

---

## Embracing diversity leads to "happier workplaces"

***ThinkBusiness spoke with Furkan Karayel, founder of Diverse In, about her inspiring start-up and the difference she is making to the start-up community in Ireland.***

### **What is the idea behind DiverseIn?**

Women in tech was my passion from a young age. As a result, I worked as a software engineer for ten years after my graduation from Athlone IT. The idea was to start a women in tech initiative at first. A lack of women and underrepresented groups in tech companies, especially in leadership roles, diverted my decision to a broader vision with diversity and inclusion, including ethnic, culture, LGBT, disabilities, gender and more. I always believed becoming an ally for each other makes all communities stronger – and this is what I wanted to achieve with [Diverse In](#). I wanted to bring people from different backgrounds together to make equal and happier workplaces.

### **What services do you offer both companies and individuals in the area of diversity and inclusion?**

We provide diversity and inclusion news, consultancy services and events. Our articles are in Huffington Post style, written by different experts in their areas. Our events are open to the public and all communities. With our consultancy services, we develop sustainable strategies for companies to build inclusive and happier workplaces with our diverse team of experts. Diversity starter packs, inclusive leadership and diverse talent are examples of some of our services. So far, we have published more than 100 articles, educated 235 people in our workshops and provided access to conferences and other workshops to 300+ people.

### **This isn't your first venture. Tell us about your previous experience.**

As they say, your first venture is most likely to fail. While I was working in my full-time job, I wanted to start a side business to understand what it's like to start a business until I find my genius tech idea. I started an e-commerce business called Giftoven to sell bespoke gifts for corporate clients. I learnt so much from this experience and it helped [Diverse In](#) to be more impactful in its' early days. I am still bombarded with so many business ideas every day. Diverse In is and will always be close to my heart, however, I might start another business at any time.

### **How many events have you had to date?**

So far, we've hosted seven events – six in Dublin and one in New York. We have received amazing feedback from each. The best thing about our events is the atmosphere, as our attendees

state. In each event, we make sure we bring highly energetic speakers. Many people build long-term friendships from our events and this is incredible to witness.

### **You're very involved in the start-up community in Ireland and abroad. How has this helped grow the company?**

Since last year, I have been the diversity and inclusion captain for Startup Week Dublin. We hosted many successful community events on the diversity and inclusion topics as well as bringing diversity into other events too. These are unique opportunities to connect companies and communities under one roof. In terms of my business, learning from other businesses, their activities and mistakes was the key to our growth. This year, we're organising the Startup Week Dublin which runs for October 21-25. Everyone is welcome to join!

### **What marketing have you done?**

I have been on mainstream media in the past, including Ireland AM, Sunday Business Post, The Irish Times and more. In addition to this, we also use the benefits of social media channels a lot. Especially Twitter and LinkedIn. However, for me, networking is the best marketing.

### **What tips would give someone starting a business in the area of diversity and inclusion?**

Before I started [Diverse In](#), I wanted to be part of an organisation that supported all other existing diversity initiatives. I searched for it, but couldn't find one and that was my motivation to start. My only recommendation to anyone thinking of starting a business in diversity and inclusion would be to see if there is an organisation out there who are doing what they want to do. If so, why not to join them?

[Got a business idea? Click here for the financial support you'll need to get it up and running](#)

*Interview by Barry Walsh*

*Published 9 September, 2019*

Image: [Shutterstock](#)