



NiteLine

30

YEARS OF LISTENING

ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023



Our Proudly Affiliated Colleges



Maynooth University
National University of Ireland Maynooth



Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University



OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
TU DUBLIN
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN



RCSI
ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND

The University of Dublin



Institute of Art, Design + Technology Dún Laoghaire



University College Dublin
Ireland's Global University



Students NiteLine Listening Service CLG.
24 Belton Park Avenue
Donnycarney
Dublin 9
D09F5C3

Company registration No: 439123

Charitable Tax Exemption No:
CHY22895

Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA)
No: 20206226



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Legal and Administrative Details

Board of Trustees

- Alex McQueen
- Kirsty Ettershank
- Catherine O'Connor
- Bláthín Peirce
- Seán Shannon
- Shanna Collins (resigned May 2023)
- David Garvan (resigend May 2023)

Company Registered Number	439123
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Charity Registration Number	20206226
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Registered Office

House 6,
Regent House,
Trinity College Dublin,
D02 FD37,
Ireland

Company Secretary	Bláthín Peirce
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Coordinator	Alex Burke
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Principal Bankers

Bank of Ireland,
2 College Green,
Dublin 2,
D02 VR66

Independent Auditor	Not Appointed
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Solicitors	Not Appointed
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Coordinator's Note



I am delighted to welcome you to NiteLine's Annual Report 2022/2023. This year marked an important milestone in NiteLine's history, as we celebrated our 30th anniversary since our foundation in 1993. It is safe to say that our 30th year has been our biggest yet. From hosting our first large-scale fundraising event, the Incognito Ball, to welcoming three additional colleges to the NiteLine family, we have gone from strength to strength this year, and most importantly, we now offer our services and supports to more students than ever before.

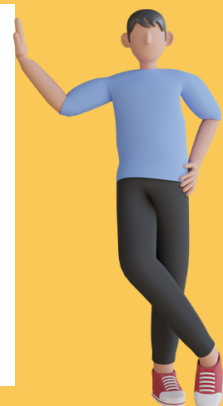
I hope you enjoy reading this Annual Report and learning more about the story of NiteLine this year, and for the last 30 years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our affiliated colleges, their Students' Unions and counselling services for their ongoing support, as well as all those who donated to us this year. I would also like to thank our dedicated volunteers who ensure our phone lines are open 7 nights a week to support their fellow students.

*Alex
Burke*

COORDINATOR



VIDEO WELCOME





Chairperson's Note

It was a great honour to succeed Shanna Collins as Chair of NiteLine's Board this year. I would like to pay tribute to her massive contribution and dedication to the vision and values of NiteLine during her time as member of the Board and Chair. Her contribution has laid a strong foundation for the continued success of NiteLine.

As a former volunteer, I understand first-hand the value a student-led listening service offers and the immensely positive impact it has in our universities and colleges. We all know the importance of mental health and the positive impact of having someone who will simply listen and make you feel heard.

That is why I am excited and honoured to help continue to advance our strategic objectives, in particular the continued expansion of what I believe to be an invaluable service to more students in universities and colleges across the island of Ireland.

I want to express my thanks and appreciation to the rest of the Board for their continued commitment and contribution to NiteLine throughout the year. I am proud to be part of a Board who collectively share the same vision and deeply understand the benefits to the student community that NiteLine offers.

They say no man is an island and a charity like NiteLine is no different. It doesn't exist in isolation but with the support of the wider community and stakeholders – I want to thank the universities and colleges, students' unions, counselling services and others who contribute directly or indirectly. Their continued support of this student-led listening service is the reason NiteLine has been around for 30 years.

However, my deepest gratitude is to our volunteers, led ably by Alex and the rest of the committee, who are students themselves working hard throughout the year, but find the time to make sure no call goes unanswered. Students who find the time to ensure that there is a comforting voice or friendly reply to anyone who reaches out in what are sometimes dark and lonely nights. These students are the lifeblood of NiteLine and while everyone has an important role to play in ensuring its continued success, our volunteers' contribution is without doubt the biggest and I thank you.

Alex McQueen
Chairperson

Who We Are

NiteLine is an out-of-hours peer support service for third level students. We offer a listening and information service run by and for third-level students, from 9 pm to 2:30 am seven nights a week during term-time. We provide a service that is anonymous, confidential, non-judgemental and non-directive.



The Story So Far



NiteLine is delighted to celebrate its thirtieth year of service in 2023. NiteLine was established in 1993 by the Students' Unions of Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin. Inspired by similar student-run services in the UK, they aimed to set up a late-night listening service to provide free and anonymous peer support to students over the phone.

We have expanded to ten colleges in Dublin, Kildare and Louth. NiteLine now offers services to more than 130,000 students. Since the introduction of our instant messaging service in 2012, our annual contact volume has increased exponentially from just over 600 contacts in the academic year 2012/2013 to over 1,200 contacts in the year 2022/23. Sixty percent [60%] of our contacts now come in via instant messaging, with the remaining forty percent [40%] coming through our phone service.



Our History

Exploring NiteLine's history from the perspective of past volunteers offers a unique window into the organisation's evolution. Through the experiences and insights of volunteers like Sarah Benson, former call-taking volunteer from 1996 to 2001, and current CEO of renowned charity Women's Aid, we can trace NiteLine's journey from its early days to its current role as a vital source of support and assistance. Volunteers like Sarah, with their first-hand experiences, provide a down-to-earth and authentic view of how NiteLine has grown and adapted over time.



Sarah Benson, CEO of Women's Aid

"I was privileged to be a part of the NiteLine Team between 1996 and 2001. For two of those years, I was also responsible for recruitment and training alongside a colleague. It was a formative experience, and definitely influenced my success in getting a subsequent role as Manager of the National Domestic Violence Helpline.

During my time, NiteLine served the students of UCD and TCD, later expanding to cover students at additional universities. Anyone involved in this service was sworn to secrecy about it. It was important not to inhibit any student from feeling they could reach out and speak to someone anonymously, and in confidence.

It was decided that they shouldn't know who among their peers might be on the other end of that line. This also protected our boundaries as volunteers from a relatively small population. It was years after I finished before I publicly divulged my involvement with NiteLine.

A consequence of secrecy was a very close-knit, mutually supportive group based on our shared work and experience. Every week we listened to the loneliness, pain, confusion, anxiety, hurt and fears that some of our fellow students were suffering from. They reached out late in the night for comfort, reassurance, information and support.

It gave me such privileged insights into my peers' experiences and a lifelong appreciation for not taking things at face value where people's well-being is concerned.

Our History

It's so interesting to reflect on the 'then' and the 'now' of NiteLine and how our operating environment has changed. In the early 1990s we were subject to a relatively minor but nonetheless notable challenge in our service delivery, which really speaks to the times we were living in – and how far Irish society has now come. In 1992, with the Fourteenth Amendment to the Irish Constitution, the legal restrictions on sharing information about abortion services available in other jurisdictions (of course there were none in Ireland at the time) were lifted. The 'conditions for provision of this information' were then legislated for in the Regulation of Information (Services outside the State for Termination of Pregnancies) Act, 1995. However, prior to December 1992, it had been a crime in Ireland for any service to give women the phone number of an abortion clinic in Liverpool or elsewhere. Due to a legal challenge in 1991 against Trinity Students Union, who had published information in a student information resource, NiteLine remained, by association, prohibited from giving abortion information to callers even after the 1995 legislation passed. It was only in 1997 after the matter was finally resolved in the Supreme Court that we stopped getting mischievous calls trying to 'trap' us into giving information about abortion, which would doubtless have resulted in another law-suit.

It's just fantastic to see how this important student support service has developed and thrived since my time. Keep up the great work!"

- Sarah Benson, CEO of Women's Aid



NiteLine's Values



Compassion

We are motivated by compassion. Our service is founded on empathy and respect for our callers and fellow volunteers.



Student Empowerment

We empower our callers to speak openly and make their own decisions through our pillars of anonymity, confidentiality, non-judgmental listening, and non-directive support. We empower our student volunteers to support their peers and grow as leaders of our service.



Excellence

We are committed to providing a professional and quality service to our callers and stakeholders alongside high-quality training and support for our volunteers.



Peer Support

As students themselves, our volunteers are in the unique position of being able to empathise with our callers. We recognise that peer support begins from inside our service and pride ourselves on the support structures available to our volunteers.



Inclusivity

We believe our service must be freely accessible to any of our students that need us. We strive to have a welcoming volunteer base that is representative of the wider student body.



Our Mission

NiteLine's mission is to support student mental health through a confidential, late-night listening and information service.



Our Vision

NiteLine's vision is for all third level students to have access to an empathetic peer listener.



Our Objective

NiteLine's main objective is the provision of a free peer support service for third-level students in Ireland. This is achieved by providing a late-night helpline, an instant messaging service, workshops and other peer support services for the benefit of all students of our affiliate colleges.



NiteLine 2022/23 at a Glance



**1,200 CONTACTS
ANSWERED**



**516 VOLUNTEER
HOURS SPENT ON
CONTACTS**



**10 PARTNER
COLLEGES**



**46 NEW
VOLUNTEERS**



**6,150 FOLLOWERS
ACROSS ALL CHANNELS**

Governance and Risk



In November 2020, a new Board of Trustees was appointed to NiteLine, and they immediately demonstrated their commitment to upholding the highest standards of governance by ensuring compliance with the Charities Governance Code. Recognising the importance of securing NiteLine's financial future, the trustees devoted their time and energy to strengthening the organisation's governance structures, particularly in the area of financial controls.

Their efforts were duly recognised when, in November 2020, NiteLine was honoured with Carmichael's Best Governance Improvement Initiative in Category 1. This prestigious award acknowledged the remarkable progress made in enhancing governance practices within the organisation.

Building upon this success and the commitment to continuous improvement, NiteLine's dedication to good governance was further acknowledged in 2022. The organisation was awarded the Carmichael Good Governance Award for our Annual Report, exemplifying transparent reporting and adherence to best practices guidelines.

NiteLine takes great pride in these accolades and remains resolute in maintaining and developing its governance standards to ensure that best practices are consistently implemented and upheld. Through the concerted efforts of the volunteers, the committee, the board and all stakeholders, NiteLine continues to make strides towards achieving its mission and serving its community with the utmost integrity and effectiveness.



EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES



NiteLine's Helpline



At the heart of our charity's mission is the support we offer to students through NiteLine's helpline. This vital service stands as a beacon of our values, providing a safe and empathetic space for students to be heard and understood.

Through our helpline, students can find solace in knowing that they can openly express their thoughts without judgment or direction. Our dedicated team of anonymous volunteers is there to lend a compassionate ear, offering unwavering support throughout their journey.

We recognise the importance of accessibility and have designed our helpline with convenience in mind. Students can choose between the freephone option or utilise the instant messaging feature on our website, niteline.ie, ensuring that they can reach out in a way that feels most comfortable to them.

Our commitment to student well-being knows no bounds, as our helpline operates tirelessly seven nights a week during the academic year, from September to May, with only a short break at the end of December and early January.

In the academic year of 2022/23, NiteLine received a total of 1200 contacts, which marks a decrease compared to the number of calls received in the previous two years. Several factors could contribute to this decline in helpline usage. One possible reason could be the changed third-level landscape post-COVID-19. Compared to the last three years, students are now spending less time at home, re-engaging with their education and their peers in in-person settings, causing a shift in the academic stressors and mental health challenges that were persistent during the pandemic. Additionally, shifts in communication trends and technological advancements might have led some students to seek assistance through alternative channels or online platforms rather than traditional helpline services. Moreover, it is essential to consider that fluctuations in contact numbers can occur naturally in any helpline service, influenced by seasonal variations or external events. It is also worth noting that the call volume for 2022/23 is still more than double the call volume just a decade earlier.

Despite the decrease in contacts, NiteLine remains determined in its commitment to providing unwavering support to students, continuously adapting its services to meet the evolving needs of the community it serves. Through ongoing efforts to raise awareness and promote the accessibility of the helpline, NiteLine aims to bridge the gap and ensure that all students who require a listening ear find the comfort and understanding they deserve.

The Significance of NiteLine

Over the past ten years, there has been a significant increase in the occurrence, complexity and severity of mental health related issues among students attending higher education institutions globally. This concerning escalation is a reflection of the prominent mental health challenges that university students face during their academic experience [1]. The escalation in mental health issues among students in higher education institutions can be attributed to a multitude of factors. The demanding academic pressure, competitive atmosphere, and intense expectations imposed on students have resulted in increased levels of stress and anxiety. Moreover, financial limitations, feelings of isolation, and the relentless pursuit of success further compound the complexities of mental health challenges within this group [2]. The prevalence of technology and social media has given rise to new obstacles, impacting the mental well-being of students by fostering heightened comparison, cyberbullying, and a relentless sense of connectivity, which can quickly become overwhelming [3].

In a study conducted by Mahon et al. (2021), using data collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a significant number of Irish students that encountered mental health problems. It was approximated that one in five students experience severe or very severe depression and anxiety, with one in ten students reporting a past suicide attempt [1]. Although this data was collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, there is a wealth of data which reveals that the state of student mental health in Ireland and globally has deteriorated further [4].

NiteLine plays a crucial role in supporting university students during the mental health crisis by providing a vital helpline service that offers a safe and empathetic space for students to discuss their concerns and emotions. The helpline's non-directive and non-judgmental listening support ensures that students can express their feelings confidentially, anonymously, and free from stigma. With both freephone and instant messaging options, NiteLine offers immediate assistance, reducing waiting times to access mental health services and ensuring accessibility to mental health services outside of normal working hours. Trained volunteers provide empathy and guidance, complementing existing university support services to alleviate the burden on campus resources.

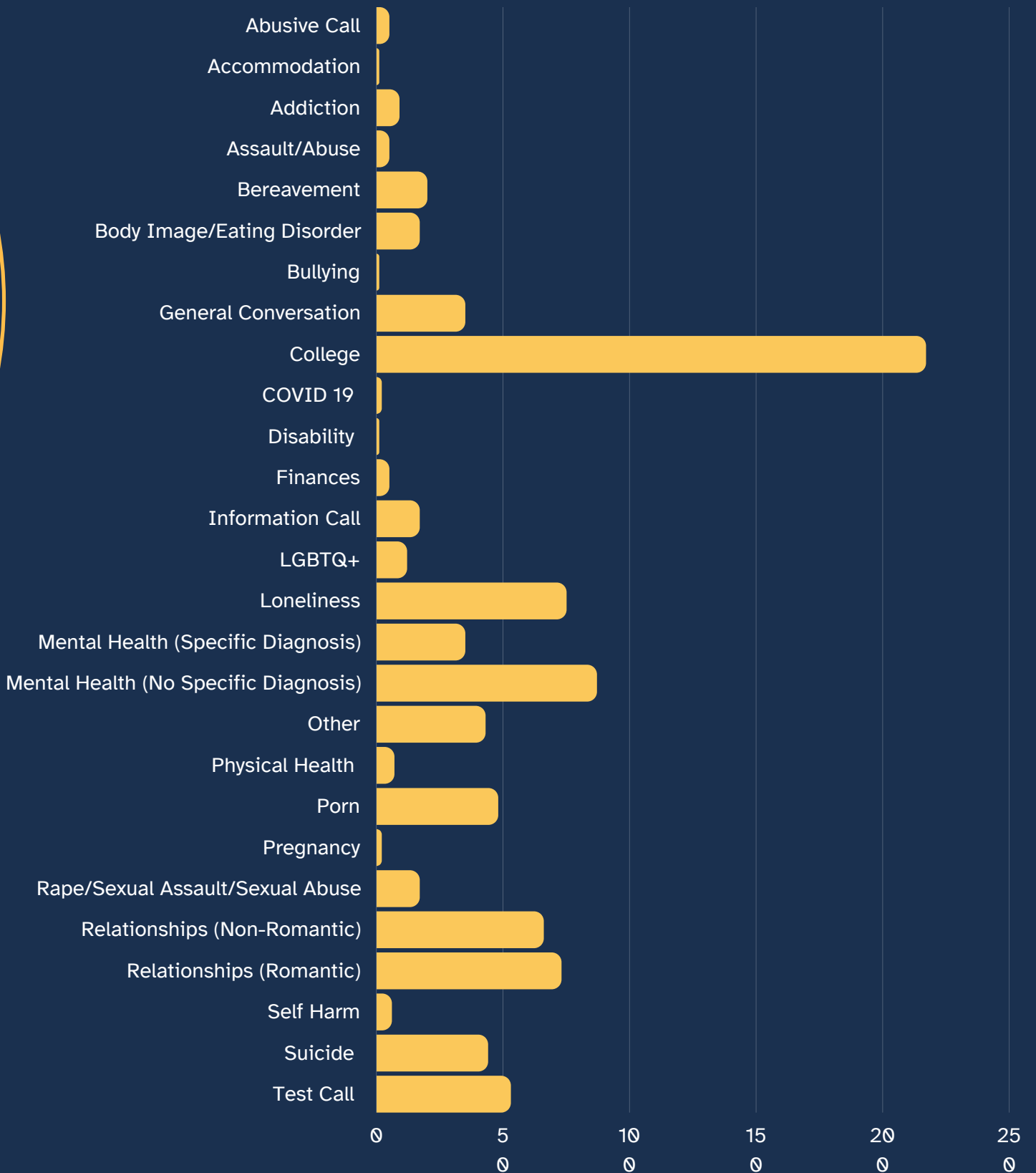


Operating seven nights a week throughout the academic year, NiteLine offers continuous support. By promoting mental health awareness and destigmatising issues, NiteLine fosters a culture of understanding and encourages students to seek help proactively.

