

A watercolor illustration of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there are several sheep with white wool and black faces, some standing and some grazing. To the right, there are several bees on a surface. In the background, there is a tree with green foliage and a small house with a chimney. The overall style is soft and artistic, with a palette of greens, yellows, and browns.

# IRISH GROWN WOOL

Almanac

A directory of the people, places and  
practices shaping *Irish grown wool*

Compiled and edited by  
Prof Alison Gault, Anna Duffy, Gillian Colhoun

Future Island-Island (AHRC Green Transition Ecosystem Programme)  
Ulster University

In partnership with the Irish Grown Wool Council



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# Foreword

My commitment to wool began many years ago as a young designer, creating knitted, woven and non-woven textiles for collections acquired by the couturier Peter Lewis-Crown and the distinguished House of Lachasse. As a knitwear designer, I worked extensively with diverse wool fibres from robust sheep wool to refined blends drawn to the extraordinary tactility, chromatic richness, and structural versatility that wool affords. Whether in its natural hues or in carefully developed dyed palettes, wool offered a material intelligence that enabled designers to articulate identity, narrative, and craft through cloth. My interest in wool and natural fibres has continued over 3 decades both as a designer, lecturer and researcher educating generations of young designers.

Over subsequent decades, however, the exponential rise of synthetic fibres such as polyester, nylon, acrylic, fundamentally altered the material culture of knitwear and fashion. While these fibres delivered cost efficiencies and scalability, their petrochemical origins have contributed significantly to environmental degradation, microplastic pollution, and growing concerns regarding human health and wellbeing. In parallel, the value of native wool declined precipitously. By 2020, witnessing the collapse in wool prices and recognising the broader ecological implications, I joined the Irish Grown Wool Council to address what can only be described as a wicked problem, how to restore value, purpose, and dignity to Irish wool within a distorted global fibre economy.

Central to this endeavour has been a whole-supply-chain perspective. The challenge was not simply to advocate for wool in garments or interiors, but to explore how every micron of fibre might be used across textiles, carpets, composites, geotextiles, and insulation. This is inherently a design-led challenge, to reimagine applications, create new markets, and articulate wool's performance attributes, including thermal regulation, moisture management, biodegradability, acoustic absorption, and toxin sequestration in ways that resonate with contemporary needs.

This systems approach informed an 18-month InterTradeIreland Innovation Boost project in 2020 with Donegal Yarns, where we developed woven structures for natural fibre composites using Irish-grown wool. Through fibre commingling and structural engineering, we enhanced wool's mechanical performance, opening pathways for its use in advanced material applications. This work demonstrates that wool is not an anachronism, but a future-facing bio-based material with significant research and commercial potential.

The exploration extended to the built environment in 2025 through the creation of a roof garden on the Belfast Campus, utilising Irish-grown wool as geotextile substrate. Here, wool functioned both aesthetically and ecologically providing mulching, water retention, nutrient release, and habitats for insects and pollinators illustrating its capacity to operate within regenerative ecological systems.

Through the Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded Future Island-Island initiative, Rathlin Island was approached as a living ecosystem. Working closely with researcher Anna Duffy, we examined the island's natural fibres with a view to valorisation. Wool from the Rathlin Blackface sheep often discarded or aggregated for low-grade processing was gathered and transformed into a range of textiles, reframing a marginalised fibre as a source of cultural and material value. In collaboration with Ulster Wool, Bonner of Ireland, and the Sustainable Rope Company, we developed knitwear, rope, felted artefacts, and explored innovative uses including wool as a growing substrate for kelp cultivation.

These initiatives affirm wool's extraordinary material agency whereby it warms and insulates, absorbs toxins, regulates moisture, supports biodiversity, and offers therapeutic value through handcraft and making. It is both ancient and technologically relevant, both vernacular and innovative. Yet it has too often been maligned and undermined by inferior fibres derived from petrochemical industries.

The Irish Grown Wool Almanac celebrates the resurgence of this noble fibre. It foregrounds the work of farmers, processors, designers, researchers, and innovators who are restoring integrity and economic viability to Ireland's wool supply chain. It evidences how local fibres, when approached through systems thinking and design innovation, can contribute meaningfully to sustainability, rural resilience, and material health.

I am honoured to contribute to this collective endeavour. Wool is not simply a fibre; it is a cultural, ecological, and economic resource. Its future depends on our capacity to revalue what has long been overlooked and to recognise that within this humble fleece lies profound potential for strong, slow, and sustainable futures.

**Prof Alison Gault**

University of Ulster, Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences  
March 2026

# Irish Grown Wool Council

## Introduction

We welcome this publication as a wonderful starting point for bringing together many of the people, initiatives and organisations shaping the development of Irish grown wool today. It offers a snapshot of a living and growing network that stretches across the island of Ireland and beyond, rooted in skill and shared purpose.

As a voluntary organisation, the Irish Grown Wool Council extends our sincere thanks to Future Island-Island for their partnership, leadership, support and commitment in bringing this publication to life. Their work in supporting green transition ecosystems across the island of Ireland has provided an important platform for Irish grown wool to be recognised within broader environmental and cultural conversations.

We were also pleased to collaborate with the European Wool Exchange Foundation and Sharon Wells (Irish Fibre Artist), as well as our co-hosts Circular Bioeconomy Cluster, Centre for Applied Bioscience Research and sponsors Future Island Island, REVEIRE, Donegal Yarns, Kerry County Council and Belfast Mini Mills to celebrate and host the 'European Wool Day 2026 Conference' and 'European Wool Experience' events in Ireland. Projects like these events and this publication help us all to connect Irish grown wool into a wider ecosystem of sustainable fibre initiatives and enhance knowledge exchange across regions and countries.

This publication is a new chapter. It starts to tangibly bring together those working in wool to be more visible and connected, marking the beginning of a broader effort to map and support the full Irish grown wool ecosystem. Crucially, it enables people to find one another; to identify farmers, processors, suppliers, collaborators, educators, designers, researchers, makers and those working to build new relationships across regions and disciplines. Alongside this printed edition, a growing digital version will continue to expand visibility, strengthen connections and ensure this network can evolve beyond these pages.

We hope it sparks new collaborations, strengthens supply and value chains and affirms that Irish grown wool from field to fibre and beyond is a valuable and viable sustainable resource with deep roots and strong future potential.

**Catherine Phibbs**

[irishgrownwoolcouncil.com](http://irishgrownwoolcouncil.com)

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this almanac, and to the wider Irish grown wool landscape it represents.

This publication exists because of the generosity of primary producers, makers, processors, educators, researchers, community groups, mills, merchants, designers, and advocates who took the time to share their work, reflections, and images. Together, these listings form a living picture of Irish grown wool across the island of Ireland.

We are especially grateful to all contributors who submitted material within a very tight timeframe, and to those who provided photographs, credits and permissions for print and digital publication.

Our thanks also go to the Irish Grown Wool Council for partnership and sector leadership, and to the many individuals and organisations working across the supply chain who continue to build momentum for Irish grown wool through collaboration, experimentation, and care.

This almanac is funded and published by Future Island-Island, an AHRC Green Transition Ecosystem programme, and has been produced as part of a wider programme of place-based, design-led research and engagement.

We also acknowledge the broader communities, local knowledge, and practical traditions that sustain wool work across generations. This publication is a small contribution to recognising that work and helping make it more visible.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of listings and contact details. Where errors or omissions occur, they are unintentional.

Future Island-Island (AHRC Green Transition Ecosystem Project, AH/Y003780/1)  
Co-Directors: Professor Justin Magee, Ulster University and Dr Clare Mulholland, Queen's University

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Primary Producers

# Cape Clear Sheep Caora Chléire



## Kirstie Affleck

Cape Clear Sheep / Caora Chléire is a small island farm with mixed breeds on Cape Clear Island. I shear and spin the wool from the flock, and I also design and knit art pieces. My work connects primary production with making and has been supported through Creative Places West Cork Islands. Working from a small island setting keeps the link between land, livestock, fibre, and craft very visible in everyday life.

**County Cork**  
capeclearsheep.ie  
capeclearsheep@gmail.com  
Instagram icon capeclearsheep

### Highlights so far?

My knitted art pieces were displayed at Cork City Library as part of an exhibition curated by Creative Places West Cork Islands in March 2025.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Processing wool from farm to yarn makes me feel connected to both the land and our human heritage, as carers of livestock, and to the tactile experience of making by hand. Wool is also a highly sustainable and practical material, especially in the damp Irish climate.

Primary Producers

# Cladoir Sheep Breeders Society

## Sandra King

The Cladóir/Claddagh is a rare native Irish sheep, historically kept mainly for wool and closely associated with South Connemara's coastal and upland farming traditions. Long thought to be extinct, the breed has re-emerged in Connemara and is now the focus of an active preservation and regeneration effort, working with Connemara National Park, Teagasc and wider breeders to rebuild numbers over time. A key strand of this work is assessing and grading Cladóir wool, improving traceability, and making fleece available for craft spinners, weavers and knitters, including collaboration with Irish Fibre Crafters to test and showcase its qualities in use.

**County Clare**  
irishfibrecrafters.com/shop  
cladoir.ie  
irishfibrecrafters@gmail.com

### Highlights so far?

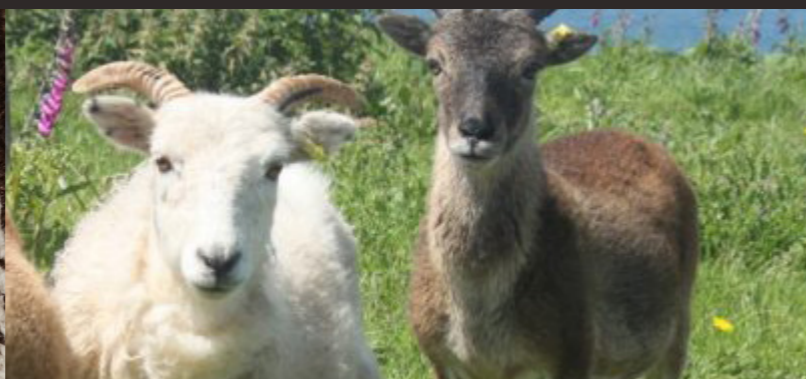
The sheep breed was lost, but a dedicated group partnered with Connemara National Park and regional stakeholders to protect it. Now in their third year, they collaborate on selling wool from this native Irish breed. Last year, the wool committee created a label and sold their yarn at regional events.

### Why Irish grown wool?

The Cladoir or Claddagh are a native Irish landrace sheep breed traditionally valued for their wool. Adapted to the west of Ireland's environment, they are more sustainable than non-native breeds. Their wool connects to Aran sweater heritage, and building a market for it helps farmers preserve the breed for future generations.

*"Wool - the unsung hero of human civilisation."*

*"Using wool from Irish native breeds of sheep to make traditional Irish garments, you can't get any better than that!"*



Primary Producers

# Curraghmore Farm

## Sandra Spethmann

Curraghmore Farm is actively involved in the Wise Wool Project, which received Creative Ireland Kerry funding in 2024, 2025 and 2026. The project focuses on educating the local community about the wool waste issue in Ireland through workshops for adults and children, including weaving and felting with local wool. Curraghmore Farm is also collaborating with MTU Tralee through the Circular Bioeconomy Cluster to support circularity and diversification strategies in livestock production systems.

**County Kerry**  
curraghmorefarm.ie  
hello@curraghmorefarm.ie  
Instagram: [curraghmorefarm.ie](#)  
Facebook: [Curraghmore Farm](#)



### Highlights so far?

A major highlight has been Curraghmore Farm's contribution to the circular bioeconomy through collaboration with MTU Tralee. Our upland sheep system is recognised as an important real-world site for validating on-farm circular wool applications and providing practical data with wider relevance for marginal farming regions.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to Curraghmore Farm because it has lost value and is often treated as a waste product. Through collaboration with Munster Technological University and the Wise Wool Project, we want to help develop higher-value applications, provide real-world feasibility data from a marginal upland farming system, and restore the economic and cultural value of wool within the sheep farming community.

Primary Producers

# Feirm Olann

## Linda Maria Costello

Feirm Olann is a sheep and cattle farm in County Galway. Our sheep produce both white and black fleece, and wool craft is an integral part of life on the farm. We wash, card, dye, and spin our own wool, working hands-on with the fibre from fleece to finished yarn. Our work connects farming, fibre processing, and creative making, keeping the journey of Irish wool rooted in the land where it is grown.

**County Galway**  
feirmolann.carrd.co  
lindamariacostello@gmail.com  
Instagram: [Galwaylamb](#)s

### Highlights so far?

I am a member of Fibreshed Ireland, the Natural Dyers Academy, and Feltmakers Ireland. I recently completed a year-long professional natural dyeing course, deepening my knowledge of plant-based colour and strengthening the link between wool, biodiversity, and sustainable craft practice.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is linked to our heritage, our struggles, and our achievements. Wars were fought and won so Irish farmers could have the opportunity to farm and produce our own Irish products. It is a privilege to be caretakers of this land and the animals that roam it. Irish wool should not be forgotten or treated as a waste product.

*“Wool: The natural fibre is now a living lab for a circular future, transforming low-value streams into sustainable solutions for the farm and planet.”*

*“Our sheep are raised with care, and their wool inspires creativity linked with biodiversity and the land.”*



Primary Producers

# Gleann na nGealt Organic Sheepfarm

## Brigid O'Connor

Gleann na nGealt Organic Sheepfarm is a traditional hill farm in Camp on the Dingle Peninsula, where I raise 100 Scotch Blackface breeding ewes. Each spring we lamb, and in July we shear. For many years, the wool was sold on to a local buyer and later shipped to England, but the fibre has always been part of our seasonal rhythm and farm identity. Our sheep are hardy hill animals, closely tied to this landscape. My work sits firmly at the beginning of the wool journey, as a primary producer, with a growing focus on reconnecting visitors and consumers to the source of Irish wool.

County Kerry  
brigid.oconnor@yahoo.com

 Brigid O Connor

### Highlights so far?

Through our Shepherd's Farm Walk, part of the Experience Dingle Peninsula Airbnb Experience, we share the story and heritage of our hill farm on a two-hour guided walk through Gleann na nGealt. Guests learn about sheep, land, and local culture, and each visitor receives a Takeaway Wool Pack made from organic wool from our own flock, allowing them to bring a small piece of the farm home.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it supports local farmers, strengthens rural economies, and promotes biodiversity. Its natural, circular qualities reduce waste and enhance climate resilience, while the knowledge and craftsmanship behind it preserve heritage skills and create products that are both sustainable and meaningful.


Primary Producers

# Jayne Harkness (Bones)

## Farmer / Woolman / PhD Researcher

As a seventh-generation sheep farmer, wool has been central to my life, from childhood to representing Northern Ireland at eight Golden Shears World Championships. I recently declined a ninth opportunity to compete to focus on lambing and starting my PhD at Ulster University, where I research how agricultural developments can support the use of UK and Irish wool in textiles and composites. My work includes Irish Grown Wool Council contributions, Balmoral wool handling initiatives, training programmes, the CAFRE Wool Scholarship, Rathlin Wool Project, and eight years as a British Wool Depot Manager.

County Antrim  
thewoolguru@outlook.com

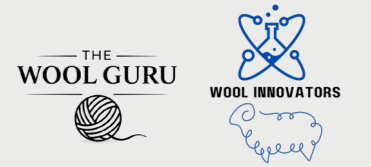
 Jayne Harkness (Bones)

### Highlights so far?

I have been recognised for services to shearing by the British Isles Shearing Competitions Association and hold an Associateship from the Council for Awards of Royal Agricultural Societies. I am a Freeman of the City of London, a Woolmen member, and serve on the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society council and sheep shearing committee, and on Agri-Search's Sheep Advisory Committee.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is more than a fibre. It is a material culture shaped by lineage, landscape and lived practice, connecting community, heritage, agriculture and education. It lives in classrooms, shearing sheds and fields, where knowledge, labour and identity meet. Grounded in primary production and practical skill, it is also a future-facing resource shaped by both flock and steward.



*"Gleann na nGealt sheep spin the valley's secrets into wool."*

*"If it weren't for the humble sheep, none of us would look as good, sleep as well, or live as healthy... and please don't suggest wool should be in insulation... it has been from the beginning of time!"*



Primary Producers

# Kylemore Lodge

## Emer Walsh

At Kylemore Lodge we are at the beginning of our journey with wool. Our organic farm is home to 1,200 native Blackface ewes, lambing in April. Set between lakes and the stunning Twelve Bens mountain range, we are developing a considered eco-tourism branch alongside the farm. We have recently been in discussions with a felt-maker and plan to begin producing wool and sheep-based products, alongside wool-focused visitor experiences. We hope to introduce hikers and visitors to the wonders of Irish wool through farm and garden activities, wool and craft demonstrations, felt-making and wool processing workshops, and spinning demonstrations.

**County Galway**  
emerwnt@gmail.com

### Highlights so far?

As an organic farm, we are excited about plans to collaborate with another organic farm. We see a mutually beneficial journey opening up: Kylemore with its native sheep and breathtaking landscape, and our partners bringing extensive skills in wool processing and felt-making.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool offers an opportunity to regenerate traditions of rural life and reawaken skills and knowledge around its traditional use. We are passionate about reconnecting the local community with wool heritage, teaching visitors about sheep and wool traditions in the Kylemore area, and working collaboratively within the wool industry.

