



# Annual Activity Report

## 2018

[www.helplink.ie](http://www.helplink.ie)

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CRO No: 546355 CRA No: 20143237 CHY No: 21366

 @helplinksupport  /helplinksupportservices

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# Chairperson's Message



Dear Friends,

Ireland has one of the highest rates of mental health illness in Europe, ranking joint third out of the 36 countries surveyed in the annual Health at a Glance report (1): with 18.5 per cent of the Irish population recorded as having a mental health disorder, such as anxiety, bipolar, schizophrenia, depression, or alcohol or drug use, in 2016. While the suicide rate is below average, the rates of depression are well above the European average for both men and women in Ireland.

education, encouraging

Organisations such as Helplink are at the forefront of this battle, supporting people with their mental health needs accessibly, 7 days a week locally, nationally and internationally.

Now more than ever we and our clients need all the support you can give, from referring a friend or a family member that needs support to simply following us on social media and donating if you can.

Helplink has been serving our communities since 2012, during this time our organisation has been growing steadily year-on-year. Over this time we have gained a lot of learning, as a result we have used this learning and experience to build a more comprehensive, client needs based and sustainable organisation.

2018 was the year of the new governance code, keeping boards of trustees busier than ever. We have set up a subcommittee actively working on compliance and reporting progress dutifully at each board meeting.

It is always sad to see dedicated, voluntary board members leaving, even though board renewal is an essential element of good governance: I would like to very much thank, for their contributions, departing board members Georgina Kearney, Jennifer Conroy, and Nial O'Reilly, and welcome Brenda Fallon, Clodna McGuire and Gerry Mackey.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who make Helplink the wonderful organisation it is today: Our CEO Lochlann Scott with his formidable drive, our counsellors and therapists, our team of mediators, the admin staff, our funders and partners.

Kind regards,

Gilles Varette  
Chair of Helplink Support Services Board of Directors/Trustees

(1) [https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/state/docs/2018\\_healthatglance\\_rep\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/state/docs/2018_healthatglance_rep_en.pdf)

# CEO Message



Dear supporters, partners, clients, interested parties,

I am delighted to provide you with the Helplink Support Services 2018 annual activity report.

## **2018 was a significant year of development for Helplink:**

Our local and national counselling services appointments rose by 15% in comparison to 2017 and our mediation appointments rose by 140%.

We expanded our suite of counselling services in order to support all generations i.e. children (ages 3 and up), young people and adults.

We provided our school and community workshops to twice as many participants as the previous year.

We began providing our counsellors as mentors under the School Completion Programme to ten schools and growing!

We expanded our online counselling service for the Irish abroad (which was only available in Australia and Canada in 2017) into a global service!

Furthermore, we started our own radio show/podcast where we talk with individuals and organisations that are supporting our communities and also made other new and lasting partnerships with organisations supporting our local, national and international communities.

We at Helplink are very lucky to be able to support people locally in the West of Ireland, nationally and internationally with their mental health and conflict resolution needs. We could not do the work we do without our funding partners, our network of partner organisations, our employees, volunteers, contractors, our clients and our Board of Directors.

The plan for 2019 is for us to consolidate our current services and at the same time expand where these service offerings are available - for example our aim in 2019 is to open up two new offices for 7 day a week and out-of-hours, face-to-face services in the counties of Mayo and Roscommon in the West of Ireland. Thank you to all our supporters and clients from 2018!

Lochlann Scott  
CEO @ Helplink Support Services

# Our Mission, Vision & Values

**Mission:** Helplink Support Services mission is to provide accessible mental health and conflict resolution services; locally, nationally and internationally.

**Vision:** Helplink Support Services' vision is to be Ireland's leading provider of accessible, free or low cost mental health and conflict resolution services locally, nationally and internationally. We aim to achieve this vision through partnership with other organisations and by providing our services accessibly through the utilisation of traditional face-to-face service provision structures in the West of Ireland, coupled with online technologies for service provision nationally and internationally; 7 days a week and out-of-hours.

**Values:** We value **Innovation** in service delivery and we work on an ongoing basis with our funding partners and clients to ensure that we are providing the best service possible; in a way that meets our clients' needs. Innovation in technology is one of these examples as we provide most of our services online, as well as face-to-face, which enables people in rural areas, people with physical disabilities and others to receive the support they need in a way that suits them.