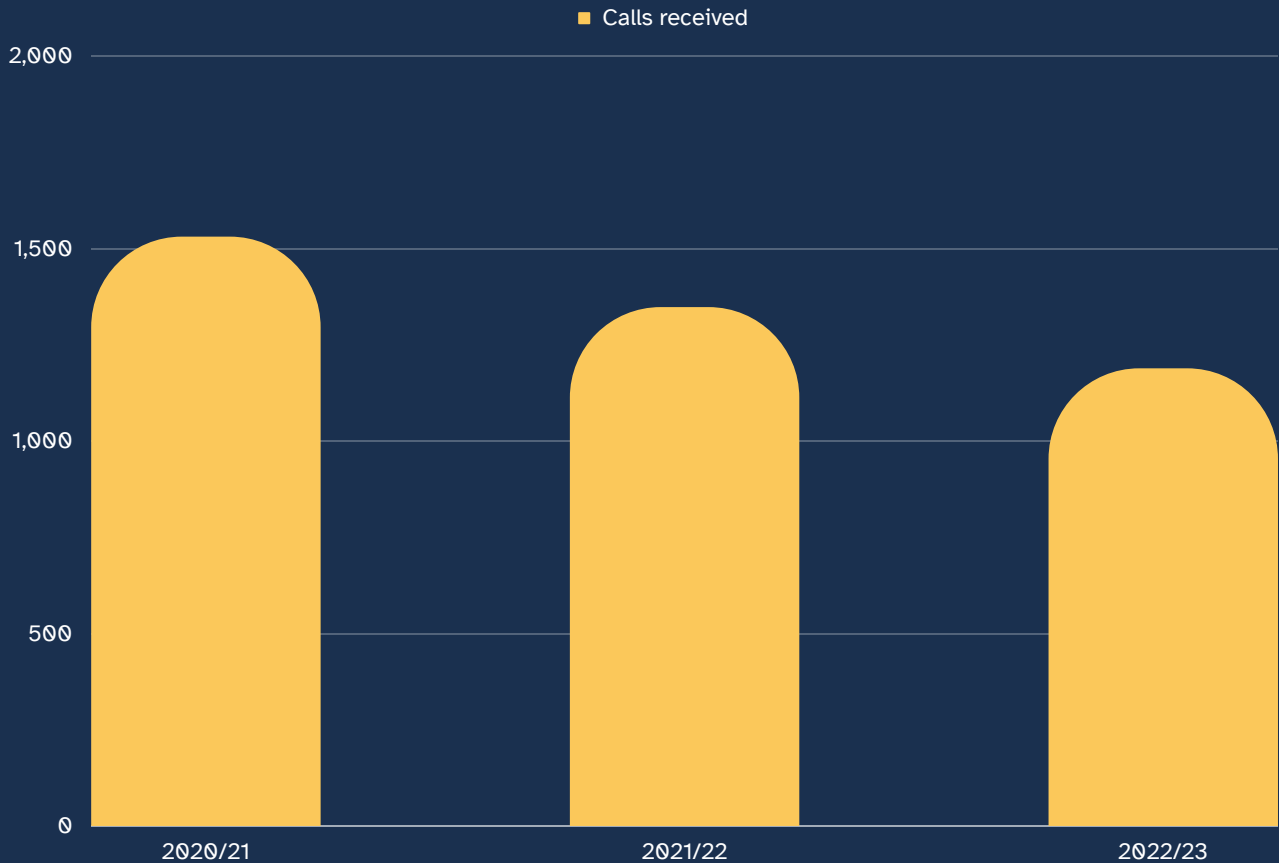
[1] Mahon, C., Fitzgerald, A., O'Reilly, A., & Dooley, B. (2022). Profiling third-level student mental health: Findings from My World Survey 2. *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 1-9. doi:10.1017/ipm.2021.85
[2] Regehr, C., Gianoy, D., Pitts, A. Interventions to reduce stress in university students: a review and meta-analysis. *J Affect Disord.* 2013 May 15;148(1):1-11. doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2012.11.026
[3] Nazari, A., Hosseini, M., Torkian, S. et al. Social media and mental health in students: a cross-sectional study during the COVID-19 pandemic. *BMC Psychiatry* 23, 458 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-023-04859-w>
[4] Gavin, B., Lyne, J., McNicholas, F. Mental health and the COVID-19 pandemic. *Ir J Psychol Med.* 2020 Sep;37(3):156-158. doi: 10.1017/ipm.2020.72.

Call Topics

Throughout the year, NiteLine remains a pillar of support for university students, offering a vital helpline service that provides a safe and empathetic space for them to share their concerns and emotions. As we reflect on the past year, certain call topics have emerged as prominent themes, illuminating the pressing issues that students face during their academic journey. This year the most common call topics were college, mental health, loneliness and romantic relationships.



Call Volume



Throughout 2022/23, NiteLine has made significant efforts to optimise our outreach and engagement strategies as colleges returned to in-person activities following the COVID-19 pandemic. However, despite these efforts, we have observed a drop in our contacts, and we believe several factors may contribute to this decline. The introduction of additional mental health helplines and online resources, which are of fantastic benefit to students, may have presented a challenge to our contact acquisition efforts, as it gives students more choices to consider. However, we believe NiteLine maintains a unique position among other mental health supports, as we are student-run and peer-focused, in addition to having both phone and instant messaging services.



To address these challenges and restore growth in the coming years, we recognise the need to re-evaluate our marketing strategies, align our offerings with evolving demands, and improve student retention efforts. It's also crucial to stay up-to-date with technological advancements to enhance our outreach. Furthermore, we must ensure that students are aware that NiteLine is available for every problem, no matter how big or small, rather than solely being perceived as a mental health crisis helpline. By emphasising the diverse range of issues we can address and the support we provide, we aim to strengthen our connection with the student community and reinforce the value that NiteLine has as a helpline.

Social Media

As NiteLine primarily targets a younger demographic, specifically university students, our engagement on social media has become an essential aspect of our annual outreach strategy. Social media platforms have emerged as a powerful means to reach, connect, and support students, and we have harnessed this potential to create a meaningful impact.

Through our presence on various social media channels, we have ensured that seeking help and support for mental health is as accessible as sending a message or dialling our phone number. The convenience and anonymity that social media afford have made it easier for students to engage with our helpline, breaking down barriers that might have otherwise hindered them from seeking assistance.



In the quest to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, we have utilised social media to initiate and promote candid discussions on emotional well-being. By sharing engaging and informative content, we aim to normalise the act of seeking help, encouraging young individuals to prioritise their mental health and well-being.

As we reflect on the past year's efforts, we are proud to witness the tangible impact of our social media presence.

NiteLine's social media have proven to be an indispensable tool in our mission to support the mental well-being of young individuals. As we continue to grow and adapt, we remain committed to harnessing the potential of social media to foster connection, reduce stigma, and empower young minds to prioritise their mental health. Together, we build a community of care and compassion, ensuring that no student feels left behind on their journey toward emotional well-being.



Social Media at a Glance



2,264 INSTAGRAM
FOLLOWERS



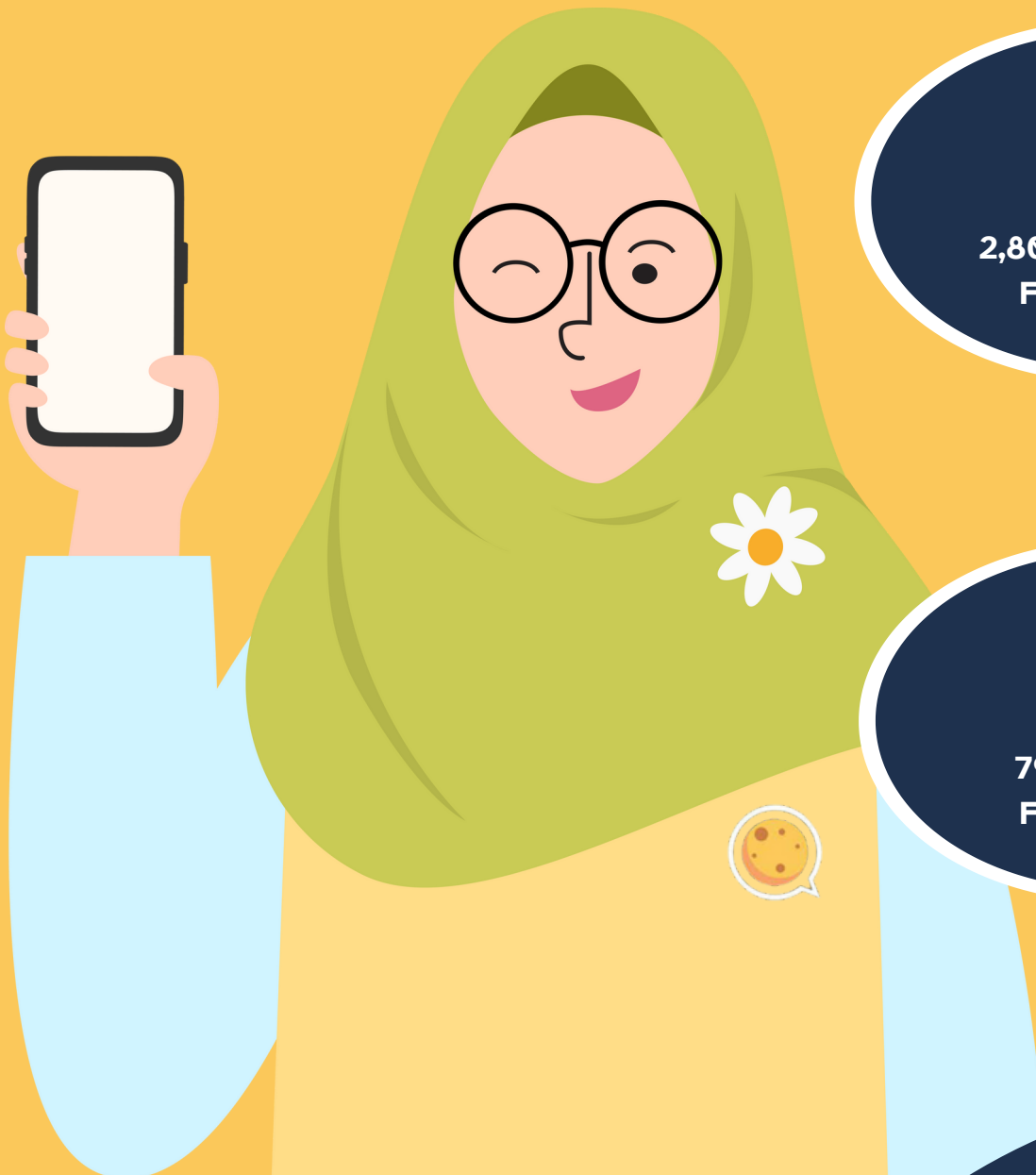
294 LINKEDIN
FOLLOWERS



2,800 FACEBOOK
FOLLOWERS



790 TIK TOK
FOLLOWERS



Publicity Events



NiteLine Information Stands

NiteLine's presence at all of our affiliated colleges through information stands is crucial. It provides a vital link to students seeking mental health support. These stands offer a discreet, accessible, and non-judgmental avenue for students to learn about NiteLine's services. In an educational environment where stress and mental health challenges are prevalent, these stands promote awareness, erasing stigma, and foster a culture of open communication.

