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| <b>Lead topic</b><br>Reform & Delivery Office | <b>Sub-topic</b><br>Benefacts | <b>Contact: Kevin Daly</b><br><b>Ext: 5473</b> |
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**FAST FACTS**

- Benefacts is a new social enterprise that is co-funded by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Atlantic Philanthropies and The American Ireland Funds.
- Benefacts is piloting a service that will provide a single repository of regulatory data on the entire not-for-profit sector.  
  
(Estimated to encompass 20,000 not-for-profit entities that receive €4.4 billion annually in Government funding)
- Benefacts will be jointly funded over a 3 year period (2015-2017) by:
  - Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (€1.95 million in total)**
  - Atlantic Philanthropies (€1.8 million in total)**
  - The American Ireland Funds (€400,000 in total)**
- The key objectives of Benefacts are to:
  - Deliver a single (cross-departmental) view of every not-for-profit entity in Ireland.
  - Facilitating better decision-making in the Government’s funding of the sector.
  - Provide services that could be used to reduce the regulatory burden on both Government and the NGO sector.
  - Re-build donor confidence and provide for increased investment in the sector.
  - Promote open data and transparency by developing a free, publicly available website, [www.benefacts.ie](http://www.benefacts.ie)

## **Q&A'S**

### **Where will Benefacts source their information from?**

- Benefacts will avail of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations and source their information from licensed regulatory sources such as the Companies Registration Office, Office of the Revenue Commissioners and The Charities Regulatory Authority.

### **When will Benefacts launch their website?**

- The Benefacts website, [www.benefacts.ie](http://www.benefacts.ie) will be launched before the end of Q1 of 2016.

### **Will the Benefacts website provide open datasets?**

- The Benefacts website will provide open, re-usable and high value datasets of financial and governance information on not-for-profit entities.

### **Was Benefacts subject to a tendering process?**

- The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform are providing **grant funding** toward this initiative and Benefacts was therefore not subject to a tendering process.

### **Is Benefacts duplicating the role of the Charities Regulatory Authority?**

- There is no duplication of functions or services between the work of Benefacts and the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA). The CRA has specific regulatory functions for which it will collect data. Benefacts will re-use appropriate CRA data. Benefacts has no regulatory function.

### **Will the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform continue to provide funding toward this initiative after 2017?**

- The Department has given no commitment to funding this initiative after 2017.

### **How does the Department ensure that Benefacts achieves their objectives?**

- A senior official in the Department chairs a Project Advisory Group, whose purpose is to ensure that the deliverables of the Project meet the requirements of all end users.

### **Who is represented on the Project Advisory Group?**

- Senior officials from the following key Government grant-making Departments and Agencies:
  - Department of Social Protection
  - Health Service Executive
  - Department of Public Expenditure & Reform
  - Department of Health
  - Charities Regulatory Authority
  - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
  - The Housing Agency

- The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
- Solas
- Central Statistics Office
  
- Atlantic Philanthropies and The American Ireland Funds are also represented on the Project Advisory Group.

**Parliamentary Question - Oireachtas**

To ask the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform the amount of funding allocated by his Department to organisations not audited directly by the Comptroller and Auditor General; if he will list those organisations and the amount of funding allocated to each over the past five years; the process that is in place to ensure that value for money is achieved and that the funding allocated is audited; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

- John McGuinness.

| <b>Organisation</b> | <b>Funding Year</b> | <b>Amount of Funding Allocated</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Benefacts</b>    | <b>2015</b>         | <b>€350,000</b>                    |

Benefacts is a new social enterprise that will enhance the visibility, accountability and transparency of the not-for-profit sector. This initiative is co-funded by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, Atlantic Philanthropies and The American Ireland Funds.

Benefacts will pilot a service that will provide a single repository of regulatory data on the entire not-for-profit sector. This sector is estimated to encompass 20,000 not-for-profit entities and receive €4.4 billion annually in Government funding.

The Department’s funding of this initiative will:

- Deliver a single (cross-departmental) view of every not-for-profit entity in Ireland.
- Facilitating better decision-making in the Government’s funding of the sector.
- Provide services that could be used to reduce the regulatory burden on both Government and the not-for-profit sector.
- Re-build donor confidence and provide for increased investment in the sector.
- Deliver public service reform by trialing and delivering new ways of working
- Promote open data and transparency by developing a free, publicly available website, [www.benefacts.ie](http://www.benefacts.ie)

The Department's management of grant funding to Benefacts is supported by a robust Funding Agreement that ensures that value for money is achieved and that the funding allocated is audited. This Funding Agreement provides that no grant shall be paid unless and until the Department is satisfied that such payment will be used for proper expenditure in the delivery of the Project.

A Project Advisory Group, which is comprised of senior officials from the largest grant-making Department and Agencies and chaired by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has responsibility for ensuring that the deliverables of the Project meet the requirements of all end users, in a manner that ensures value for money is achieved.

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform regularly reviews the Company's accounts and records that relate to the application of Grant monies, including expenditure profiles, cash profiles and regular management accounts. Benefacts are also required to submit their audited accounts to the Department without delay after the end of the financial year.

The Company is obliged to keep all invoices, receipts, and accounts and any other relevant documents relating to the expenditure of all grants received by it for a period of at least six years following receipt of same.

Benefacts will also make its financial records available for inspection to the Comptroller and Auditor General, as and when required, in accordance with the provisions of Circular: 13/2014 Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds.