

ConsultA

ACEI Newsletter - 14 January 2021

Information and Advice for ACEI Members

ACEI Work Arrangements

The ACEI office is temporarily closed. Email info@acei.ie with queries or contact sarah.ingle@acei.ie.

Covid-19 Updates

- [ACEI](#)
- [EFCA](#)
- [FIDIC](#)

Online Resources

- [HSE](#)
- [Revenue](#)
- [Institute of Public Health](#)
- [Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection](#)
- [Health & Safety Authority](#)
- [World Health Organisation](#)
- [Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [Health Protection Surveillance Centre](#)
- [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#)

ACEI Viewpoint on New Restrictions

Happy New Year to all our members and we hope that you were able to take a good break over the holiday.

As ACEI President Conor McCarthy noted last week, Ireland is now facing its most difficult challenge to date since the arrival of the pandemic. The recent rise in coronavirus cases has resulted in hospitals approaching critical levels in terms of admissions, and ICU beds are nearing capacity. While some essential construction sites will remain open, the majority closed on 8th January. Although these closures will negatively affect ACEI member firms, it is important that we support the new Government protocols and adhere to the travel and other regulations. The association also calls on Government ministers and officials to increase the speed of the rollout of vaccines, and supplies permitting, suggests serious consideration is given to implementing a 24 hour / 7 day a week vaccination programme.

During January the Construction Industry Council (CIC) of which ACEI is a member, will also be proactive in its communications to Government to provide evidence to support the safe opening of all sites from the beginning of February. All contributions from member firms in this regard are welcome, please send your views to info@acei.ie.

The ACEI Executive Board thanks all members for their continuing adherence to health and safety protocols at this difficult time. We look forward to better times ahead for the built environment sector.

SFA Free Business Support Programme

The Small Firms Association (SFA) recently launched a free eight-week business support programme *MentorsWork*. This welcome initiative has been developed in partnership with Skillnet Ireland, Ibec, SBCI and Microfinance Ireland. The programme promises to connect Irish firms with experienced and skilled mentors to guide them through current and future challenges including Brexit, the pandemic, cash flow difficulties and skills shortages.

MentorsWork has already helped hundreds of SMEs improve their operations and bottom line. The programme is tailored to suit individual needs and a mentor works with each company on a one-to-one basis. Private sector firms based in Ireland with between 5 and 250 employees are eligible to take part in this free [personalised support programme](#).

FIDIC 2021 Online Events Series

The International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) has a comprehensive series of free webinars planned for the first half of the year. These events have been organised to keep members updated on the key issues facing the international sector as well as to support several key FIDIC initiatives.

Webinar topics include communications, diversity and inclusion, the use of FIDIC contracts in emerging countries, combating corruption, promotion of quality, net zero and best business practice in a post-COVID world. There will also be a series of webinars to support the launch of FIDIC's new State of the World reports and a number of events that will look at the changed landscape brought about by the pandemic and what the industry needs to do to adapt to it.

Further information and how to register for the webinars are available on the [FIDIC website](#).

EU Contact Tracing Applications

Tracing and warning applications (apps) can help break the chain of coronavirus infections, nationally and across borders, and save lives by complementing manual tracing. Most member states including Ireland have launched a voluntary national contact tracing and warning app. New services have been established to allow national apps to connect across borders in Europe to facilitate users being warned if they were in contact with someone infected with COVID-19.

The [contact tracing and warning app](#) is voluntary, based on Bluetooth proximity technology, respects users' privacy and does not enable the tracking of people's locations. Recently Belgium and Finland joined the group of interoperable apps across Europe. Eleven countries are linked so far and more will follow.

Review to Renew NDP Consultation

There are only two weeks left to submit to the public consultation element of the National Development Plan (NDP), [Review to Renew](#). This consultation offers all people in Ireland - expert stakeholders and users of infrastructure - the opportunity to inform and influence important policy that affects the fabric of our daily lives including jobs, businesses, houses, roads, public transport, infrastructure, facilities and distribution of our people. ACEI will be sending in a submission and member firms are also encouraged to contribute to this important initiative.

Recent Good News

- Following a commission by Shannon Foynes Port company, ACEI member firm Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions reported that Ireland could become an [exporter of the renewable power](#) generated by floating wind farms. The country could also become a producer of green hydrogen using electricity produced from the same wind farms.
- Last month the EU introduced a revised [directive on drinking water](#). This was a response to the first ever successful European citizens' initiative and works towards the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The directive came into force on 12 January 2021, and member states will have two years to include it in national legislation.
- Tel Aviv is working on creating [wireless electric roads](#) to charge and power public transportation in the city. The electric roads are part of a pilot program led by the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality in collaboration with ElectReon and Dan Bus Company.

ESBN Public Consultations 2021

ESB Networks (ESBN) has a planned, ongoing programme of [public consultations](#) in 2021. The deadline for a number of these expire in the coming weeks but there is still an opportunity to contribute in some strategic areas, including on-street electric vehicle charging. We encourage all members to review the [consultation documents](#) and provide feedback.

NBCO Newsletter

The National Building Control Office (NBCO) recently published its latest newsletter. In the [NBCO Q4 2020 issue](#) Part B of Fire Safety in Dwelling Houses is explained. Some important guidelines include ensuring that fire evacuation plans are in place, fire alarms are all working, escape routes are clear and, if you live in a multi-unit that the fire doors are kept closed. Also if you have gas or an open fire, make sure you have a working carbon monoxide alarm.

Improving Resilience in Difficult Times

Clinical psychologist Meg Jay describes resilience as a heroic struggle and an ongoing process. In her twenty years studying adult development and listening to clients, Jay has learned important lessons including: *"Resilience is not a trait. It's not something you're born with."* Her essential tips on how to [become more resilient](#) are available in a recent Ted post. These are now needed more than ever in the current challenging circumstances.