*“Meet like-minded individuals with a longing to regenerate traditions of Irish rural life and reawaken skills and knowledge around the traditional use of wool in Connemara.”*

Primary Producers

# Lecarrow Wellness

## Tara Eastwood Lyons

The home of Lecarrow Wellness is our organic farm in Ballyhaunis, County Mayo, run by husband-and-wife team Tara and John Gerard Murphy. Our working farm is home to a small flock of sheep and a herd of Connemara ponies. We farm organic sheep with a specific focus on wool quality, keeping a mixed flock including Jacob, Belclare and Texel sheep. As an organic, regenerative farm, we prioritise biodiversity enrichment and the restoration of natural habitats in our commitment to living in harmony with nature. Wool is central to this vision, valued not as a by-product but as a primary resource.

**County Mayo**  
lecarrow.ie  
info@lecarrow.ie  
@lecarrowfarm

### Highlights so far?

We have recently collaborated with Annie Gambrill of Gambrill & Lam in North Mayo to create bespoke products from Irish wool, with traceability at the forefront. After three years of research and development, we are preparing to launch our products in early spring. Our naturally coloured wool produces a distinctive grey fleece with warm brown undertones, reflecting the landscape from which it comes.

### Why Irish grown wool?

We believe Irish wool deserves to be valued as a true resource. Our collaboration unites organic sheep farming with traditional handweaving to craft durable, locally grounded products made to last. We envision these pieces becoming cherished heirlooms, passed down through generations, demonstrating sustainable farming where wool is the primary product, not a by-product.

*“Selling products made with wool from our very own sheep has been a dream of ours for a long time. To see it come to fruition is so exciting for us.”*



Primary Producers

# Mackell Farm

## Laura Coughlin

Mackell Farm is a small farm in County Mayo where we raise wool from our flock and hand-process it. Our work sits at the beginning of the wool journey, rooted in sheep keeping and hands-on fibre work on the farm. We are part of a long family tradition of working with sheep and wool, and we continue that connection today through small-scale, practical use of the wool we produce.

**County Mayo**  
lracough@gmail.com  
@lauracoughlinart

### Highlights so far?

Our family has raised sheep and processed wool on this farm since at least the 1800s, and it means a great deal to continue that tradition today.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to us because it is a beautiful, useful natural fibre that too often goes to waste in Ireland.

Primary Producers

# Mary Noonan

## Sheep Farmer

I have worked on the family sheep and cattle farm in West Cork since I could walk. I have a great love of farming, animals and nature, and a particular passion for sheep. It is worrying to see so little value placed on wool by our government, when it is such a natural and versatile product. I supply wool to crafters, as I farm many different breeds of sheep. I also use surplus wool mixed with straw for livestock bedding, since prices from wool merchants became so low. I welcome all ideas to maximise the use of Irish wool in Ireland. I now farm full-time with the help of my four sons and hope the value wool once had can be restored.

**County Cork**  
Marytraining16@gmail.com

### Highlights so far?

I was delighted to be asked to write my story for the book "Exploring Irish Wool for Feltmaking" by Feltmakers Ireland, and thrilled to see it published and to read the other stories from around Ireland. A crafter I supply wool to, recognised my knowledge and interest in wool and sheep and encouraged me to write the article. She is also amazed at the variety of sheep breeds I farm.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I have worked with sheep all my life. My parents and uncle told stories of what they could buy with wool sales after shearing. It is appalling to think it is now considered a waste product. Farmers must shear sheep for welfare, and it would be great to see a market reopen and add value to farmers' incomes.

*"We're excited to be part of Ireland's wool community!"*

*"Things can only get better for the wool industry. I love dividing and labelling the different fleeces for the needs of various crafters and hearing their feedback."*



Primary Producers

# Mount Henry Irish Wool

## Joanne Slevin

I work full-time on my family farm and am the fourth generation to run it. I keep a flock of sheep and have recently begun processing some of the wool myself. I sell skirted fleeces as well as carded wool. I am still learning the spinning process and hope one day to sell spun wool too, developing the journey from flock to finished fibre on the farm.

**County Laois**  
mounthentryirishwool@gmail.com  
Instagram *MountHenryIrishWool*

### Highlights so far?

My biggest milestone has been taking wool from my own flock and processing it to the stage where it can be worn.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I am passionate about Irish wool because it is slow fashion, made through traditional skills that are invaluable.

Primary Producers

# Windrush Farm

## Sophie Nicol

Our connection to Irish wool begins on our farm, where we keep a fibre-only flock of pedigree Zwartbles sheep. We care for the sheep year-round and follow the fleece through shearing, processing and carding before using it in our workshops and experiences. The farm and business are run by me and my mum, Lucinda, and I am a third-generation female farmer, continuing a family tradition of working closely with land, animals and craft. Day to day, we focus on making Irish wool visible, valued and tactile again. Through farm tours and needle felting workshops, we invite people into the full "field to felt" process: meeting the sheep, learning how wool is prepared, and making felted pieces by hand.

**County Wicklow**  
windrushfarm.ie  
info@windrushfarm.ie  
Instagram *windrush\_farm\_ireland*  
Facebook *Windrush Farm*

### Highlights so far?

One of the most meaningful parts of our journey has been sharing our love for the sheep and the land they live on. Showing people how a fleece goes from field to usable fibre, and giving them the chance to make something by hand, makes it real. It is rewarding to see people connect with the animals, land, and craft, and share how everything is linked.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is vital for a sustainable textile industry and preserving heritage and craftsmanship. On our regenerative farm, sheep support climate resilience and biodiversity. We believe hands-on, engaging experiences are the most effective way to connect people with wool and raise awareness of its value.



*"From flock to fleece, from fluff to fabric."*

*"Every fleece has its own story, shaped by the land, the shepherd, and the hands that work it."*



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No 10.

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# Coffey Wool Exports

## Patrick Coffey

Coffey Wool Exports is a family-run business involved in the Irish wool industry for four generations. We buy wool throughout Roscommon and the west of Ireland and bring it to our depot in Lecarrow, where it is graded and baled for sale on international markets. We work at the handling, grading, and wool merchant stage of the wool journey, linking sheep farmers with export markets. We are also the only GOTS-certified handlers of organic wool in the Republic of Ireland.

**County Roscommon**  
coffeywoolexports@gmail.com  
f P Coffey & Sons Ltd

### Highlights so far?

A key milestone has been working with other members of the Irish Grown Wool Council to produce the guide 'Shear Success' on wool quality and presentation, distributed to sheep farmers nationwide in a joint effort to improve the quality of the national clip.

### Why Irish grown wool?

From our perspective, we have seen the trade go through many ups and downs, as with any commodity, and the years during and after Covid were especially difficult. Wool is a defining part of our rural heritage, and with stakeholders working together we hope to build public awareness and enthusiasm for Irish wool and its quality and potential.

# Paul Lannen & Son Ltd Lannen Wool

## Liam Lannen

We generally deal directly with farmers and manage the required paperwork for the Department of Agriculture. Our work involves grading wool, classifying different wool types, baling them, and preparing them for export. As merchants and brokers, we operate at the early stages of the wool journey, handling Irish wool and ensuring it is processed and moved efficiently through the supply chain.

**County Waterford**  
liamlannen@gmail.com

### Highlights so far?

Our family has been involved in the wool trade for generations, and I have continued that tradition, working with wool as an important part of Irish farming.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Wool is a natural product. It is biodegradable and renewable each year. It ticks all the boxes.

*"It takes a sheep one year to grow a fleece, but a few minutes of careless management can ruin it forever."*

*"100% natural."*




# Ulster Wool



## Stephen Preston

Ulster Wool is a farmer-owned cooperative, handling around 1,500 tonnes of wool each year on behalf of more than 4,000 sheep farmers. Acting as a central route to market, Ulster Wool collects wool, grades and packs it, carries out testing where required, and markets and sells Irish wool on farmers' behalf through the British Wool auction system. Alongside this core handling and sales role, Ulster Wool supports the wider sector through shearing training and by helping promote wool's value and potential through links with the Campaign for Wool and the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO).

**County Antrim**  
ulsterwool.com  
StephenPreston@ulsterwool.com  
 *UlsterWool*

### Highlights so far?

Ulster Wool has been working on behalf of its members for 75 years. We have consistently returned the best value to Irish farmers for their wool through our grading, quality, and market access. Ulster Wool continues to innovate, having introduced full traceability back to farm on every bale of wool it sells, and is open to working with farmers, co-ops, and wool businesses across the whole of Ireland.

### Why Irish grown wool?


Irish wool has exceptional qualities for a range of premium applications including carpets, bedding, and apparel. Ulster Wool champions its value and seeks to ensure that this flows back to the farmers. We need to be proud of our product and see end brands specifying Irish wool in their products.

# Caoirigh



## Evin Higgins

Caoirigh is a sheep farm, licensed wool store and scouring plant based on a family farm outside Tuam, County Galway. We supply 100% Irish wool to crafters in Ireland, with wool traceable back to the farm of origin and scoured in a chemical-free way. Caoirigh began with a simple aim: to add value to the wool produced on a smallholding in the west of Ireland. After seeing wool paid below its production cost, we focused on what makers needed most: small quantities of properly scoured, washed wool ready for further processing and creative use.

**County Galway**  
caoirigh.ie  
sales.caoirigh@gmail.com  
 *caoirigh\_irishwool*

### Highlights so far?

A major milestone was developing an environmentally friendly scouring and washing process and securing a licence to store and scour wool. That step allowed us to move wool beyond its lowest-value routes and create a practical, usable fibre for crafters and small-scale production.

### Why Irish grown wool

No climate. No life long-term. This is my personal opinion so we are putting in the effort to make the whole process as environmentally friendly as possible and this effort will be ongoing at Caoirigh Farms.

*“With demand for crossbred wool driving prices to the highest level in a decade, let’s ensure we make the most of Irish grown wool.”*

*“Irish wool is great again.”*



# WOOLSTORE



## Katarina Hruskova

WOOLSTORE processes 100% Irish wool sourced from local farmers in the west of Ireland. Based in Belclare, County Galway, we work directly with fleece from farm level, offering processing services to individuals and companies up to the carding stage. Our aim is to strengthen regional wool infrastructure and keep more value within Ireland by building capacity in early-stage processing. With plans to develop into a full woollen mill in the future, our work currently sits within wool handling and processing, helping to move fleece from raw material towards usable fibre for makers, designers, and industry.

**County Galway**  
woolstore.ie  
woolstore.ie@gmail.com  
📷 woolstoreireland

### Highlights so far?

I was honoured to work with Cecilia Vicuña, processing 275 metres of Galway wool for her exhibition at IMMA Dublin, running until July 2026. It was a privilege to see Irish wool take centre stage within a major contemporary art context.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Wool is our heritage and it heals our body and soul. Irish wool connects us to land, tradition, and craft. It is a natural, renewable fibre with deep cultural roots and powerful potential for the future.

*“I love Irish wool, and I hope more and more people will realise how amazing it is and why we should use it.”*



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RAW  
WOOL

WASHED  
WOOL

PICKED  
WOOL

CARDED  
WOOL

# Cushendale Woollen Mills

## Miriam Cushen

Cushendale Woollen Mills has a deep-rooted connection to Irish wool, built on generations of craft, community, and care for natural fibre. As one of Ireland's few remaining vertical mills, we oversee every stage of production on-site in Graiguenamanagh, County Kilkenny, from raw fleece to finished textile. We work closely with Irish sheep farmers to source high-quality, locally grown wool, which we then wash, dye, card, spin, weave, and finish in-house. Our team of skilled craftspeople combine traditional methods with contemporary design to create sustainable, traceable Irish wool products. By preserving heritage techniques while championing Irish-grown fibre, we ensure that the story of Irish wool continues to thrive in today's world.

**County Kilkenny**  
cushendale.ie  
info@cushendale.ie

🌐 📷 📱 cushendale

### Highlights so far?

Throughout our journey, we have continued to champion Irish-grown wool, even while working with fibres like mohair and merino. We partner with Galway sheep farmers, supporting Ireland's only native breed. A proud milestone was collaborating with designer Thom Browne, supplying Irish wool yarn for an Autumn/Winter collection on the global stage.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to us because it is such an important part of our national heritage, from both our land and rural communities. It represents a deep connection to our history and environment, and supports a more sustainable future by keeping traditional skills and responsible wool production alive within the mill. As a natural, renewable, and circular fibre, Irish wool plays an important role in resilient, low-impact textile manufacturing.

*“Irish wool tells the story of our land, our history and our future, a fibre rooted in place, made to last, and woven with purpose.”*



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Spinning

# Donegal Yarns Ltd

## Chris Weiniger

Donegal Yarns is one of the few remaining woollen spinning mills in Ireland, tracing its heritage to the early traditions of hand spinning that date back centuries, when Irish tweed yarns were spun, woven, and knitted in local homes. Today, we are a fully vertical spinning mill in Kilcar, County Donegal, using wool sourced both locally and internationally to supply local and global markets with the famous Donegal Tweed yarn. The full production process and distribution takes place at our Donegal mill, in a village with a long history of industrial textile manufacturing.

**County Donegal**  
donegalyarns.com  
info@donegalyarns.com

   donegalyarns



### Highlights so far?

We have worked across the supply chain to reintroduce Irish wool into our products, bringing together farmers, merchants, academia and customers. Future Island-Island has shown how innovation can turn a natural resource into a valued product, supporting communities and demonstrating circular economy in practice.

### Why Irish grown wool?

The foundations of our business are built on the provenance and heritage of natural resources and skilled making. Being able to combine technical innovation in our industry with a locally sourced natural fibre is both rewarding and full of potential.

*“Wool - naturally sustainable, good for you and the planet.”*



Spinning

# Spin Me a Yarn

## Elizabeth O'Connor

I am a spinner, working primarily with Irish-grown wool as well as other fibres. I spin on wheels and spindles and teach both methods to others. I have a strong interest in textile history and textile archaeology, and alongside spinning I practise older fibre crafts such as sprang and nalbinding. My work sits at the hand-spinning stage of the wool journey, transforming locally sourced fleece into yarn and sharing traditional skills with new generations.

**County Limerick**  
lizoconnor65@gmail.com

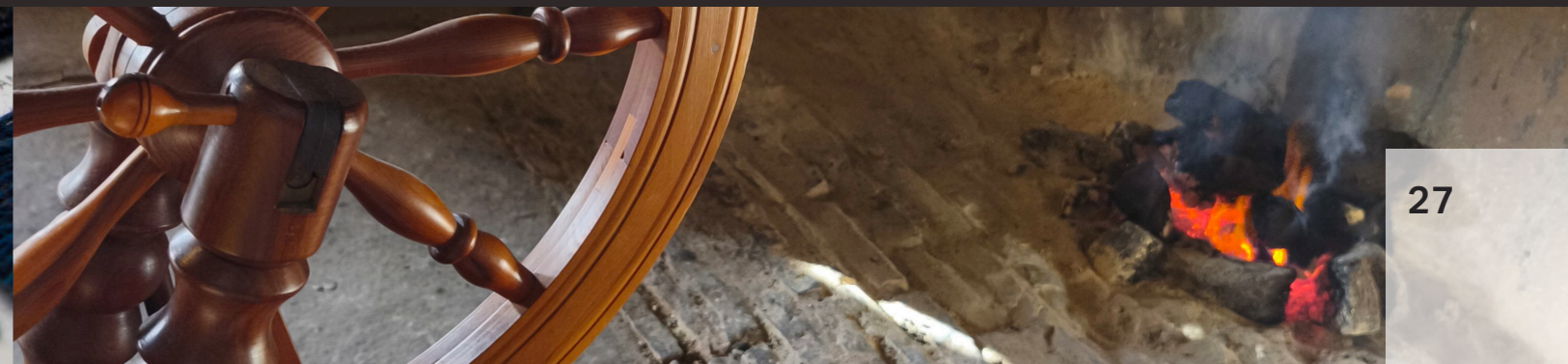
### Highlights so far?

I have been a member of the Irish Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers for over ten years. Within the Guild, many spinners buy Irish-grown wool from local farmers to spin into yarn, as I do. I have met many inspiring spinners, weavers, and dyers using local wool, and there has been a growing awareness among Guild members of the importance of supporting our local wool industry.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is local, fewer air miles, non-polluting, warm, and farmed by families living on the land. For me, it is very important to demonstrate the skills of spinning, weaving, and dyeing to the public, increasing understanding and appreciation of what Irish wool can do.

*“Wool: I hope we warm to wool as much as wool warms us!”*



Spinning

two rivers mill

# Two Rivers Mill

## Phil Allen

We are a small family-run mill that works with Irish alpaca fibre using the worsted process to make strong, lustrous yarns from raw fleece for knitting and weaving. We can blend alpaca with sheepswool and other natural fibres to the benefit of the finished yarn. We enjoy working with small brands and makers to create beautiful bespoke natural yarns for their special projects.

