 86 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2.
01 4752386
www.ahead.ie

IBEC

84/86 Lr Baggot Street, Dublin 2.
01 6051500
www.ibec.ie

ICTU

31/32 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.
01 8897777
www.ictu.ie

Equality Authority

2 Clonmel Street, Dublin 2.
01 4173333
www.equality.ie

National Disability Authority

25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.
01 6080400
www.nda.ie

Health and Safety Authority

10 Hogan Place, Dublin 2.
01 6620400
www.hsa.ie

**Where to source people with disabilities for employment:**

FÁS's Employment Services Offices can provide a comprehensive service to employers who wish to employ a person with a disability. They can also provide contact details for other organisations - such as NTDI (Rehab subsidiary), CRC, etc. - who are a further source for recruiting prospective employees. Details of FÁS's Employment Services Offices are listed below, by region.

FÁS Employment Services Offices**Dublin North**

D'Olier House, D'Olier Street,
Dublin 2. 01 612 4800

34 Main Street,
Swords, Co Dublin.
01 840 5252

Enterprise House
6 Bridge Street, Balbriggan,
Co Dublin. 01 8415141

The Brace Centre
Main Street Blanchardstown,
Dublin. 1501 820 1011

Unit 14C, Finglas Shopping
Centre, Finglas, Dublin.
1101 834 6222

Northside Shopping Centre
Coolock, Dublin.
1701 847 5911

FÁS Training Centre
Poppintree Ind Estate,
Jamestown Road, Finglas,
Dublin 1. 101 814 0200

Baldoyle Industrial Estate
Baldoyle, Dublin.
1301 816 7400

Dublin South & Wicklow

The Boulevard
Quinnsborough Road, Bray,
Co. Wicklow. 01 286 7912

FÁS Training Centre
Wyattville Road,
Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin.
01 204 3600

18/21 Cumberland Street
Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin.
01 280 8488