NiteLine Workshops

NiteLine's workshops, such as "How to Support a Friend" and "Wellbeing in the Workplace," are vital. They equip students and staff with essential skills and knowledge to foster mental health awareness, resilience, and support networks, creating healthier, more supportive campus environments.



NiteLine Events

NiteLine's events like coffee mornings, painting, and yoga classes promote student well-being, reducing stress and fostering community connections. These activities provide vital outlets for relaxation and self-care, nurturing mental health while enhancing the campus experience, demonstrating NiteLine's commitment to holistic student support.

Publicity Events



NiteLine Pub Quizzes

TU Dublin students Alix Weld, Maria Eufemia, and Niamh O'Connell's fundraising effort of over €2000 in December 2022 for NiteLine was immensely valuable. Their contribution enables NiteLine to expand its support to more students in 2023, emphasizing the vital role of student-led initiatives in sustaining mental health services. Their generosity reinforces the commitment to ensuring students have access to crucial resources during challenging times.

NiteLine Podcast Appearance

During NiteLine Awareness Month in February, representatives joined the "A Slice of Life" podcast hosted by Catriona and Lena. They delved into NiteLine's workings, making it easier for people to understand and use NiteLine. Tips from the "How to Support a Friend" workshop were shared, along with insights on what makes a good active listener. This conversation aimed to demystify the NiteLine call process and provide valuable guidance for navigating challenging conversations.

A chat with NiteLine
and A Slice of Life
podcast!



NiteLine
CRA: #20206226



Collaboration with Clubs & Societies

NiteLine continuously participates in various mental health-related events and initiatives in our affiliated colleges. We believe in the power of dialogue and support when it comes to addressing mental health challenges. If societies or clubs share our passion for this cause and are interested in collaborating, we wholeheartedly encourage them to reach out.



NiteLine at Pride 2023

Inclusion has always been a guiding principle at NiteLine, and as we continue to champion the values of acceptance, diversity, and equal opportunity, we believe that actively participating in events that promote these ideals is vital.

One such event that resonated deeply with NiteLine's core mission was our attendance at the Dublin Pride Parade in June 2023, a day of celebration of the LGBTQ+ community.

NiteLine took pride in participating in the parade, expressing our unwavering support for the LGBTQ+ community, and demonstrating our commitment to creating a society where everyone feels valued and accepted for who they are.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our volunteers and supporters who made this inspiring day possible, and we look forward to many more events that celebrate the beauty of diversity.





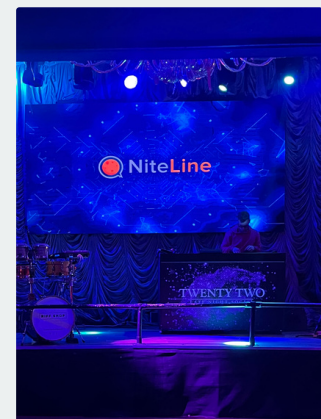
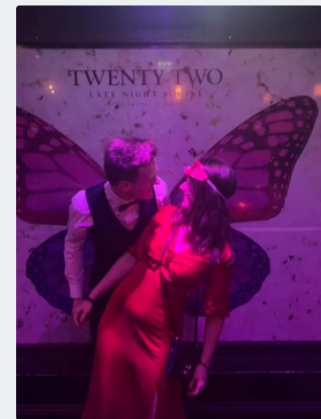
The Incognito Ball

NiteLine's masquerade ball, the Incognito Ball, was NiteLine's first large scale fundraising event that embodied one of our core values: anonymity.

The event featured DJ performances from our affiliated colleges' DJ societies and a performance from well-known DJ group Riff Shop, ensuring a memorable experience for all.

As our first large-scale fundraising initiative, the ball not only raised vital funds but also strengthened our commitment to providing a confidential helpline through raising awareness for our charity.

Encouraged by its success, we eagerly anticipate organising more events like this to further our mission of supporting mental health while allowing students to have fun.



Grants & Bursaries

Jack Shannon Bursary

In July 2022, NiteLine was honoured to have been chosen as the inaugural recipient of the Jack Shannon Bursary. This bursary was established by the Shannon Family, TCDSU and the Senior Tutor's Office at TCD and is named in memory of Trinity student, Jack Shannon, who tragically and sadly died by suicide in 2020. The bursary endeavours to honour the lives and memory of TCD students who have lost their lives to suicide, and to encourage everyone in the TCD community to have more open conversations about our mental health.



VHI Health and Wellbeing Fund

In June 2023, NiteLine was chosen as one of the recipients of the VHI Health and Wellbeing Fund, in partnership with the Irish Youth Foundation. This fund supports projects that strengthen resilience in young people and helps them manage anxiety. NiteLine will use this funding to expand our services to Limerick over the coming academic year. We aim to recruit call-taking volunteers in Limerick, so the student population in Ireland's third-biggest city can gain access to an empathetic peer listener. We will also hold workshops and other events on university campuses in Limerick to help students have an open conversation about their mental health and equip them with the skills to better manage their own mental health, while also looking out for their peers.



Expansion

NiteLine's core objective is to provide free, empathetic peer support to all third-level students in Ireland. We made great strides towards that objective in 2022/23 by affiliating with three additional third-level institutions in early 2023. This brought the total number of universities and colleges affiliated with NiteLine to ten, and saw the number of students who can avail of our services increase from 100,000 to over 130,000 - an unprecedented 30% increase.



Dublin City University, Dundalk Institute of Technology and Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology are now proud members of the NiteLine family. Their students can now avail of all of NiteLine's services, from our late-night phone line and instant messaging service to our range of workshops and publicity events. Students from these colleges can now also volunteer with NiteLine, further diversifying and strengthening our organisation and allowing us to continue to grow and to offer our services to even more students in the future.

This monumental expansion would not have been possible without the hard work and cooperation of the Students' Unions, counselling services and other student services within DCU, DkIT and IADT, and we are incredibly grateful for their support.

NiteLine is looking forward to expanding further in the years to come, in particular to expanding to other cities around Ireland to ensure that one day, all third-level students will have access to an empathetic listener, regardless of their college of study or geographical location.



Staff Ambassadors

NiteLine believes that the staff at our affiliated colleges play a major role in the publicity of our charity. The staff ambassador program is a collaboration effort between NiteLine and academic staff, where lecturers, counsellors, tutors and others help to spread the word about NiteLine among their students.

These staff ambassadors engage in many activities, including using an information slide at the end of lectures and emails.

They also include NiteLine posters in their handbooks, websites and other modes of distribution. They may also help by distributing our introductory video, application forms and student surveys.



Prof. Richard Roche

Maynooth University

"I'm proud and honoured to be a NiteLine Staff Ambassador; now more than ever, it's vital that students know they have somewhere they can turn to for advice, and the peer-to-peer support NiteLine provides has made, and will continue to make, a massive difference to students in distress."



Prof. Maria Morgan

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

"I'm very happy to support NiteLine. I provide the NiteLine details at the end of all my Medicine Year 1 lectures. I believe the simplicity of making a first contact via a text message, a familiar and non-intimidating approach, means there's a greater chance of a student who needs support reaching out. The immediacy, privacy, and out-of-hours availability of the peer-to-peer text support service makes it unique and effective."

Anonymous Volunteer Testimonials

Here is what some of our current volunteers have to say about their experience going from students to NiteLine Volunteers



I don't study psychology or medicine, so I wasn't sure that I would be a good fit, but since joining NiteLine I've realised that we are such a diverse group of people from all different backgrounds!

The training is amazing, so no matter what background you have; whether it is STEM, arts or otherwise, you'll be well prepared for anything. Taking calls and helping your fellow students is such a rewarding experience.



What I enjoyed most about training and about NiteLine itself was all the new people I've had the privilege of meeting. I never expected to make the friends I've made through NiteLine and all the volunteers are honestly some of the most wonderful people.

Training was a great experience and I felt very ready to take calls by the end of my training. My trainers were warm and welcoming and helped me with any questions I had. Volunteering with NiteLine is one of the best experiences I have had and I would recommend it to anyone.



INTERNAL ACTIVITIES



Training

Highlights

- Restored pre-COVID-19 training structure for volunteers.
- Successfully implemented an Eating Disorder Module in collaboration with Bodywhys, enhancing our support for students facing these challenges.
- Conducted in-depth research on Quality Assurance (QA) practices in other helplines, leading to the creation of a comprehensive QA policy for call-taking volunteers.
- Enhanced training materials by incorporating flowcharts into slides, addressing topics concerning serious crime and suicide to equip volunteers with necessary skills and knowledge.
- Launched the 2023/24 Expression of Interest Form, attracting potential volunteers interested in joining our dedicated team.
- Successfully trained and onboarded 46 new volunteers, bolstering our capacity to provide essential support to those in need.

Recruitment

Over the past year, our recruitment efforts were highly successful, with applications open until late July 2022, resulting in an impressive 123 applications received. Following a rigorous selection process, we scheduled 75 interviews to identify the most passionate and dedicated candidates. Training sessions were organised to accommodate the growing interest, including two groups in August 2022, one group from September to November 2022, and one group in January/February 2023. By February 2023, we welcomed a total of 46 new volunteers who were equipped to provide essential support to those reaching out to NiteLine. Our commitment to expanding our volunteer base underscores our dedication to serving the community.