We as an organisation value **Partnership** with other agencies/organisations in local, national and international communities. It is our belief that non-profit organisations can accomplish more if we work to complement the existing resources available in these communities rather than duplicate them. An example of our partnerships on a local level is providing appointments in local health centres and community centres in order to bring our much needed services to the people where they need them. Our work with Irish support organisations on the ground in the USA and Australia to promote our Irish Abroad Counselling Service and to help facilitate client referrals is an example of our work with international partners.

As a charitable organisation, that provides mental health and conflict resolution services, **Transparency** is of paramount importance to us. Helplink operates in a way that is honest, transparent and ethical. Our accounts are available to the public for viewing, upon request, as are our annual reports.

**Confidentiality** is a key value for our organisation due to the work we carry out in the mental health and conflict resolution sectors. We go above and beyond the industry standards when it comes to confidentiality – one of the ways we achieve this value is by not storing client contact information/session notes in the cloud and by not keeping any paper based files for clients. All client information and session notes are kept on encrypted documents on external hard drives. We also have client contracts where confidentiality is discussed with the client for transparency. Furthermore, all staff, volunteers, board members, contractors sign up to our code of conduct which is available in our HR policies and procedure document.

Helplink believes in the philosophy of **Good Stewardship**. As a result we endeavour to have a Board that has a diverse range of skills, expertise, genders and personal qualities in order to provide robust and effective stewardship. We are compliant with the Good Governance Code of Ireland, we are a registered charity with the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) (Ireland) and we have charitable (CHY) status with the Revenue Commissioners. Furthermore, we have systems and processes that are regularly reviewed, to ensure that we can achieve and sustain our objectives with integrity.

# Organisation Chart / Governance

## Current Members of Helplink's Voluntary Board of Directors/Trustees & Organisation CEO

**Gilles Varette:** Product Support Manager Americas – EMEA CSG International  
(Chair of Helplink Board)

**Sam O'Neill:** Marketing Executive and former President of GMIT Student's Union  
(Organisation Secretary)

**Debbie McDonagh:** Family Support Training & Development Coordinator at WRDATF  
(Organisation Treasurer)

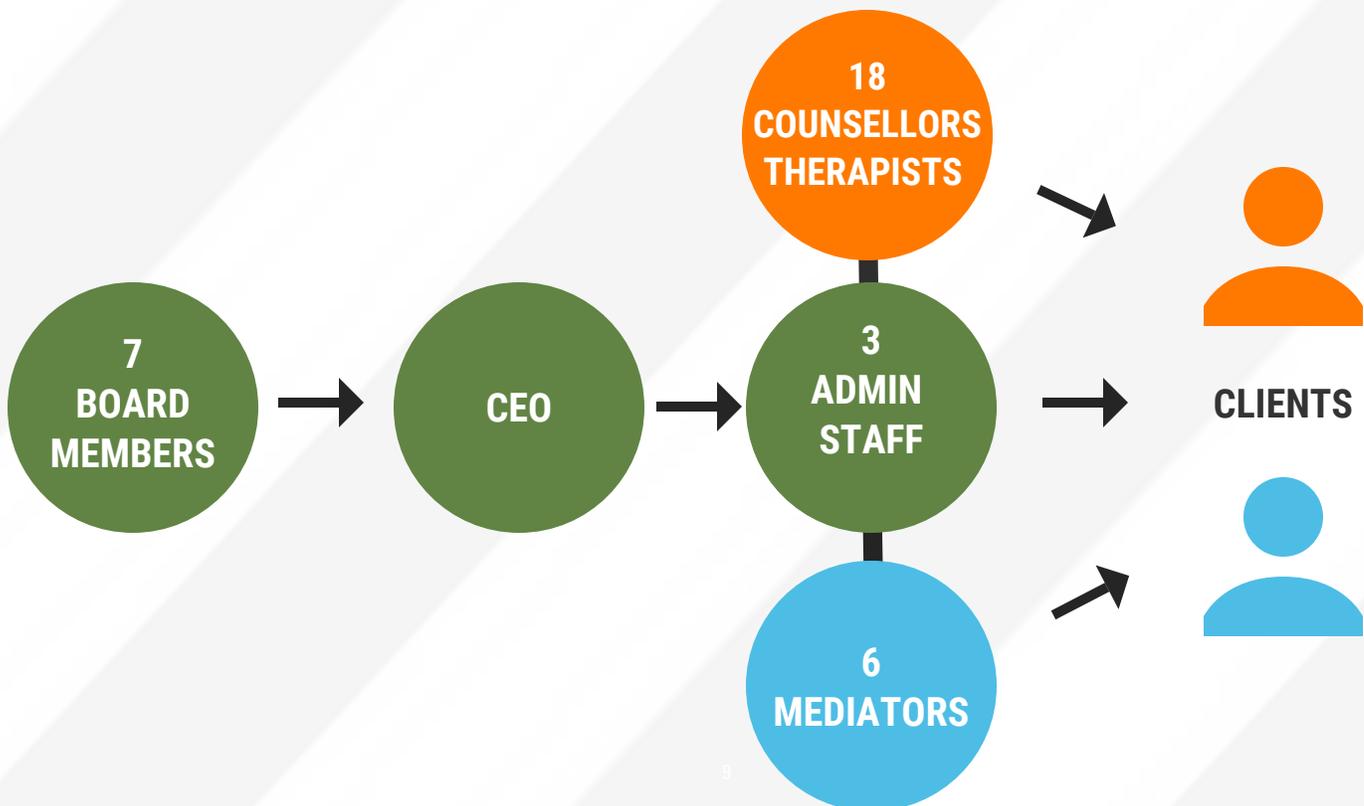
**Tamar Scott:** Counselling Psychologist and Clinical Supervisor