**County Derry/Londonderry**  
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phil@tworiversmill.com

  *philtworivers*

### Highlights so far?

We recently moved our mill from England to Northern Ireland for a better business and living environment and are now working with Irish alpaca breeders to create a market for their unique and under-used fibre.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Processing high-quality alpaca fibre in Ireland is a vital step towards creating a market for Irish natural fibre products and contributing to the financial viability of Irish herds, as well as ensuring the continuity of textile manufacturing expertise on the island.



Dyeing

# EweMomma

## Tracey Whitehead

I spin and hand-dye Galway wool and wool from sheep born and bred in County Fermanagh. My work sits across spinning, dyeing, and maker-facing fibre preparation, with a focus on traceable, locally grown wool. I also sell washed fleece for spinning and work directly with customers who value Irish-grown fibre and its story. Alongside this, I run a weekly spinning group, including spinners who process fleece from their own Fermanagh sheep, and I deliver spinning workshops using locally grown fleece.

**County Fermanagh**  
ewemomma.co.uk  
info@ewemomma.co.uk

 *ewemomma*  
 *ewemommaknits*

### Highlights so far?

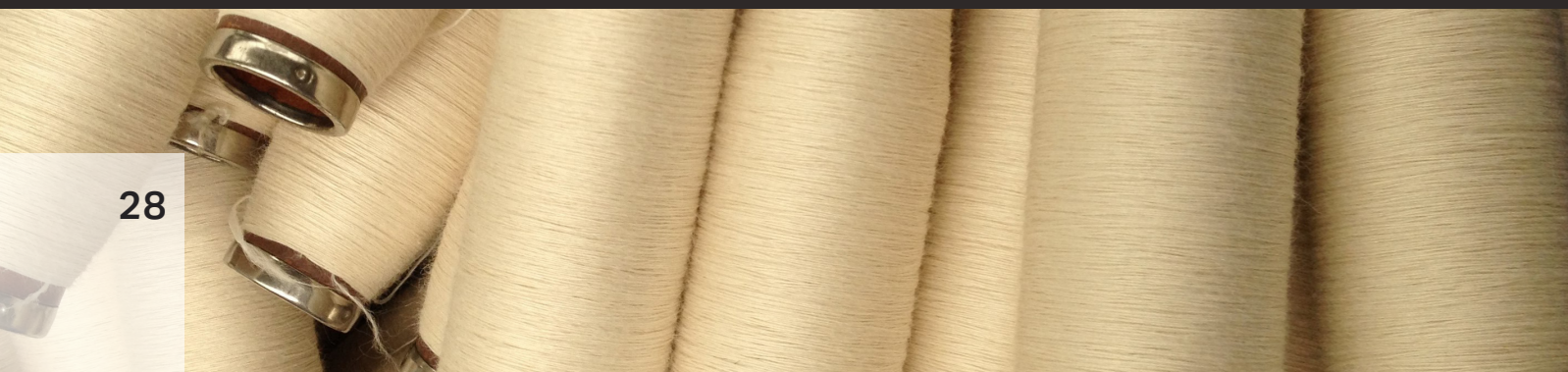
I have promoted Irish Galway wool and sold washed fleece for spinning to customers around the world. I run a weekly spinning group that includes people spinning and carding fleece from their own Fermanagh sheep. Our group takes part in demonstrations to promote spinning and Irish wool whenever possible, and I also run spinning workshops using local fleece.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish-grown wool matters because it is sustainable, local, and deeply rooted in our craft heritage. It supports farmers, reduces environmental impact, and performs beautifully in our climate. Each fleece tells a traceable story of land, sheep, and skill, connecting modern makers with generations of Irish textile tradition while keeping rural economies and skills alive.

*“Using good quality natural fibre is a benefit to everyone involved, from the breeder to the wearer.”*

*“Every strand of Irish wool carries the land, the sheep, and the maker’s hands, a story of care, craft, and connection you can feel in every stitch.”*






Dyeing

# Herbarium Dyeworks

## Debbie Orr

Herbarium Dyeworks is a natural dye studio, using mostly plants to colour yarn and silk threads. Part of my range includes a Bluefaced Leicester Romney worsted spun blend that is grown, collected and spun in Ireland. I also dye alpaca wool from a local farm, spun in Northern Ireland.

**County Down**  
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   herbariumdyeworks



### Highlights so far?

After a couple of failed attempts to acquire Irish yarn, I was delighted to find Ériu who work with small farms specialising in specific breeds which provide excellent knitting yarn. The skeins come with traceability tags so that the customer can get an idea of where their yarn was produced. I called the wool Lomra which is Irish for fleece.

### Why Irish grown wool?

When I first started as a dyer in 2007, much of my cashmere and silk yarns at the time were imported from China. Now I do get some yarn types from South America but anything to reduce those air miles and make the most of what we have on our doorstep makes more sense.

*“The reintroduction of mills and scouring plants on the island would be my big hope.”*



Dyeing

# Talú

## Malú Colorín

Talú is Malú Colorín's natural dye house and educational project. Through it, she helps creatives use colour as a catalyst to remember our relationship to the land. Her offerings include workshops, art, and events, including the Archipelago Festival of Colour. Malú mostly dyes with and teaches using local natural fibres, and Irish-grown wool is always present in the dye house. In her natural dyeing workshops, she speaks about the importance of local natural fibres such as linen and wool. Participants usually dye a skein of Irish-grown wool from either Ériu or the Galway Wool Co-op.

**County Wicklow**  
talu.earth  
malu@talu.earth  
 talu.earth



### Highlights so far?

Since 2024, Talú and Ériu have been collaborating to deliver wool experiences for knitting tours. Participants visit the Ériu farm and meet the sheep that produce Ériu's signature luxury yarn. Afterwards, Malú leads a natural dyeing workshop using yarn from the sheep they have just met, creating a direct connection between animal, fibre, and finished piece.

### Why Irish grown wool?

As a natural dye studio and educational hub that aims to keep its value chain as short as possible, using locally available materials such as Irish-grown wool and dye plants is a core part of Talú's ethos. This aligns with Fibershed's soil-to-soil model, which informs every aspect of the business.

*“Just like we appreciate the terroir of wine, wool from different breeds and locations needs to be appreciated for its unique properties.”*



Designer Makers



# Aoife Mc Namara

## Designer Maker

Aoife Mc Namara is committed to exploring Ireland’s material heritage through contemporary design. Since launching her label in 2019, she has dreamt of creating a textile entirely her own: 100% Irish wool. At the intersection of design, research, and craft, we work closely with Irish farmers, spinners, and mills to refine fibre, texture, and performance. We are currently developing a wool that is locally sourced, renewable, and durable, designed to be worn for years rather than seasons. Our involvement spans the entire journey, ensuring that the material carries the story of landscape, craft, and cultural legacy.

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📷 *aoife\_ireland*

### Highlights so far?

The development and limited release of our first piece crafted from 100% Irish wool, a project six years in the making. Inspired by Ireland’s landscapes and craft heritage, we are proud to work with local farmers and mills to create a sustainable, high-quality textile, and wholly Irish. Becoming a certified B Corp has further strengthened our commitment to responsible, purpose-driven design.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to us because it connects people, place, and craft. Working with local farmers and spinners, we are helping sustain rural livelihoods, preserve traditional skills, and create a material that celebrates Ireland’s landscapes and biodiversity. For us, it’s about producing a durable, natural textile that is both beautiful and responsible.

Designer Makers

# AranAccessories

## Máirín Ní Dhonncha

I’m a designer of knitting patterns and I use Irish wool whenever possible. My Ogham Scarf design is one example, created using organic Irish wool by Yarn Vibes. I’ve also created patterns using Galway wool, Nua by Stolen Stitches, and wool from Donegal Wool Spinning company.

**County Galway**  
aranaccessories.net  
info@aranaccessories.net  
📷 *aranaccessories*

### Highlights so far?

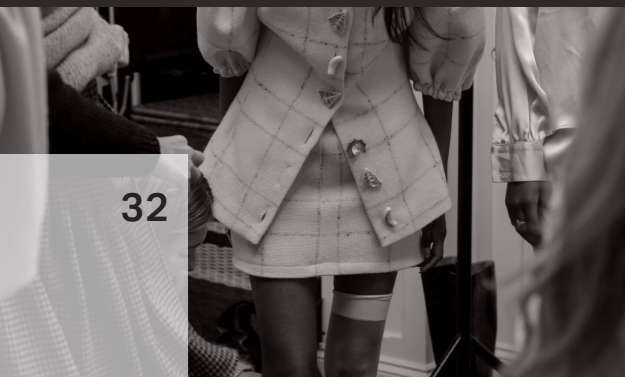
I’m proud of my Ogham Scarf design. I was delighted with how I recreated the ancient Ogham language, originally carved on the corner of a large stone, in a soft textile accessory that any knitter can replicate. The scarf spells “Le Grá” (with love) in Ogham.

### Why Irish grown wool?

My father had a few sheep which he would shear in summer purely for their comfort; the wool had no commercial value. Yet it is an incredible material: warm, robust, biodegradable, and a tangible link to our craft and textile heritage. Anything which raises its profile and perceived value is important to me.

*“A material shaped by place, made with intention, and deeply connected to Ireland’s land and spirit.”*

*“I hope that we are on the cusp of a wonderful revival of Irish wool.”*



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# BÁINÍN

## Sarah Dowling

I graduated from Limerick School of Art and Design in 2025 with a BA in Fashion Design with Sustainability. My collection centred on textile research using 100% Irish-grown Galway wool, sourced via Donegal Yarns. I aimed to create traceable garments that could return to the earth, connecting farmer to garment. I challenged the “waste product” narrative, softening knitwear and using deadstock Irish linen to reduce coarseness while keeping materials natural. Showcasing that our naturally beautiful, heritage-rich raw material has a place in the evolving fashion industry was central to this project.

**County Galway**  
sarahdowlingdesign@gmail.com  
📷 [sarah.dowling.design](#)

### Highlights so far?

Exploring a local natural fibre made the work feel more enjoyable and guilt free. I was shortlisted for the Arts Thread Only Natural design competition and won the Arts Thread Global Creative Graduate Showcase 2025 in the Sustainable Fashion/Textiles specialism. Seeing 100% Irish wool recognised on a global fashion platform is a milestone I am very proud of.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Farmers should be getting a fair price for their hard work. Irish wool is not a waste product, and there is a place for 100% Irish wool in the ever-changing fashion industry. The more we explore, research and create with Irish wool, the bigger its future will be. Circular and regenerative design is the only way we can continue to produce, in any industry.

# Bluebell Knitting Consultancy Services Frederique Knits

## Frederique van Buuren

Frederique Knits promotes knitting, a love of natural yarns, and the process of knitting and spinning with natural, often local Irish yarn. As part of this work, I provide technical pattern review services for Irish brands and designers, and I am rolling out knitting classes during 2025. Day to day, I rewrite patterns to support a wider audience, review patterns, knit sample pieces and test products. I also give talks and demonstrations for children and adults on the fleece-to-yarn process, spinning, and the benefits of choosing local wool. In short, I love sheep, the wool they produce, what we can do with it, and sharing that with others.

**County Wicklow**  
frederiqueknits@gmail.com  
📷 📺 [frederique\\_knits](#)

### Highlights so far?

I’m very honoured to work with Ériu Ireland, based in my home county Wicklow, preparing their knitting patterns for a worldwide audience. I believe in the quality and potential of local wool, its environmental benefits, and the importance of supporting local farmers and businesses. I couldn’t believe my luck when I got the chance to help develop their designs and to spread the word, and wool, to other knitters.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Wool is a valuable natural resource that we need to learn to use again. I love understanding the processes from farm to end product, sharing this with others, and encouraging people to move away from non-circular fibres and towards natural, circular materials instead.

*“I am really looking forward to seeing Irish wool being developed for different products in various industries over the coming years. This versatile and biodegradable natural material has a really bright future.”*

*“I hope that our lovely Christmas jumpers will be made from natural and local wool in the near future!”*



Designer Makers

# Brenda Hewitt Handweaver

## Designer Maker

Brenda Hewitt is a handweaver and textile designer living and working in Gortahork, County Donegal. She creates handwoven fashion and interior accessories, individually designed and woven by hand. Her work is rooted in Donegal's weaving heritage, including genuine handwoven Donegal tweed, and she works with Irish wool yarns including Donegal Yarns, Cushendale and Galway Wool.

**County Donegal**  
brendaehewitt84@gmail.com  
📷 [brenda.handweaver](#)

### Highlights so far?

I have been weaving for over 30 years, continuously experimenting with colour and texture, and never weaving two pieces the same.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I am passionate about the environment and proud to have a product that is sustainable and regenerative.

Designer Makers

# Caitlin McCracken Knitwear

## Caitlin McCracken

Caitlin McCracken Knitwear uses Irish wool in every garment we produce. It is fundamental to our brand to uphold a deep respect for its heritage, quality and sustainable benefits. We embrace our natural resources while supporting local production by sourcing wool from Donegal Yarns. Our work sits at the design and manufacturing stage of the wool journey, where raw fibre is transformed into contemporary knitwear using zero-waste knitting techniques to create a positive impact within the fashion industry. We focus on timeless design and garments made to last, honouring the heritage craft of machine knitting.

**County Armagh**  
caitlinmccracken.co.uk  
info@caitlinmccracken.co.uk  
📷 [caitlin.mccracken.knit](#)

### Highlights so far?

We received "Best Green Business" in the Women in Business Awards 2025. This recognition reflects our commitment to sustainability, zero-waste production and the responsible use of Irish wool. It marks an important milestone in our journey and reinforces our dedication to creating high-quality knitwear that is both environmentally conscious and made to last.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me because it connects me to our heritage, traditional skills and the craft of making. I am proud of where I grew up, and creating a brand that embodies that is truly special. I am passionate about keeping traditional crafts alive and supporting circular, sustainable practices to create Irish knitwear.

*Caitlin McCracken*  
*knitwear*

*"Hoping for a move away from synthetic fibres to wool and other natural fibres."*

*"Every fleck in Irish wool is a tiny piece of home."*



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Designer Makers

# Caoimhe Dowling Studio



## Caoimhe Dowling

Committed to sustainability and local craft, the brand releases annual collections that champion Irish wool, celebrating the beauty and heritage of our homegrown, indigenous fibres wherever possible. Growing up in the countryside of County Kerry, close to the rhythms of nature, instilled in me a deep appreciation for materials, a connection that ultimately inspired a brand rooted in thoughtful, material-led design.

**Copenhagen, Denmark**  
caoimhedowling.com  
studio@caoimhedowling.com  
 caoimhedowlingstudio

### Highlights so far?

A milestone in our journey this AW26 season was the creation of our "Clochán" knit, lovingly crafted in County Donegal from 100% Irish wool. There's a special pride in knowing this garment is truly 100% crafted and made in Ireland from our own wool.

### Why Irish grown wool?


Irish wool matters to me because working with indigenous materials is vital for both sustainability and cultural heritage. I believe the fashion industry must collaborate with and support local agriculture, and in turn, be nourished by it. Craft skills and the translation of traditional knowledge into a contemporary context are always at the heart of what I do.

Designer Makers

# Ceird na Cróise The Craft of Crochet

## Dorenda McGee

I currently work with Donegal Aran Tweed, which is 100% wool. I first discovered and bought this yarn in Spidéal, County Galway, four years ago. Crochet is my hobby, and in 2024 I set up Ceird na Cróise (The Craft of Crochet). My first crochet hat made in Donegal Aran Tweed is still my favourite. With daily use, it has lasted well and keeps my hair dry effectively. Through crochet, I enjoy working with Irish wool in practical, wearable pieces that show its durability, warmth, and everyday value.

**County Meath**  
mcdorenda@gmail.com  
 craft\_ofcrochet

### Highlights so far?

Meeting Mr Cyril Cullen, the internationally known Irish knitwear and porcelain designer, in 2024 was a real milestone for me, and attending his latest book launch in 2025 was also very special.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me because it supports the Irish sheep farming industry and yarn production. It is a natural product with proven performance. Like Aran jumpers, wool hats keep you warm and dry, hold their shape well, and are sustainable, practical, and beautiful.

*"Soft yet strong, wool is a shield and a hug all at once."*

*"Aran Tweed is all you need."*





# Christine Tait Design

## Christine Tait

I am a crochet artist and pattern designer from Donegal, bringing traditional crafts and modern designs together using high-quality, luxurious materials. I design patterns and kits using Donegal yarn, characterised by colourful flecks woven into the yarn, creating a unique texture and appearance. The production process, from raw fleece to finished yarn, takes place at the woollen mill in Kilcar, Donegal.

**County Donegal**  
christinetaitdesign.etsy.com  
christinetaitdesign@gmail.com  
@ christinetaitdesign

### Highlights so far?

I live with Lyme disease, and crochet has helped me through the challenges of navigating a chronic illness. Crochet has many benefits and is a powerful tool for reducing stress and anxiety, encouraging relaxation, boosting mood, and much more. By designing and sharing crochet patterns and kits, I aim to share the benefits and joy crochet brings.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I live on a farm with sheep. The wool has so much potential, but sadly most farmers consider it a waste product. I see a durable and sustainable material, carrying a rich history and reflecting the Irish landscape. I would love to be able to create products with my own yarn in the future.

