



## Putting down roots - tree project to aid asylum seekers

23 November 2021

A project which will see the planting of 8,000 native trees to represent the number of people seeking asylum in Ireland and living in Direct Provision has been launched in Co Offaly.

The 'Putting Down Roots' project aims to raise funds for young people who are in the protection process and have lived in Direct Provision to enter third-level education.

The initiative is a collaboration between arts group Museum of Everyone, the Irish Refugee Council and climate change project Easy Treesie.

Curator of Museum of Everyone Brendan Fox said: "These trees represent the number of individuals currently seeking asylum in Ireland. Each tree can be purchased for €5 - this goes to the Irish Refugee Council to help young people finance a third-level education."

Education Officer of the Irish Refugee Council Charlotte Byrne added: "We partly want to just bring it back to people's attention again, that people are living in those centres for years, too long. Ultimately, we just want to bring attention to that, to raise some money, to get some people into education and plant some trees, it's a nice thing."

Amanda Nyoni, who lives in Direct Provision, is taking part in the project.

She says a small donation could make a difference.



"I have seen a lot of my friends face challenges. We all need to exercise empathy. Just take a moment to breathe, and think 'okay, what do I lose by helping this person?'"

The project's first tree planting ceremony was held at Scoil Mhuire in Tullamore. Birr and Lough Boora Parklands are other sites selected for tree planting over the next few months.

Source: <https://www.rte.ie/news/2021/1122/1262500-tree-project-to-help-8-000-people-in-direct-provision/>