Targeted Recruitment

In the past year, we have taken significant steps to enhance our volunteer recruitment process, aiming to create a more diverse and inclusive team. To achieve this, we initiated a targeted recruitment campaign by sending campaign emails to groups that were underrepresented in our volunteer base, namely male students, international students, and mature students. Through these efforts, we sought to attract individuals from diverse backgrounds, enriching the perspectives and experiences within our organisation.

Training

Implementation of Eating Disorder Module

In the past year, we made significant strides in enhancing our training program by implementing an eating disorder module in collaboration with Bodywhys. This crucial addition to our training lessons aimed to equip our volunteers with specialised knowledge and skills to better support individuals facing eating disorders and body image issues. Through comprehensive consultations with Bodywhys, a renowned organisation specialising in eating disorder support, we ensured that our volunteers received the most up-to-date and evidence-based information. The implementation of this module reflects our commitment to staying at the forefront of mental health support and providing the highest standard of care to those reaching out to NiteLine.

New Training Tools

During the past year, we bolstered our training program by implementing flowcharts into our training slides and creating handouts outlining essential procedures to follow in cases related to serious crime and suicide. These flowcharts and handouts were thoughtfully integrated into the relevant training lessons, ensuring that our volunteers are equipped with clear and standardised protocols for handling sensitive situations. By providing concise and easily accessible guidance, we further fortified our volunteers' ability to respond effectively and compassionately when supporting callers dealing with serious crime or suicide-related concerns.



Review of Buddy Materials

"Buddies" are our volunteer peer trainers who carry out mock calls with trainees to prepare them for volunteering. In the past year, we conducted a review of our Buddy Materials, which encompassed the handbook, poster, calls, and feedback forms. The purpose of the review was to ensure that these resources remain relevant and effective in supporting our incoming volunteers during their training journey. Buddies play a crucial role in providing one-to-one practice and feedback sessions for new volunteers. By updating and enhancing the Buddy Materials, we sought to optimize the support and guidance provided to our incoming volunteers, allowing them to develop their skills and confidence in a nurturing and constructive environment. This peer-driven approach to training fosters a sense of solidarity among our volunteers, creating a positive and enriching learning experience.

Retraining

Retraining for continuing volunteers is key for NiteLine in maintaining the high standard of support we can provide to students, by ensuring that volunteers have ample opportunity to refresh their knowledge of topics and skills covered in base training, to learn about new topics and policy changes that may have been introduced since they completed their base training, and to share their experiences with fellow volunteers so they can all learn from each other.

There are three main retraining programs throughout the academic year.

Firstly, all continuing volunteers attended one of several three-hour retraining sessions in late August or early September 2022, which gave volunteers the chance to refresh their call-taking skills after the summer break. Topics covered were chosen based off feedback from volunteers and call trends from the previous academic year. Any updates made to base training were presented to continuing volunteers at this session. As per NiteLine policy, volunteers can not take calls until completing retraining after the summer.

Secondly, retraining was provided to all volunteers at Training Weekend in March 2023. Training Weekend is our annual weekend retreat for volunteers, and it is a chance for volunteers to retrain, to bond with their fellow volunteers, and to celebrate the hard work they have been doing all year long. Retraining at Training Weekend takes the form of a six-hour retraining session in small groups of approximately five volunteers, as well as "real-life role-plays", where volunteers can practice their call-taking skills with each other. The topics covered at retraining were chosen based off feedback from our Volunteer Survey, and included topics such as eating disorders and suicide.



Finally, retraining is provided on a continuous basis at NiteLine's fortnightly support meetings. At these meetings, volunteers are encouraged to discuss calls they have taken using the IDEA format - Issue, Dealt with, Emotions, Acquired Knowledge - therefore encouraging them to share what they learned from each call with their fellow volunteers. This year, support discussions were structured following a specific theme, such as chatty calls or cyclical calls, and volunteers were asked to discuss their ideas, tips, experiences or concerns to promote peer-to-peer learning.

Research into Volunteer Welfare

During the academic year 2022/23, NiteLine volunteer and TCD public face, Erika Carroll, carried out research into the well being of NiteLine volunteers as part of her Bachelor's thesis. The results of this research highlight the strengths of NiteLine's volunteer support structures, as well as some of the areas for improvement. The findings are also valuable for other helplines and volunteer organisations in further strengthening their supports.

While a considerable amount of research has been conducted on the service-users of listening services such as NiteLine, little is known about the experience of the volunteers themselves. Pre-existing literature of helpline volunteers is resoundingly bleak, linking this form of emotionally intense volunteering to negative psychological symptoms including burnout, depression, anxiety, compassion fatigue, emotional blunting and suicidal ideation (Kitchingman et al., 2017). Furthermore, research by Kitchingman et al. (2018) within another helpline, Lifeline Australia, identified female sex, young age and a lack of crisis listening-helpline experience to be the demographic factors most likely to predict the development of negative psychological outcomes within helpline volunteers; three characteristics that fit the description of the majority of NiteLine volunteers.

Reduced volunteer wellbeing is important to identify and understand, as it can lead to further problems such as absenteeism, emotional blunting and increased volunteer turnover; all of which can ultimately lead to a reduced quality of service (Johnson et al., 2018). Similarly, the resoundingly negative literature on helpline volunteers may result in retention and recruitment challenges for charities such as NiteLine (Nencini, Romaioli & Meneghini, 2016).



Consequently, 41 NiteLine volunteers (7 males and 34 females) were recruited through purposeful sampling in order to gain an insight into their experience as student helpline volunteers. Participants were presented with two surveys, one at the beginning of their call-taking shift and one at the end of their shift. The surveys included a series of standardised questionnaires assessing volunteer wellbeing and associated mental health outcomes including anxiety, depression, quality of life, burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion satisfaction, as well as a series of open-ended questions to obtain a deeper understanding of the volunteers' experience and recommendations for helpline charities.

Research into Volunteer Welfare



The research found that NiteLine volunteers are motivated by a desire to meet others and gain fulfilment through compassion satisfaction. Volunteers' wellbeing is protected and enhanced by individual and organisational factors such as high quality training, self-care strategies, psychological and organisational resilience.

Contrary to pre-existing literature, NiteLine volunteers do not experience reduced wellbeing in comparison to their peers, with volunteers showing lower state and trait anxiety, burnout and vicarious trauma in comparison to the general student population.

NiteLine volunteers did, however, exhibit higher levels of burnout and vicarious trauma in comparison to older helpline volunteers. It is likely that the peer-to-peer element of NiteLine may explain this increased negative effect on student volunteers (McCann & Pearlman, 1992).

Volunteers' anxiety levels reduced throughout the shift, with less experienced volunteers more likely to experience high pre-shift anxiety. The number of calls received during the shift significantly predicted the reduction in anxiety, with volunteers who received no calls during their shift at an increased risk of post-shift anxiety.

Both individual and organisational resilience were identified as factors that protected NiteLine volunteers' wellbeing. While organisations can promote individual resilience through the promotion of self-care and stress-management, organisational resilience encompasses the support, training, culture, shared goals, sense of community and accountability put in place to promote employee wellbeing. 75% of NiteLine volunteers rated the organisational support of the charity as being extremely high quality and readily available. Many self-reported feeling valued, appreciated and cared for within the organisation. 26% of volunteers said that they would be extremely likely to access these supports in the wake of a stressful call. This is likely as a result of the extremely highly rated team supports within the organisation. 69% of participants ranked the volunteers that were in the room with them during their call-taking shift as the most important factor contributing to their wellbeing during their shift.

Research into Volunteer Welfare

This research identified four primary recommendations for NiteLine to continue supporting its volunteers, but they may be useful to other helpline charities:

1. All volunteers should be screened regularly for any signs of reduced wellbeing. Training should also be provided to volunteers to help them identify subtle changes in their wellbeing that may be an early sign of burnout or vicarious trauma.
2. Continued, relevant and specialised training should be provided to helpline volunteers to deal with all call topics and also to cope with expectation management when no calls are received during a shift.
3. A Shared Volunteer Identity should be promoted through volunteer anonymity, positive organisational socialisation and morale events to encourage volunteer retention and sense of belonging.
4. Communal and group shifts should be promoted in other helplines in order to enhance team support.

It is clear that NiteLine volunteers are overcoming the occupational challenges of their crucial role and are not experiencing reduced wellbeing in comparison to their peers. This study is a beacon of hope in the sea of negative literature on helpline volunteers and consequently aims to promote helpline volunteer recruitment within the student population. NiteLine is proud that its robust support and training structures have a proven positive impact on its volunteers, and we will continue to strengthen these structures in the future.



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DOI: [10.1088/03069885.2019.1646409](https://doi.org/10.1088/03069885.2019.1646409)

Nightline Europe



Nightline Europe is a collaborative project between student-run listening services across Europe. The project was spearheaded by Nightline France, inspired by the collaborative efforts and historical connection between NiteLine in Ireland and Nightline France, which was founded by a former NiteLine volunteer. Driven by the vision of fostering collaboration among European Nightlines, Nightline France set its sights on creating a network known as "Nightline Europe."

The essence of Nightline Europe lies in uniting individual listening services across Europe through a membership system. This network offers an opportunity for Nightlines to come together, exchange ideas, share best practices, and collaborate on initiatives aimed at bolstering mental health support for students across the continent.

Thanks to the interest in mental health held by the Telos Management Fund, Nightline France secured a grant in 2022 to launch Nightline Europe. The generous funding facilitated the organisation of a productive Workshop Weekend in Paris in March 2022, where representatives from Nightlines in France, Aachen, Dresden, Frankfurt, Innsbruck, Graz, NiteLine in Ireland, and the Nightline Association from the United Kingdom collaboratively shaped the foundation of Nightline Europe.

