

"Together to create new growth"
"Social entrepreneurship & social economy: Developing a European ecosystem to unlock social innovation, growth and jobs"
Conference on 18 November 2011 - Brussels

Panellist: Caroline CASEY



CURRICULUM VITAE

Caroline Casey a serial social entrepreneur, Founder of Kanchi, The Ability Awards, Co-Founder of Elephant Family, has been recognised internationally for her pioneering and innovative approach to changing attitudes and perceptions of disability focusing on business and media. In 2000, Caroline left her Management Consultant position with Accenture and founded Kanchi, an organisation established to influence this change, which she named after the elephant she trekked across Southern India on during a 1,000km personal journey.

Designing products and initiatives around the Disability Business Case Kanchi is leading a global business movement that will drive societal change for people with disabilities. Kanchi's multi-stakeholder approach, designed to engage critical top level leadership is core to its success. Kanchi devised its flagship programme - the Ability Awards to recognise and build awareness of the Business Case for Disability creating a standard of best practice that can be practically replicated throughout the business community. The awards are now being rolled-out internationally, initially with partner, communications giant, Telefonica across five countries in the next five years with the focus on Europe.

Caroline is invited around the world to speak on her leadership work at eminent events including the Global Competitiveness Forum, the Clinton Global Initiative, TED and Davos.

She became the first Irish person to be appointed a Young Global Leader of the World Economic Forum, is an Ashoka Fellow, Eisenhower Fellow and received an Honorary Doctorate from National University Ireland. She currently sits on the boards of a number of media and charity organisations in Ireland. Caroline is visually impaired to the degree that she is registered as legally blind.

Scaling up and financial sustainability

Kanchi, a recipient of the Ashoka Globalizer award is currently scaling its Irish operations to meet the market demand for its Ability Awards programme internationally with the establishment of a new company, Kanchi International. In response to a constricted funding environment Kanchi is also focusing its attention on developing a revenue generating business based on licence fees and provision of training, consulting and gap analysis offering to business. Due to the success of the Ability Awards in Ireland Kanchi has also developed the Kanchi Network, the first business membership organisation in Ireland focusing on the competitive advantage of inclusive business. Central to the Kanchi Network is the Kanchi Benchmark and training modules. The Kanchi Benchmark, based on the assessment and verification process of the Ability Awards, is a best practice tool for business that will enable continuous learning around the Disability Business Case, providing a standard of excellence that companies can work towards. In time, both the Kanchi Network and Kanchi Benchmark will be replicated internationally in countries that have been successful in running the Ability Awards.

Through her work in Kanchi, Caroline has been involved in many consultative forums on social entrepreneurship and has a particular interest in the areas of scaling, mentorship, access to funding and multi-stakeholder engagement.