

Description the EGP:

In April of 2007, National Learning Network, Tralee was recommended for funding of €501,667 under round two of the Enhancing Disability Services programme to run the Sporting Chance Initiative. Funding was provided from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform which is administered through POBAL. Sporting Chance is a ground breaking new training programme to enable people with disabilities to build careers in the sports and leisure industry. These posts could include coaches, leaders, educators and managers.

Many students who were coming to the National Learning Network centre in Tralee were identified as having a strong passion and aptitude for sport. The sports and leisure industry, particularly since the establishment of the Irish Sports Council, has undergone an unprecedented expansion. Despite this expansion, many members of society who have a disability have been unable to access sporting facilities and even less likely to undertake training and development programmes leading to career opportunities in this sector.

Sporting Chance was specifically developed to assist individuals with disability to gain the qualifications, skills and work experience necessary to obtain employment in the sports and leisure industry. The course would also interest students who wished to access further third level education in this area. The course would be targeted towards individuals with physical and sensory disabilities, intellectual difficulties and those with mental health difficulties. There was far greater demand than supply of places following the development and subsequent marketing of the programme.

All courses also include job specific modules plus job seeking skills and work experience. No course fees apply to the training programmes and a training allowance is paid to students. In addition to mainstream qualifications, National Learning Network, Tralee also offers a person-centred approach.

Courses are tailored to meet the needs of the individual by means of assessment and discussion. This leads to an Individual Action Plan for each student. Literacy and numeracy classes are also available to students who wish to improve their education skills as required by the course.

The centre staff provides training which maximises the benefit to the individual and also helps students obtain employment. The centre staff provides training on areas such as assertiveness training, confidence building and independent living skills as required by the student. Applicants do not require any formal entry requirements. An average of 90 % of National Learning Network students progress to employment, further education or further specialised training.

Where is it provided?

The National Learning Network (formerly called NTDI) is Ireland's largest non-government organisation with more than 50 purpose built training and employment facilities catering for around 4,500 students each year. The organisation offers over 40 different vocational programmes which carry nationally and internationally recognised certification and are designed to lead directly to jobs or progression to further education. National Learning Network, Tralee has been providing vocational training and employment opportunities for people with additional support needs for over 30 years. The centre offers a wide range of training courses.

Who is providing this program?

The Sporting Chance Programme is provided by the National Learning Network in Tralee Co Kerry Ireland

Local/national/European level of program?

The Sporting Chance Programme has a national focus providing people with disabilities throughout Ireland the opportunity to study in Kerry. This is an innovative, cutting edge course which is unique in an international context. 88

Segregate/inclusive setting?

The programme is completed at the National Learning Network Tralee Kerry Ireland which is Ireland's largest non-government organisation with more than 50 purpose built training and employment facilities catering for around 4,500 students each year. While the programme is based at the National Learning Network, a vast majority of the course is completed in an integrated setting with links with National Governing Body of Sport courses and the Institute of Technology Tralee. In addition the students complete relevant work experience related to their area of interest and are supported in obtaining employment opportunities within this area or to support in furthering their education. An example of this is the close partnership with the Institute of Technology Tralee where students have on completion of the sporting chance programme furthered their education within the Health and Leisure Studies at the Institute of Technology Tralee.

What is the target group?

The Sporting Chance Programme targets individuals with physical and sensory, intellectual and mental health difficulties.

What is the content of the program?

OUTLINE TRAINING PLAN – FLOW DIAGRAM