# Conor O'Brien Studio

## Conor O'Brien

Conor O'Brien is a fashion designer based in Dublin, Ireland. Operating with a slow-fashion, cottage industry mentality, each piece, ranging from alternative Aran knitwear to cut-and-sew garments, is tailored to the client and prioritises individuality and customisation over mass production. Everything is handmade using traditional techniques exclusive to the human touch and irreplaceable by machine, using the best of natural fibres in Ireland, including Galway wool.

**County Dublin**  
conorobrienstudio.com  
conorobrien1501@gmail.com  
@ conorobrienstudio

### Highlights so far?

In September 2025, I launched a small 13-look collection made up of cut-and-sew garments using Irish linen and natural fibre deadstock and remnants. I also included a hand-knitted jacket in the blackberry stitch, made using Galway wool and lined with Irish linen and silk organza, reworking a heritage Irish material into a contemporary, wearable shape.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is important to me and my practice because it supports a cleaner, more sustainable supply chain. Working from a cottage industry model, I want greater clarity in material sourcing, and to be able to say something is genuinely Irish wool, not just labelled as such, is central to a more authentic and honest Irish fashion industry.

*"Made with love, and Donegal yarn."*




*"I hope for the future that Ireland will see its inhabitants return to Irish-made clothing made of genuine Irish textiles, as it once was in the past."*

Designer Makers

# Crafts of Ireland

## Sandra Coote

Crafts of Ireland is a small, family-based business dedicated to the sustainable use of wool produced from our own flock in County Cavan. We identified early on that Irish wool is particularly well suited to dry needle felting, and from this we developed our own wool felt fabric, hand-dyed fibres for needle felting, workshops, felting kits, and commissioned artworks. We work across farming, fibre preparation, dyeing, teaching, and making, using Irish wool as the foundation of everything we produce. Our aim is to transform locally grown wool into high-quality, sustainable art materials and finished pieces rooted in place.

**County Cavan**  
craftsofireland.ie  
info@craftsofireland.ie  
 *Crafts of Ireland*

### Highlights so far?

Being able to look at a finished piece of wool art and know that every individual fibre comes from our own farm or from local farmers is a huge achievement. Building this process was not straightforward. Due to limited infrastructure in Ireland, we had to learn and carry out each stage ourselves, including importing a machine from America to produce Irish wool felt fabric that was not commercially available here.

### Why Irish grown wool?


Irish wool is deeply rooted in our heritage. It is a sustainable, renewable material that has long been undervalued. Our commitment is to use our wool to provide sustainable Irish art materials to a wider audience, sharing a love of working with local fibre and reducing the need to import wool.

Designer Makers

# Donegal Hand Weaving

## Leila Worth

I'm a traditional handweaver from Donegal working on an old Donegal loom. I use only wool in the making of my fabrics and blankets. Over the last four years, I have worked alongside John Heena in Ardara, and I also completed the ETB Donegal weaving course in Kilcar. My work sits in the making and heritage craft end of the wool journey, rooted in place, traditional skills, and a deepening connection to Donegal weaving.

**County Donegal**  
worthleila@yahoo.com  
 *leilaworth*

### Highlights so far?

My journey with weaving has connected me to my roots and to Donegal in a very different way. It is hard to name one milestone because it continues to unfold as both craft and art form. Working with wool and colour has changed my sense of belonging to Ireland, and I am excited to keep learning and meeting others working with wool.

### Why Irish grown wool?

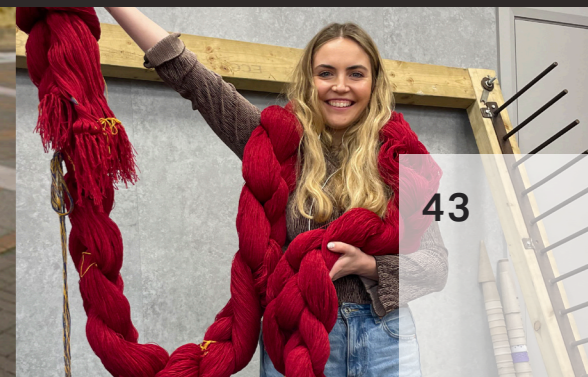
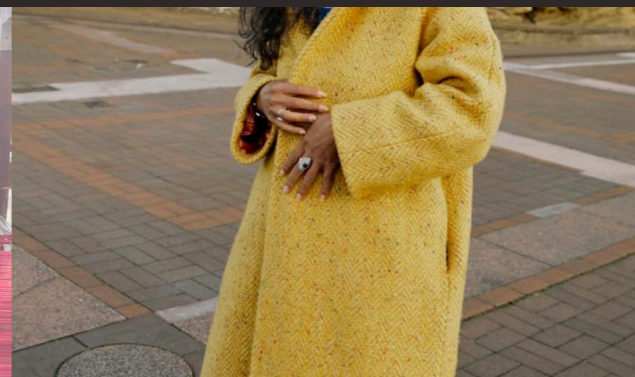
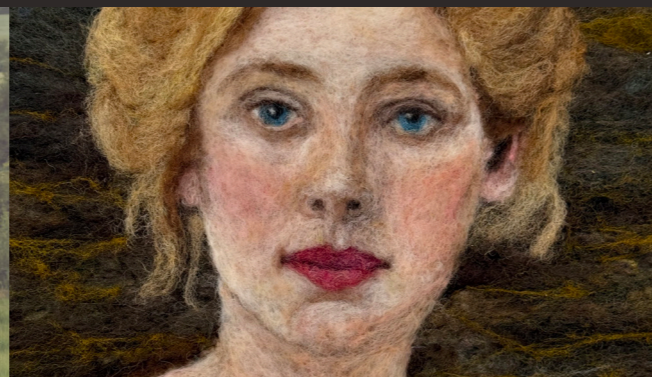
Irish wool matters to me because it is what I work with every day. It connects animals, land, people, and place. The Irish phrase *fite fuaite le chéile* comes to mind when I think of Irish wool and weaving. It means "interwoven together," and that feels true of the many threads involved in working with wool.

*"Crafting memories with authentic Irish wool from our farm in County Cavan."*

*"My hope for the future is to work with Irish wool in a contemporary way, bringing people back to the land and together, fite fuaite le chéile."*



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# Errigal Handweaver

## Siobhán Ní Ghallchóir

I use Irish Heather yarn from Donegal Yarns wool mill. As a weaver based in Mountcharles, I work directly with this yarn to create woven textiles that reflect the character and resilience of Donegal's landscape. My practice sits at the making stage of the wool journey, transforming Irish-grown fibre into blankets and wearable pieces rooted in place and tradition.

**County Donegal**  
errigalhandweaver.ie  
space\_draw@yahoo.ie  
 [errigal\\_handweaver](#)

### Highlights so far?

I have sourced a flying shuttle Donegal loom, which gives me the opportunity to demonstrate the craft of weaving to both local people and visitors. It also allows me to adapt the traditional herringbone pattern to create more expressive weaves and wearable art, expanding the creative possibilities of this heritage loom.



### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is absolutely vital in revealing the story of how resilient Irish people are, particularly in rural Donegal, where weaving and knitting helped families supplement a meagre farming income. The coarse Irish wool reflects the Atlantic climate and landscape. It also tells the story of native breeds that were replaced by breeds producing more mutton.

# Fabulous Fibres

## Karen Bowden

As a designer, maker, supplier and educator, my day-to-day work includes creating new designs and patterns, processing raw wool, and hand-dyeing. I started working with Irish wool in August 2025 when I bought my first fleece from a farmer just 15km away to process. With the clean, dyed, and carded batts, I made a felted handbag. Since then, I have purchased several fleeces for processing and am working on making Irish wool wearable. I am a member of Feltmakers Ireland, the International Feltmakers Association, and the Guild of Irish Spinners, Weavers and Dyers, and I am looking forward to European Wool Day as an opportunity to further promote Irish wool and its place in sustainable fashion today.

**County Galway**  
fabulousfibres.com  
karen@fabulousfibres.com  
 [fabulous\\_fibres](#)  
 [Fabulous Fibres](#)

### Highlights so far?

I have been proud to meet and work with local Irish farmers and processors, and to demonstrate my work at Bloom 2025.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I worked with many wools and cheap synthetic yarns for years, then realised I was contributing to fast fashion and its environmental impact. That was the moment I began shifting my business towards a more sustainable approach. While I may always need to import some fibre, I am moving away from synthetics and, living in rural County Galway surrounded by sheep, I want to use the wool growing on my doorstep.

*“Donegal – where the sheep can survive on the edge of a cliff, but their wool will be right at home in your wardrobe, wherever you call home!”*

*“From Farm to Fabulous ...”*



# FeltHappiness Hats

## Juliane Gorman

Since moving to Ireland from the United States four years ago, I was surprised to learn that although there are more than five million sheep here, most of their wool is treated as a waste product. Wanting to make a change, I shifted from imported Merino to working exclusively with fibre sourced from Irish-raised sheep. In my back garden studio, I wash and process the wool by hand, using a drum carder to prepare it for my wet-felted hats. Each piece features seaweed-printed fabric created with the cyanotype technique, which I then nuno felt into the fibre, resulting in sea-inspired, sculptural headwear that reflects Ireland's natural landscape. FeltHappiness is where land and sea meet: thoughtfully crafted, sustainable hats rooted in place.

**County Dublin**  
felthappiness.com  
juliane@felthappiness.com  
Instagram: felthappiness  
Facebook: FeltHappiness

### Highlights so far?

In addition to creating hats, I occasionally make sculptures. Last year, I was honoured to be included in the highly competitive juried exhibition, Sculpture in Context at the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin. I created three kinetic "windsocks" of cyanotype-printed silk and Galway wool, which I placed in the seaside area of the Wild Ireland native plants section of the garden.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me because it encourages us to value what we already have. Using locally sourced fibre supports circularity, reduces waste, and honours the land that sustains us. By creating my hats from local wool, I align my work with Ireland's landscape and heritage, transforming an overlooked resource into something purposeful, beautiful, and enduring.

# Felting in Irish Wool with Margaret

## Margaret Ryan Collins

I am an enthusiastic felter who loves to share the joy of felting with Irish wool. I first began using Irish wool at eight years of age, crocheting ponchos, hats and scarves. In the early 1980s, I was introduced to Lumra rug making, using this traditional Irish craft in college projects. Throughout my career as a Home Economics teacher, I used Irish wool wherever possible in craft work with students, including appliquéd felt pieces and Irish wool tapestries. I now focus on developing felting skills with interested groups and individuals through demonstrations and workshops. I am a member of Feltmakers Ireland and have demonstrated and delivered workshops at Bloom (NCCI area), the Tullamore Show, and during Heritage Week in various locations.

**County Kildare**  
mgtmjryan@gmail.com

### Highlights so far?

In July 2024, I ran a workshop at the Comeragh Wild Festival in County Waterford with an enthusiastic group of men and women interested in wet felting Irish wool into 3D forms. I shared the wonderful properties of Irish wool, including its durability, sustainability, insulation, breathability, and biodegradability. A number of participants went on to take further workshops and continued enjoying the therapeutic craft of felting with Irish wool.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is part of our heritage and culture, and it kept many Irish people warm for generations. It is local, with no air miles if we are careful, and it remains highly relevant today for its fire resistance, moisture wicking, resistance to mildew and mould, flexibility, durability, and natural beauty in the modern world.

*"May Irish sheep be valued not only for their meat, but for their wool, which will be kindly felted into our future."*

*"A most beautiful natural fibre, with many ways to add to your life, home-grown natural beauty, don't miss it."*



# Joanne Foley

## Designer Maker

As a felt artist, my day-to-day practice centres on transforming wool into detailed animal portraits, with a special focus on pets and sheep. I begin by carefully selecting fleece, considering fibre length, texture, and natural colour variations. Much of my current work celebrates Ireland's native breeds, particularly the Galway sheep. I use both wet and needle felting to build depth and structure, then use fine felting needles to sculpt form, expression, and character. Within the wool journey, my role sits at the creative and interpretive end of the process, giving prepared fibre a new narrative life through art and highlighting the beauty, sustainability, and cultural value of native wool in a contemporary context.

**County Galway**  
Joannefoleytextileartist@gmail.com  
Instagram Facebook Joannefoleyfeltartist

### Highlights so far?

A recent highlight is a portrait of the native Irish Galway sheep created with over 60% Galway wool. The fibre, tougher and rougher than merino, demanded patience and deepened my respect for the breed. Crafting the sheep from its own wool felt like a quiet act of honour, connecting land, lineage, and heritage. I'm deeply proud to tell this enduring Irish story through fibre.

### Why Irish grown wool?

This work matters because native breeds like the Galway sheep embody generations of heritage and hard-earned ecological wisdom. Preserving them protects biodiversity, strengthens climate resilience, and sustains living rural knowledge. Honouring their wool honours a balanced relationship between land, animal, and people.

*"Native wool is not just fibre, but a keeper of place - holding wind, rain, history and place in its quiet, resilient heart."*



# Hooked on Rathlin

## Patsy Harbinson

Hooked on Rathlin is a handmade knitwear micro-enterprise based on Rathlin Island. I design and make woollen accessories and crochet pieces inspired by the island's weather, wildlife, and coastal colours, including hats, ear warmers, scarves, and my signature puffins and sheep. I sell locally through Rathlin outlets and craft markets, with packaging and labelling that is plastic-free and uses recycled card. Through Future Island-Island, I have been developing my practice in line with the waste wool workstream, with a focus on increasing the use of natural, traceable Irish wool in my products. My work sits in the making and storytelling end of the wool journey, connecting local fibre with local identity and visitor experience.

**Rathlin Island**  
patsyearthling@yahoo.co.uk  
Instagram hooked\_on\_rathlin

### Highlights so far?

Investing in and learning to use a vintage Brother flatbed knitting machine, enabling me to work with 100% wool and develop complex colourwork. Through Future Island-Island, I became a Rathlin Creative Fellow, mentored by Prof Alison Gault and knitwear designer Marie Bruhat on Fair Isle. I developed Rathlin-inspired colourways, improved my machine knitting and finishing, and began translating Rathlin's prehistoric pottery motifs into new knit designs.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is a local, natural fibre with a story that begins in land care and farming. It is biodegradable, durable, and rooted in rural skills and heritage. Working with Irish wool supports a more circular textile economy, adds value to a by-product of agriculture, and helps keep place-based making alive.

*"Irish wool carries place in every strand. Let's keep it valued, used, and made into things people can love for years."*



Designer Makers

# Irish Alpaca Yarns

## Patricia Kerr

All of the fleece I process into yarn comes from Irish alpaca farms. All my crafts are made from Irish Alpaca Yarns, and all my teaching of the traditional crafts of spinning and weaving is done using Irish alpaca fleece and yarns. My work spans fibre processing, yarn production, making, and education, with a focus on local provenance and traditional skills.

**County Dublin**  
irishalpacayarns@gmail.com  
f irishalpacayarns

### Highlights so far?

A key focus in my journey has been the importance of education in the traditional crafts of spinning and weaving, bringing the magic of Irish alpaca fleece and yarns to a whole new audience of present and future crafters.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Sustainable luxury with amazing longevity.

Designer Makers



# Irish Fibre Crafters

## Sandra King

I have had my own sheep and have been using their fleeces in my work for many years. I am a crafter and use my wool for hand spinning, natural dyeing, weaving, knitting, and crochet. On a regular basis, I promote these traditional crafts and Irish wool by hosting experiences at my home studio. I sell my Irish wool products, most of which are art yarns, to weavers, knitters, felters, and spinners worldwide.

**County Clare**  
irishfibrecrafters.com  
irishfibrecrafters@gmail.com  
i irishfibrecrafters  
f Irish Fibre Crafters

### Highlights so far?

I have been active in Fibreshed Ireland symposia and European Wool Day from their early stages. A highlight of my journey was a collaboration with the Science Foundation of Ireland for a free event called *Purls of Wisdom*, where science and art were brought together to raise awareness of Ireland's changing climate.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me on several levels: continuing its use in traditional crafts, its importance in Ireland's heritage, and its contribution to maintaining a circular economy.

*"Irish Alpaca Yarns, luxurious and local."*

*"I am hoping that the work being done in Ireland to revalue Irish wool will continue and make a bigger difference to wool's importance."*




Designer Makers

# Irish Heritage Knitwear

## Lynne Gallagher

Irish Heritage Knitwear spins locally sourced Irish fleece and also works with Donegal Yarns to produce 100% Irish wool garments. Based in County Offaly, we are committed to creating fun, practical knitwear that reduces reliance on fast fashion and encourages a return to naturally produced fibres. Our work spans spinning, yarn sourcing and garment design, sitting across the middle and end of the wool journey, transforming Irish fleece into wearable, durable pieces rooted in tradition and everyday use.

