



Outdoor Recreation Network

May 15th 2025

Presentation Outline:

- Overview of CERT at MTU – Mary Rose
- Understanding Regenerative Tourism - Aisling
- EU Project CE4RT Research Findings - Fiona

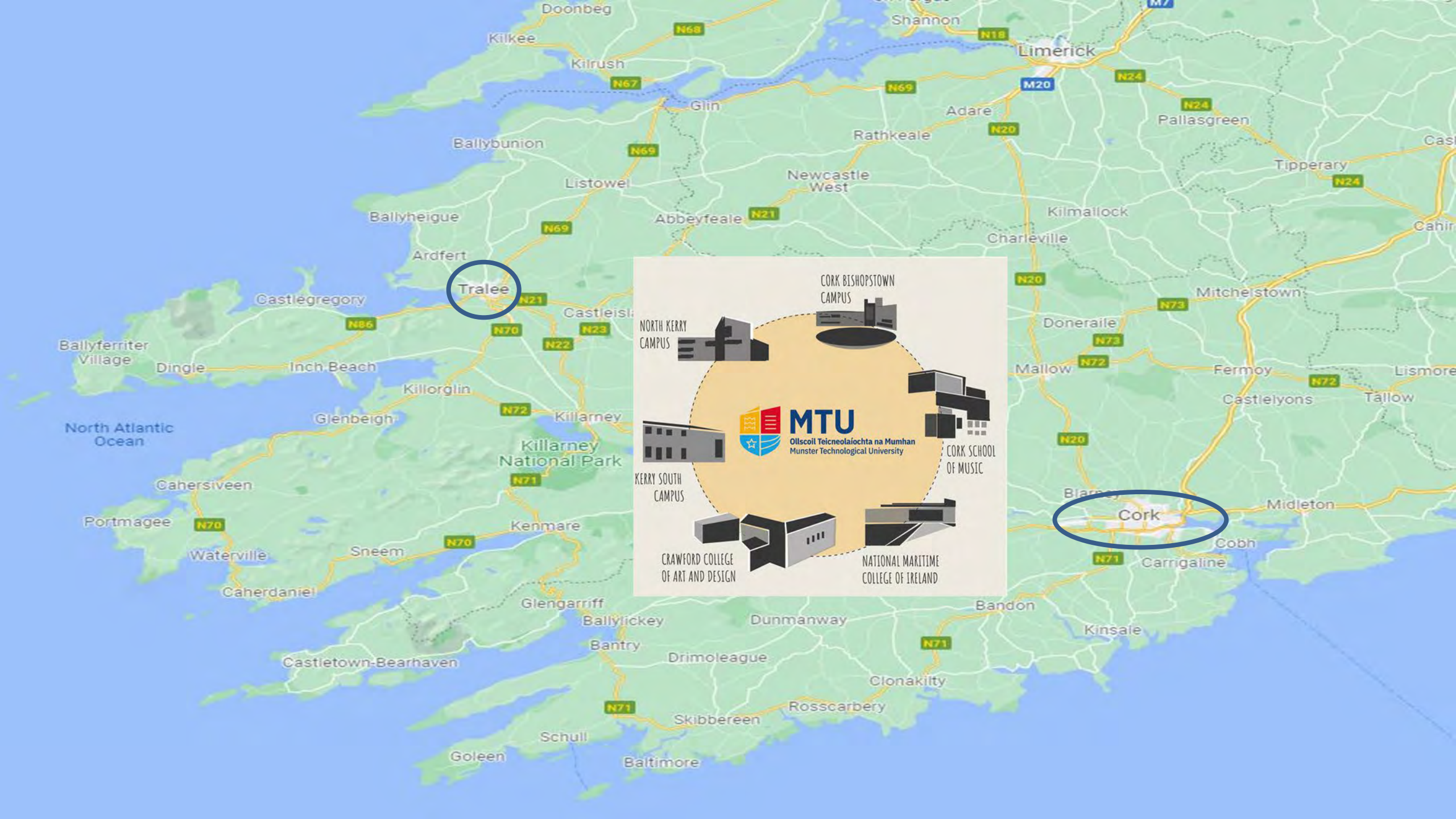
Overview of CERT at MTU

Mary Rose Stafford

Munster Technological University is a multi-campus university with 18000 students and over 2000 staff.

