

Karena Ryan

Karena Ryan Artist

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Karena Ryan, a native of Dublin who is based in Tuam, Co Galway, launched her business, which creates handmade textile gifts and artworks for people's homes and business premises, from her home in September 2019.

Karena, who had been a secondary school teacher of Art, English and PE, took a career break to establish her company, Karena Ryan Artist, through which she also offers workshops for adults and children.

With no prior experience as an entrepreneur, Karena did a business course with the Design and Craft Council of Ireland (DCCI) which gave her the foundation to set up her company.

Due to the pandemic, the company grew slowly, but she is now seeing the fruits of her labours, with plenty of bookings for 2023 and 2024.

In November 2022, Karena was among 26 artists selected to go to Philadelphia to showcase their artwork to the Irish diaspora, an event which led to sales, further work and potential collaborations.

Karena won the Future Makers Award 2022 from the DCCI. She is speaking about and exhibiting her work at the Mary Robinson Climate Conference in Ballina this year. Upcoming exhibitions include Mayfair, London, Belfast with Craft Northern Ireland and the EU Parliament in Brussels.

Karena found that the ACORNS programme gave her more clarity and focus. She says that although the participants had diverse businesses, they experienced the same struggles and issues as entrepreneurs and were – and continue to be – a great support to each other.

Her plans include starting a part-time course in fashion design in September, which she expects will lead into other areas of work and product lines. Karena intends to participate in Showcase Ireland in 2024 and is extending her art studio with gallery space so she can facilitate workshops from her own home instead of hiring premises.

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,
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