**County Offaly**  
irishheritageknitwear.com  
irishheritageknitwear@gmail.com  
 Irish Heritage Knitwear

### Highlights so far?

Working directly with farmers has deepened our understanding of the quality of Irish fleece and the pride that comes when they see their wool spun into yarn. For many, it brings back memories of mothers and grandmothers who worked with wool in the same way. It is this sense of connection and continuity that we hope to pass on through our knitwear.

### Why Irish grown wool?


Irish wool holds enormous possibility. Its traditions, heritage, history and remarkable qualities make it a vital natural resource. It is renewable, versatile and deeply connected to our landscape and culture, offering a meaningful alternative to synthetic fibres.

Designer Makers

# Jean Long

## Designer Maker

I am a hand knitter working primarily with Irish wool. I knit for Irish designer Conor O'Brien, and my work featured at Dublin Independent Fashion Week 2025 for his Phantom Thread show. It was also showcased at the World Wool Forum in Rome in October 2025 by the Galway Wool Co-Op and at H&H Americas in Chicago in May 2025 by Ériu. I was involved in the heritage project Geansaí Chléire, where I reverse-engineered, recorded the pattern and reknit a fisherman's gansey originally knit on Cape Clear Island in 1926. The Geansaí Chléire featured in an exhibition organised by Creative Places West Cork Islands at Cork County Library in March 2025.

**County Cork**  
Long.jean@gmail.com  
 jeanmlong

### Highlights so far?

The Geansaí Chléire heritage project has been very personal to me, as my maternal family is from Cape Clear and I come from a long line of fishermen and their families. The project allowed me to explore my ancestry in a tangible way and to record and highlight the largely undocumented contribution women made to society in the early 20th century.

### Why Irish grown wool?

It is important to me that Irish sheep farmers are paid fairly for their wool and that consumers understand the value of choosing Irish wool over imported fibre. Irish wool embodies our landscape, climate and sheep breeds. It forms part of our social and cultural identity. I use Irish wool in my teaching and have taught at Ballymaloe Cookery and Farm School, as well as running workshops at Restyle Cork, the Sister Hub Aghada and Glenville Park.

*“Wool: natural, renewable, versatile, beautiful.”*

*“Working with Irish wool enables us to engage in conversation with the Irish landscape, cultural heritage and ancestry. It keeps our traditions alive.”*



# Joyce Country Wool

## Carina Coyne

Joyce Country Wool is based on our sheep farm in the heart of Joyce Country. I use wool from our own farm and from farms within the Joyce Country Valley only. After shearing, I bring the fleeces into my workshop on the farm, number each fleece individually, and process it from beginning to end. I prepare the wool for spinning or knitting into unique garments that cannot be repeated. I also use dyes that grow wild on the mountains and along the shores of Lough Nafooeey here in Joyce Country.

**County Galway**  
joycecountrywool.com  
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@ joycecountrywool



### Highlights so far?

The world of fashion has changed, and customers and designers increasingly recognise the time and work that goes into a finished garment. They can wear it honestly and know there is a zero carbon footprint. No two fleeces are the same, so there will never be two garments the same.

### Why Irish grown wool?

My husband and I inherited the farm from generations before us and continue to keep the same traditions alive, in the same way wool helped keep our ancestors alive. Without wool, and without families spinning and knitting long ago, they would have found it hard to survive. We owe so much to our land and to wool.

# Karena Ryan Textiles

## Karena Ryan

We work with Irish-grown wool as both a material resource and a vehicle for cultural storytelling through my organisation, Karena Ryan Textiles. Our practice combines research, making, teaching and collaboration. We source wool from Irish farmers and small-scale processors, often working with traceable fleeces, and carry out processes including washing, carding, felting, stitching and embroidery in our studio in County Galway. Our work sits at the intersection of craft, design and sustainable interiors, transforming an undervalued fibre into contemporary textile artworks and interior pieces. We collaborate with farmers, processors, designers and cultural organisations to reconnect people with the origins and future potential of Irish-grown wool.

**County Galway**  
karenaryanartist.com  
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@ karenaryantextiles

### Highlights so far?

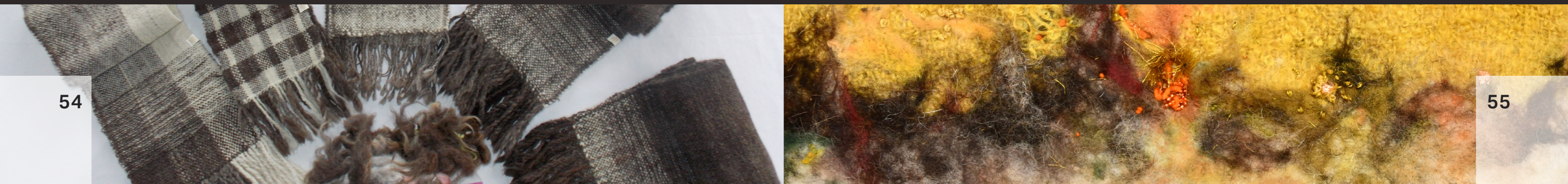
A key milestone in my journey was a funded residency in Brussels with wool processor Ngairé Takano, deepening my understanding of wool processing and material value. I was shortlisted at Showcase for my Galway wool textile lamp and selected to present my work in Philadelphia. More recently, I completed a Master's in Agricultural Innovation, grounding my practice in research-led sustainable design.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me because it carries stories of land, care and making that have been overlooked. By working with wool slowly and visibly, I seek to give voice to an undervalued fibre, supporting rural livelihoods, safeguarding skills and demonstrating how wool can play a meaningful role in sustainable, circular design today.

*"Let everything happen naturally and Mother Nature will do her thing."*

*"Wool is gold, not waste. It holds stories, skills and sustainable futures, if we choose to see its worth."*



Designer Makers



# Magee Weaving

## Susie Page

We are a weaving mill working predominantly with the apparel industry, as well as interiors and accessories. Within these collections, we have developed key qualities that use Irish wool in conjunction with our spinning partners, Donegal Yarns. As a Donegal-based mill, our work centres on creating fabrics that reflect our heritage while collaborating across the supply chain to bring Irish wool from fibre to finished cloth.

**County Donegal**  
www.magee1866.com  
spage@mageeweaving.com  
📷 *Magee1866*

### Highlights so far?

As a weaving mill based in Donegal, developing a Donegal quality using Irish wool fibre has been important in highlighting our story. It allows us to showcase an authentic fabric and tell a truly Irish story through cloth, rooted in place, craft and tradition.

### Why Irish grown wool?

It is important for us to understand our roots and to showcase not only a truly sustainable fabric but a fully traceable one. Linking every stage in the production of fabric, from its beginning through to end use, strengthens that story and responsibility.

Designer Makers

# Markree Wool Craft

## Mary Cooper

I source my wool from local farmers and process it through to yarn and finished products. My work includes spinning, dyeing, and creating handmade wool items using traditional fibre techniques. Based in County Sligo, I work directly with local fleeces and transform them into yarn and wool products that reflect the character of the fibre and the place it comes from.

**County Sligo**  
Etsy.com/ie/shop/MarkreeWoolCraft  
mary@markreewoolcraft.com  
📷 *markreewoolcraft*

### Highlights so far?

I am passionate about using Irish wool. I hate to hear the negative reviews it gets, and I believe much of it is of excellent quality.

### Why Irish grown wool?

It is a sustainable local product that was once renowned worldwide. With education, this lost heritage could be revived to a certain extent.

*“A fabric traced from its roots, passed down through the generations, loved as much in the future as it is now.”*

*“Irish wool is a sustainable product to be proud of.”*



Designer Makers

# Native Yarns

## Lorna Shannon

I take wool from local farmers, sort it, and bring it to the mill for spinning. When it returns to me as yarn, I hand dye it and take it to market. Any wool that cannot be sent to the mill becomes mulch for hedgerows and gardens. I currently work with two small flocks, both within five miles of my studio, and this collaboration has improved the sustainability of both flocks. I use only native breed wool, including locally grown Hill Cheviot and Jacobs, and am looking to expand the range.

**County Antrim**  
nativeyarns@gmail.com  
📷 *lornashannonweaving*



### Highlights so far?

As a hand spinner and weaver for many years, I became aware of the devaluation of wool as a raw material. I have always celebrated the variety and quality of our homegrown wool, and upscaling to mill processing has enabled me to bring native breed wool within reach of a wider community of craftspeople.

### Why Irish grown wool?

It is important to me not only to celebrate the heritage of wool but to make it relevant in the modern world. By creating Native Yarns, I support the sustainability of local flocks, which in turn has a positive impact on biodiversity, rural livelihoods and wellbeing.

*“Locally grown wool is here to stay – Welcome to my Woolly World!”*

Designer Makers

# Niamh Ní Catháin

## Niamh Ní Catháin

As a designer and weaver, Irish wool is central to my practice as a material connection to place, people and land. Working directly with wool allows me to engage with the full making process, from fibre to finished textile, ensuring it is handled with care, integrity and respect. I work alongside growers, makers and researchers to explore how Irish wool can be used within contemporary, place-based textile practices. My work sits at the making and material exploration stage of the wool journey, focusing on weaving, whole-garment construction and experimental approaches to form and structure.

**County Down**  
niamhnicathain.com  
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📷 *niamhnicathain*

### Highlights so far?

Taking part in a residency on Rathlin Island as part of the Future Island project was a formative moment in my journey. Working with wool from the island and weaving it into textiles, then sharing the finished work with local residents and farmers, made the value of Irish wool tangible and highlighted the importance of care and shared ownership across the wool journey.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me as a material closely connected to land, people and making. Working with it alongside other local fibres allows me to develop place-based textile practices that respond to landscape and community. Through weaving, wool becomes a way to care for materials and nature, support local skills and build more thoughtful, connected relationships with place.

*“Wool is not just for winter! It’s a fibre for all seasons, places, and ways of living.”*



Designer Makers

# Niamh O'Connell Design

## Niamh O'Connell

Working from my home studio in Dublin, I use renewable, locally and naturally grown materials in my contemporary handwoven and knitted designs, grounded in handmade and traditional techniques. I promote social and environmental responsibility by highlighting biodiversity loss and the protection of local ecosystems through my work. Evoking delicate details of endangered species, I create one-off bespoke textiles and small collections. I exhibit and sell across the island, including at Galway Wool Meitheal, Bunnratty Castle Rare Breeds Day, The Leitrim Design House and Om Diva Boutique in Dublin. I am a member of the Galway Wool Arts Group and Fibreshed Ireland.

**County Dublin**  
niamhoconnelldesign.com  
niamhoconnelldesign@gmail.com  
📷 *niamhoconnelldesign*

### Highlights so far?

I was delighted to showcase rare Galway wool in my handmade woven and knitted designs at XTANT Roots 2024 in Majorca, a global gathering celebrating heritage textiles. In 2025, at the Leitrim Design House National Design, Craft and Art Awards, I presented my shortlisted work Fox Moth, handwoven with native Galway wool, hand-spun Irish wool and Aran Tweed from Donegal Yarns.

### Why Irish grown wool?

So much Irish wool has been considered a waste product in recent years, and I am delighted to be part of the movement restoring its integrity. Through slow design and traditional handmaking, I highlight its benefits for our health, the planet, farmers and local economies.

Designer Makers

# Olann & Seol

## Kirsten Carstensen & Jork Lewandovski

We source our wool exclusively from our own sheep and from local farmers. We wash and process it ourselves without chemical additives. Our range includes wool locks, carded wool, felt and felt products, and woven rugs. We aim to manage the entire journey ourselves, from the sheep to the finished product, working with pure Irish wool at every stage.

**County Kerry**  
olannseol.ie  
jork@olannseol.ie  
📷 *olannseolireland*

### Highlights so far?

We are proud to source wool from our neighbours, from the Ryeland Sheep Association and from the Galway Co-op, and to use it to produce handmade rugs and other woollen products made from pure Irish wool.

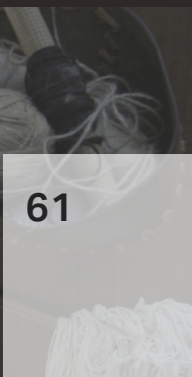
### Why Irish grown wool?

We love Irish wool. Due to the special climatic conditions in Ireland, Irish wool is ideal for our work and products.



*“Wrapped in Wonderful Woolly Warmth.”*

*“May Irish wool receive the love it deserves.”*



# Pop Out Projects

## Maeve Pudney

We have invented and patented a compact wooden loom, the Rocket Loom, which makes weaving accessible to a new generation. We design and manufacture a range of creative kits centred around our looms, local yarn and original designs. One of our most popular products is the mini weaving kit with Galway wool. Stocked in gift shops across Ireland, it allows people to interact with Galway wool in a fun and affordable way, introducing Irish-grown wool at the making and learning stage of the journey.

**County Sligo**  
popoutprojects.com  
hello@popoutprojects.com  
📷 *popoutprojects*

### Highlights so far?

Ireland's textile heritage is a strong part of our cultural identity, and we are proud to introduce people to weaving in a modern and accessible way.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is an undervalued and underused resource. As a business with sustainability at our core, we would love to see this natural resource developed further and appreciated for its potential.

# Rathlin Wool Project Future Island-Island

## Ellie Ferguson

Within my studies at Ulster University, I work alongside incredible technicians, which is where I discovered the use of wool within my work. Learning about the sustainability of wool, and about its properties and possibilities, has brought me to where I am now: pushing to create more sustainable fashion work using this natural fibre. My connection to Irish wool sits within design development and making, where I am exploring how traditional fibre processes can inform contemporary, sustainable fashion practice.

**County Antrim**  
ellieferguson888@gmail.com  
📷 *ellouise\_studios*

### Highlights so far?

During my second year project within TADF at Ulster University, in partnership with Future Island-Island, students were asked to respond to a sustainability brief using wool from sheep on Rathlin. The wool was developed into rope, yarn, and felted fleece. Inspired by Rathlin's wildlife and landscape, I created a final garment collection combining wool dyeing and weaving.

### Why Irish grown wool?

For me, working on this project pushed me out of my comfort zone and made me think more deeply about sustainability and the importance of process in making. Keeping traditional knowledge alive, and reviving natural fibres in place of synthetics, feels increasingly important in a fast-paced society. Even making a small contribution to that awareness matters.

*"Weave on!"*

*"One small step can make a real difference."*





# Rathlin Wool Project Future Island-Island

## Ellyn Elliott

I am a final year student studying Textile Art, Design and Fashion at Ulster University. During second year, I had the opportunity to work with wool and rope sourced from Rathlin Island, alongside Donegal Yarns, to produce a series of contemporary, sustainable garments. That project began my journey with Irish wool. As I develop my graduate collection, I am continuing to use wool as my primary resource, creating garments inspired by tradition and life in rural Ireland in the early 20th century. I believe it is important to use locally sourced, ethical materials to support sustainability and quality, and I aim to continue using Irish wool as a core fibre in my knitwear.

**County Donegal**  
ellyncelliott@gmail.com  
📷 [ellynelliottdesigns](#)

### Highlights so far?

My work associated with the Rathlin Wool Project has changed the course of my practice and my material choices as a knitwear designer. It offered a new perspective on garment design, giving me the opportunity to use hand and machine knitting processes to reimagine a material that was once discarded on the island and turn it into contemporary fashion pieces.

### Why Irish grown wool?

My knitwear focuses on representing Ireland's rural heritage and traditions, and natural fibre reinforces the relationship between my work and the materials historically produced and used in Irish agriculture. Using Irish wool helps my garments retain a strong place-based connection to the rural settings that inspire my designs.

# Rhyme Studio Irish Wool Designs

## Rhyme Studio Ltd

Rhyme Studio is an interiors and design maker advancing the use of native Irish wool within contemporary architecture and design. Working with Irish mills and weavers, the studio develops high-performance carpets, lighting and acoustic systems that reposition Irish fleece as a serious material for healthy interiors. Day to day, the practice focuses on material development, design and market building, translating underutilised Irish wool into durable, low-impact interior products made in Ireland and specified internationally. The studio operates at the premium, design-led end of the wool value chain, with an emphasis on longevity, environmental responsibility and meaningful Irish production.

**Dublin & New York City**  
rhymestudio.com  
inquiries@rhymestudio.com  
📷 [rhymestudioart](#)

### Highlights so far?

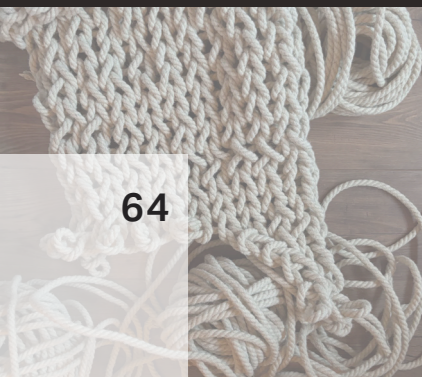
We began with a simple aim: to make truly sustainable design in Ireland at a level the international interiors market would take seriously. Along the way, it became clear that native Irish wool was largely absent from high-value applications. A key milestone has been proving demand for luxury Irish wool carpets and textile systems through real commissions and international visibility, while challenging the industry's default reliance on synthetics and plastic.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it is one of the few truly circular, bio-based materials available to contemporary design. Through our work, it became clear that this native fibre, long undervalued, offers significant benefits for indoor air quality, durability and low-carbon production. Used intelligently, wool supports healthier interiors while strengthening rural and craft economies.