It covers the counties of Cork and Kerry in the South-West of Ireland.





Tralee

Cork

CORK BISHOPSTOWN CAMPUS

NORTH KERRY CAMPUS

KERRY SOUTH CAMPUS

CRAWFORD COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

NATIONAL MARITIME COLLEGE OF IRELAND

CORK SCHOOL OF MUSIC

MTU
Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan
Munster Technological University



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**Circular Economy for
Regenerative Tourism**

What do we do?

Advance a regenerative approach to tourism development

Education

- Masters of Arts Regenerative Tourism
- Regenerative Tourism Micro-credentials
- PhD students
- Digital learning resources

Applied Research

- Research projects – EU (COSME, Interreg AA, Interreg NPA), Ireland/Scotland
- Research papers - journals, book chapters, conferences

Industry collaboration

- Killarney Keep Cup Project
- Dingle Peninsula Tourism Alliance
- Ballyhoura Development

Representation on National & International Tourism Bodies

Understanding Regenerative Tourism

Dr. Aisling Ward

Defining Regenerative Tourism



- *Regenerative Tourism is based on a fresh understanding that the visitor economy in general and the destination, in particular, is not an industrial production line but a **living, networked system embedded in a natural system called Nature** and subject to Nature's operating rules and principles (Pollock, 2019a, p. 7) .*
- *An emergent, evolutionary and dynamic understanding, which includes sustainability within the framework of living systems ... slowing down the visitor's pace and creating an experience that activates deep and positive connections between the **visitor**, the **local community** (the other), **the place** and **the systems that support life** there, aligning both the local and the visitor to the rhythms of nature (Teruel, 2018, p. 64)*

Why do we need to move from Sustainability to Regeneration?



Sustainability is not sufficient to ensure the long-term protection of the planet.



Current Travel and Tourism models assume that the “industry” continues to grow.

