Comharchumann Cumarsaide Bhaile Atha Cliath Thoir-Thuaidh Teoranta

Annual Report

2025

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Chairperson's Report

A warm welcome to the shareholding members of the Near Media Co-op to our Annual General Meeting.

Near celebrated its 30th anniversary in recent times. We were honoured by the Lord Mayor of Dublin at a reception in the Mansion House and we were presented by a beautiful commemorative scroll to mark the occasion. This can be seen in the studio corridor.

Over the past few years, the co-op has invested heavily in new studio equipment. We can now say that we have state-of-the-art studios and I hope all of you who regularly use them are happy with them. We continue to invest in new equipment such as studio headphones and I am happy to inform you that your annual contributions are put to good use. Our next major target is a new van.

I would like to welcome Jaye Palmer as our new Outreach coordinator and we wish her every success in her new role.

The CE project is supported by the Department of Social Protection and I gratefully acknowledge that important support; and I thank the CE staff for their dedication.

I note with sadness the passing of Denis Byrne, Sean Whelan, Connie O'Reilly, Anne O'Toole, and Paul Murray.

We continue to roll out work plans to achieve objectives outlined in our strategy. It has identified many challenges and tasks to be tackled so that we will be ready the meet the new media environment that is coming over the horizon, and yet keep us loyal to our core ethos.

The area of training of staff and new presenters is an important goal for the co-op. It is particularly encouraging to see more women continue to becoming involved in the research, production and presentation of new programmes.

Thanks to all members for all the wonderful programming, those on sub-committees and other ad hoc groups. I would like to thank and acknowledge the work carried out by those who drew up the draft Social Media policy. It was gratifying to see the skills of co-op members being utilised for the good of the co-op.

All this excellent work would not be be possible only for the commitment of the management team of the co-op, the dedication of the management committee and the loyalty of staff and co-op members.

I would like to thank all those who support what we are striving to achieve, such as:
- Coláiste Dhulaigh and CDETB,
- Department of Social Protection (INTREO),
- Coimisiun na Mean,
- Northside Partnership,
- Community Legal and Mediation,
- Dublin City Council,
- CRAOL,
- Citizen Information Centre,
- MABS (Money, Advice and Budgeting Service).

Finally let us all continue serving our community to the best of our ability.

Declan Cahill,
Chairperson,
Committee of Management

Secretary's Report

The Near Media Co-op Committee of Management is a working committee which met on a monthly basis in 2025. Members of staff and shareholding members attended these meetings during this time. The Annual General meeting was postponed earlier in the year and rescheduled for September to facilitate completion of the audited accounts.

The Committee of Management has a responsibility as the governing body of Near Media Co-op to report on a regular basis to multiple statutory bodies. The Committee provided oversight and governance in respect of support provided by the Departments of Education, and INTREO at the Department of Social Protection, as well as Coimisiún na Meán.

The Committee of Management is fully committed to good governance and in operating in an open and transparent environment. During 2025 we continued to positively engage with the Charity Regulator. This culminated in the filing of the compliance record with the regulator again this year on time and in full. This demonstrates our commitment to compliance with legal and statutory frameworks and that our organisation operates to high standards of governance and administration. Our registered charity number is 20205453.

There is one serving member of the Committee of Management whose term of office has ended this year. This is Vincent Teeling. Under the rules of the organisation, one-third of the committee must stand down each year. In order to meet this rule, I will also stand down this year. Both members are seeking re-election to the Committee of Management.

No motions were received ahead of the AGM.

We look forward to the year ahead and the challenges and successes that it brings but most of all continuing to grow the Near Media Co-op and re-affirming our commitment to community media and the community which we serve.

Sabrina Ryan
Secretary
Committee of Management

Treasurer's Report

The financial performance of Near Media Co-operative in 2025 showed ongoing stability. The organisation continued to manage our affairs with financial oversight . These efforts enabled us to move forward to achieve modest gains in our overall financial position.

