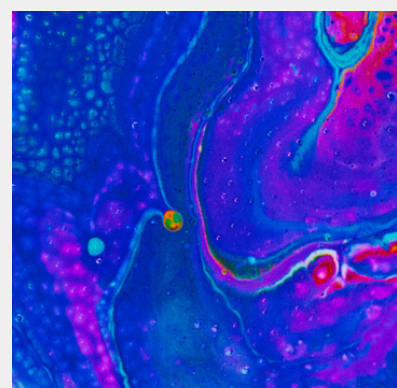
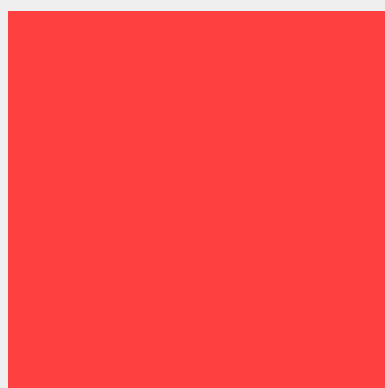
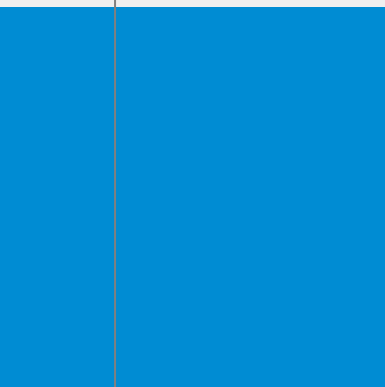
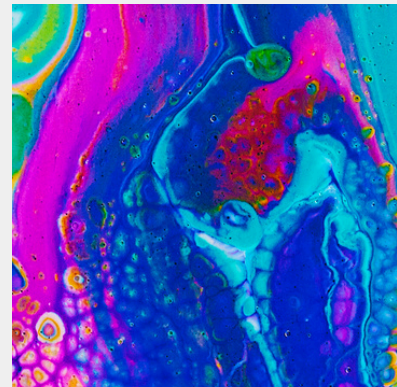
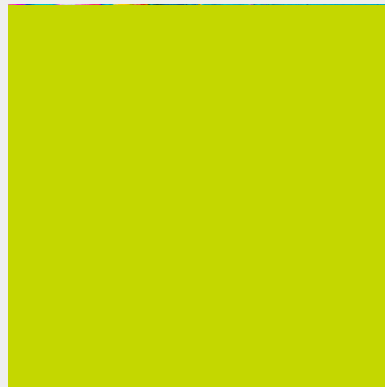


# The Art of Change

# Creative Initiatives for Climate Action

Case study based on 3  
initiatives of Westside  
Resource Centre, Galway

Explore More



# Introduction

## Background

The Westside Resource Centre, based in Galway, Ireland, plays a key role in empowering the local community and promoting environmental sustainability. Serving areas often categorized as "Disadvantaged," the Centre fosters partnerships and engages residents in meaningful climate action initiatives. Recognizing that traditional approaches to climate awareness can feel overwhelming, the Centre uses community art projects to connect people with environmental issues in an accessible and engaging way.

## Initiatives Overview

The Westside Resource Centre integrates creativity into climate action through three innovative community art projects:

### Westside Arts Festival

A longstanding event, the Westside Arts Festival incorporates sustainability into community arts through activities like clothes upcycling, gardening workshops, and pollinator talks. Collaborations such as CURAM Institute's After Image project combine science, art, and community participation to promote environmental awareness.

### Painting the Planet

Inspired by the UN SDGs, this project brought residents together to create artwork representing each of the 17 goals. These pieces, exhibited locally and at a national summit, continue to inspire conversations about environmental and social issues.

### The Air We Share

By blending citizen science and artistic expression, this project empowered residents to monitor local air quality and translate findings into creative works, fostering connections between personal health, air pollution, and climate action.



## Key Milestones

- **Community Engagement:** Strengthened connections through participation in festivals, workshops, and exhibitions.
- **Education:** Enhanced awareness of sustainability through hands-on activities and creative projects.
- **Collaborative Innovation:** Partnered with local authorities, academic institutions, and organizations to amplify impact and reach.

## Motivation

The Westside Resource Centre initiated these projects to:

- Create informal, accessible spaces where residents could explore climate action without feeling overwhelmed.
- Encourage participation in environmental initiatives through creativity and collaboration.
- Highlight the intersection of art, science, and sustainability in addressing global challenges locally.

## Key Activities

### Community Engagement and Events:

- Annual participation in local events like the Westside Arts Festival and hosting art exhibitions.
- Workshops, talks, and interactive sessions to raise awareness and foster connections.

### Art and Advocacy:

- Collaborative projects like Painting the Planet to connect residents with global SDG goals through personalized art.
- Leveraging creative residencies in The Air We Share to translate scientific data into engaging visuals.

### Education and Skill Development:

- Workshops on upcycling, sustainability, and environmental practices.
- Opportunities for participants to learn citizen science and artistic techniques.



