



‘The future of media: experience, models, practice’

6 May 2021

Panel Two: The current model and its appropriateness for the future

This panel will discuss the current funding models from the perspective of different stakeholders.

15:05 Chair’s introductions: Sonya Lennon, designer and social entrepreneur

15:10 Panellists’ introductory remarks:

- Áine Kerr, Kinzen
- Kevin Rafter, Dublin City University
- Roberto Suárez Candel, International strategy, future and impact consultant

15:25 Panel discussion and audience Q&A

15:50 Panel two ends

Sonya Lennon has over thirty years experience as a creative director, designer, broadcaster, entrepreneur and strategic consultant and speaker. A multi-award-winning Social Entrepreneur, Sonya founded global not for profit initiative [Dress for Success](#) in Ireland in 2011 which has successfully supported over 3,000 women into employment and economic independence.

Through her advocacy work, she has campaigned at a European level for gender equality in the workplace by addressing the [Gender Pay & Opportunity Gap](#). Since 2016, Sonya has led the highly publicised #WorkEqual campaign in Ireland. Through this campaign, she has spearheaded public awareness, highlighted legacy and cultural issues that prevent workplace equality and focussed on solutions to address them. Sonya has been invited to present on the issue on multiple occasions to the Irish Government.

The inaugural #WorkEqual Conference in 2019 saw her bring together international speakers and diverse stakeholders to ratify priority issues and recommendations. This culminated in a post-conference report titled *Practical Steps to Workplace Equality* co-authored with Professor Michelle Millar NUIG. This document has been submitted to government as a framework to accelerate positive change.

Sonya is solution focussed, iterative and innovative but always grounded by a value in human relationships and understanding how to maximise the potential of business and people. Sonya lives her life and works with a profound sense of curiosity and joy matched with an infectious laugh and a razor-sharp wit.

Áine Kerr is a serial risk taker and trailblazer with 17+ years of experience in the specialist cross-over space between journalism and technology.

Co-founder and COO of technology start-up Kinzen, Áine is a former Head of Journalism Partners at Facebook in New York, former Managing Editor at Storyful, and former journalist with The Irish Times, The Irish Independent and The Irish Examiner.

Áine holds a Fellowship with Columbia University’s Sulzberger Leadership Programme and a Masters in Journalism with DCU.

Presenter of the RTÉ radio series Reignite, she is a member of the European Council’s committee of experts on quality journalism in the digital age and an advisor to the Institute for the Future of Journalism



and Media (FuJO) in DCU. She is a board member with Gaisce, the President of Ireland's award earned by young people.

Kevin Rafter is Professor of Political Communications and Head of the School of Communications at Dublin City University, and the author/editor of over a dozen books on Irish politics and media. He is Chair of the Arts Council of Ireland and also Chair of the Compliance Committee of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, and recently qualified as a Chartered Director with the Institute of Directors. Prior to 2008, Kevin worked as a political journalist with the *Irish Times*, *Sunday Times* and *Sunday Tribune*. His work as a presenter of the *This Week* radio programme for RTÉ News was acknowledged with a European Journalism Award.

Roberto Suárez Candel is an international strategy, future and impact senior executive. He advises boards, CEOs and management teams on how to operate with a greater focus on their value, and enables them to design their strategy and plan their future.

From 2012 to 2020, Roberto was the Head of Strategy & Media Intelligence of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). He was responsible for the definition and implementation of the corporate strategy, driving the adaptation of the organization to the market changes and securing the delivery of first-class services and value to EBU Members. He was also in charge of the [Media Intelligence Service](#) (MIS), the market research unit of the EBU.

From 2010 to 2012, Roberto worked as a Marie Curie post-doc Fellow at the Hans-Bredow-Institut für Medienforschung in Germany. Previously, as an academic researcher and lecturer focused on media policy, Roberto worked in Sweden (Stockholm University) and Spain (Pompeu Fabra University).

Roberto Suarez holds a PhD in Social Communication and a Masters in Communication Research from the Pompeu Fabra University (Barcelona, Spain).