FÁS Training Centre
Old School Building
Loretto Avenue
Rathfarnham 01 4951414

Government Buildings
Castlepark, Arklow,
Co. Wicklow.
0402 39 509

27/33 Upr Baggot St
Dublin. 401 6070500

Dublin West & Kildare

Ballyfermot, Ballyfermot Hill,
Dublin. 1001 605 5900

Social Services Centre
Square Complex, Tallaght,
Dublin. 2401 452 5111

235 Crumlin Road, Crumlin,
Dublin. 1201 456 3000

Georges Street, Newbridge,
Co. Kildare. 045 43 1372

Main Street, Clondalkin,
Dublin. 2201 459 1766

Cookstown Ind Est, Belgard Rd,
Tallaght, Dublin. 2401
4045200

Midlands

Townhouse Centre,
St. Mary's Square,
Athlone, Co. Westmeath.
0902 75 288

7 Market Square, Longford.
043 46 820

Church Avenue, Mullingar
Co. Westmeath. 044 48 805

4 Meehan House
Portlaoise, Co. Laois.
0502 21 462

Castle Street, Roscommon.
0903 26 802

Church Street,
Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
0506 51 176

Mid-West

18 Davis Street,
Limerick. 061 48 7915

79 Connolly Street,
Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
067 31 879

Government Buildings,
Newcastlewest, Co. Limerick
069 62 411

FÁS Training Centre,
Shannon Ind Estate,
Shannon, Co. Clare.
061 471 133

Friar Street, Thurles,
Co. Tipperary. 0504 22 188

42 Parnell Street, Ennis,
Co Clare. 065 682 9213

North-East

49 Church Street, Cavan,
Co. Cavan. 049 433 1767

14 North Quay, Drogheda,
Co. Louth. 041 983 7646

79 Park Street, Dundalk,
Co. Louth. 042 933 1608

Market Street,
Monaghan, Co. Monaghan.
047 81 511

Tara Mall,
Trimgate Street, Navan,
Co. Meath
046 23 630

North-West

Government Buildings,
Shannon Lodge,
Carrick-on-Shannon,
Co. Leitrim. 078 20 503

Ionad OiliÚna FAS,
Na Doire Beaga, Leitirceanainn
Co. Dhun na nGall
075 31 211

Government Buildings
Cranmore, Sligo. 071 43 390

Ballyraine Ind Estate,
Ramelton Road,
Letterkenny. 074 22 200

Main Street, Ballybofey,
Co Donegal. 074 30384

South-East

56 Parnell Street, Waterford.
051 862 901

Irishtown, Kilkenny.
056 65 514

6 Mary Street,
Clonmel
Co. Tipperary.
052 24 422

Crescent Mall,
Henrietta St,
Wexford.
053 23 126

Carlow Shopping Centre,
Kennedy Avenue,
Carlow.
0503 42 605

South-West

Government Buildings,
Sullivan's Quay, Cork.
021 85 6200

30/31 Shandon Street, Cork.
021 4946169

Warner Centre, Barrack St,
Bantry, Co. Cork.
027 50 464

Unit 1, Kenmare Place
Killarney, Co. Kerry
064 32 466

17 Lower Castle Street
Tralee, Co. Kerry
066 712 6444

25 O'Brien Street, Mallow,
Co. Cork. 022 21 900

West

Island House, Cathedral Sq,
Galway. 091 534 400

FÁS Training Centre, Ind Est.
Mervue, Galway. 091 706 200

Castle Street, Roscommon.
0903 26 802

"Riverside"
Church Road
Ballina, Co. Mayo
096 24 017

Humbert Mall, Main Street,
Castlebar, Co. Mayo
094 22 011

Information on technical aids/ interpretative service

Comhairle

Hume House, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.
01 6059000
www.comhairle.ie

National Council for the Blind of Ireland

Technology Department, Whitworth Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.
01 8307033
www.ncbi.ie

Central Remedial Clinic

Vernon Avenue, Clontarf, Dublin 3.
01 8057400
www.crc.ie

National Association for Deaf People

Deaftech Department, 35 North Frederick Street, Dublin 1.
01 8723800
www.nadp.ie

Irish Sign Link (Interpreter Services)

25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.
01 6080437
www.hsa.ie

For additional information on specific disability issues:

National Disability Authority

25 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.
01 6080400
www.nda.ie

Forum of People with Disabilities

21 Hill Street, Dublin 1.
01 8786077
www.inforum.ie

People with Disabilities in Ireland

Richmond Square, Morning Star Ave, Dublin 7.
01 8721744

Disability Federation of Ireland

Sandyford Office Park, Blackthorn Avenue, Dublin 18.
01 2959344
www.disability-federation.ie

National Federation of Voluntary Bodies

Oranmore Business Park, Oranmore, Co. Galway.
091 792316
www.fed-vol.com

Irish Wheelchair Association

Blackheath Drive, Clontarf, Dublin 3.
01 8338241
www.iwa.ie

Mental Health Association of Ireland

6 Adelaide Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin.
01 2841166
www.mentalhealthireland.ie

National Association for the Mentally Handicapped of Ireland

5 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2.
01 6766035
www.namhi.ie

National Association For the Deaf

35 Nth Brunswick Street, Dublin 1.
01 8723800
www.nadp.ie

National Council for the Blind of Ireland

PV Doyle House, Whitworth Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.
01 8307033
www.ncbi.ie

Irish Deaf Society

30 Blessington Street, Dublin 7.
01 8601878
www.irishdeafsociety.org





The Aisling Project was established to create an awareness and understanding of the issues related to disability.

Aisling is the Irish word for dream and vision. The central tenet of the Aisling Project is the dream of making a difference by demonstrating that people with alternative ability have a significant role to play in society and in the workforce.

Funding for the project has been raised through Founder, Caroline Casey's 1,000 Km trek across southern India on the back of her elephant Bhadra.

More details at: www.theaislingproject.org
or contact Coman Kenny at 01 465 2880 or 086 804 6260



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