



Irish Guide Dogs
for the blind

TY PROGRAMME 2026

Together we are changing lives

At Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind we believe the students who participate in Transition Year (TY) Programme are potential future members of our community of Staff, Puppy Raisers, Temporary Boarders and community Volunteers. With this in mind, we have developed an interactive programme which aims to inspire students to support our work raising awareness and funds and to consider a career with us so they too can make a difference to others and change lives.

At the end of our week long programme, each student will have a greater understanding of:

1. the welfare of our **dogs** and what that entails;
2. the services and support we provide to our **Clients**;
3. the **Technical Training** and what that involves;
4. the **structure, governance, funding** and running of a charity; and
5. how to undertake a **fundraising event**.

Our Programme, which will be delivered online through Zoom, aims to deliver real insights and appreciation for the work that we do. The aims of our TY Programme are:

- To deliver an interactive, engaging schedule which aims to inspire;
- To provide a platform to meet many members of our community and to ask questions;
- To develop skills in the area of planning and executing a fundraising event; and
- To empower the students with a desire to make a difference to someone's life.



OUR PROGRAMME

Our TY Programme is built around the **four pillars** which are the foundations of our organisation.



DAY ONE

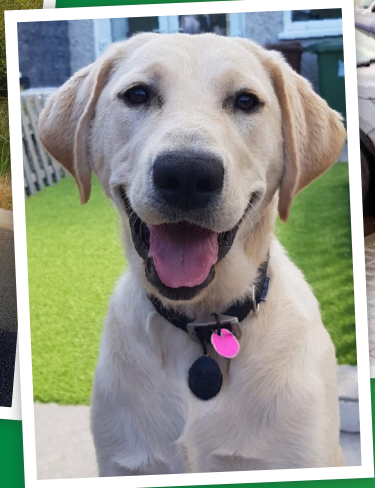
Outline of the Week 30 min virtual session led by Fundraising/Communications

Our first session begins with an outline of the Programme, what will happen, how to make the most of the week and what we would like from each student at the end of the week. Our Regional Development Officers will present and discuss how to plan for a fundraising event, the types of fundraising events that you can hold and how to inspire and motivate volunteers.

Dogs 90 min virtual session led by our Dog Pillar

Meet our Dog Care and Welfare team who manage the care of our training dogs and look after all dogs onsite in our Training Centre kennels. Find out more about the day-to-day work of the team and learn about the roles they play in managing the welfare of our dogs. You'll learn about how we, together with our fantastic Volunteers, keep our dogs happy and healthy during their time at our Training Centre and how we support our Clients to continue this when the dogs begin their working partnerships.

Find out about our Volunteers across the country who hold our brood bitches and stud dogs in their homes, and how our pups are cared for in the first weeks of their lives. If you're lucky, we may even have a pup available to say hello!



DAY TWO

Clients 90 min virtual session led by our Client Pillar

One of our youngest Guide Dog Owners will talk to you about how life was before receiving a Guide Dog and how their life has now changed allowing them to do many things a young person enjoys.

An Assistance Dog owner will explain how family life has changed since receiving their dog who supports their child, provides comfort and guidance to them but has also become a much-loved member of the family.

Our Shared and Client Services team will be happy to answer questions.



DAY THREE

Training 90 min virtual session led by our Technical Pillar

It all starts with our puppies! Learn the evolution of how our puppies are trained from 8 weeks to 12-14 months of age. This journey begins with our Puppy Raiser Volunteers. A member of our Puppy Raising team will walk you through what's involved in the puppy's training such as basic obedience, socialisation and public access exposure. Hear from one of our Puppy Raisers on what this amazing adventure means to them.

How does a Guide Dog keep their owner safe from cars, walking onto road or walking into people or objects? Our fantastic Training team will explain everything including how they train our dogs, how they decide which dogs will make the grade, and critically how they match the right dog to the right person to give each partnership the best chance of success.

DAY FOUR

Resources 60 min virtual session led by our Resources Pillar

It costs over €5 million to run our organisation each year and 85% is dependent on the generosity of the public.

Our Fundraising team will explain how they work with our network of Branches across the country to raise awareness for our work and to fundraise through various events such as challenges, on-street collections, raffles, quizzes etc. And even giving talks in schools and colleges.

The team will also explain how they put together an annual calendar of events including Guide Dog Day, our car raffle and our Christmas cards and calendar campaigns. You will learn from the Digital team how they adapted to the impact of Covid-19 which saw social media becoming the focus of all fundraising activities. Further input will be given around the other sources of funding we receive. We will bring you through the management of funds received, and the structure and governance of the organisation.

Q&As

A Question and Answer session will be led by our Shared Services team (60 mins).



DAY FIVE

Visit our Training Centre

At the end of the week we would be delighted to welcome each TY class to visit our Training Centre in Cork. There you will meet our team and plenty of dogs and get hands on experience of the work we do. This will also give us an opportunity to award certificates for completion of our TY Programme.



Why not join us for our Open Day which takes place every August



We hope you can join our TY Programme and learn how you too can help change lives.

TO APPLY

Application form is available on our website. Applications must only be submitted by TY Co-ordinators/Teachers



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www.guidedogs.ie