We wish to formally acknowledge the invaluable support of our funding partners. Their continued contributions were instrumental in sustaining our operations and enabling our community media mission. Our sincere thanks go to:

- City of Dublin Education and Training Board
- Department of Social Protection / INTREO (formerly FÁS)
- Coimisiún na Meán's Sound & Vision Scheme, funded through the television licence fee
- Members of Near

Each of these partners played a critical role in supporting Near Media Co-op throughout 2025 and continue to underpin our work in the community media sector.

Financial Overview

Our audited accounts confirm sound financial stewardship. The organisation closed 2025 with a planned overrun on expenditure. This was primarily attributed to by delays in funding drawdown and the continued absence of grant previsioning from the European Union.

We have initiated a series of internal measures to mitigate the impact and adjust our funding model in the previous year and this continues into 2025.

Outlook for 2026

The financial outlook for 2026 is positive. Through careful planning and sustained support from our partners and members, Near Media Co-op remains well-positioned to meet future challenges and continue delivering value to our community, members and funders.

Vincent Teeling
Treasurer
Committee of Management

Near FM

Near Media Co-op's Community Employment project is still going strong. It is currently on the last year of the 3 years contract, so it would be renewed next year (2026)

Digital Transformation Scheme (Coimisiún na Meán)
The Digital Transformation Scheme provides funding to support media organisations to innovate and transition to the digital information environment. Near Media Co-op applied to the fund at the end of 2025 to improve broadband access, as well as the listen again and Nearcast site, and the studios web streaming. and the application was confirmed successful in 2026. It is worth €26,400 on equipment and training.

Radio and podcast productions
Production of new original audio content is the core of what we do, be it traditional radio or podcasting, or drama. We work with the various sectors, Community Education, the broader Community and Voluntary sector, and the NGO and charity sector and these are key parts of our strategic aims. In recent years we have focused more on supporting various groups from the community education and NGO sectors on their podcast productions. Below are some samples of our recent work.

Community Information Provision
One of the areas we support is Community Information Provision. We work closely with information providers in the area, and one of those is Community Law and Mediation and here are some examples below
Lydia Tamrat discussed the practical aspects of mediation, what it is, CLM's mediation service and types of scenarios they can help with. Clodagh Daly the Centre for Environmental Justice Manager discussed knowing your environmental rights, project they have developed with Bohemian Football Club. This project is aimed at reaching new communities. Aoife Kelly-Desmond newly appointed CEO of Community law and Mediation Services discussed CLM's services and community for legal advice, mediation and 'know your rights' talks.

Sankalpa, an organisation supporting people in recovery from addiction came in for a tour, a workshop, and an in-depth interview. George Mulcahy was joined by Mick Williams, Manager and Sinead Johnston, Team Leader at Sankalpa. We also supported them in interviewing each other about their firsthand experience of the difficulties, as well as discussing how people can avail of the addiction support services that they offer at the centre.

Nearcast
We continue to grow and develop our podcast platform. We work primarily with the community/voluntary, NGO and charity sectors and we offer a range of supports including support with idea development, production, sometimes presenting, post-production, RSS population and promotion. We have worked with many national and local clients, including Aontas and the Wheel. . Our podcast work included podcasts Candid Conversations, Stories from Foster Care, Perspectives on Prevention and a new series developed with the Family addiction support Network. All our podcasts are available on Spotify, Apple or wherever you get podcasts. Overall there have been 3148 downloads in 2025. For more visit www.nearcast.ie.

Sound and Vision Radio Programming
Through the Coimisiún na Mean Sound and Vision scheme, Near FM is supported to produce high quality radio series, collaborating with new and diverse range of community partners, in order to achieve community co-operation in-line with our ethos.

Near FM trainees get the opportunity to work on these professional productions. Some of these productions are co-productions with other partner expertise. One great example is Trinity Talks, now in its fourth series, where we partner with Trinity Long Room Hub (TCD) to record conversations in front of a live audience. In the latest series we also partner with Trinity in the Community associate Unit 18, a community hub based just off Pearse Street in Dublin 2.