At the Workshop Weekend, attendees discussed essential details of the plan, including the proposed membership system, membership conditions, project objectives, and governance structure. This inclusive approach ensures that Nightlines from various European cities have a stake in shaping the network's direction.

Following the Workshop Weekend, insights and opinions were collected from all Nightlines and representatives of NiteLine, Nightline France, the Nightline Association (UK) and Förderinitiative Nightlines Deutschland (Germany) began holding monthly working meetings to finalise the specifics of the Nightline Europe network.



Nightline Europe

This culminated in the first ever Nightline Europe conference held in Paris in March 2023. The conference was attended by volunteers and representatives of NiteLine, and Nightlines in France, the UK, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. At this conference, the full project proposal for the formation of the Nightline Europe network was presented to participants. After the conference, Nightline Europe was officially launched and applications to join the network were opened for Nightlines across Europe.

Nightline Europe envisions a future where European Nightlines stand together as a united front, advocating for mental health awareness and support at local, national and European levels. Through this network, Nightlines aim to create a nurturing and empathetic environment where every student feels heard, understood, and supported. By working together, members of Nightline Europe hope to change the face of mental health in Europe and gain access to European Union funding, which will help to achieve these goals.

NiteLine is proud to be a founding member of the Nightline Europe network, building on years of collaboration with Nightline France and the Nightline Association in the UK. Through our membership in the network, we are looking forward to sharing our expertise with Nightlines across Europe and working together to improve the quality of listening services provided to students here in Ireland and across the continent.



STRATEGIC PLAN

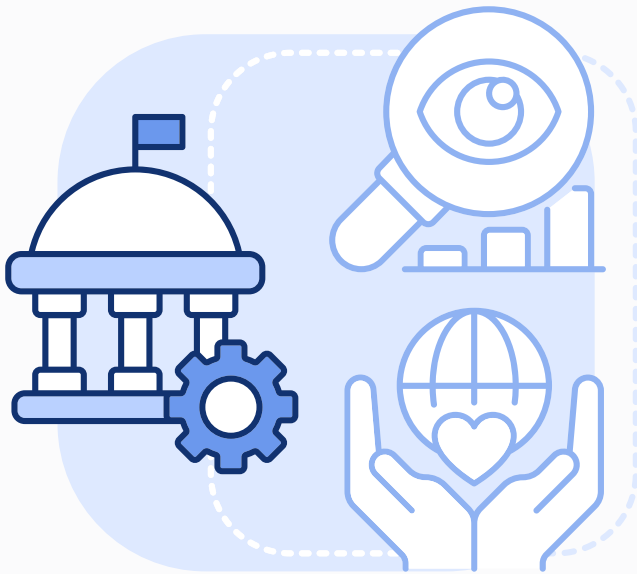


Strategic Plan

NiteLine released its strategic plan for 2021-2025 in December 2020 which details the core ambitions of our service. The strategic plan was developed through the collaboration of volunteers, representatives of affiliated colleges, an external advisory board and third level students. This plan is reviewed and updated annually. The main objective of this strategic plan is to widen the accessibility of NiteLine to more students nationwide. Our 5-year strategic plan is supported by 1-year work plans.

The strategic objectives set out by NiteLine are as follows:





Strategic Objective One: Best Practice

NiteLine aims to review the service which is offered to students and to improve it in any way we can to guarantee the best possible support.

Goals

1. **Create a quality assurance protocol.**
2. **Implement a new system for presenting call taking policies to our volunteers which clearly demonstrates the evidence base behind each policy.**
3. **Collate and implement feedback from our volunteers on our training and internal support.**
4. **Collaborate with other helplines to exchange best practice.**
5. **Ensure compliance with all relevant additional standards of the Charities Governance Code.**

Updates

1. A quality assurance protocol has been implemented. This protocol was drafted based on existing quality assurance measures and additional measures provided by other similar helplines.
2. Research is currently underway for this strategic goal and is aimed to be completed by 2025.
3. The Volunteer Survey was implemented in 2021 and has become an annual staple of our charity, also being repeated at the beginning of both 2022 and 2023. This survey provides valuable insight into the internal structures of our charity. This feedback is used by the Support Officer and the Training Development Officer to appropriately inform the structure of support and ongoing training for the upcoming year and ensures practices are volunteer-informed.
4. This goal was achieved in 2021 and is a continuous practice in our charity, exemplified by our collaboration with Bodywhys in 2022. Through engaging with different national helplines, we have received valuable insight into best practice through quality assurance protocols and volunteer support.
5. The Board are in full compliance with the Charities Governance Code.



Strategic Objective Two: Efficiency

NiteLine continually reviews our organisational model to meet the demand of our services.

Goals

1. **Ensure we recruit both volunteers and trustees with the necessary skills to achieve our strategic objectives (continuous).**
2. **Refine the relationship between our student-run committee and our Board of Trustees (ongoing).**
3. **Restructure our committee for more effective communication as we expand (to be completed for incoming committee 2022/23).**
4. **Introduce full-time pay for NiteLine's Coordinator (to be completed 2025).**
5. **Develop an IT strategy to support our strategic objectives (to be completed 2025).**

Updates

1. NiteLine recruited the first Board of Trustees in 2020. Every member satisfied the relevant skills required. Furthermore, as of the end of this fiscal year of 2022, two new board members were added to the Board who both fulfil the skills necessary for their respective roles. The Board composition is reviewed annually. The volunteer population is also reviewed to ensure our volunteers are representative of the diversity seen in the wider student population, and our volunteer recruitment campaigns are adjusted to reflect areas where increased diversity may be necessary.
2. This is an ongoing process between the student-run committee and the Board of Trustees. A step which has been taken this year notably was a review of the Board's handbook and a Board evaluation. This year the Board were invited to committee meetings, during which they each introduced themselves and discussed their role and projects.
3. The restructuring of committee organisation has been completed as of 2022 and has been introduced for the 2022 student-run committee. The structural layout of the committee can be viewed in the committee organisation chart in the governance section of this report (page 50).
4. This goal has not been implemented yet. However, we predict as a result of diversifying our income, that this goal will be achievable by 2025.
5. A Board trustee was first appointed in June 2021 who possesses expertise in IT and data analysis. This is the first step in this process.



Strategic Objective Three: Expansion of Services

NiteLine has the objective of increasing access to our service by expanding to more colleges, reviewing opening hours and investigating new ways to engage with our contacts to offer support.

Goals

1. **Increase the number of students who can access our services by increasing the number of students covered by our service by at least 20%**
2. **Increase our annual contacts by at least 50% (to be completed by 2025).**
3. **Explore options for new, innovative and effective platforms to offer peer support (to be completed by 2025).**
4. **Review our opening hours (to be completed by 2025).**
5. **Support the establishment of at least one more NiteLine in Ireland (to be completed by 2025).**

Updates

1. In September 2021, the Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) became a partner college of NiteLine. This led to an increase in the number of students with access to our services from 70,000 to over 100,000, which is a 43% increase. At NiteLine we aim to increase access to our services above and beyond our goals. In 2023, we affiliated with three colleges; DCU, DKIT and IADT, representing a further 30% increase. In 2024, we aim to increase this once more by establishing a second NiteLine branch in Limerick.
2. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed a decrease in the number of contacts made to our service. However, as we restore our on-campus presence through publicity and fundraising to spread awareness, our goal is to restore our pre-COVID-19 annual contact levels. We anticipate an increase in our annual contacts for the coming academic year given the establishment of our NiteLine Limerick branch.
3. Research is underway to review other forms of support platforms such as email and text messaging platforms. The additional platform will be finalised by 2023 and implemented by 2025.
4. This goal will be completed by 2025 and is under review.
5. Discussion is underway to ensure a sustainable model of expansion for this goal and in the upcoming year will be reviewed by both the committee and the Board of Trustees. We are currently in the process of establishing NiteLine Limerick and aim for this to be completed by 2024.



Strategic Objective Four: Awareness of Services

NiteLine aims to alert as many students as possible about the services we provide across all of our affiliated colleges.

Goals

1. **Develop our physical on-campus presence at our affiliated colleges.**
2. **Increase our social media followers by 100%.**
3. **Develop a public engagement strategy to support our expansion over the next 5 years.**

Updates

1. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the physical on-campus presence of our service volunteers had been restricted. However, this also highlighted the importance of social media presence during times when in-person awareness activities aren't feasible. NiteLine has vastly developed our online presence through delivering workshops online via Zoom and by conducting giveaways on our social media platforms. As restrictions were lifted, NiteLine's workshops returned to a face-to-face format and allowed us to develop this goal further. In the academic year of 2022/23 we increased this engagement significantly as students returned to campus without restrictions. Publicity stands were, therefore, arranged in each of our affiliated colleges over the academic year.
2. In the year 2021/22, this strategic goal was revised as issues arose in the publicity team as a result of restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was agreed that the 100% goal may not be attainable as a result of the lack of publicity available. At the current predicted rate of our social media following, we predict an approximate 80% increase of social media followers by 2025.
3. This goal is under review and will be completed by 2025.



Strategic Objective Five: Funding and Partnership

NiteLine aims to diversify its income streams through affiliations and partnerships, and ensure that it has the funding necessary to continue to provide a high-quality service to students.

