

## 10 local businesses to watch in Limerick

### **One of Ireland's oldest cities Limerick is home to a thriving coterie of dynamic young enterprises with local heart and global vision.**

With a population of 194,899 in the county of Limerick and just under 95,000 in the city of Limerick, the region is a jewel in Ireland's economic crown from both an entrepreneurial perspective and as a gateway to Ireland and Europe for generations of multinationals.

Limerick city is the third most populous urban area in the Republic of Ireland. One of Ireland's oldest cities Limerick dates from 812 and has a medieval history that encapsulates the Vikings and the Normans and the city was besieged by Cromwell in 1651 and the Williamites in the 1690s. In the 18th century Limerick port established itself as one of Ireland's major commercial ports, exporting produce from the Golden Vale to Britain and America.

Today Limerick city and county is home to a bustling array of local businesses as well as major international employers in areas like life sciences, technology and finance, including Northern Trust, Uber, Regeneron and Transact Campus, to name a few.

The region's economic pulse is supplied with fresh talent from the University of Limerick as well as Limerick Institute of Technology, Mary Immaculate College and Limerick School of Art & Design, among others.

Entrepreneurial talent in the city is evident from an array of companies that include Deveire, Inkvine, AMCS, Teckro and YellowSchedule.

Here are 10 enterprises to watch:

[Aoife Ireland](#)

A luxury fashion brand with a social conscience, Aoife has “a vision of empowering women through unique garments made consciously in Ireland and designed to last a lifetime of experiences.” Having qualified from Limierick’s school for Art and Design, founder Aoife McNamara set out on a mission to create a fashion brand that is both ethical and environmentally friendly. Within the space of two years Aoife built her social media presence and now has the likes of models Vogue Williams and Roz Purcell, wearing her clothes. Aoife got Silver in the 2019 Irish Made Awards and was a 2020 Gossies Awards winner. In her most recent collection Aoife includes more casual designs alongside the classic Aoife McNamara power suits and statement pieces.

[Blindboy Podcast](#)

Produced from his home studio in Limerick, The Blindboy Podcast recently celebrated 25m downloads and has guests such as Graham Norton and Hozier on to discuss a wide range of topics. The podcast tackles areas such as the history of certain types of music, Irish history, mental health and random “hot takes” that the presenter describes hit take on certain topics.

### [Cotters Irish Lamb](#)

Brothers Nick and Jack Cotter turned their family farm 100pc organic supplies local homes and businesses directly to reduce their carbon footprint and be more environmentally friendly. Following Covid-19 the brothers changed their packing to be 100pc biodegradable, and totally compostable. They then started supply lambs wool in their boxes that is also compostable but also can be used in gardening, as insulation and as a fertilizer. The Cotter Crate won ‘Best Agri-Engineering Start-up’ and the Alfred Cox Founder’s Perpetual Trophy for the ‘Best Overall Start-up Innovation’ at the 2019 Enterprise Ireland Innovation Awards at the Ploughing Championships.

### [JumpAgrade](#)

Social enterprise JumpAgrade founders David Neville and Pádraic Hogan spotted a gap in the market around the inequality of students receiving grinds. Their vision is that every young person is enabled to fulfil their potential, “regardless of their location, ability or socio-economic background.” Speaking with *ThinkBusiness*, Hogan said: “We realised from teaching thousands of students online in our first four years that delivering personalised feedback to students online quickly is something every teacher in Ireland should be able to do without burning themselves out. This is because 98pc of students who receive personalised instruction perform better than those who don't. So we actually have developed feedback software now that roughly halves the time it takes a teacher to deliver effective feedback to their whole class. And so, the 50+ schools now using this software in Ireland as part of our 'Formative Feedback Programme' are now benefiting greatly. We are working with schools all over Ireland, starting shortly with partners in the UK and by the end of the year the US.”

## [Lean on Me](#)

ThinkBusiness.ie · Episode 16 - Miriam O'Connor - Lean on Me

Lean on Me is an initiative by local people for local businesses. When the Covid-19 crisis hit and lockdown ensued, a group of local volunteers consisting of a lawyer, a newspaper publisher, business people and an economist devised a clever idea to enable consumers to buy vouchers now that could be used in the future. But in the meantime the revenue from the vouchers would help local firms like coffee shops and retailers get immediate cash to pay for bills that keep arriving in the post even though their income has disappeared.

## [SensorPro](#)

After selling his software firm to e-commerce company Clarus, Chris Byrne started SensorPro from the same building in Plassey, near the University of Limerick. Along with CTO and co-founder Richard Coady, they could see US marketing tools lacked the principles of GDPR baked into the platform. So they established SensorPro as an EU-made email marketing and survey platform. The US advertising agency Epsilon Publicis Groupe and ERP firm Epicor white label the solution. Customers include WD40, Mick's Garage and An Post. The company recently published a new Shopify app to help store owners send email to customers on a schedule and identify customers likely to buy. Launched on 4 May, 78 European stores had signed up for the service within the month.

## [Tracworx](#)

Founded by three friends from the University of Limerick, Tracworx has developed a patient tracking system that uses only the existing Wi-Fi networks in a hospital, allowing them to automate their data collection and to generate reports using real-time data. The company was established in 2016 by three college students, CEO Chris Kelly, COO Fionn Barron and CTO Eoin O'Brien. In December 2019 Tracworx was named the [overall winner of the InterTradeIreland Seedcorn investor readiness competition](#) and received a cash prize of €100,000.

## [Treaty City Brewery](#)

Treaty City Brewery is the brainchild of beer enthusiast Stephen Cuneen, who was previously an engineer working for Intel in cities all over the world. It was while he was living in Vancouver that Stephen began to brew his own beer. Having moved home to his native County Limerick he found a location opposite King's John Castle that was the perfect place to bring his dream of mass producing his own beer to the general public. Treaty City Beer now has it's own state of the art brewery where you can go for tour (which will be starting again in July) producing more than five types of beer including Hell's Gate Lager, Harris Beer and Thomand Red and other merchandise such as glasses, t-shirts and sweatshirts. Cuneen adapted during the Covid-19 lockdown to deliver beer locally.

## [The Urban Co-Op](#)

Founded in Ballysimon, Co Limerick, in 2013, Urban Co-Op initially functioned as a buying club the community. It is now a full-service retail grocery store and Community Wellness Hub with more than 2,500 members. Its stated goal is "to create a one-stop community wellness hub – including a [demonstration kitchen](#) and education space. This will enable us to broaden our range of classes available and open up the co-op to even more people." With a grant from Social Entrepreneurs Ireland €10,000 and a place on their accelerator programme, the Co-Op is set to grow in 2021.

## [Wellnice Pops](#)

Wellnice Pops produces 100pc natural, fruit and vegetable-based ice-pops as an alternative to the sugar filled competitors. Founders Trin O'Brien and BJ Broderick both had a background in music and engineering. In 2015, both were wanting a fresh start and after BJ finished her studies in nutrition and health coaching, the two friends decided to start their own business. Having grown through independent retailers and music festivals, the company won a silver award at the Bank of Ireland Start-Up Awards in 2017.

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