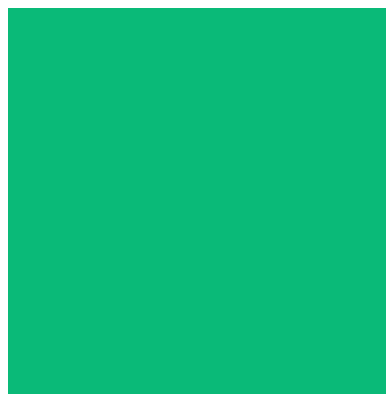
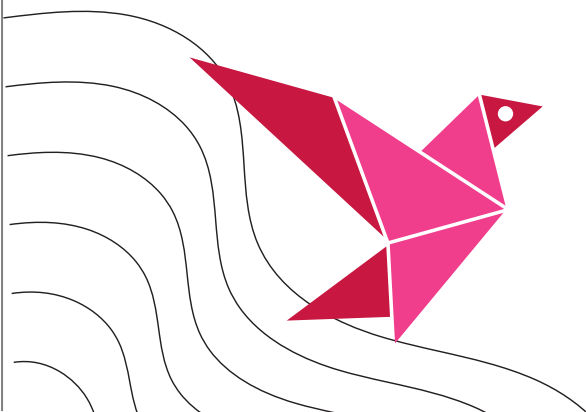
# Outcomes + Insights

## Challenges and Solutions

- **Engaging Disadvantaged Communities:**
  - *Challenge:* Residents felt disconnected from climate discussions.
  - *Solution:* Created informal, creative group settings to make topics relatable and approachable.
- **Simplifying Complex Topics:**
  - *Challenge:* Communicating SDG themes and air quality issues effectively.
  - *Solution:* Combined art and guided discussions to translate abstract ideas into tangible, meaningful experiences.
- **Building Long-Term Partnerships:**
  - *Challenge:* Sustaining collaborations across sectors.
  - *Solution:* Leveraged the Centre's extensive network to establish partnerships with local authorities, academic institutions, and other community groups.

## Impact

- **Social Benefits:**
  - Fostered stronger community ties through collaborative activities.
  - Reduced feelings of powerlessness by empowering residents with creative tools and knowledge.
- **Environmental Advocacy:**
  - Increased awareness of sustainability and climate action through interactive workshops and exhibitions.
- **Recognition:**
  - Projects like *Painting the Planet* and *The Air We Share* gained local and national attention for their innovative approach to connecting art and climate action.
- **Educational Impact:**
  - Enhanced understanding of air quality, global goals, and sustainable practices through hands-on involvement.



# Insights and Recommendations

## Key Insights:

- Creative approaches make complex environmental issues more accessible and engaging.
- Strong partnerships enhance the scope and impact of local initiatives.
- Grassroots organizations play a critical role in connecting communities to global sustainability efforts.

## Recommendations for Similar Projects:

- Replicate interdisciplinary projects like The Air We Share to address other environmental issues.
- Expand initiatives to explore additional SDG themes.
- Foster continuous collaboration with local and national partners to sustain impact.

## Relevant Links

- [Westside Resource Centre Facebook Page](#)
- [Westside Arts Festival Facebook Page](#)
- [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)
- [The Air We Share Website](#)
- [The Air We Share Project Launch Video](#)



**An informal, creative group setting helps reduce feelings of powerlessness and information overload.**

**James Coyne**

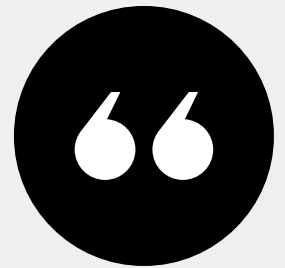
CEO - Westside Resource Center



# Conclusion

The Westside Resource Centre demonstrates how creativity can make environmental challenges more relatable and actionable. Through projects like the **Westside Arts Festival**, **Painting the Planet**, and **The Air We Share**, the Centre combines art, science, and community engagement to empower residents to connect with climate action in meaningful ways. These initiatives highlight the potential of community art to foster local resilience and inspire practical steps toward sustainability.