Goals

- 1. Review our existing affiliation fee to ensure NiteLine is enabled to provide a high standard of service whilst balancing the need for affordability for colleges.**
- 2. Design a revenue development plan to diversify our income, focusing on fundraising and grant opportunities.**
- 3. Establish partnerships to cover at least 25% of our costs (to be completed by 2023).**

Updates

- NiteLine strives to ensure equality in the services provided to each college and, in return, we want to ensure that our affiliation fee is affordable for colleges, while reflecting the value of the service provided and the resources required to deliver this service to colleges of varying sizes. This strategic goal is currently in review and we estimate that we will progress significantly on this point during the academic year of 2023/24.
- During the academic year 2022/23, a significant focus was placed on income diversification, which saw NiteLine host its first large-scale fundraising event, leading to NiteLine receiving more donations than ever before. For the year 2023/24, NiteLine plans to grow these fundraising events further, as well as apply for additional grant opportunities and continue to diversify income streams in other ways.
- This goal is actively under review.

GOVERNANCE



OUR VOLUNTEERS



NiteLine continues to strive to provide the best listening service to third level students. NiteLine has a volunteer base of enthusiastic and devoted students who voluntarily dedicate their time to our service to ensure that we meet the needs of our community.



NiteLine volunteers play a pivotal role in our governance framework, exemplifying our commitment to student well-being. Their dedication and service empower us to provide vital support to third-level students. Their contributions are a cornerstone of our organisation's mission to maintain the highest standards in student support service.



Committee

NiteLine is committed to delivering the highest quality call service to third-level students. To uphold this standard, we have a committee of dedicated and passionate student volunteers who go the extra mile to ensure our service aligns with the needs of our community.

Annually, NiteLine volunteers engage in the election of a committee tasked with the responsibility of overseeing and managing the organisation. This committee works in collaboration with counsellors and other essential staff members from our affiliated colleges to ensure the effective operation of our service.

The committee consists of five key departments which include:



Committee Structure

Coordinator

Vice
Coordinator

Publicity

Training

Finance &
Sponsorship

Volunteer
Welfare

Research &
Development

Miscellaneous

Head of
Publicity

Head of
Training

Finance
Officer

Support
Officer

Surveys,
Reporting &
Research
Officer

Rota
Secretary

Publicity
Officers

Training
Officers

External
Events &
Fundraising
Officer

Morale
Officers

Policy
Officer

I.T.
Officer

Public
Faces

Training
Development
Officer

Visual
Merchandising
Officer

Social Media
Officer



Board of Trustees

NiteLine's Board of Trustees consists of a team of highly skilled and motivated individuals, and is of paramount significance for the organisation's overall success and impact. These individuals bring a diverse range of expertise, experience, and perspectives to the table, thus guiding NiteLine's strategic decisions with a well-rounded and informed approach. The presence of a proficient Board ensures that the organisation benefits from sound governance, prudent financial management, and effective oversight. The Board consists of a Chairperson, Company Secretary, and Trustees in the areas of finance, marketing, alumni relations, IT, risk management, clinical counselling and HR. The Board is actively recruiting skilled individuals to fill Trustee positions that were not occupied this year.

The Board works closely with our student volunteers and committee, to develop a strong link between the Board and the population that benefits from the service, and to ensure that NiteLine remains a primarily student-run organisation. Members of our student committee, such as our Coordinator and Finance Officer, attend all Board of Trustee meetings, and individual trustees attend committee meetings or work with specific committee members on a regular basis. Ultimately, NiteLine's skilled Board of Trustees serves as the cornerstone of its growth and sustainability, steering the organisation toward continued achievements and positive change.



Chairperson Alex McQueen

I joined NiteLine as a volunteer while in college and I saw the massive impact that just listening to someone had. It opened my eyes to the deep range of issues which face students, the same students if you met them in the street and asked how they were, would say "I'm grand". When the opportunity came up to join the Board I was delighted. While I can't take calls anymore, I feel excited that I can give back by supporting the continued good work of the volunteers today from a governance and strategic perspective.

Company Secretary Bláthín Peirce

I joined the Board as Legal Trustee during the pandemic in 2020. It was a strange time for everyone, particularly students whose college experience was now virtual. I wanted to use my legal skillset to help NiteLine navigate through those challenging days. Since joining, I've learned so much about what a valuable service it is and am excited about the future plans for NiteLine. I work closely with Alex Burke, Coordinator, and help him and the committee with legal documentation, queries and future business plans. Recently, I became the company secretary, so I now manage the exciting company filings!





Finance Trustee

Kirsty Ettershank

I wanted to fulfil the role of Finance Trustee at NiteLine as I was driven by my desire to contribute my financial experience and skillset to a meaningful cause. What I enjoy most about this role is witnessing the direct correlation between sound financial decisions and NiteLine's ability to create a lasting impact on both students' and volunteers' lives. It's immensely gratifying to witness the growth that NiteLine has experienced since joining and I look forward to seeing what else we can do to bring this valuable service to more students across Ireland.

Marketing Trustee

Catherine O'Connor

I was really keen to support the amazing work NiteLine does within the student community. I admire the positive impact it has not only on those who avail of the service but on the strong community of volunteers who run the organisation.

I'm very lucky to work with the brilliant publicity team. From creating brand guidelines, supporting up-coming events to growing the awareness of the service, the volunteers do a fantastic job and the service is going from strength to strength.



Alumni Trustee

Seán Shannon

I joined NiteLine as a phone volunteer because I wanted to be part of something bigger. I later became a trustee as I wanted to contribute to NiteLine long-term by making it that bit bigger and better to benefit others. Some may think their problems cannot be solved or they're not serious enough to warrant help, but NiteLine encourages talking about it, which can make things a little bit easier. As NiteLine expands rapidly, I am inspired by our volunteers who give up their time to support callers, and seeing their passion for NiteLine makes this all worthwhile.



Board of Trustees

Rotation of Trustees

At NiteLine, we are committed to nurturing innovation and adhering to best practices. We firmly believe that trustee rotation plays a pivotal role in achieving this objective. Consequently, we have established a policy wherein no NiteLine Trustee can hold their position for more than two consecutive terms on the Board. Furthermore, no Trustee can serve for a cumulative duration exceeding nine years.



Induction and Training of Trustees

Upon the appointment of a new Trustee, our practice at NiteLine involves a comprehensive induction process. This includes a meeting with the Coordinator, Chairperson, and select Trustees to provide essential guidance. As part of this induction, an Induction Pack is distributed, comprising vital policy documents, organizational history, strategic plans, and business plans.

Similar to our approach with NiteLine volunteers, we place a strong emphasis on continuous training for our Board members. All Trustees have already received training in the roles and responsibilities of Charity Trustees through the Carmichael Centre.

Conflicts of Interest

Alongside our training and rotation practices, NiteLine has implemented a Conflict of Interests Policy, aligned with the guidelines provided by the Charities Regulator. This policy serves as a crucial safeguard to uphold NiteLine's integrity. It empowers the Board to proficiently recognize, document, and navigate any potential conflicts of interest, thereby ensuring that all Trustees consistently act in the best interests of NiteLine.

Stakeholders

NiteLine has a collection of stakeholders which includes our volunteers, the students, student service departments and the student unions of affiliated colleges.

NiteLine receives its' funding from its' affiliated colleges, which include Dublin Business School (DBS), Dublin City University (DCU), Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT), Maynooth University (MU), National College of Art and Design (NCAD), Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI), Technological University of Dublin (TU Dublin), Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and University College Dublin (UCD).

In return for this funding, each semester NiteLine provides extensive reports on its activities to the students' unions, counselling and student services of each affiliated college. Furthermore, NiteLine posts frequent social media posts which update colleges about its activities.

NiteLine will update students' unions and other college stakeholders with any other relevant information, outside of the semester reports, via email, which can then be circulated to students. Updates may include changes to opening hours and upcoming activities. These updates are also easily accessible via our website, niteline.ie, and social media channels.

Risk Management

In order to identify, mitigate and prevent potential risk which may arise, NiteLine has a risk management policy. The risks include, but are not limited to; Governance and Management, Environment, Compliance, Operational and Financial Risk. The risk management policy details the responsibilities of everyone in NiteLine in combatting risk. Procedures for foreseen risk are documented, including the management of the risk register. The risk register is regularly updated. The risk register outlines reporting risks and the training of volunteers and trustees with regard to their responsibilities around risk.

Each risk is assigned a probability score of 1-5 and an impact score of 2-5, which are then multiplied to give a risk rating which can be categorised as follows:



FINANCIAL NARRATIVE



Income

As of the current year, our income for operational procedures is based on affiliation fees, which our charity receives from our ten affiliated colleges, as well as donations, grants and bursaries.

During the upcoming year, it is our main objective to seek new options to diversify our income streams, by pursuing some of the following:

- Mental health workshops to companies in exchange for payment or services.
- Partnerships with local businesses to cover costs associated with operational activities.
- Applying for further grants or other forms of funding.



Expenditure

The expenditure of our charity is distributed across many departments which differ in their total expenditure. This year, publicity was the department with the highest expenditure costs due to in-person and social media opportunities to ensure active coverage of all colleges. Operational costs, such as taxis for volunteers and our phone line are also significant expenses.



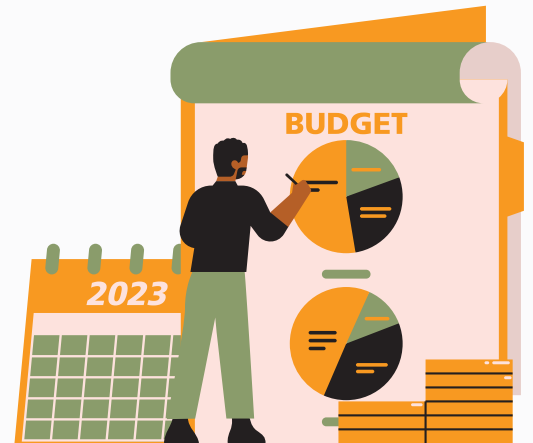
Sponsorships

NiteLine is delighted to receive sponsorship-in-kind from one local business. Reads Design and Print has generously covered the cost of some of our advertisement material such as stickers and posters since 2012 which enables our charity to spread awareness of the services that we provide.