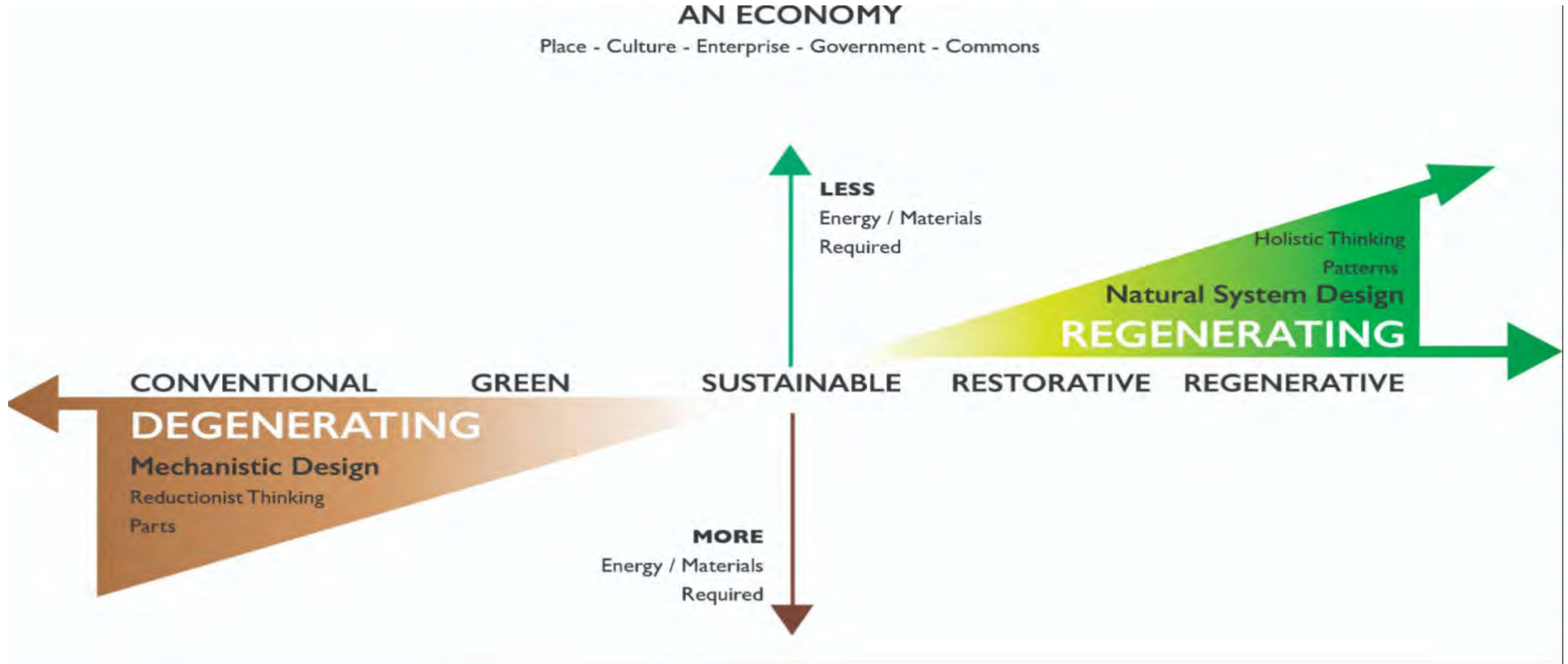


Success in tourism continues to be measured by GDP and Economic growth.



Regeneration is a rebirth of thinking about our role and regenerating our role on the planet (Pollock, 2020)

Features of Regenerative Tourism (Reed, 2007; Fullerton, 2015)



Regenerative Tourism



REGENERATING.
RE-GREENING.
REINVENTING.

How can your business grow/succeed in a way that creates the conditions for communities, visitors, residents and the environment to thrive?

Examples could include:

- Good quality employment opportunities
- Year-round employment
- Supporting local producers and suppliers
- Actively engaging in environmental preservation
- Empowering visitors – aligning visitor with values of the place

The Mindset Shift Challenge – changing how impact is measured



- Destinations are starting to adopt **Regenerative models**
 - Bay of Plenty, NZ
 - Visit Flanders
 - Hawaii
- Designing **alternatives** to volume and value based KPIs
- Moving from Volume based Indicators towards **Values Based Indicators**

The Mindset Shift in Action – Destination Systemic Case Study

Killarney Coffee Cup Project

- In August 2023, over 50 businesses (now 70) in Killarney, Co Kerry voluntarily came together to eradicate single use coffee cups following a litter pick up in the Killarney National Park and UNESCO Biosphere.
- Irelands first town to become single use coffee cup free.
- 50% less coffee cups in Killarney bins
- 60% less coffee cup litter on the roadside and National park
- Positive social and environmental behaviour shift from visitors and residents.



Practical Examples

Research Findings – EU co-funded CE4RT Project

Fiona Scott-Hayward



MTU

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan
Munster Technological University



What was the CE4RT Project?



To find out more about any of the 80 CE4RT Tourism SMEs, click on a country on the map above.



1

EU co-funded project:

Circular Economy for Regenerative Tourism (CE4RT)

5

Countries:

Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Poland & The Netherlands

7

Project Partners

80

Tourism Businesses (SMEs)



Co-funded by
the European Union

CE4RT Regenerative Tourism Framework:



Champions Local Places

NATURE:

- We contribute to the protection and improvement of biodiversity in our area & communicate this to our visitors
- We participate in nature conservation activities in our area



CULTURE & HERITAGE:

- We know what distinguishes our place from anywhere else
- We use authentic stories to connect the visitor to our place



Benefits Host Communities

- We promote local products and services to our visitors
- We are active participants in our community
- We provide an inclusive and accessible workplace
- Our business has a strategy to support the wellbeing of our employees
- Where possible we prioritise employment of those living in the area
- Where possible we prioritise ethically sourced and local products and services



Tackles Climate Action

- We collect data from our business about **energy** consumption
- We collect data from our business about **water** consumption
- We collect data from our business about **waste** production/collection
- We use a recognised tool to calculate our **carbon footprint**
and inform our sustainability plan



Empowers Visitors

- We communicate to our visitors the special value that their visit brings to our place and community
- Throughout our communications we empower visitors to be more responsible before, during and after their stay
- We promote sustainable choices to our visitors (including transport, activities, accommodation, food & drink)
- We provide visitors with information on how they can support local social or environmental projects.