**Art has a unique role in making climate action less daunting and more engaging for communities.**



**James Coyne**

CEO - Westside Resource Center



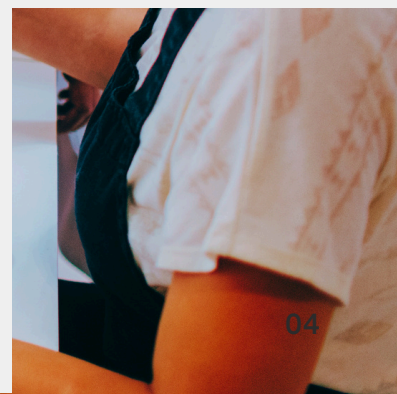
Community Building



Climate Awareness



Environmental Education & Education



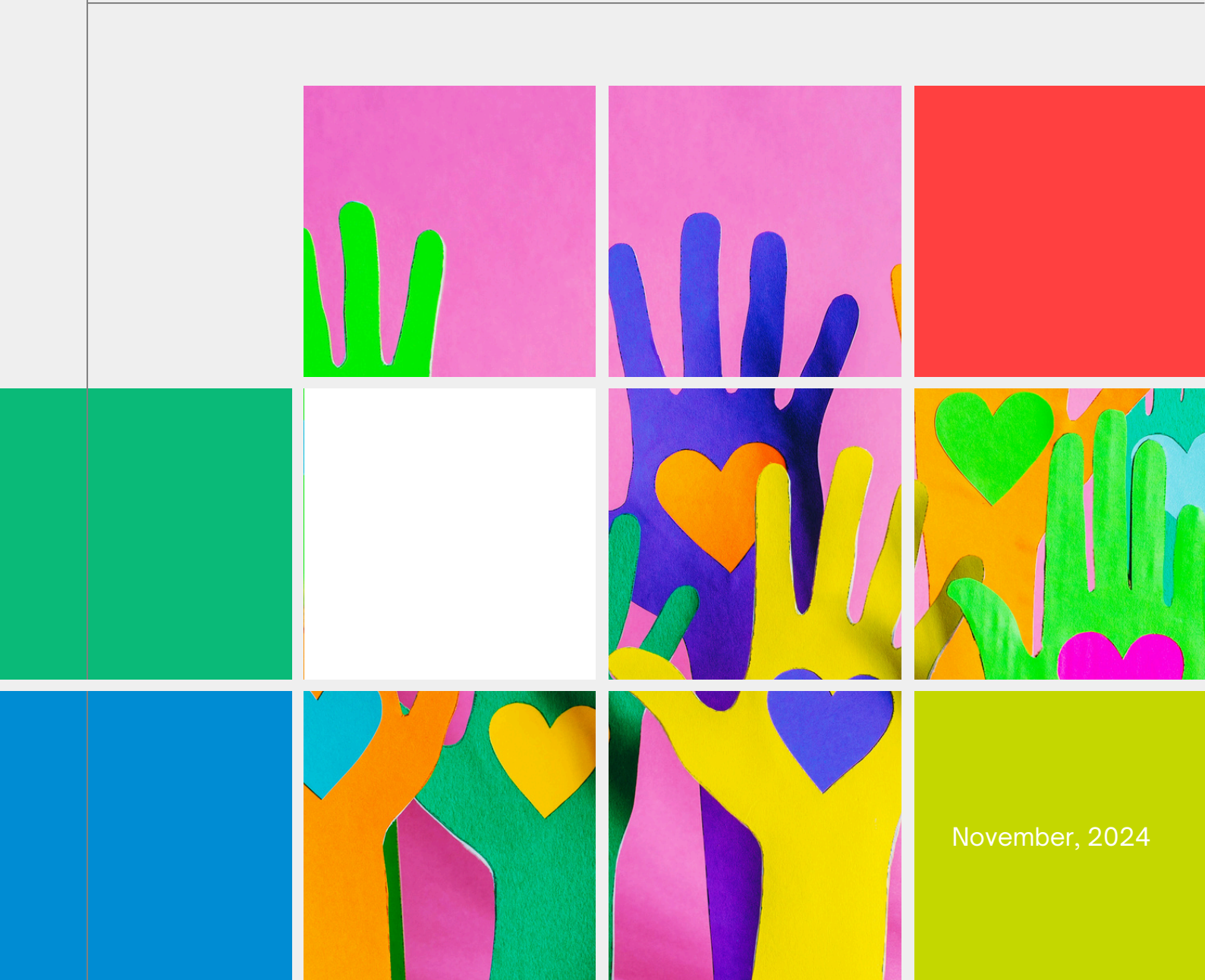
# SDG Perspective

The initiatives—**Westside Arts Festival**, **Painting the Planet**, and **The Air We Share** support global sustainability goals by addressing environmental challenges through creative, community-driven action. Each project contributes to global sustainability goals by inspiring local action in the following ways:

- **Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities** - Engages residents in creative projects promoting urban sustainability and community cohesion.
- **Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production** - Encourages sustainable practices through upcycling workshops and resource-conscious activities.
- **Goal 13: Climate Action** - Makes climate issues accessible through art, fostering local action on air quality and waste reduction.
- **Goal 15: Life on Land** - Promotes biodiversity and environmental awareness through nature-focused art and workshops.
- **Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals** - Strengthens collaborations between community organizations, authorities, and academic partners to drive impact.



## THE GLOBAL GOALS




November, 2024

# Get Involved. Take action.

If you're inspired to contribute to this initiative or to initiate a similar action yourself, here are the contacts to get you started:

 [info@westsideresourcecentre.ie](mailto:info@westsideresourcecentre.ie)

 Westside Resource Centre CLG, Seamus Quirke Road, Galway

 (091) 528325

This story and case study were developed through the 'Connected' project and its partners, highlighting Irish community-driven solutions to environmental challenges. For more details contact [a.alexandrov1@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:a.alexandrov1@universityofgalway.ie)