*“As a knitwear designer, it is important to celebrate wool as a product of Ireland’s heritage and culture.”*

*“The future of sustainable interiors is the intelligent and comprehensive use of natural fibres, starting with the ones nature already provides.”*



# Ryan Koenig Studio

## Ryan Daniel Koenig

Ryan Koenig Studio is a knitwear design and instruction brand specialising in Aran knitting through knitting patterns, knit kits, and weekly Aran Knitting Workshops in Dublin city centre. In these workshops, participants use Irish wool from the Galway Wool Co-op and Donegal Yarns to knit an Aran scarf. All patterns promote Irish wool as the recommended yarn, placing the studio firmly within the making and education stages of the wool journey.

**County Dublin**  
Linktr.ee/ryankoenigstudio  
ryandanielkoenig@gmail.com  
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### Highlights so far?

The biggest highlight has been sharing a cultural craft with others. Many participants attend the Aran Knitting Workshop because a mother or grandmother once knitted Aran jumpers for them, but they never learned the skill themselves. The workshop offers a meaningful way to reconnect with loved ones who have passed, through craft and shared heritage.

### Why Irish grown wool?

The heritage aspect of Irish wool, particularly in relation to Aran knitting, is central to my practice. Continuing to use Irish wool will hopefully help drive demand and increase the amount farmers in Ireland are paid for their wool, supporting rural livelihoods from farm to mill.

# Simply Spun

## Rosemary McCartney

As a spinner and weaver, I use fibre and yarn produced in Ireland and the UK. My practice centres on working with natural materials, transforming spun yarn into handwoven textiles. I sit at both the spinning and weaving stages of the wool journey, using Irish-spun yarns in my work and sharing traditional skills through making.

**County Down**  
simplyspun.co.uk  
info@simplyspun.co.uk  
📷 [simplyspunni](#)

### Highlights so far?

I feel very fortunate to have spent my entire career working with wool and natural materials. Being able to devote my working life to spinning, weaving, and sharing these skills has been a privilege.

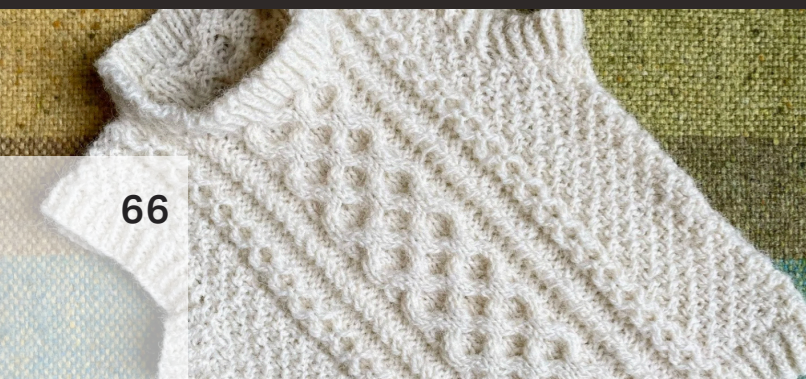
### Why Irish grown wool?

Ireland has such a long history of using the wool it produced in the traditional skills of spinning, weaving, and knitting. I love sharing these skills with others and keeping that heritage alive through practice and teaching.



*“Aran knitwear that is made with Irish Galway wool could likely have a steamroller rolled over it, and it would still retain the definition shown in the cables. It’s the best yarn ever used in Aran knitting for stitch definition.”*

*“As wool dries out, it gives off heat.”*



# Stolen Stitches

## Carol Feller

As a retailer and hand-knit designer, the origin and quality of the yarns we use matter deeply to us. At Stolen Stitches, we source wool from Irish mills and prioritise Irish fleece wherever possible. Working this way means we can support fibre that is grown, spun, and finished in Ireland, while designing garments that highlight its character and durability. Our work moves between design, retail, and education. We collaborate with mills, dyers, and retailers, and we work closely with a wide community of knitters both in Ireland and internationally. We sit at the maker stage of the wool journey, where Irish-grown fibre transforms into unique garments. Through patterns, knit-alongs, and teaching, we carry that transformation from fibre to finished garment.

**County Cork**  
stolenstitches.com  
shop@stolenstitches.com  
📷 *feller.carol*  
📘 *Stolen Stitches*

### Highlights so far?

My first book, Contemporary Irish Knits, featured three Irish mills and included designs created specifically to showcase their yarns. Seeing those fibres brought to life through contemporary cabled knitting patterns was a turning point. When knitters experience the beauty and potential of a yarn through design, they want to knit it, and it moves from skein to garment, becoming part of everyday wear.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it keeps the full cycle of making here in Ireland. From sheep to mill to knitter, we can grow, spin, and knit within the same country, sustaining rural communities and maintaining essential skills. At every stage, natural resources are used well, and employment is supported. The result is knitwear defined by warmth, durability, and lasting quality.

# Studio Báinín

## Carolann Madden

I am a traditional handweaver and spinner, trained by Master Weavers Norman Kennedy and Kate Smith, and I hold a PhD in Folklore/Ethnography specialising in material culture. I have been weaving for over a decade and spin my own woollen singles, sourcing Irish-grown wool, particularly Galway wool, from local farmers. From my studio in MART Galway I design textiles using a historic early 19th-century-style loom to create sustainable home goods and cloth rooted in tradition. Trained in historic wool processing, spinning, dyeing and weaving techniques, I see myself as part of a long craft lineage. I am currently a Postdoctoral Fellow funded by Taighde Éireann/ Research Ireland, researching material culture in the West of Ireland.

**County Galway**  
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📷 *ccmhandwoven*

### Highlights so far?

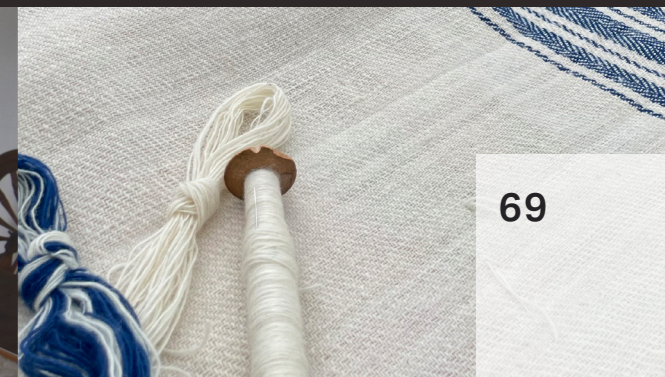
I recently undertook two heritage projects centred on working from raw fleece. For the first, I skirted, washed, processed, spun, dyed and wove a traditional double-width homespun blanket entirely by hand, using over 8,000 metres of handspun woollen singles. I am also recreating the traditional Galway red petticoat from hand-processed and handspun Galway wool dyed with fresh madder from the garden.

### Why Irish grown wool?

For me, Irish wool is important not only for its gentler environmental impact but also because of its deep relationship to Ireland itself. We have been wool growers here for centuries, and working with wool is deeply ingrained in the heritage of this island. To lose our connection to Irish wool would be to lose an important facet of cultural heritage.

*“Wool is what we make of it. Make it wonderful.”*

*“Working with Irish wool reconnects us to those who came before us who used and wore it every day and valued all it has to offer.”*



Designer Makers

# Studio Donegal

## Tristan Donaghy

Studio Donegal is a family-run weaving mill in Kilcar, County Donegal, where we handweave and manufacture goods. We work with spinning partners including Donegal Yarns, who produce the majority of our wool yarns using mixed wool sources, and we also work with Kerry Woollen Mills to spin some Irish wool for a range of our blankets. Our work sits across weaving, design, and manufacturing, with a strong connection to Donegal's textile heritage and an ongoing interest in finding meaningful contemporary uses for Irish wool.

**County Donegal**  
studiodonegal.ie  
info@studiodonegal.ie  
Instagram *studiodonegal*



### Highlights so far?

We are currently developing an upholstery cloth with Stable of Ireland, made using Romney Marsh wool yarn spun for us by Donegal Yarns. This has been an exciting collaboration and a valuable way to explore new applications for wool in interiors.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Tweed was traditionally made from local wools. Today, the market often demands softer fibres, so it is encouraging to find another use for Irish wool in upholstery cloth, where its strength and character can be appreciated.

Designer Makers

# Tarika Kinney

## Designer Maker

As a recent graduate now based in Belfast, I am building direct relationships with Irish mills and making locally sourced Irish wool a priority in my practice. Throughout my degree I worked exclusively with deadstock surplus wool, mainly 100% cashmere from Todd & Duncan, choosing to design locally and work with a mill connected to my studio. That commitment to locality still guides me. My work sits at the design and transformation stage of the wool journey, translating responsibly sourced fibre into contemporary garments and small-scale pieces that prioritise craft, longevity, and material integrity.

**County Antrim**  
tarikakinney-thearchive.cargo.site  
studio.tarikakinney@gmail.com  
Instagram *tarikakinney*

### Highlights so far?

Presenting a look at Ireland Fashion Week inspired by land, sea, and myth. The garment was knitted from 100% cashmere deadstock from Todd & Duncan, then hand-felted and beaded to create texture reminiscent of shifting tides and coastline. The piece blended storytelling with traditional techniques, grounding contemporary design in material integrity and narrative place.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool connects landscape, lineage, and responsibility. After studying in Paris and visiting the Woolmark offices, I became committed to developing fully biodegradable garments from 100% Irish wool. Growing up mixed-race in Ireland, textiles have been a way to connect with identity, and knit allows tradition and modernity to coexist within one material language.

*"Studio Donegal, not your run-of-the-mill mill!"*

*"From field, to fibre, to form; wool binds all to the body."*



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# Rathlin Island Project Between the Land and Sea

## Tess Carter

My work is rooted in knitwear design and making, with Irish wool sitting at the centre of both my creative practice and day-to-day process. I work primarily with natural fibres, exploring the relationship between material, place, and process through hands-on knitting and machine knitting. Much of my current work draws inspiration from Rathlin Island, using Irish wool to reflect landscape, weather, and heritage through texture and structure.

**County Down**  
tesscarter863@gmail.com  
Instagram [tesscarter](#)

### Highlights so far?

A key milestone in my journey has been being selected to showcase work as part of Irish Fashion Week, which affirmed my commitment to knitwear and material-led design. I am also proud to have worked with Rathlin wool, using it as both a creative and cultural anchor within my practice. These experiences strengthened my connection to place, process, and the storytelling potential of Irish wool.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me because it carries a deep connection to land, care, and heritage. Working with it encourages slower, more thoughtful making and supports rural livelihoods and local knowledge. Its natural resilience, durability, and traceability allow me to design responsibly while honouring both material and place.

# The Wool Experience

## Seamus Kirwan

Working with Irish grown wool is my full-time occupation. I give six, one-hour demonstrations per day, from mid-March to the end of October each year, at The Sheep and Wool Centre in Leenane, Connemara, County Galway. I also travel nationwide providing wool spinning and weaving workshops, along with demonstrating at agricultural and other events across the country. I use a wide variety of Irish grown wool in my work every day, promoting the product and passing on knowledge to the next generation.

**County Galway**  
niceoneshay@gmail.com  
Facebook [Seamus Kirwan](#)

### Highlights so far?

Wool is the highlight of my life. It is what I am passionate about for many reasons. It is what I use every day in building my business. It is the product I have used to create employment and to help keep our heritage crafts and native wools alive. Wool is the future in so many ways.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me greatly, and I am passionate about wool and all aspects of the product. When two degrees never gave me full-time employment, I turned my attention in another direction, and this is where wool came into the equation. I learned to weave from the age of eight, so I used what I had learned and what I have taught myself to create full-time employment. Now I have work seven days per week if I want to, all based around wool and creativity.

*“From field to fibre, Irish wool tells stories worth wearing.”*

*“To bring value back to wool, we need investment through finance, time, knowledge, commitment, resilience and determination. It’s worked for me so far, so I’ll stick with it.”*



Designer Makers



# Vibe by Vision

## Aaron O'Grady

Vibe by Vision works at the intersection of acoustic performance, sustainable materiality and sensory design, with Irish wool playing a central role in our interior systems. We design and manufacture acoustic walls, ceilings and bespoke features that support wellbeing, neurodiversity and environmental responsibility. Our team collaborates with architects, interior designers and creative studios to specify and customise acoustic solutions for workplaces, education, hospitality and public buildings. At the specification and application stage of the wool journey, we transform responsibly sourced wool into high-performance acoustic panels, wall systems and finishes.

**County Dublin**  
vibebyvision.com  
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Instagram: [vibebyvisionacoustics](#)  
LinkedIn: [Vibe by Vision | Bespoke Acoustic Panels](#)

### Highlights so far?

A defining milestone in our journey has been developing acoustic systems that merge sustainability, branding, and neuro-inclusive design. Projects such as NTMA, IMMA, DocuSign, and Genesis showcase how our acoustic systems support sensory zoning, improve acoustic clarity, and integrate seamlessly with interior architecture.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it connects land, craft and contemporary design. In our interiors it brings softness, durability and acoustic performance, helping regulate sound, temperature and air quality. It allows us to create calm, grounded spaces that are materially responsible from source to end of life. By integrating Irish-grown wool into our products, we support local supply chains, reduce transport impact and bring a renewable, biodegradable material into contemporary interior architecture.

*“Wool begins in the hills and finishes in the spaces we inhabit. Its journey is as circular as it is silent.”*

Designer Makers

# Yarn Vibes

## Joan Lucey

Yarn Vibes is Ireland's first 100% organic and sustainably produced Irish wool. Our wool is sourced from Fergal Byrne, a 9th-generation sheep farmer in Co. Kildare, and is carefully processed and spun in Co. Donegal. Every strand brings together skilled makers from across the country and celebrates the heritage of Ireland's wool industry.

**County Cork**  
yarnvibes.com  
hello@yarnvibes.com  
Instagram: [loveyarnvibes](#)

### Highlights so far?

We are incredibly proud that our knitting yarn is authentically Irish, and the first Irish organic wool in the world. What started as a small concept has now become a supportive community working towards a more fair and sustainable future, one strand at a time.

### Why Irish grown wool?

At Yarn Vibes our goal is to produce the finest quality 100% Irish wool, in beautifully natural, traditional and modern colorways. Supporting the Irish wool industry is of vital importance to us, keeping our ancient traditions alive.

*“Each skein of our organic yarn has carefully passed through the hands of our team of talented craftspeople, who bring with them generations of experience and skill, resulting in our uniquely rustic yarn.”*



# 44 Clovers

## Rachel Bingham

Rachel's work is rooted in County Galway, where she is living on an organic sheep farm raising the rare native Galway sheep and learning the day-to-day care of the flock. Alongside shepherding, she continues her making practice as a textile artisan, with a focus on wool, traditional stitches, and natural colour. Her connection to Irish wool sits across the early and late stages of the journey, from farm life and fleece to the hands-on work of making and storytelling, with a particular interest in seeing Galway wool valued, traceable, and visible in Irish knitwear.

**County Galway**  
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Instagram *44clovers*

### Highlights so far?

A turning point has been relocating from Maine to rural County Galway and beginning life on a farm where Galway sheep are raised. Bringing long-held interests together, Rachel is learning directly from the rhythms of sheep, land, and season, while rethinking how she shows up creatively in this new chapter.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it is part of a living relationship between land, animals, and people. Galway wool in particular carries native breed heritage and a strong sense of place. For Rachel, it also speaks to fairness and transparency, where fibre can be traced, valued, and chosen deliberately.

*“My hope for the future is to see Galway wool available, traceable and offered as a choice in every sweater shop and department store across Ireland.”*



# Ann Mechelinck

## Textile Artist

I create contemporary hand-woven wall hangings inspired by the Irish landscape, the scenic countryside, and the enchanted forests of West Cork. “Made with Irish wool” has become the trademark of my work, and I proudly emphasise this at exhibitions and to buyers. I work solely by hand, merging weaving, crochet, and embroidery, traditional skills I believe need to be kept alive in today’s world where so much has become mechanised or computerised.

**County Cork**  
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### Highlights so far?

Living in the countryside led me to become fascinated by moss, its textures and greens on stones, trees, and in the undergrowth of West Cork forests. I became more aware of nature’s power to regenerate. Moss became my symbol of positivity in a negative world, and a synonym for healing, hope, and optimism, mindsets that are too often overlooked in society.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I search for the right materials and techniques. My inspiration, and love of traditional skills naturally brought me to Irish wool. When sampling, it felt wrong using imported or acrylic yarns, in touch and colour. Irish wool brings everything together, a natural, locally sourced material with textures and colour that links concept, skills, and inspiration into contemporary artworks.

*“Wool weaves community, tradition, connection, and resilience into our everyday lives.”*



# Art by Grainne

## Gráinne Zannis

I source sheep fleeces by contacting local farmers and collecting unwanted, unsaleable wool directly from their farms. I sort and process it at home: washing, drying, combing or carding, dyeing, spinning, and then knitting or weaving it into garments and everyday household items. I also wet and needle felt, producing dyed carded batts on my drum carder to make slippers, bags, hats, clothing, vessels, wall hangings, toys, and wool paintings. I often work alongside my home-schooled children, who have a deep understanding of wool, its properties, and its endless possibilities.

