

# Uilleann pipe-making initiative hits the right note

Minister Bruton presents awards

Press release on behalf of Na Píobairí Uilleann ([pipers.ie](http://pipers.ie))

Thursday February 26, 2015



Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton TD, presented the first group of uilleann pipe-making graduates with their awards at a ceremony in Na Píobairí Uilleann's dedicated *PipeCraft* Centre in Clonshaugh today.

NPU *PipeCraft* is an Educational Programme delivering specialist training to young people in the many and varied traditional skills required to make the uniquely Irish uilleann pipes – the iconic sound of Ireland.

Ten students graduated today at the *PipeCraft* Centre having completed an intensive three-year full time training programme in the craft.

Speaking about today's announcement, Minister Bruton said: "I am delighted to congratulate each and every one of the graduates from this programme. Pipe-making is an important part of our cultural heritage and I am delighted that a new generation of people is learning this important craft."

NPU chief executive Gay McKeon added: "The *PipeCraft* initiative was established in response both to a growing demand for instruments from pipers and after we identified a unique opportunity to re-embed the art of uilleann pipe making throughout Ireland.

"We are acutely aware of the stated expressions of support for bespoke education programmes such as *PipeCraft* but the reality is an operation like this, which incorporates heritage, culture, education, community and enterprise, requires investment to make it happen. There is an extraordinary return on that investment, however, not just in terms of tailored education but also in terms of employment and the provision of a critical service to the traditional arts community.

"Today's graduates, who, with the support of the LEADER programme around the country, were trained by a number of master pipe-makers, are progressing having satisfied our expert examiners of the essential pipe-making skills. Making a full set of Irish uilleann pipes can take up to 300 hours and requires highly specialist skills in wood turning, tool making, fine metal work, leather work, reed making and also the ability to play and tune the instrument."

## **Note to editors**

Na Píobairí Uilleann (NPU) was founded in 1968, when the Irish uilleann pipes were on the brink of extinction, to promote the playing and making of the instrument and to foster Irish Traditional Music.

Our mission is 'Sharing the Sound of Ireland' based on four pillars of Access, Education, Performance and Preservation delivered by excellence in values, governance and processes.

The vision of NPU is to enrich the lives of people worldwide through the music and culture of the Irish uilleann pipes and to establish the music of the uilleann pipes as a major art form around the world in the 21st century.

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