

“The fundamental challenges facing our planet, from resource scarcity and climate change to digital accessibility and inequality, are not going anywhere. As long as those systemic issues exist, the work of Colectivo remains essential.”

LAURA McDERMOTT

Colectivo



Laura McDermott, from Dunboyne, Co. Meath, was working in FinTech for Bank of Ireland in Dublin when she decided to make a change. In 2015, she moved to Spain, a decision that would ultimately “supercharge” her career and leadership style. What was intended as a one-year stay became a seven-year international journey. During this time, she completed a Master’s in Customer Experience and Innovation at IE Business School in Madrid, graduating top of her class.

Her experience at IE was transformative. Laura went on to become Director of Academic Experience and Innovation and served as Design Lead in the IE Centre for Social Innovation and Sustainability, working with global corporate partners to design strategic social impact programmes across Latin America and Europe. Today, Laura remains a bridge between the Spanish and Irish business ecosystems, returning annually to Madrid as an award-winning faculty member at IE.

Laura returned to Ireland in 2022, bringing with her deep experience from the Spanish market, where sustainability reporting had been firmly embedded since 2018. While the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive created momentum in Ireland, Laura’s approach extended beyond compliance. Having witnessed the full maturity curve in Spain, she introduced a broader perspective

on what comes after reporting: how organisations embed sustainability into core strategy and develop long-term innovation programmes. Rather than focusing solely on reporting, she brought a blueprint for strategic transformation and lean innovation.

In September 2022, Laura founded Colectivo, a firm focused on making sustainability actionable. Operating as a collective of over 20 global experts, Colectivo uses behavioural design to close the “implementation gap” that often prevents strategies from being realised. Its clients include global insurance leaders, UN agencies, private sector organisations, and major universities. As an official Green Service provider for Enterprise Ireland and the IDA, the company plays a key role in supporting sustainable transformation through both private contracts and European-funded projects.

As EU priorities evolved in 2025 and demand for corporate sustainability reporting softened, many firms in the sector experienced a slowdown. Colectivo, however, remained resilient due to its focus on design and innovation rather than compliance-driven services. While the market shifted, its mission remained clear. As Laura notes: “The fundamental challenges facing our planet, from resource scarcity and climate change to digital accessibility and inequality, are not

going anywhere. As long as those systemic issues exist, the work of Colectivo remains essential.”

Laura sees the reduction in reporting requirements as an opportunity. With less emphasis on paperwork, businesses can focus on implementation—driving change through inclusive design, deep people engagement, and resource efficiency. For her, the goal is not simply to meet standards, but to redesign organisations to be more resilient, future-proof, and human-centred.

Since its launch, Colectivo has received significant recognition for its innovative approach. The firm won the Small Firms Association “New Emerging Business” award for two consecutive years and has been shortlisted for multiple Irish Green Awards for its work in construction and tourism. Laura has also earned international recognition, including being named one of the Top 100 European Women in Social Innovation by the Euclid Network in 2022, a 2024 PMI Changemaker by PwC Ireland, and a finalist for the 2025 IMAGE ESG Champion of the Year.

Laura credits much of her successful return to Ireland to the Back for Business and Starting Strong programmes, which helped her quickly navigate the Irish business landscape, build strong networks, and form lasting relationships that continue to support her journey.

COLECTIVO

POSITION

Founder and CEO

WHAT WE DO

Colectivo is a cross-sector consultancy focused on practical sustainability and innovation. We help organisations turn strategy into action by addressing environmental, workforce, and systemic challenges.

CONTACT US

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