Position

This fiscal year we had a sizeable surplus present in our budget as a result of effective financial controls in place to keep in line with our budgeted spending. Our budget was reflective of best practices and was designed based on the previous year's trends. This fiscal year we saw a welcome increase in expenditure mainly driven by the relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions and the resumption of service on site in our office.



Reserves

We aim to keep our reserves equal to between three and six months of expenditure. When the reserves go over this value, with the required approvals, it may be spent on expenses, such as capital expenditure. This fiscal year we spent some of our reserves on refurbishing our office, with the support of Trinity Estates & Services, to ensure our volunteers have a safe, comfortable space to work in.



**Students NiteLine Listening Service Company Limited
by Guarantee
Unaudited financial statements
for the financial year ended 30 June 2023**



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Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities in Respect of the Trustees' Report and the Financial Statements

The directors are responsible for preparing the directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law they have elected to prepare the financial statements with FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, and financial position of the Company and of its incoming resources and application of resources including its income and expenditure for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- assess the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern; and
- use the going concern basis of accounting unless they either intend to liquidate the Charitable or cease operations or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at the time the assets, liabilities, financial position and its incoming resources and application of resources including its income and expenditure of the Company, and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2014. They are responsible for such internal controls as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the Company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities. The trustees are also responsible for preparing a trustees' report that complies with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

On behalf of the board

Mr. Alex McQueen

Chairperson

Date: 9th September 2023

Ms. Bláthín Peirce

Company Secretary



Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds €	Restricted funds €	Total 2023 €	Total 2022 €
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	4	11,607	-	11,607	4,021
Charitable activities	5	32,617	-	32,617	28,825
Total Income		44,224	-	44,224	33,631
Expenditure from:					
Raising funds	7	-	-	-	-
Charitable Activities	6	38,395	-	38,395	21,729
Total Expenditure		38,395	-	38,395	21,729
Net income		5,829	-	5,829	11,902
Fund balance brought forward		37,901	-	37,901	26,784
Total funds carried forward		43,730	-	43,730	38,686

Statement of Financial Position

as of 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 €	2022 €
Non-Current Assets			
Intangible assets		-	-
Property, Plant & Equipment	9	1,717	-
Total Non-Current Assets		1,717	-
Current Assets			
Receivables	10	23,325	17,825
Cash and Cash Equivalents	11	30,596	45,224
		53,921	63,049
Payables: Amounts falling due within one year	12	(11,908)	(24,363)
Net Current Assets		42,013	38,686
Total assets less current liabilities		43,730	38,686
Financed by			
Retained Reserves		43,730	38,686

Cashflow Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 €	2022 €
Cash flow from operating activities			
Excess income		5,829	11,902
(Increase) / decrease in receivables		(6,286)	(17,825)
Increase / (decrease) in payables		12,455	12,172
Net cash flow from operating activities		(12,911)	6,249
Cash flow from investing activities			
Payment to acquire intangible assets		-	-
Payments to acquire property, plant and equipment		(1,717)	-
Net cash flow from investing activities		(1,717)	-
Cash flow from financing activities			
Bank interest paid / (received)		-	-
Net cash flow from financing activities		-	-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		(14,628)	6,249
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 July		45,224	38,975
Cash and cash equivalents at 30 June		30,596	45,224

Notes 1 to 17 form part of these financial statements

We, as directors of Students NiteLine Listening Service, state that:

1. the company is availing itself of the exemption provided for by Chapter 15 of Part 6 of the Companies Act 2014;
2. the company is availing itself of the exemption on the grounds that the conditions specified in s.358 are satisfied;
3. the members of the company have not served a notice on the company under s.334(1) in accordance with s.334(2);
4. we acknowledge the company's obligations under the Companies Act 2014, to keep adequate accounting records and prepare Financial Statements which give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company at the end of its financial year and of its profit or loss for such a year and to otherwise comply with the provisions of Companies Act 2014 relating to Financial Statements so far as they are applicable to the company,

Signed on behalf of the Board of Students NiteLine Listening Service.

Mr. Alex McQueen
Chairperson
Date: 9th September 2023

Ms. Bláthín Peirce
Company Secretary



Notes to the Financial Statements

1. General Information

Student NiteLine Listening Service is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in the Republic of Ireland “(the Company)”.

2. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102) the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2014.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

The preparation of financial statements required the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise judgement in applying the Company’s accounting policies.

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the company’s financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on a historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of certain financial assets and liabilities and investment properties measured at fair value through profit or loss.

Income

Donations

Donations are accounted for when NiteLine is entitled to the monies or assets donated.

Charitable activities

Income from charitable activities is derived from affiliation fees from the Company’s affiliated colleges. Affiliation fee is recognised in the period to which the fee relates.

Expenditure

Charitable activities

Expenditure for charitable activities comprises the costs incurred by the Company in providing training and support services.

Raising funds

Expenditure for raising funds comprises the costs incurred by NiteLine in raising funds for its charitable purposes.



Notes to the Financial Statements

Receivables

Receivables are initially recognised at fair value and thereafter stated at amortised costs using the effective interest method less impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts except where the effect of discounting would be immaterial. In such cases, the receivables are stated at cost less impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and short-term deposits with financial institutions.

Payables

Payables are initially recognised at fair value and thereafter stated at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method, unless the effect of discounting would be immaterial, in which case they are stated at cost.

Property, plant and equipment

Items of property, plant and equipment are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any impairment loss. Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of items of property, plant and equipment to a residual value of nil using the straight-line method for the current and comparative periods. Depreciation is charged for the first time in the year following acquisition. The useful lives of property, plant and equipment for the current and comparative periods are as follows:

- Fixtures and fittings: 5 years

Depreciation methods, useful lives and residual values are reviewed at each reporting date and adjusted if appropriate.

3. Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of these financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income, and expenses. Judgements and estimates are continually evaluated and are based on historical experiences and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.



Notes to the Financial Statements

4. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted €	Restricted €	2023 €	2022 €
Donations	11,607	-	11,607	4,021
Total donations and legacies	11,607	-	11,607	4,021

5. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted €	Restricted €	2023 €	2022 €
Affiliation fees	32,617	-	32,617	28,825
Total income from charitable activities	32,617	-	32,617	28,825

Each of the Company's affiliated colleges pay an annual fee which is used to sustain the daily operation of the service.

6. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted €	Restricted €	2023 €	2022 €
Operational expenses	38,395	-	38,395	21,729
Total expenditure on charitable activities	38,395	-	38,395	21,729



Notes to the Financial Statements

7. Expenditure on Raising Funds

No expenditure incurred on raising funds in the period.

8. Directors' emoluments

The Company does not pay any remuneration to the volunteer Board of Directors. Directors are reimbursed for receipted expenses which in 2023 totalled €Nil. (2021: €Nil)

9. Fixed Assets

	Fixtures & Fittings 2023 €	Total 2023 €
Cost		
At beginning of year	-	-
Additions in year	1,717	1,717
	1,717	1,717
Depreciation		
At beginning of year	-	-
Depreciation charge for the year	-	-
	-	-
Net book value		
At 30 June 2022	-	-
At 30 June 2023	1,717	1,717

Notes to the Financial Statements

10. Receivables

	2023 €	2022 €
Receivables	23,325	17,825
Total receivables	23,325	17,825

Receivables related to outstanding balances due from affiliated colleges

11. Cash and cash equivalents

	2023 €	2022 €
Cash on hand	-	-
Cash and bank balances	30,596	45,224
Total cash and cash equivalents	30,596	45,224

12. Payables

Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 €	2022 €
Payables	11,908	24,363
Total payables	11,908	24,363

Payables relate to outstanding balances due to Trinity College Dublin. The Trinity College Dublin Students' Union pays the Company's liabilities as they fall due. After the reporting period, the Trinity College Dublin Students' Union issues the Company an invoice for an amount equal to expenses for the period.

Notes to the Financial Statements

13. Limited by guarantee

Student NiteLine Listening Service is a company limited by guarantee. The Company is limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the members is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding €1 towards the assets of the company in the event of liquidation.

14. Contingent liabilities

The company had no contingent liabilities at the reporting date.

15. Related Party Transactions

There were no related party transactions in the reporting period.

16. Subsequent Events

There are no subsequent events to report.

17. Approval of the financial statements

The board of directors approved the financial statements on 9th September 2023.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Students NiteLine Listening Service.

Mr. Alex McQueen
Chairperson

Ms. Bláthín Peirce
Company Secretary

Date: 9th September 2023



Contact Us

For general enquiries, or if you are interested in affiliating with or collaborating with NiteLine, please contact info@niteline.org.

However, if there are questions specific to this annual report please do not hesitate to contact:

- researchanddevelopment@niteline.org
- coordinator@niteline.org

In Need of Support?

We offer both a phone helpline and an online messaging platform. We are open seven nights a week during term from 9 pm - 2:30 am, to support you through whatever is on your mind. Students of our affiliated colleges can call **1800 793 793** or visit niteline.ie to get in touch with an experienced volunteer.

A list of useful resources is available on our website niteline.ie for when our phone lines are closed.

Social Media and Contact Details



info@niteline.org



[@NiteLine.ie](https://www.instagram.com/NiteLine.ie)



1800 793 793



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