



4<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**AIB launches financial literacy and skills programme for secondary school students. Research shows prioritisation of work-life balance**

- **AIB plans to support 500,000 customers through financial literacy programmes by 2023**
- **Research conducted with young students shows prioritisation of work-life balance, expectation to switch careers**

AIB has launched a new financial literacy and skills programme for secondary school students aimed at supporting 12-18 year olds in the development and learning of key life skills. The programme will focus on themes including sustainability, financial wellness, health and well-being, globalisation, and civic literacy. It will also support the development of core skills including communications, critical thinking and digital innovation.

Over 70% of all secondary schools in Ireland have already signed up to the programme based on the success of previous AIB schools programmes such as Build A Bank, making it the biggest programme of its kind in the country.

Last March, AIB set out plans to support 500,000 customers through financial literacy programmes by 2023, one of the bank's key sustainability targets. The target is part of the bank's wider sustainability strategy which focuses on climate action, economic and social inclusion and future proofing our business.

AIB's Director of Corporate Affairs, Strategy and Sustainability, Mary Whitelaw, said, "In AIB, we want to play our part in building a society that is socially and economically inclusive. We are doing this through investing and raising awareness in access, education and innovation for our customers, colleagues and our communities.

"As part of a socially and economically inclusive society it's important to recognise the vital role that access to finance plays in everyday life", she added. "As a result, I'm delighted to announce AIB's new financial literacy programme for schools. Future Sparks helps to ensure we are equipping our young people with real life skills that will benefit them greatly. We want to support students to acquire knowledge and skills to help them manage their financial future. This programme helps to ensure we are meeting the needs of the next generation, today."

Through the programme, students and teachers will have access to over 50 educational videos from more than 45 different business and thought leaders and entrepreneurs. They will also have access to 190 educational resources including case studies, worksheets, lesson plans and exam questions with content tailored to the various age groups throughout second level.

Each group that completes the programme will receive a tree and a plaque for their school, with students also awarded with individual digital certs to recognise their hard work while supporting biodiversity. Recently the bank announced that it would plant 90,000 native Irish trees over the next three years on behalf of new AIB second-level student account holders.

## **Research**

AIB conducted research in advance of the launch of the Future Sparks programme to gain a better understanding of the experiences and attitudes of 12 to 18 year olds in Ireland. When it comes to financial literacy, the research revealed

- 87% think bank advice/services will be important or very important in their future career.
- 79% would like to learn more about managing their money.
- 42% say their day-to-day management of money is good.

The research also revealed

- 96% think achieving a healthy work/life balance will be of great importance in their career.
- 56% think it's likely that they will have to re-train and change career, despite not having commenced it.
- A high salary is seen as the most attractive future job benefit (52%).

The research was carried out by iReach on behalf of AIB among 1,000 12-18 year olds throughout August 2021.

**ENDS**

Further Information:                      Graham Union  
[Graham.X.Union@aib.ie](mailto:Graham.X.Union@aib.ie)  
(085) 208 8343