



# Diversity & Inclusion Case Study

**Spotlight on Janet O'Donoghue**  
Group Procurement Manager – Errigal Bay

December 2020

**BORD BIA**  
IRISH FOOD BOARD

**AON**  
Empower Results®

in  
partnership  
with



# Spotlight on Janet O'Donoghue - This month's AgDif case study focusing on Diversity & Inclusion inspiring stories.



## Passion for the Industry

Born into a fishing family, I had an inherent interest in the industry. I was given the opportunity to work temporarily in administration in Errigal Bay, while completing a business degree in LYIT Killybegs, after my youngest child started primary school. Working in various roles in Errigal Bay and covering for annual leave I knew that what I did not know could be learned. After being out of the work force for many years, these different roles gave me great confidence in my abilities. Returning to and completing third level education as a mature student made me realise that skill-wise, I was on a par with other college leavers. I cannot stress enough the importance of mentors in my career. My managers and colleagues at Errigal Bay were always encouraging, helpful and supportive.

## Overcoming Challenges

My current role as Group Procurement Manager at Errigal Bay is a position which has to date been held by a male and involves the purchase of raw material from fishing boats and companies for processing at our plants. This was my most challenging role to date as I felt that I had to 'prove' myself in what was traditionally seen as a 'mans' world. In hindsight, I must admit that my perceptions were driven by my family background in fishing. With regards to working with suppliers, there were very few occasions when I felt unwelcome anywhere because of my gender. Most of the fishing groups that I dealt with were very supportive of me in my new role. Achieving results and targets in the role gave me further confidence to expand procurement to other areas that Errigal would not have explored before.

## Aspiration Advice

I think humour is very important, as my colleagues know! And, as above – mentorship and encouragement. Women of all ages can aspire to further their career. I believe that self-belief and self- esteem are major barriers for women who would like to advance their careers or to move to other areas of work. Lack of confidence drives women away from many roles which they could excel at. A workplace culture of mentorship and encouragement underpinned by positive reinforcement will allow the person to reach their potential. As a wife and mother, the support of my family was also very important. It is this help and support that has driven me to advance my career to the position I am now in. Applying yourself to four years in college after having four children and shipping them off to school, you can progress anywhere!

## Culture of Encouragement

We have many employees working in the company and I hope seeing me progress will give other employees the impetus to realise their potential in the future. For employers, don't look at the person, but at what the person can do. Create a culture in the workplace of mentorship and encouragement which will nurture the employees' potential and give them the confidence to advance themselves. This very important role within the company proved to me that Errigal Bay which was established almost sixty years ago are very much on top of their game when it comes to Diversity and Inclusion.

Find out more about how to build and execute your D&I strategy by using the [AgDif toolkit](#), to create an environment where your employees can thrive and where you can attract the best talent to your business.

a collaborative initiative to advance and support diversity and inclusion within the Irish Food, Drink and Horticulture industry led by

**BORD BIA**  
IRISH FOOD BOARD

**AON**  
Empower Results®

in partnership  
with

30% Club  
GROWTH THROUGH DIVERSITY