



Kilkenny LEADER Partnership has launched a new programme to help get Kilkenny's long-term unemployed people back into the workforce.

The programme called TÚS, which means 'beginning' in Irish, the programme will provide 80 long-term unemployed people with a 12 month work placement in community and voluntary organisations across Kilkenny. The TÚS programme will match each participant to a work placement best suited to their skills and areas of professional interest with the aim of helping participant's upskill and gain work experience with the long-term goal of employment.

The programme also includes training and programmes will be personalised to best suit each participant. Courses provided by the TÚS programme include CV preparation; ICT and ECDL training; interview preparation and much more.

"This programme is the first of its kind in the country, aiming to get 80 long-term unemployed people back into employment through training and work placements, tailored to best suit each participant. As part of our Employability Strategy, we are always working towards helping Kilkenny's unemployed get back into the work force and this programme is a continuation of this work," said Declan Rice, CEO of Kilkenny LEADER Partnership.

Participants on the programme will be referred from the Department of Social Protection to Kilkenny LEADER Partnership. There is no self-referral system on to the programme. In addition to benefitting unemployed people, the TÚS programme's work placements will also assist communities and voluntary organisations in both urban and rural Kilkenny. There has been an excellent response from voluntary organisations interested in taking participants. The first group of participants have started in placements with Piltown Development Association, Kilmacow Community Centre and Fiddown Tidy Towns Association, Loughboy Area Resource Centre, Kilkenny Leader Partnership Warmer Homes Project, Mill Family Resource Centre in Urlingford, Droichead Family Resource Centre in Callan, Enable Ireland and Ring A Link.

Mike Redmond has been newly appointed as Supervisor of the first batch of TÚS programme participants. Mike has many years experience in the rail and construction recruitment industries in both Ireland and the UK.

"This initiative will give long term unemployed people the confidence and skills they need to return to the workforce and increase their employability. Matching participants with work placements best suited to their skills will benefit not only the

participants themselves but also the community and voluntary groups they are working with” says Mike Redmond.

Community organisations interested in the TÚS programme can download an application form from the Kilkenny LEADER Partnership website, [www.cklp.ie](http://www.cklp.ie), or call the office on 056 7752111.