Trinity Talks: Dublin's Hidden Histories, is in partnership with Trinity Long Room Hub and Unit18. Recorded in front of a live audience, and featuring songs sung by An Goilin Traditional singers, the series brings to light histories of Dublin that have been lost or forgotten

The Hugh Lane Concert series
Made with the support of Coimisiún Na Mean with the Television License fee.
The Hugh Lane Concert series is available on Spotify. The series has twice been nominated for the prestigious PRIX EUROPA award for Best European Radio series (Music) in 2020 and 2023.
Episode 42 featured Aoife Ni Bhríain on violin and Cormac McCarthy on piano.

Audio Drama
We finished broadcasting series 5 of the New Drama Hour in December and series 6 is currently under production and will start airing on World Audio Drama Day in October. We have a funding application for another audio drama currently under review and are also currently gathering scripts for series 7 of the New Drama Hour. We now have an audio drama sub site at drama.nearfm.ie This puts all our audio drama in one place and has a dedicated RSS feed for our drama content so that it can be found on all the podcasting platforms.

Outreach

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We continued to deliver a wide range of training, outreach and access activities. The focus remained on media literacy, community partnerships, learning by doing, and supported access to broadcast facilities. While responsibility for Outreach transitioned during this period, activity remained steady, with new partnerships formed and existing relationships strengthened.

Media Literacy, Education and Policy Engagement
On 17 September, staff at Near FM participated in an online meeting of the AONTAS Community Education Network and on 15 October, staff attended a "Spot the Spin" media literacy workshop led by Dr Eileen Culloty, timed to coincide with the Presidential election period. The Mad About Media Sound and Vision series is due for broadcast in Spring 2026.

Community Partnerships and Outreach Development
On 14 October, a new partnership was established with Coolock Library following an initial contact and a subsequent studio tour and meeting. On 19 November, staff at Near FM attended the Northside Partnership Community Showcase Event. This resulted in contacts and interviews being secured with Fáilte Isteach, Sanctuary Runners, Fingal Volunteer Centre and Dignity Partnership.
On 24 September, staff attended a Tallaght Drug and Alcohol Task Force event highlighting research on mothers in addiction recovery. Audio gathered at the event was produced into a Nearcast

podcast.
On 31 October, outreach engagement took place at an Outside Broadcast for a Halloween party in Golden Years, Darndale, supporting access and visibility for older people within the broadcast schedule.
On 11 November, staff attended the Community Law and Mediation report launch on community mediation in Ireland.
Near FM delivered an outside broadcast as part of the FET Coláiste Dhúlaigh Open Day on 20 November and on 12 November

Training Courses, Workshops and Supported Learning
From 10 November through December, Near FM delivered a five-week podcasting course in partnership with Sphere 17 in Coolock and pn 12 November, 18 FET Coláiste Dhúlaigh students attended a media literacy talk, followed by a practical group chat recording workshop. This combined discussion-based learning with hands-on studio experience.

Youthreach, Work Experience and Access Pathways
Youthreach Harmonstown groups visited Near FM on 4 and 7 November. The visits were split over two days to accommodate group size, with 12 students attending on the first day and 10 on the second an on 1 December, a group of 10 students from Youthreach Parnell attended a 60-minute studio tour and workshop.

Networking
On 17 October, we attended a Shared Island meeting hosted by Cork Community TV. The meeting focused on networking around a proposed all-island broadcast collaboration involving NVTV, DCTV, CCTV and Near TV.
A second Shared Island meeting took place alongside the DCTV Festival on 28 November, continuing discussions on cross-station collaboration and shared programming, and a third session in NVTV, Belfast completed the exercise on 6th December.

Forward Planning and Development
Background preparatory work was undertaken during this period for the Women Behind the Mic course scheduled for February to April 2026.

Near TV

TV Training with new CE trainees and students



We continued our relationship with Colaiste Dhulaigh bringing in a student Conor Nugent for training in our As Live Shoots of the Five Lamps Festival. It was on this Project that Jaye Palmer also came on board with the Near TV team cutting her teeth as a Floor manager on the varied performances we recorded throughout the festival.



