



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101033864

## **Project Launch**

### **Press Release**

**2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021**

Belfast Metropolitan College launched their new £1.12 million European digital construction project 'ARISE' in the 2 days KICK OFF meeting 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021.

ARISE aims to revolutionise the learning process by changing the face of delivery and recognition of sustainable energy skills in the building sector.

ARISE's mission is to support the twin transition of the design and construction sector and to contribute thereby to the European Recovery and Resilience Plans 2021 -2027, by providing the building sector professionals with digital and sustainable energy skills of the future, along with demand-side guidelines for marketable appreciation of skills and exploitation of benefits thereof.

The nine partners in the project consortium are: Belfast Metropolitan College, Northern Ireland, Technological University Dublin, Ireland, Institute for Research

in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy, North Macedonia, ISSO, Netherlands, Architects' Council of Europe, Belgium, IBIMI Institute for BIM, Italy, Building Changes, BV, Netherlands, Copenhagen School of Design and Technology, Denmark and Instituto Superior Technico, Portugal.

On the opening launch day on Wednesday, September 1, Belfast Met Innovation Manager and ARISE project coordinator, Paul McCormack gave an introduction and outlined the challenges and objectives for the 30-month programme.

Louise Warde Hunter, Principal and Chief Executive of Belfast Met also addressed the opening day audience with: *"Today's ARISE launch reinforces Belfast Met's commitment to engage in international partnerships and applied Research & Development, working in innovative ways with industry to meet the emerging skills needs of the economy at home and abroad. "*

*"Our People, our Planet, and our Partnerships are key to addressing the interconnected challenges of sustainability at TU Dublin. The ARISE project creates a positive impact by addressing real-world challenges in the construction sector through the upskilling of individuals to reach their infinite potential. ARISE leverages learning post-Covid, by offering bite-size educational units through a digital mobile curriculum to enable learning opportunities that are accessible and sustainable in our daily lives."* Stated Ms Jennifer Boyer, Vice President of Sustainability, Technological University Dublin, one of the nine European partners on the project, which has Belfast Met as the lead partner.

The funding for the project was gained through the EU Horizon 2020 Work Programme. Ms Amadine De Coster-Lacourt, Project Advisor, (CINEA), European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency, highlighted that :

*“ARISE will contribute to the Green Deal and the Renovation Wave objectives by facilitating recognition of sustainable energy skills in the built environment and increasing demand for those skills.”.*

The distinct work packages work to be carried out by the partners were discussed and detailed.

- Work Packages:
  - WP1 MANAGE *Belfast Met*
  - WP2 BENCHMARK energy & digitalisation skills *IBIMI - Italy*
  - WP3 DESIGN framework *ISSO The Netherlands*
  - WP4 DEVELOP autonomy e-engine *KEA - Denmark*
  - WP5 FILL agility e-tools *TU Dublin*
  - WP6 PILOT Digital Pathway energise *Belfast Met*
  - WP7 REPLICATE market implementation *IECE Macedonia*
  - WP8 COMMUNICATE dissemination & exploitation *ACE Belgium*

Martin Lennon, Director, (OHMG), O Hare McGovern stated: *“The early involvement of OHMG with (previous project) BIMcert was the platform that escalated our BIM journey, ensuring we remained at the forefront of digital innovation.*

*“ We are delighted to once again join with BMET and their international partners, at the start of their ARISE project journey. The result of this partnership will ensure OHMG have a skilled workforce who will have the knowledge, experience and competencies to deliver on the Government’s Construction 2025: Strategy”.*

Mark Baldwin, Building Smart International, in Switzerland added: *“Competency assurance is a significant aspect contributing to the success and sustainability of the digitalization of the built asset industry.”*

ARISE will revolutionise the learning process by monetizing skills development and learning exchange with a digital system based on skills recognition rather than accreditation. The training and transaction system developed by the project will reward learners as they achieve competence at a certain level with the cryptocurrency for skills exchange - CERTcoin – the innovative currency of skills and learning of the design and construction sector embracing today’s digital transformation benefits. This reward-based on skills and time credits will be stored in an Individual Learning Account and can be used as digital points accumulation for example in a skills barometer or for exchanging it into valid certificates. It will be an easier accessible, less time consuming and still competitive way to up-skill design and construction professionals and workers , as well as market demand side – public administration, clients and owners.

ARISE will apply digitalization both as a learning method and as a framework of job-based construction skills of the future, multiplying the effects of the green transition skills. The novel training method will make the learning process attractive and effective, facilitating its accessibility through a smartphone and a user-friendly web-based platform. The intervention/learning progress will be achieved in a scalable way, in bite-sized skills delivery. ARISE will apply digitalisation and the earning of learning credits in a "step by step" recognition of competencies, as an accelerator to empower demand for sustainable energy skills in the design and construction sector, and as an enabler of formal

certification. This system will be employed based on blockchain procedures to instil transparency and trust.

Within 30 months, until February 2024, partners will work on the development and demonstration of the innovative on-demand training scheme for digitalisation towards sustainable energy skills, aimed at both supply and demand sides.