Long term sustainability & profitability

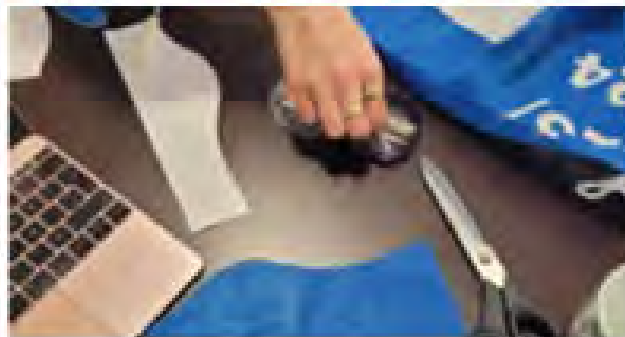
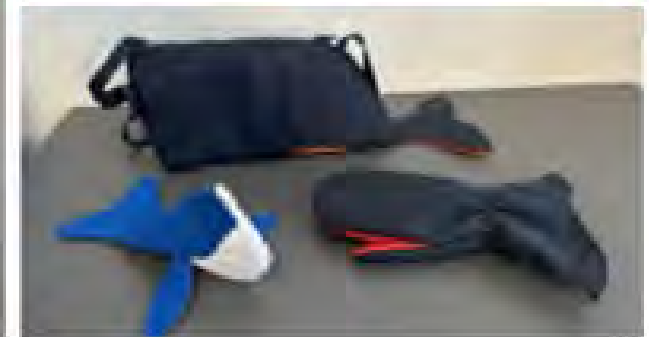
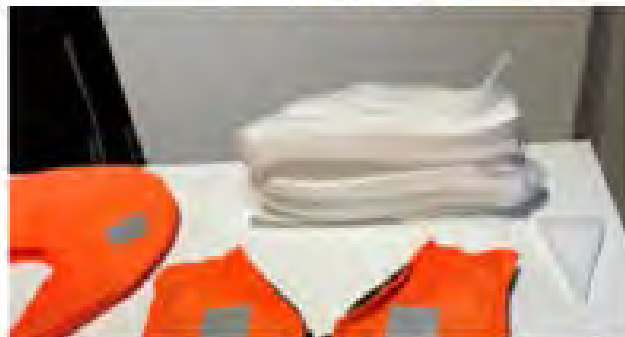
- We focus on staff retention and investment in our team
- We have a business plan that spans at least 3 years
- We have a system in place for keeping staff involved in our sustainability objectives
- We collect feedback from our visitors and use it to develop our products and services
- We try to increase the length of stay of our visitors



Examples of Good Practice: Muckross Creamery, Browar Dukla



Example of Good Practice: Elding Whale Watching



Innovation & Circular Economy

CE4RT participant Elding Whale Watching working with local entrepreneur Flott to produce gloves, bags and pencil cases for their souvenir shop from waste lifejackets, flotation suits, rain jackets etc.

Further resources

[CE4RT Digital Toolkit](#) - Case Studies, Sustainability Action Plans, Templates

[Digital Learning Resource](#) – Intro to Circular Economy & Regenerative Tourism

[Regenerative Tourism for SMEs – Micro-credential](#) – online - next intake Autumn 2025

[Masters of Arts - Regenerative Tourism](#) – fully online

- Certificate – 1 semester
- Diploma – 2 semesters
- Masters – 3 semesters including applied research project

Keep in touch:

Check out other projects MTU are involved in

- [DIBEST](#) - Digital Innovation for Tourism micro-enterprises
- [RETURN](#) - Exploring tourism revenue transfers to support regenerative tourism and climate resilience

Keep in touch:

Follow us on LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/94185423>

Email us directly about any of the programmes, ideas for collaboration or with any questions:

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