**Brenda Fallon:** HR Specialist, currently HR business partner at NUI Galway

**Cliona McGuire:** Consultant Solicitor at O'Connor Johnson Solicitors

**Gerry Mackey:** Mentor – Investor and Financing Readiness

**Helplink's CEO Lochlann Scott:** former assistant psychologist, social care worker and held multiple management roles in retail and the hospitality sectors.



# SERVICES & IMPACT

## Local & National Counselling/Therapy Services Info & Statistics for 2018

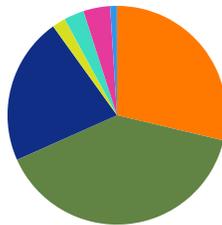
(7 Days a Week & Out-Of-Hours)

In 2018 Helplink provided over 1200 counselling and therapy appointments locally (face-to-face) in the West of Ireland, from our Galway based offices, some services were also provided online nationwide.

**The following are the counselling/therapy services we offered in 2018:**

- General Counselling
- Play Therapy (Galway only)
- Art Therapy (Galway only)
- Couples Counselling
- Youth Counselling (including addiction)
- Addiction Counselling
- Bereavement Therapy

### Types of Counselling / Therapy Services Attended 2018



● General Counselling (Full Fee) 29%   ● General Counselling (Discounted Fee) 39%  
● Play Therapy 22%   ● Art Therapy 2%   ● Addiction 3%   ● Couples 4%  
● Youth Counselling 1%

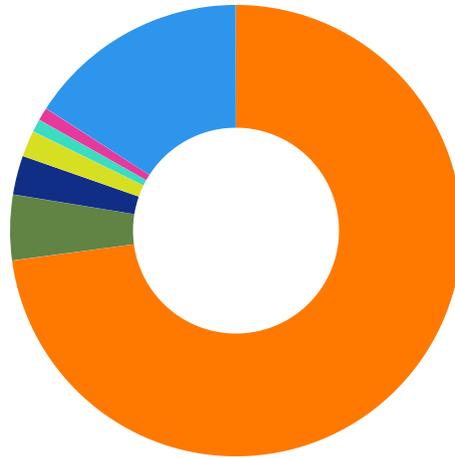
### Play Therapy Testimonial by a Parent of an 8 Year Old Child

"I did just want to drop you a quick line to say thanks for all the work you did with our son this year. He is much more content, and has none of the issues he had when we first made the referral. He still experiences big emotions, but seems better able to manage and understand them, and even better still he can now say he is proud of himself which is not something I expected. This was something he never said before and would shy away from, but he has grown in confidence over the last number of months"

