



GENERATION IRELAND

THREE YEAR STRATEGY 2026-2028

WIDENING ACCESS TO GOOD JOBS AND CAREERS

WELCOME AND OUR AMBITION

Generation Ireland's Three Year Strategy for 2026–2028 sets out our ambition for the next phase of our work: supporting more adults facing barriers to employment into good jobs and long-term careers, while contributing to a more inclusive and responsive education-to-employment ecosystem in Ireland.

Since launching in Ireland, Generation has become a trusted partner for learners, employers, funders and public agencies. We deliver intensive, practical programmes aligned to employer demand, helping adults who are unemployed or underemployed gain the skills, confidence and networks needed to access new career opportunities. Our work has shown that, with the right support, people often overlooked by traditional recruitment pathways can thrive in roles with strong progression potential.

Over the next three years, we want to increase the rate, quality and durability of employment outcomes for our learners - not just helping people move into work, but supporting them into roles where they can stay and progress. Our ambition is to deliver outcomes that compare strongly with existing skills-to-employment pathways, while sharing evidence and learning that can strengthen practice across the wider system.

By 2028, we aim for Generation Ireland to be sector-leading in the impact we deliver for learners, demonstrating what is possible when training is closely linked to employer demand and supported by high-quality mentoring and placement support. Through this work, we also hope to contribute to national policy and funding discussions on building more effective pathways from education to employment.

Across the strategy period, we expect to support around 750 people across four to six sectors of employer demand, including technology, green jobs, healthcare and life sciences.

This work will only be possible through partnership. We are grateful to the learners, alumni, employers, funders, training partners, public agencies and community organisations who have shaped our work so far, and we look forward to continuing to work together to widen access to opportunity and support more people into careers that can change the trajectory of their lives.



Peter Cosgrove

Chair of the Board, Generation Ireland



Ronan Harbison

Executive Director, Generation Ireland

THE LANDSCAPE: WHY THIS STRATEGY MATTERS NOW

Ireland enters this strategy period from a position of economic strength. Employment remains high, and the labour market has proven resilient through global uncertainty, rising costs and rapid technological change. In March 2026, Ireland's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 4.7%. However, strong headline figures do not mean opportunity is reaching everyone equally. Youth unemployment remained significantly higher at 12.5%, while long-term unemployment continued to rise, accounting for almost one-third of all unemployment by the end of 2025.

These figures highlight the continued need for effective, inclusive routes into work, particularly for people whose barriers to employment are not resolved by a strong labour market alone. Generation Ireland supports adults who face multiple barriers to employment, including unemployment, underemployment, limited professional networks, financial insecurity, caring responsibilities and migration-related barriers. Our learners are motivated to work but often face challenges accessing good jobs and long-term career opportunities.

Over the next three years, our priority is to improve the rate, quality and durability of outcomes for these learners - not only supporting people into employment, but helping them remain and progress in their careers over time. We will also explore how to support people facing deeper or more complex barriers to work, while recognising where partner organisations may be better placed to support earlier steps towards employment.

At the same time, the jobs market is changing rapidly. New technologies, including AI, are reshaping roles and skills needs, while employers continue to seek talent in areas such as technology, healthcare, green jobs and life sciences. This creates both a challenge and an opportunity: training programmes must remain closely aligned to employer demand and equip learners with the technical and soft skills, employability support and pathways needed to access real vacancies with progression potential. Government policy is moving in the same direction, with national strategies such as Creating Futures 2026–2030 and the Department of Further and Higher Education's 2025–2028 strategy emphasising a more agile, inclusive and future-focused skills system that responds to the needs of learners, employers and the wider economy.

This is the context in which Generation Ireland's mission matters. Ireland has talent everywhere, but opportunity remains unevenly distributed. Our strategy is about helping to close that gap by widening access to good jobs and careers.

36,100 people were long-term unemployed in Q4 2025

Headline labour-market strength does not mean opportunity is reaching everyone equally.

Employer demand is changing



Learners need supported pathways



The system needs to become more agile and responsive



Sources: [CSO Monthly Unemployment, March 2026](#); [CSO Labour Force Survey, Q4 2025](#); [SOLAS Creating Futures 2026–2030](#); [DFHERIS Statement of Strategy 2025–2028](#)

OUR MODEL AND IMPACT AMBITION

Generation Ireland supports adults facing barriers to employment into good quality jobs and careers.

We achieve these outcomes in a unique way different to other providers in the Irish FET ecosystem. Our programmes are intensive, profession-specific and designed around employer demand. They combine technical training, employability and soft skills, personalised mentoring, and six months of post-programme placement support. They are free for learners and focused on roles where employers need skilled, motivated talent.

Our model is simple, but powerful.

We reach people who are unemployed or underemployed, working through referral partners, community organisations, public agencies, employer networks and direct outreach.