**County Waterford**  
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### Highlights so far?

I have held numerous solo exhibitions displaying and selling my wool work. I sourced a spinning wheel for a local Community Education project and have given wool-processing demonstrations and weekly workshops, including wet and needle felting. I will also be doing a wool-spinning demonstration for Heritage Week 2026 in Clonmel Library. I consider Irish wool to be one of the most underutilised natural resources available to us.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Many people believe Irish wool is substandard, but I beg to differ. I have yet to come across a fleece that is unusable. People are often amazed when they see Irish wool go from raw fleece to a spun skein, and the range of uses it can have. It is a huge oversight to treat this extraordinary material as a waste product of the meat industry when it is, in fact, one sure alternative to the problems created by fast fashion.

*“Goal: dress like a sheep at all times!”*



# Emily A Thompson

## Textile Artist

Emily is a needle felting artist creating unique artworks that connect people to the beauty of the world around them. Using locally sourced Irish wool, which she washes and dyes, Emily layers coloured wool to mirror the Irish landscape. She uses a needle felting tool to mat the fibres together, repeatedly working them with a sharp barbed needle. She then incorporates both sewing machine stitching and hand stitching to add further texture and detail. Her dyed wool is her “palette” and her felting needles her “paintbrush”. Fine art prints and home goods featuring prints of her work are available.

**County Cork**  
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### Highlights so far?

Using locally sourced Irish wool has been a beautiful adventure. Other textile artists have been generous with their resources and encouragement along the way. Reclaiming Irish wool to create art feels like reviving what was once a much-loved resource that has since become a waste product.

### Why Irish grown wool?

By using Irish wool, I feel I am supporting circularity while increasing knowledge and appreciation of Irish wool, heritage and the landscape.

*“Woolly journeys in wild places...”*



# Karima Rebecca Powell Artist



## Rebecca Powell - West Cork Collective

I am a textile artist using locally sourced wool in my projects, which include wet felting for wearable and home décor pieces, knitting and hand-stitched wall art. I buy raw fleeces directly from Irish farmers and process them myself. I value the hands-on connection of scouring and dyeing the wool, then selecting individual locks for each piece. I am also the founder of West Cork Collective, where we promote and advocate for heritage crafts, and where several members work with Irish wool.

**County Cork**  
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krp.artist@gmail.com

### Highlights so far?

I am proud to buy and process Irish fleeces for my home décor, wearable and wall art pieces. Each finished work carries a story; it is part of the land, not simply an interpretation of it. I have held two solo exhibitions where Irish wool featured strongly. In the early 1990s, I worked as an Aran knitter from home for a small business, and I now recognise the importance of that time in helping to keep the craft alive.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool has a deep connection to land, heritage, culture and language. It is biodegradable, sustainable, easy to care for and supports a circular economy. It makes sense to return to this incredible resource. It has always been there; we simply need to remember how to use it and bring it into the present, preserving the ancient knowledge it carries.

*“Humanity needs to remember the importance of these resources and their connection to land, lore and language.”*



# • LOGGE • ROMANI •

## Marta Romani & Karl Logge

We are two artists originally from Sydney and Brescia who now live in Sardinia, learning ancient textile techniques from a Sardinian Master Weaver. Our practice includes natural cold dyeing, spinning using a domed 'fuso' (drop spindle), building looms and weaving traditional designs and patterns. We have developed three Irish wool-focused projects: "Yarning Tomorrow" at Cowhouse Studios, Co. Wexford; The Wild Weave-a-torium at IMMA, Dublin; and "Meitheal, or The Social Fabric" at the Leitrim Sculpture Centre. Through experiments in weaving and dyeing using Irish wool and Sardinian techniques, we consider the politics, economics and future of this resource that entangles our two islands.

**Sardinia, Italy**  
cargocollective.com/loggerom  
loggerom@gmail.com  
@ loggerom  
visioneradical

### Highlights so far?

We are proud to have established the Yarning Tomorrow Manifesto in 2022, which we hope to reboot soon. Our 2025 project "Meitheal, or The Social Fabric" introduced our weaving approach to locals in Manorhamilton and inspired an ongoing group interested in working with their own local wools. We also created a 12-metre-long walking warp begun as a collective tapestry, which we hope will continue to grow using wool from growers across Ireland.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool echoes what we know about Sardinian wool and that of other places we have visited. It is an interface and a memoryscape, holding history and knowledge emerging from an entangled relationship with the island as ecology, settlement and unsettlement, and a tactile space of creative possibility. For us as artists, working with natural and local fibres activates a deeper understanding of place, especially for children and young people who will inherit the future we build today.

*“We hope to keep weaving our two islands together by bringing many hands, places and people into an endless and timeless dance of wool stories.”*



Textile Artists

# Lucia Errity Art

## Lucia Errity

I create two-dimensional art pieces using Irish wool and textiles. I am an artist working independently, making wool paintings that adorn people's homes. My practice centres on using Irish wool as a fine art medium, transforming fibre into landscapes, seascapes and nature scenes. Through this work, Irish wool moves from raw material into a contemporary visual art context, where its texture and natural qualities become central to the finished piece.

**County Meath**  
luciaerrityart.ie  
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📷 *luciaerrityart*

### Highlights so far?

I have been painting since 1995 and began painting with wool in 2020, when for reasons we would rather forget, we all had a lot of time on our hands. I discovered that Irish wool is a wonderful medium. It lends itself beautifully to the creation of landscapes, seascapes and nature scenes.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I love the thought that the wool I use becomes part of an artwork that will adorn people's homes. There is something meaningful about transforming a natural fibre into a lasting piece of art connected to landscape and place.

*“When I make art using Irish wool, I believe the wool helps me because it comes from nature, and it makes sense that it returns to nature in a landscape or seascape.”*



Textile Artists

# Lucy Hyland

## Textile Artist

I am a textile artist working primarily with Irish wool within a hand-built weaving practice that bridges heritage craft and modern design. From my studio in Dungarvan, I source native fibres, including wool from Irish producers such as Ériu and Donegal Yarn, integrating them into material-led, intuitive textile works that explore themes of connection and belonging. My work occupies the space where Irish wool moves beyond raw fibre and enters a contemporary visual arts context. Through slow, repetitive weaving processes, I explore structure, rhythm and form, allowing the inherent qualities of Irish wool, its texture, resilience and tonal variation to shape the outcome.

**County Waterford**  
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📷 *lucyhylandart*

### Highlights so far?

A significant shift in my practice came when I began blending reclaimed wools from my English and Irish family lineage with native Irish wool. What began as a personal exploration of identity evolved into a deeper material commitment to Irish fibre. Working with Irish wool allowed me to move beyond questions of nationality and discover a sense of belonging grounded in land, ecology and place through making.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool carries tactile meaning for me because it holds the imprint of landscape. It connects fibre to field, maker to land and contemporary practice to inherited knowledge. Its texture and tonal depth carry both history and possibility, allowing me to create work that captures the fabric of Irish living.

*“Irish wool is land, sea and weather intertwined, becoming form through care and craft.”*



# Plum Cottage Studio

## Veronika Straberger

Veronika is a visual artist living and working in the small village of Keekill on the shores of Lough Corrib, County Galway. Her creative journey focuses on developing a sustainable art practice that works in harmony with nature and the unique ecosystem of the neighbouring lakeside. She gathers local materials in tune with the seasons, from willow, moss, leaves and berries to woolly fleeces, raw clay, and soil. Her work is steeped in old traditions and local craftsmanship, including clay brick making, basketry, and loom weaving, drawing on the knowledge of those who came before.

**County Galway**  
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### Highlights so far?

Veronika offers open art workshops with local community groups and individuals, encouraging participants to explore and discover their own creative medium in an expressive way. Through an artist residency at her two-hundred-year-old thatched cottage, she invites people to step away from everyday life and reconnect with nature through creative and mindful practice.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters within Veronika's practice as a locally gathered, natural material that carries place, season, and rural tradition.

# Sandysosew

## Sandra Reynolds

I use Irish wool to needlefelt art inspired by life in Ireland. My work transforms this natural fibre into expressive pieces that reflect Irish landscapes, colour, and everyday scenes. As a needle-felting artist, I sit at the making stage of the wool journey, shaping Irish-grown wool into contemporary artwork rooted in place.

**County Dublin**  
Sandysosew@gmail.com  
📷 *sandysosew*

### Highlights so far?

I am a firm supporter of sustainability and recycling. I am proud to be able to design and produce art from a natural Irish product, demonstrating how wool can be reimagined creatively while staying true to its environmental and cultural value.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Wool has historically been used for many purposes and is now experiencing a resurgence in popularity. It is a truly versatile product that deserves its place in Irish life. As a by-product of farming, it has earned its place in Irish culture, from fashion to art and its many varied uses.

*“Working with wool alongside other land-based materials helps keep skills, stories, and sustainable making connected to the landscapes they come from.”*

*“From land to lifestyle, our woolly wonderful sheep are part of Ireland’s identity.”*



# Sharon Wells Art

## Sharon Wells

I work as a feltmaker and tutor of ancient textile crafts. I source wool from Irish sheep farms for my felted pictures and bogscape sculptures. I have demonstrated peg loom weaving and felting with the Irish Grown Wool Council at Bloom and the National Ploughing Championships. I teach all ages and abilities in felting, peg loom weaving, lucet braids, and wool processing. I am passionate about promoting wellbeing through craft, supporting farmers' incomes, and encouraging a circular economy rooted in tradition and lived experience.

**County Wicklow**  
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📷 sharonwellsart

### Highlights so far?

With Catherine Phibbs from IGWC, we successfully bid for the European Wool Exchange Foundation 2026 Conference to come to Ireland. I project managed 'European Wool Experience' interactive rooms as part of this event. My felted bog sculpture Portach Álainn was included in a curated exhibition at the National Design & Craft Gallery (July-Nov 2025). I also participated in Good Bog Bad Bog with Wicklow Uplands for Culture Night 2025, leading sessions using Irish wool to create bog landscapes and wildlife.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I use Irish wool because it connects me to the past and to my own ancestors and how they survived. Land and the sheep on it are woven into my soul. I source and collect wool from farmers across the county and have built relationships with them, including being invited to see hand-shearing. After a traumatic bereavement, creating with Irish wool helped build me back up.

*"With wool you can build what you see and what you can imagine."*



# Tamzen Lundy Designs

## Textile Artist

In my practice as a contemporary feltmaker, I work with a wide range of wools, including internationally, European, and Irish-sourced fibres. Through my product-based business, I create quirky, whimsical pieces inspired by the Irish landscape and its rich storytelling traditions. My faux taxidermy foxes are stuffed with Irish and British wool, while my sheep feature Galway wool needle-felted around a wet-felted Merino face. I believe all wool is preferable to plastic acrylic fibres. Rather than favouring one source over another, I see the integration of diverse fibres as a way to educate the public and foster a deeper appreciation for wool's value, versatility, and sustainability.

**County Kildare**  
tamzenlundydesigns.ie  
tamzenlundydesigns@gmail.com  
📷 tamzenlundydesigns

### Highlights so far?

In 2020 I left a long career in fashion and buying to return to wet felting. Concerned about mass production and acrylic fibres, I founded Tamzen Lundy Designs, creating wool pieces inspired by the Irish landscape using wool, waste tweed, and silk. I also served as Chair of Feltmakers Ireland (2018–2021), helping lead research into locally sourced Irish wool that resulted in the book *Exploring Irish Wool for Feltmaking*.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I believe all wool is preferable to plastic acrylic fibres. I see the integration of diverse fibres as a way to educate the public and foster a deeper appreciation for wool's value, versatility, and sustainability. Irish grown wool is a readily available sustainable raw material that, with investment, could be used in many areas, from gardening to insulation, to crafts and textile production.

*"Working with my hands making textiles from wool is grounding. It's a way to slow down, reconnect, and find joy through texture, touch, and connection to the land."*



# Crafty Dreams Studio

## Joanne Slevin

Crafty Dreams Studio is a club focused on using natural local fibres, including sheep wool and alpaca wool. Our work centres on making and learning with fibre through spinning, knitting, crochet, weaving, and felting. We are passionate about natural materials and local sourcing, and our activities help build skills, confidence, and appreciation for wool and other fibres within the community.

**County Laois**  
craftydreams2023@gmail.com  
Instagram Facebook *crafty\_dreams\_studio*

### Highlights so far?

We were proud to receive nominations for the Laois County Community Awards in both 2024 and 2025.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to us because we are passionate about spinning, knitting, crochet, weaving, and felting with natural fibres sourced locally. Using local wool supports practical making skills and helps keep natural materials in use.

# Feltmakers Ireland

## Juliane Gorman (on behalf of Feltmakers Ireland)

Feltmakers Ireland is a voluntary guild of feltmakers living and working across Ireland. Members range from beginners to professionals, connected by an interest in wet and needle felting. Day to day, the guild supports skill-sharing, workshops and exhibitions, and collaboration among makers. Many members once relied on imported Merino, but through researching and publishing *Exploring Irish Wool for Felting* (a study of the felting qualities of nearly 40 sheep breeds raised in Ireland), Feltmakers Ireland has strengthened links with sheep farmers and wool producers. The guild now sits at a pivotal point in the wool journey, advocating for greater use of locally sourced Irish wool.

**County Dublin**  
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feltmakersIE@gmail.com  
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Facebook YouTube *feltmakersireland*

### Highlights so far?

A recent milestone for Feltmakers Ireland is participation in European Wool Day, where members will exhibit felted artworks made with 60% Irish-raised wool. The guild will also host interactive wet-felting circles using local fibre. This wool was partly funded by a Design & Crafts Council of Ireland grant and sourced from Ériu and WoolStore Ireland, and its distribution to members marks an important step in encouraging wider use of Irish-raised fibre.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to us because it is the essential material for our craft. As feltmakers, we rely on wool to create felt, so it makes sense to use fibre from sheep reared on our own figurative doorsteps. Choosing Irish wool supports rural livelihoods, values local land stewardship, and strengthens a more circular, sustainable textile culture rooted in place.

*“Sheared fibre, spun fluff.”*






*“The inherent properties of Irish sheep’s wool are a quiet grace that makes felting possible. Long live the sheep who gift it!”*

# Glenside Farm Comber CIC

## Malini Colville

Glenside Farm Comber CIC is a community farm based on a working farm, creating opportunities for people to access the rural environment. It is home to pedigree Blue Texel sheep and award-winning Glen Cowie Aberdeen Angus. We recently completed a year-long project, Farm to Fabric, funded by the Heritage Fund. Using our own fleece, 25 participants learned heritage skills across the wool journey, including carding, spinning, dyeing, weaving and felting. Sessions were facilitated by Inspiring Yarns CIC and Kiri Cottage Crafts. The project was rooted on the farm, helping participants understand sheep rearing and the value of wool in relation to farming.

**County Down**  
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-  [glenside\\_farm](#)
-  [Glenside Farm](#)
-  [Glenside\\_Farm](#)

### Highlights so far?

Farm to Fabric was developed in direct response to the under-utilised commodity of sheep fleece identified by the farmer. Giving participants the chance to work with fleece and learn the processes behind wool production helped them understand its value. After the project ended, one participant sent a hat and cowl made with Glenside Farm fleece to the farmer, showing the lasting impact of the work.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is under-utilised, despite a rich heritage of wool-based crafts across the island. With little value currently returning to farmers, exploring innovative ways to use fleece in the production of wool is why Farm to Fabric took place, and why we are passionate about developing further initiatives. We are continuing further projects and workshops focused on our vision of health and wellbeing for all, through farming, nature and community.

*“Wool-based crafts are part of our heritage, and promoting the journey of wool from Farm to Fabric brings joy and wonder.”*






# Inspiring Yarns CIC

## Claire Anketell

Inspiring Yarns CIC is a Northern Ireland-based social enterprise working to restore value to Irish-grown wool through education, innovation and local processing. Founded in 2021, we deliver textile training and heritage craft workshops, and work with farmers, makers and partners to help reconnect fleece to local use. Through our WoolCycle initiative, we are developing plans for a local wool processing mill to address the lack of scouring and spinning facilities in Northern Ireland. Day to day, we support practical skill-building and collaboration that helps move wool from farm to fibre to finished work.

**County Down**  
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-  [inspiringyarns](#)
-  [inspiringyarnsuk](#)
-  [Inspiring Yarns / Claire Anketell](#)

### Highlights so far?

A key milestone has been launching WoolCycle, our ambition to establish a local wool processing mill in Northern Ireland. Our Farm to Fabric collaboration with Glenside Farm CIC also showed strong community appetite, with places filling quickly and participants continuing to make with Glenside fleece after the programme ended.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to us because it connects land, livelihoods and textile heritage. By restoring value to locally grown fleece, we support circular production, biodiversity and community wellbeing, while reducing waste and reliance on synthetic fibres.