# SERVICES & IMPACT

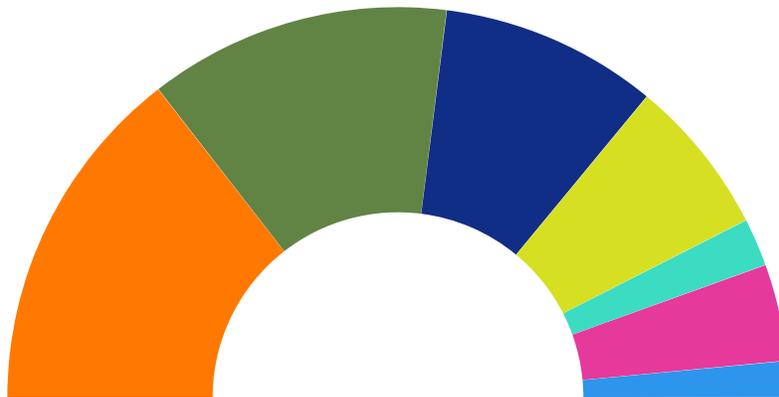
## Local & National Counselling/Therapy Services Info & Statistics for 2018 CONTINUED

### How Clients Heard About Our Counselling Services



- ONLINE SEARCH 78%
- FAMILY/FRIEND 5%
- GP 3%
- SOCIAL MEDIA 2%
- OTHER MEDIA 1%
- COLLEGE/SCHOOL 1%
- NO ANSWER 9%

### Number of Appointments per Client



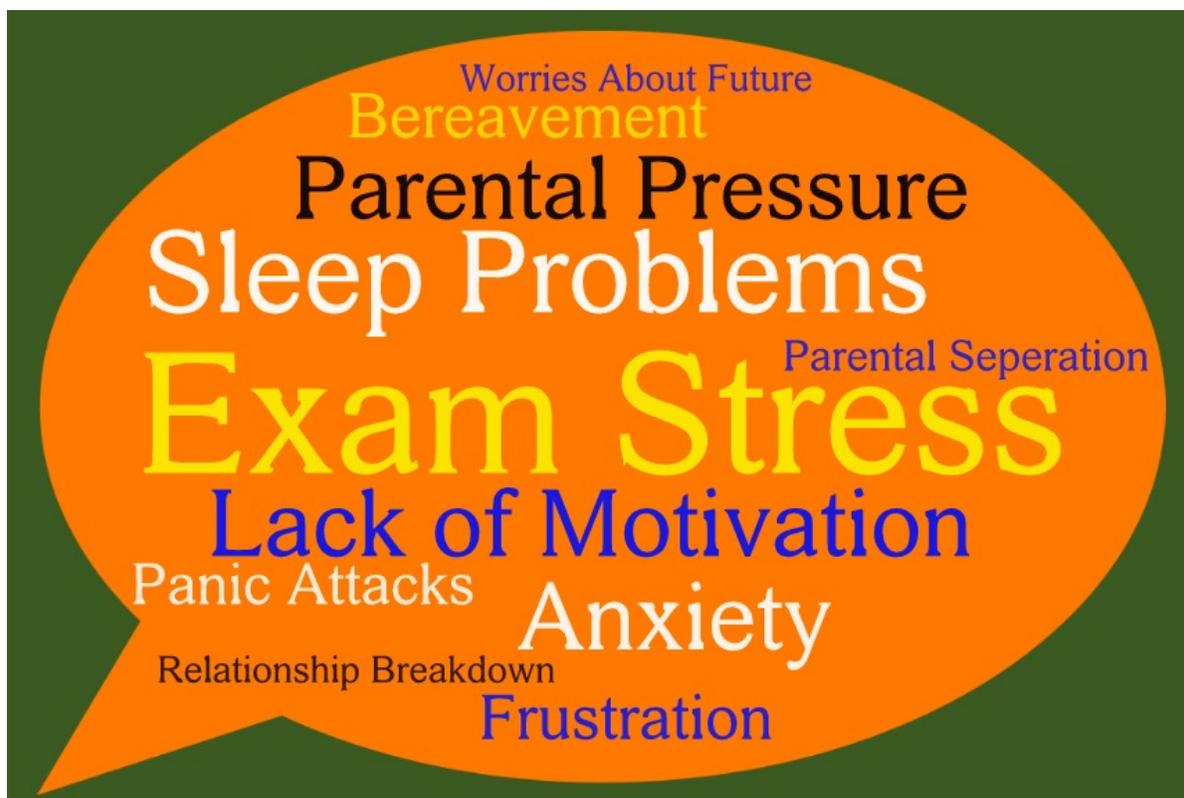
- ONE 29%
- ONE - THREE 25%
- ONE - SIX 18%
- ONE - NINE 13%
- ONE - TWELVE 4%
- ONE - FIFTEEN 8%
- FIFTEEN PLUS 3%