We have also been continuing our CE training, Running workshops on
Editing - Using premiere Pro and DaVinci Resolve to edit multicam performances.
After Effects - Creating Titles, Lower Thirds and Credits for Sound and Vision
Camera techniques - Operating Cameras in Low Light Scenarios - Hand held Camera Techniques
Grip Work - Setting Up Tripods and Dollys on a Live Set.

Production & Dissemination

This has been a very busy year at NearTV with the final submission of the Preparing For Life Documentary and the filming of the Five Lamps Festival TV show which is made up of Five TV hour programmes consisting of live performances and interviews with the artists. Along with those projects we have been awarded a social benefit grant to work with the Africa Centre and a Shared Island grant to work alongside other community media organisations to provide workshops and training to local community organisations and help them tell their shared stories though short films and documentaries.

1. Preparing for Life (PFL) Documentary

We are thrilled to announce that the *Preparing for Life* documentary is complete and has been submitted to DCTV and Comisiun Na Mean. The project has been a resounding success, and all participants involved have expressed great satisfaction with the end result. This documentary represents a significant achievement, involving a substantial amount of dedicated filming and editing in order to fully capture the story of PFL.



We are particularly proud of the stellar work produced by Sean Markey and our other CE participants, who contributed significantly to the project, including high-quality work on the motion graphics.



This film serves as a vital follow-up to our *Health Effect* documentary produced seven years ago. It has been incredibly rewarding to document the progress of the children in Darndale as they move through the program and excel in school, revisiting the families and the Darndale National School to see their development firsthand. Furthermore, we have successfully established links with the University of Chicago's Center for the Economics of Human Development to explore how this program is performing internationally.

Looking ahead, the documentary will be broadcast on DCTV this autumn. We are also planning a screening event in the autumn in conjunction with the Northside Partnership and the PFL program, which will provide a wonderful opportunity for various bodies—including the UCD Geary Institute and the University of Chicago—to view the documentary and celebrate the hard work of all participants. On top of this we recently found out that the documentary won an award at the Impact International Documentary Festival.

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2. The Five Lamps Festival

In April, our team successfully filmed the Five Lamps Festival, providing an excellent example of our team coming together to execute an "as-live" broadcast filmed over the course of a week. We captured a vibrant mix of performances, including theater at the Seán O'Casey Community Centre, comedy clubs featuring various comedians, and diverse performances in Mud Island, such as the African dance troupe, brass bands, and children's performers.

This project was a fantastic opportunity for our team to gain "as-live" training and experience. We were delighted to welcome back previous trainees to the team, including Kirsty Sheridan, who joined us as a camera operator, and our former PFL documentary trainee, Greg Brett, who also served as a camera operator. Working alongside Sean, Jaye and our student intern, Conor, the team gained invaluable hands-on experience by collaborating on this large-scale production.





Plans for upcoming work:

For the next period we will be working on the Five Lamps Festival Edits, delivering the workshops to the Africa Centre, Holding a screening of the Preparing For Life documentary for all the participants, Working with local groups to help them make short films and documentaries for the Shared Island Project, and continuing our ongoing training

Online

Listen Again Site
In the 2025 we had 1259 new pieces of audio uploaded to the website bringing us to a total of 15,524 interviews and programmes available on the site. Overall amount of downloads 2025: 20,998
Most listened to were:

Lifeline : Migrants protest at Leinster House
09/25/2025 105 downloads
Seven Stages for Seven Ages – episode 5 – Middle Age 03/01/2024 103 downloads
The Moth Hour 05/07/2025 91 downloads
Lifeline: Bridge Association of Ireland, C.B.I.A. 01/16/2025 89 downloads
Trinity Talks: Dublin's Hidden Histories – Episode 1 – Dr. Susan Byrne 04/17/2025 79 downloads

Livestream
In 2025 we streamed a total 9068503 minutes of audio (That's the equivalent of over 17 years)
Peak simultaneous listeners was 160 on October 12th.

Webcam
We have a new webcam feed from the studio. We currently have a multicam system in place with the idea that we can send a broadcast of a live programme to DCTV and there are currently several live debates from Northside Today available in video format on our Listen Again site.
In 2025 it generated 8783 unique views.