

## **Necessity leads to skincare invention with global potential**

**We talk to women forging innovative businesses in rural Ireland. Today, we talk to Finola Fegan of [Finca Skin Organics](#) who left her own successful engineering company to set up a start-up cosmetic business.**

Finola Fegan has suffered from rosacea – a chronic skin condition for which there is no cure – since her early 20s.

After trying every cream on the market, she discovered the cosmetics contained chemicals and additives that caused irritation instead of helping her condition.

Finola was running her own engineering company with another female engineer – a school friend from her home town of Mayobridge, outside Newry.

But after 20 years in the business, she had achieved all she wanted and decided to establish a cosmetics company to help other people with rosacea.

### **On the right track**

While lecturing in Dundalk Institute of Technology, she heard about the Enterprise Ireland New Frontiers programme. On this programme, she realised her business could be global.

Finola was already making sales but set up Finca Skin Organics as a limited company at the end of 2018, making a range of five products from a small manufacturing unit in Carlingford, Co. Louth.

Finola availed of many supports. Louth LEO helped her with a priming grant and she attended DCU's Ryan Academy, before receiving Competitive Start Funding from EI.

When she began ACORNS, she had a goal of achieving third party investment by the time it ended. At the start of 2021, she took on private investment, which is being matched by EI to make the company an Enterprise Ireland High Potential Start Up (HPSU).

ACORNS is a Government-supported programme designed to support [early-stage female entrepreneurs living in rural Ireland](#) through a peer learning approach.

Women in rural Ireland with new businesses or at least with well-developed ideas are being invited to join [ACORNS 7](#). The ACORNS programme is designed to support early-stage female entrepreneurs living in rural Ireland through a peer learning approach. Thanks to the support of the

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the voluntary contribution of time by Lead Entrepreneurs, there is no charge for those selected to participate.

She felt ACORNS kept her on track to achieve this goal and she found her Lead Entrepreneur very insightful and able to adapt advice for each different business.

“ACORNS is an excellent female entrepreneurial programme where we can be honest and open about our business highlights and low points,” Fegan said.

“It is focused on growth and encouragement and I would recommend it to anyone at an early stage in their business. The mentoring from the Lead Entrepreneur was excellent.”

Finola is focusing on scaling her business with her team of investors.

She is currently in the middle of a rebranding process which includes a revamp of her Irish and UK websites and plans to scale up her marketing department.

She is also developing a new product and aims to target the US market.

Anyone interested in receiving an application form ahead of the September 10, 2021 deadline for ACORNS 7 should [register their interest here](#)

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