# SERVICES & IMPACT

## Reasons Why **Adult** Clients Attended Counselling



## Reasons Why **Youth** Clients Attended Counselling



# SERVICES & IMPACT

## **TUSLA Alcohol Dependency Counselling Service Galway City & County**

In 2018 we renewed our free alcohol dependency counselling service for adults, referred through TUSLA. During this period we provided 159 counselling appointments to adults across Galway City and County. The gender breakdown of those attending was Male 50% and Female 50%.  
The no show/cancellation rate was 3%.

These clients gained therapeutic support in Galway City, Ballinasloe, Gort, Connemara, Athenry, Tuam etc.

## **EAP Employee Counselling Service & Workshops**

In 2018 Helplink continued its innovative pay-as-you-go employee counselling service to many small and medium sized businesses and community organisations across the nation. Furthermore, we continued to provide our Leadership and Employee workshops with multiple businesses and organisations; addressing topics such as supporting clients/staff in distress, mindfulness, stress/anxiety reduction and more.

## **SCHOOL/STUDENT SERVICES 'Mind Hacks' Workshops & Student Mentoring Service**

Over the course of 2018 Helplink provided fourteen 'Mind Hacks' workshops across seven schools/colleges (primary, post-primary and third level) to 400 plus students in Galway City and County. The topics/information/education provided were: on mindfulness, emotional wellbeing, the biology of the brain/body mental health, stress/anxiety reduction, the transition from primary school to post-primary, building resilience, enhancing self esteem and much more. Furthermore, Helplink provided Mentors (qualified counsellors supporting primary and post-primary children/young people to stay in school) to 10 schools under the School Completion Programme during this period.

## **Radio Show / Podcast The Helplink Show**

September 2018 saw the launch of our very own radio show/podcast. Our CEO presents an hour long radio show once a month on topics such as mental health, emotional wellbeing, community services, etc.

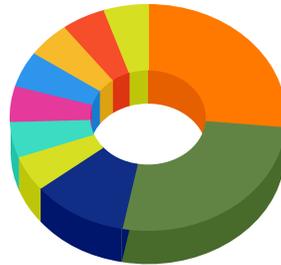
The show is/was available live on four radio stations every month in the West of Ireland i.e. Flirt FM (NUIG student radio), Connemara FM, Ros FM (Roscommon community radio) and CRC FM (Castlebar (Mayo) community radio station) and on our YouTube Channel.

In 2018 we interviewed NUIG's Student Counselling Service, Pieta House, COPE Galway, Alcohol Action Ireland, ALONE and more!

# SERVICES & IMPACT

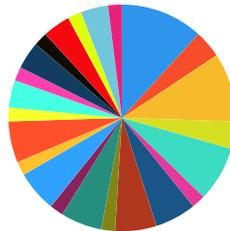
## INTERNATIONAL Irish Abroad Counselling Service Info & Statistics for 2018

In 2018 we expanded the reach of our online counselling service for Irish citizens living abroad by going fully global. As a result appointments were available not just in Australia and Canada; during this period, we also supported Irish people in a further 8 countries (10 total for 2018).



- AUSTRALIA 26%
- CANADA 26%
- ENGLAND 11%
- DENMARK 5%
- FRANCE 5%
- GERMANY 5%
- NETHERLANDS 5%
- SWEDEN 5%
- SWITZERLAND 5%
- VIETNAM 5%

## Reasons for Attending the Irish Abroad Counselling Service



- Anxiety 12%
- Low Self-Esteem 8%
- Eating Disorder 2%
- Fear of Death 2%
- Work-Life Balance 2%
- Coping Mechanisms 4%
- Destructive Behaviour 2%
- Bullying 4%
- Cultural Issues 6%
- Stress 6%
- Family Issues 4%
- Lack of Motivation 2%
- Low Mood 4%
- Loneliness 10%
- P.T.S.D. 2%
- Isolation 2%
- Break-Up 6%
- Grief 6%
- Depression 6%
- Feeling Lost 4%
- Problems Adapting 2%
- Lack of Contentment 2%
- Homesick 4%
- Lack of Connections 2%