We deliver intensive, profession-specific programmes that build technical skills, mindsets, behaviours and employability skills for target roles.

We work with employer partners to connect graduates to real vacancies, interviews and support job search and placement.



Our impact to date since launching in 2020:

- 800+ learners enrolled over the past 5 years
- 87% graduation rate
- 71% employment rate
- 82% job retention at one year
- €28,000+ average starting salary

By 2028, we aim to achieve:

- ~750 learners supported over three years
- 90%+ graduation rate
- 70%+ employment rate at six months post-programme
- 85%+ job retention at one year
- €30,000+ average starting salary

These are ambitious goals. They reflect our belief that high-quality education-to-employment programmes should be measured not only by participation or completion, but by whether they lead to sustained economic mobility.

OUR STRATEGY AT A GLANCE

1

Driving impact



We will deepen the breadth, depth and durability of our impact for learners.

Be agile to employer demand

Continuously review and update programme content, incorporate industry-valued certifications where relevant, and orient our portfolio around areas of real employer need.

Build durable employer pathways

Prioritise programmes and regions where employers have clear hiring demand, and deepen partnerships with anchor employers who can offer repeat opportunities for Generation graduates.

Broaden access carefully

Continue serving adults facing barriers to employment, while strengthening our ability to support a broader range of learners over time through a phased approach that first improves job outcomes, employer partnerships, and learner supports before gradually expanding access to more disadvantaged groups.

2

Investing in the future



We will build the partnerships, funding base and market position needed for long-term impact.

Deepen collaboration with the ecosystem

Work with training providers, Education and Training Boards, employers, public agencies and community partners to build shared pathways, using co-delivery as a tool to leverage partnership strength and increase agility and resilience.

Diversify and strengthen funding

Build a more sustainable funding base to support both delivery and innovation, with a particular focus on longer-term funding and funding for bespoke projects.

Strengthen policy, partnerships and credibility

Contribute to national conversations on impact measurement, employer-led training, and effective interventions for people facing barriers to employment.

3

Investing in people



We will invest in our people and strengthen our organisation to achieve our long-term goals.

Invest in the Ireland team

Build greater local capability in areas such as curriculum design, programme development, partner management and operational coordination.

Strengthen governance

Strengthen engagement, ownership and accountability across the Ireland Board and staff team, ensuring decisions are timely and forward-looking to the needs of the landscape in Ireland.

Our strategy is built around three connected themes. The underlying strategy work identifies eight strategic priorities across these three higher-level areas, including employer-led programme design, target population, co-delivery, funding, policy presence, team capability and governance.

WHAT WILL CHANGE BY 2028

By 2028, Generation Ireland will have...

1.	Deepened impact for learners	We will support more adults facing barriers into good jobs and careers, with strong outcomes in employment, retention and wage progression. Our focus will remain on helping learners complete programmes, move into work, stay in work and progress over time.
2.	Stayed agile to changing employer demand via diversified programmes	As roles and skills needs continue to evolve, Generation Ireland will adapt its programmes to remain closely aligned with employer demand. Alongside our established sectors, we will expand pathways into areas such as green jobs, healthcare and life sciences, building a more diverse portfolio that reflects the changing needs of the economy and creates access to the careers of the future.
3.	Broadened access carefully, while protecting outcomes	We will continue supporting adults facing barriers to employment while gradually exploring how to reach learners with more complex needs. This will be done in a phased way through stronger partnerships, data-led learning and bridging pathways where additional preparation is needed.
4.	Deepened collaboration with Ireland's skills and employment ecosystem	By 2028, Generation Ireland will work more closely with training providers, ETBs, employers, public agencies and community partners. These partnerships will combine Generation's employer-led, outcomes-focused model with the reach and expertise of the wider system.
5.	Strengthened Generation Ireland for the long term	Delivering this strategy will require stronger organisational capability, governance and local decision-making. By 2028, we will have strengthened capacity in areas such as curriculum design, programme development, partner management and operational coordination to better respond to Ireland's labour market and learner needs.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

Generation Ireland's model depends on partnership. We bring a distinctive education-to-employment model, but our impact is greatest when we work closely with employers, funders, public agencies, training providers and community partners.



Our ambition is simple: to become Ireland's leading pathway into good jobs and careers for adults facing barriers to employment.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Ireland's labour market is strong, but opportunity remains unevenly distributed. Employers need skilled, motivated talent. Public policy is prioritising inclusive, responsive pathways into work. Learners facing barriers need support that is practical, human and connected to real jobs.

Generation Ireland's role is to bring these agendas together.

Over the next three years, we will drive impact, invest in the future, and invest in people. We will stay close to employer demand, deepen collaboration across the ecosystem, and continue building an organisation capable of delivering strong, durable outcomes for learners.

Talent is everywhere. Opportunity is not. Our role is to widen the gate to good jobs and living wages - without lowering the bar.

Generation
IRELAND