ACORNS
Accelerating the Creation Of Rural Nascent Start-ups

Sharon Huggard
The Style Coach

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As a young child, Sharon Huggard watched her mother transform into a Hollywood star when she got dressed up for dinner dances. The power of this instantaneous transformation through style stuck with her and is at the heart of her business mantra 'Style…it's a feeling'!

Sharon spent 13 years in financial services before taking a career break to raise her three young children. During this time, and with no fashion experience but a passion for empowering women through style, she entered Ireland's Next Top Stylist competition – and won.

She trained as a stylist and set up Style for You from her home in Innishannon in Co. Cork but her career as an entrepreneur was interrupted when she was headhunted by Dressed boutique in Cork.

She worked as a stylist and fashion buyer for six years, before being made redundant in July 2019. Sharon decided this was her moment to do what she always wanted and established The Style Coach in September 2019.

The Style Coach merges personal style with personal development and Sharon has a range of qualifications in both styling and being a Life Coach.

The business quickly gained momentum, with collaborations with stores such as Brown Thomas, and workshops being held nationwide. Then Covid-19 hit and she had to reinvent herself.

She took her business online, developed group programmes and established a membership model.

At times, Sharon found running the business during lockdown isolating and the camaraderie and support of the ACORNS programme was a real strength to her. She found the holistic approach of ACORNS, which looks at the person, as well as the business strategy, beneficial.

Before Covid, most of Sharon's business was from Cork but now around 65pc of her clients are from outside Cork, and many are international. Her business is now scalable and her focus is on building on her international customer base.

Providing early stage female entrepreneurs, living in rural Ireland, with the knowledge, support and networking opportunities to meet and even exceed their current aspirations.

An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine