

## CIT MARKETING STUDENT ASSISTS IRISH GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND TO ACHIEVE THEIR TARGETS



**Irish Guide Dogs**  
for the blind

### BACKGROUND

Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind is Ireland's national charity dedicated to helping people who are vision impaired and families of children with autism to achieve improved mobility and independence. Services for people who are vision impaired include Guide Dog Training, Orientation and Mobility Training (Long Cane) and Independent Living Skills Training for adults, and a Child Mobility Training Programme for children in primary and secondary education.

All services are offered free of charge and Irish Guide Dogs provide full aftercare and support to their clients. Their services are offered nationwide and they have clients in all 26 counties. Irish Guide Dogs breed and train the dogs in Cork, and client training programmes are offered on a residential basis at their Headquarters and Training Centre in Cork.

"We currently have extensive waiting lists for all our services which we are addressing through building capacity and through increasing our efficiency and effectiveness. The core purpose of the organisation is to enable people with sight loss and families of children with autism to lead better lives, become more independent and more mobile." Evelyn Power, Irish Guide Dogs.

### PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED

Irish Guide Dogs receive over 85% of their income through voluntary donations and fundraising through a network of Volunteers across the country. It will cost over €5 million to run the organisation this year. The charity continues to provide their services free of charge to ensure that no one is excluded due to lack of income.

The fundraising department have a huge task to reach this annual target with tight budgets and deadlines. Additional resources were needed to help reach the targets set for the organisation. By partnering with CIT, Irish Guide Dogs could gain access to additional resources and provide a valuable practical learning experience.

### HOW CIT DELIVERED THE SOLUTION

The Bachelor of Business in Marketing at CIT provides students with an experiential learning opportunity. In February 2018, Alison Desmond, a student from CIT joined Irish Guide Dogs as part of her placement in Year 3 of her course. Alison's role was Marketing and Corporate Assistant where she supported both the marketing and corporate teams. Alison's tasks included the creation of newsletters, planning and assisting at corporate events, social media and implementation of national campaigns.



Roy Keane, Ambassador for Irish Guide Dogs with CIT Intern, Alison Desmond

**"From day one, Alison was passionate, professional, eager and open to learn. She quickly picked up on the way of working within the charity and developed relationships with all of the team, supporting a wide range of different events and activities. We couldn't have found a better fit for the whole team with Alison. We found the CIT placement process great. It was a simple and easy process, with extremely positive benefits for the whole charity."**

- Evelyn Power, Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind.

**"I absolutely loved my time at the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind where I learned so much and I also got to put my knowledge from college into action. I believe placement is a vital part of the course and having this experience will help with further study."**

- Alison Desmond, CIT student.