## Client Testimonial From Our Irish Abroad Online Counselling Service

"I was going through a very difficult time in my life. Things were falling apart for me and I needed help. Through the hard work and dedication of this team I managed to get myself back together again. I met an amazing person who didn't judge me but instead offered a listen ear and very good advice. I felt these people genuinely wanted to help me and cared a great deal about my life. I will be forever in their debt as they were that helping hand which I so badly needed. Things don't always work out as planned but for now the future seems that bit brighter"

# Services & Impact

## Conflict Resolution Centre

**Mediation Services:** during 2018 Helplink's Conflict Resolution Centre donation based mediation services attendance figures **increased by 140%** on 2017 .

**Our qualified/accredited Mediators provided the following types of mediation during 2018:**

- Family Mediation (couples or wider family disputes)
- Housing Mediation (students, social housing tenants, private tenants and landlords, etc.)
- Community Conflict Mediation (neighbour or schools disputes, etc.)
- Elder Mediation (nursing home, land, inheritance disputes, etc.)

**School Workshops:** in 2018 our CRC Mediators facilitated four 'Changing Conflict' workshops across two schools to 100 students. 'Changing Conflict' is a workshop focused on the management of conflict and bias and also provides an introduction to what mediation is and how it can support people. It's designed to help students in post-primary (fourth and fifth year) and third level to learn about Conflict Management – the theory and some of the skills underpinning it.



### Public/Community Workshops:

As part of Social Inclusion Week 2018 in Galway our CRC Mediators/Workshop Facilitators also provided a free Intercultural Mediation Information Session for the general public in the Galway City library.

OCTOBER  
**18**



Helplink  
SUPPORT  
SERVICES

**#SOCIAL INCLUSION WEEK  
INTERCULTURAL  
MEDIATION  
INFORMATION SESSION**

**Galway City Library  
Thursday 18th October  
6pm - 7.45pm**

Helplink's Conflict Resolution Centre (CRC) will host a FREE public information talk on how intercultural mediation can help people and communities achieve greater inclusion and diversity through shared communication and understanding.  
To register a free place please e-mail [CRC@helplink.ie](mailto:CRC@helplink.ie)

# Services & Impact



## Social Media Statistics 2018



**Twitter**  
**950+ Followers**  
**67k Impressions**



**Facebook**  
**1,288**  
**Followers/Likes**



**Google**  
**107k Site Impressions**  
**4k Site Clicks**



## Services Overview 2018

**15 Experienced  
Qualified  
Counsellors  
&  
Therapists**

**1 Global  
Counselling  
Service  
for  
Irish Abroad**

**10 Therapeutic  
Services for  
Children  
Young People  
&  
Adults**

**4  
Mediation Services  
&  
Ireland's 1st Online  
Mediation Service**

**7 Types of School  
Employer  
Community  
Workshops**

**6 Experienced  
Garda Vetted  
Qualified  
Mediators**



## Financial Year Outcomes 1st July 2018 to 30th June 2019

**Gross (total) Income: €114,600**

### Sources of Income

- Grants:

Galway City Council Social Inclusion Grant	500
Galway City Council Social Inclusion Week Funding	150
TUSLA Alcohol Service	13000
Galway City Council Community Enhancement Programme	6163
ESB Energy For Generations Fund	5500
Bon Secours	5000
- Donations & Sponsorship (public, corporate, philanthropic) 1039
- Fundraising 1665
- Trading or Commercial Activities 80893
- Other income sources 690

**Gross (total) Expenditure: €111,292**

### Main Expenditure Items for Current Period

- CEO Salary 19191
- Administrator & Bookkeeping Wages 12480
- Contractor Fees (counselling services & workshop facilitation) 54398
- Office Rent 4837
- Insurance 775
- Lighting & heating costs 913
- Professional fees 5213
- Board/committee expenses 983
- Costs related to trading or commercial activities 9639
- Other activity costs 2862

# Thank you for reading

Some of our Supporters / Partners / Memberships for 2018



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