*“May every Irish fleece find its purpose, valued, processed locally, and woven back into the fabric of our communities.”*





# Irish Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

Elizabeth O'Connor

The Irish Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers is a voluntary organisation with members across Ireland, welcoming everyone from beginners to professionals. Founded in 1975 by Lillias Mitchell, the Guild promotes weaving, spinning and dyeing through workshops, lectures, demonstrations and a shared equipment library where members can rent spinning wheels, looms and carding tools. It also supports the use of Irish-grown wool and fair payment for farmers, with members sourcing fleeces locally and demonstrating spinning at agricultural shows to show the journey from fleece to finished textile.

**Nationwide**  
weavespindye.ie  
hello@weavespindye.ie  
@weavespindyeie  
weavespindyeE

## Highlights so far?

For over 50 years, the Guild has supported and sustained traditional textile skills in Ireland. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in Irish-grown wool, with growing awareness of sustainability, traceability and the importance of fair prices for farmers. The Guild continues to play a key role in encouraging makers to choose Irish wool and keep these skills alive for future generations.

## Why Irish grown wool?

Irish grown wool is natural, renewable and biodegradable. It does not create microplastics like synthetic fibres and supports farming families who care for land and biodiversity. Supporting Irish wool strengthens rural livelihoods, heritage skills and soil regeneration, while helping to counteract the dominance of cheap synthetic imports. The Guild is passionate about ensuring these skills and values are passed on to the next generation.



# Little Bear: A WayMaker Project

Eileen Russell

Our organisation is a social enterprise supporting children's emotional wellbeing through play and therapeutic creativity. We work directly with children and families through play therapy, sensory supports and wellbeing resources. Our connection to Irish wool sits within our Little Bear project, a free digital therapeutic storytelling platform designed to comfort children through gentle metaphor and imagination. Alongside this digital work, we are developing complementary physical products that offer natural sensory experiences. We collaborate with skilled makers and academic partners to ensure materials are natural and safe for children, with Irish wool reflecting our commitment to sustainability, authenticity and calming sensory qualities.

**County Antrim**  
lovelittlebear.com  
hello@wearewaymaker.com  
@we\_are\_waymaker

## Highlights so far?

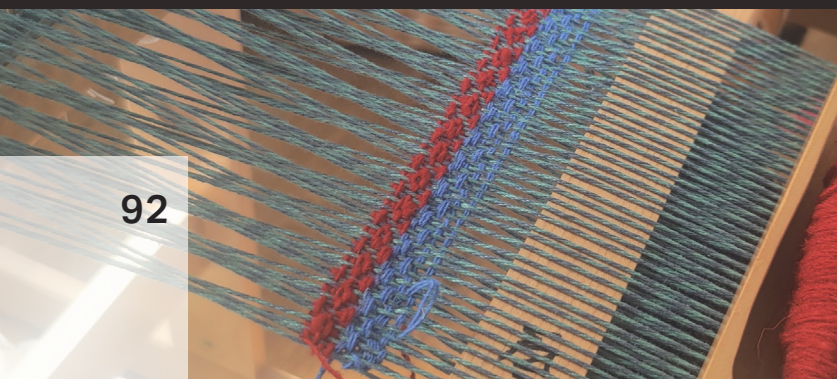
A milestone we are proud of is the recent launch of our Little Bear therapeutic storytelling project during Children's Mental Health Week. Sharing the platform online and receiving such a warm, positive response from families and professionals has been incredibly encouraging. It affirmed our belief that gentle digital storytelling, paired with natural sensory values, can reach children in meaningful and accessible ways at exactly the right moment.

## Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me because it provides a natural, tactile material that meets children's sensory needs while supporting imaginative play. As a children's play expert, I value wool for its sustainability, durability and ease of cleaning. It connects children to nature, fosters wellbeing and reflects a heritage of care, craftsmanship and circularity in every product.

*"Wool: keeping us warm when it's cool, and cool when it's warm, for over 6,000 years. Be green: wear wool!"*

*"My hope for the future is that more little hands can experience the warmth and wonder of Irish wool, inspiring gentle, imaginative and sustainable play."*



# The Liberties Weavers



## Claire Byrne

The Liberties Weavers is a Dublin-based community textile social enterprise rooted in Ireland's historic wool and weaving traditions. We deliver weaving classes, public workshops, school visits, heritage talks and collaborative textile projects from our base in The Liberties, once a major centre of wool and cloth production. As a community group, we prioritise Irish wool, using 100% Irish fibre in our workshops and bringing raw fleece to schools so students can see and understand the journey from sheep to yarn to cloth. Our work connects Irish-grown fibre with contemporary community creativity.

**County Dublin**  
thelibertiesweavers.ie  
thelibertiesweavers@gmail.com  
Instagram: [thelibertiesweavers](#)

### Highlights so far?

A milestone we are especially proud of is the revival of weaving in Dublin's Liberties, once the heart of the city's textile industry. From a small community initiative, we have grown into a vibrant social enterprise with over 250 people on our waiting list. Seeing Irish wool back on local looms, and young people discovering fleece in their classrooms, reminds us why we began: to reconnect community, craft, and heritage.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to us because it connects land, animal, maker, and community in one continuous story. It supports livelihoods, sustains traditional skills, and offers a natural, renewable fibre in a world of synthetics. Working with Irish wool keeps heritage alive while promoting circular, climate-conscious creativity rooted in place.

# MiST – Mizen Spinning & Textile Group



## Brigid O'Brien & Sandy Ryrie

MiST is a diverse group of women living in West Cork who meet through friendship, textiles and creativity. We come from different backgrounds and learn from one another, united by individual threads. As crafters and artists, our ethos is to use underused resources such as Irish wool and recycled materials, creating and upcycling wherever possible. Our combined skills include scouring raw fleeces for carding, natural dyeing, spinning and plying. From these beginnings, we design and create wearable, useful and inspiring pieces of textile art.

**County Cork**  
mist.spin26@btinternet.com

### Highlights so far?

We have been invited to exhibit our work in Kinsale and Skibbereen libraries. The group is often asked to demonstrate traditional spinning and weaving techniques at shows and public venues. We have been featured in local newspapers and an American fashion magazine, and some members have held solo exhibitions in art galleries.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Some members of our group were brought up on farms, inspiring us to continue using traditional materials and techniques and to educate people of all ages. In a rural area such as ours, it is important to support farmers by using fleeces that might otherwise be discarded, while keeping traditions alive with minimal energy use.

*"We may not have much contact with sheep directly, but we are consumers."*

*"Keep yourself warm, wool is cool!"*



# Wise Wool Project

Kerry Walker, Lisa Sandow, Sandra Spethmann

The Wise Wool Project is a Creative Communities initiative using the arts to raise awareness of Ireland’s growing wool waste dilemma. Once a valued national resource, Irish wool is now often discarded despite its natural and sustainable qualities. The project reconnects communities with this traditional material and highlights its potential for a more sustainable future. Through hands-on workshops in schools and community spaces, participants explore the journey of Irish wool from sheep to textile through art, craft and conversation. Students learn about local farming, sustainability and circular design while experimenting with felting, weaving and wool-based art.

**County Kerry**  
curraghmorefarm.ie/wise-wool-project  
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📷 [wise\\_wool\\_project](#)

## Highlights so far?

Over the past two years, the Wise Wool Project has creatively connected with schools, youth groups, families, and local artists. An important platform attended last year was the National Ploughing Championships, where people from all over Ireland were invited to hear about the Wise Wool Project and learn about solutions to wool waste in Ireland. Being present at such a large-scale event was a significant milestone.

## Why Irish grown wool?

Wool, once central to rural life across Europe, is now often discarded as waste, costing farmers more to shear sheep than the wool is worth. The Wise Wool Project highlights this growing issue and encourages creative, community-driven solutions.

# Craggaunowen Castle and Crannog

Steven Ryan

Craggaunowen is an open-air museum in County Clare showcasing Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Medieval life in Ireland. The remit of the site is to encourage experimental archaeology, a love of history, and the sharing of knowledge. Onsite there is a reconstruction of a crannog, a ringfort, and an original 16th century castle. Activities include textile production, including spinning, natural dyeing, and weaving. We use drop spindles, spinning wheels, and local dyes, and weave on frame, sprang, and warp-weighted looms. We produce woollen cloth for costumes and wall hangings. Since the 1990s, we have hosted a flock of Soay sheep, and their fleece, along with fleece from Galway, Cladoir, and sheep from local farms is used every day at Craggaunowen.

**County Clare**  
craggaunowen.ie  
craggaunowen@claretourismdev.ie  
📷 [craggaunowen.ie](#)  
📘 [Craggaunowen](#)

## Highlights so far?

On the last Sunday of August, Craggaunowen hosts the Annual Textile Day, when spinners and textile workers from all over Ireland and beyond come together to share skills, knowledge, and fibre. They meet the public, demonstrate crafts, chat, and tell stories. Over the years, the day has developed into an established festival.

## Why Irish grown wool?

At Craggaunowen, wool is a valuable material for experimentation, learning and sharing skills. It connects us to the land and our ancestors while helping pass these traditions to future generations, and as a natural, sustainable product, it is something we are proud to promote.

*“Ireland’s wool waste reimaged.”*



*“There is a feeling of wellbeing when using wool, a relaxing and rhythmical activity that has been passed down through the ages.”*

# Kiri Cottage Crafts



## Christine Casey

I give demonstrations and talks, and run workshops to educate people about Ireland's heritage crafts, notably spinning, weaving, knitting, and crochet, as well as other Scandinavian crafts such as nålbinding, lucet braiding, and peg loom weaving. I run workshops in my own facilities and can also deliver them in other venues. My work sits in education and skills-sharing, helping people connect with traditional textile practices and supporting sustainable ways to use fleece and wool.

**County Down**  
kircottage.co.uk  
kircottagecrafts@aol.com  
f Kiri Cottage

### Highlights so far?

I learned to knit when I was six, and crochet shortly after, with a mother, grandmother, and aunt who were knitters, crocheters, lace makers, and held a wide range of textile skills. I learned to spin and weave in my early twenties and have gathered a host of other textile crafts along the way.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I want to preserve heritage crafts and offer a sustainable way to use fleece.

# The Story of Rathlin Wool



## Marianne Green

I am a sheep farmer's daughter from Rathlin Island. I began using the story of how wool was seen as a waste product to describe the Future Island project and the extra complications of being a farmer on an island. The story resonated with islanders and those in the wool industry, as Future Island investigated alternative uses for wool from Rathlin. With a fellowship from Future Island, my story was transformed into a self-published book, *The Story of Rathlin Wool*, in 2025. It has been beautifully illustrated by Lynn Finnegan, with some illustrations embroidered using Rathlin wool.

**Rathlin Island**  
rathlin360.com/rathlin-wool-book  
mariannegreen2000@yahoo.com

### Highlights so far?

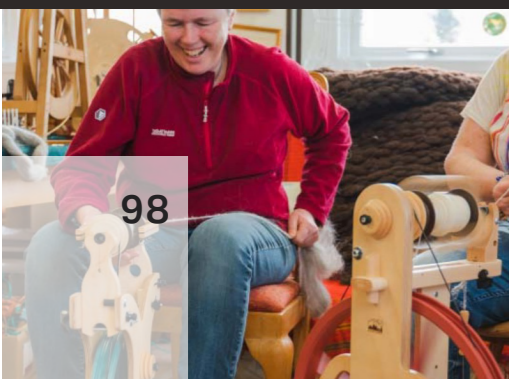
I have learned so much about the grading process from Ulster Wool, especially Jayne Harkness (Bones), and about the process of changing fleeces into wool from Chris Weiniger at Donegal Yarns. I have had amazing fun dyeing and creating with Alison Gault and Anna Duffy from Belfast School of Art, as well as watching the journey of Patsy Harbinson from *Hooked on Rathlin* through a FII fellowship. Launching the book at Belfast Design Week was nerve-racking but great fun.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Wool matters to me because it is a fibre with so much local heritage, can be used in many ways, and brings joy and comfort while being sustainable.

*"Let's see wool become a valuable commodity again, with a range of sustainable uses."*

*"Choosing wool means supporting local production, embracing a natural fibre that regrows, regulates warmth, can be used in so many ways, and biodegrades sustainably."*



# Aransheep

## Mairtín Ó Flaithearta

Aransheep is a one-man operation on Inis Mór, centred on sheep farming, research into sheep breeds, and exploring what can be knitted with their wool. Alongside the farm, I run a farm shop and a knitting museum, sharing the story of the Aran gansey and keeping its traditions visible and alive. The farm also welcomes visiting knitting groups and foreign tours, offering the chance to see the Galway sheep and lambs up close and connect with the living tradition behind the garments.

**Inis Mór**  
aransheep.ie  
info@aransheep.ie

### Highlights so far?

I'm the only maker on Aran producing Aran ganseys from wool grown on Aran.

### Why Irish grown wool?

I believe an Aran gansey can only truly be made with wool grown on sheep in Ireland. Using Irish-grown wool protects the integrity of the Aran story, keeps value closer to farming and island livelihoods, and helps ensure that what is sold as "Aran" is rooted in place, tradition, and local fibre.

# Back Garden & Co

## Christopher Denslow

I am a textile artist who works mostly with plants, bones and raw Irish wool. I handspin all of my own wool, sourced directly from Irish farms, and I mainly work with alpaca alongside a range of sheep wools. I also use offcuts from Irish producers to create one-of-a-kind blends and art yarns. My work sits at the intersection of farming, craft, and sustainable production, keeping more of the processing, design, and storytelling at home, from farm gate to finished piece.

**County Dublin**  
backgardenandco.com  
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@backgarden.andco

### Highlights so far?

Working with raw Irish wool has felt like a return to something ancient and honest. I'm proud of building relationships with local farmers and handspinning fleeces from animals I've met myself. Blending alpaca, sheep wool and Irish mill offcuts into one-of-a-kind yarns is storytelling through fibre, honouring land, lineage and the quiet beauty of slow, intentional craft.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me because it carries the story of land, weather and care. It supports rural livelihoods and keeps traditional skills alive, while offering a renewable, biodegradable alternative to synthetic fibres. Working with it feels like participating in a circular, climate conscious practice rooted in heritage, resilience and respect for place.



*"That Aran gansey should be certified like Harris Tweed is."*

*"May we value wool not as waste, but as a living thread connecting land, animal, farmer, maker and future."*



# Connemara Wool

## Gladys Nee

Connemara Wool hand-scours local wool, then dries and cards it for felting. I create slippers, felted soap, and other products using wool from our own flock as well as wool from neighbours and friends. My work sits in the processing and making stages of the wool journey, creating local value from wool that is often overlooked and helping keep this material in use within the community.

**County Galway**  
gneedeigns@gmail.com  
📷 [connemarawool](#)

### Highlights so far?

I am very proud that I have been able to use Connemara wool to make products.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Connemara wool is largely viewed as a waste by-product, so it has been extremely important to be able to create value and local uses for it.

# Dooleys Wool

## Kevin Dooley

We are a family-run business founded by our father, Seamus, over 70 years ago. He began by shearing sheep, then purchasing and exporting wool. Today, we continue that legacy and also sell 100% Irish wool bedding. Our work spans generations and multiple stages of the wool journey, from farm to finished product, maintaining strong relationships with Irish farmers and ensuring Irish wool remains central to what we do. As part of our work with the Irish Grown Wool Council, we initiated a traceability programme with nine farmers from whom we buy wool.

**County Offaly**  
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📷 [dooleyswool](#)  
📘 [Dooley's Wool](#)

### Highlights so far?

Under the traceability programme, wool was sent to Muckamore (Ulster Wool) to be graded through a traceable system. QR codes were applied before scouring, and we now use this fully traceable wool in our bedding products. Donegal Yarn also uses this traceable wool. Consumers can now purchase Irish wool products knowing they contain 100% Irish wool from named Irish farms, and the farmers were paid a premium for this wool.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool was replaced 30 years ago by oil-based synthetics, which are now causing significant environmental damage. Irish farmers are producing a sustainable, biodegradable eco fibre on our island and are not being rewarded for it. The time has come for Irish wool to re-emerge and be properly valued again.

*“Created by nature.”*

*“The properties in wool can never be manufactured or replicated in a factory. They must be grown naturally.”*



# Ériu

## Zoë Daly & Lionel Mackey

Ériu works across farming, wool sourcing, yarn production, and garment making. Through a nationwide network called Farm to Yarn, they incentivise farmers through fair pay to focus on wool quality, then hand-select and purchase this wool alongside the wool grown on their own farm to produce Ériu Yarn. Their work connects primary production with value-added making, supplying the hand-knitting, fashion, and textile markets while also creating their own garments.

**County Wicklow**  
eriu.eu  
zoe@eriu.eu  
eriu.ireland

### Highlights so far?

Since the early days of the business, Ériu has envisioned establishing its own woollen mill. After acquiring old machinery, they are now preparing to realise that vision by setting up the mill on their farm, marking an important step in rebuilding local wool infrastructure.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is a valuable natural and national resource that shaped Ireland's design, craft, and industrial history. Ériu sees the decline in farmer value, sheep value, and sovereign wool industry capacity as something that can be reversed. Their work is driven by a commitment to restore the value of this fibre and the industry around it.

*"Our vision is to reclaim Ireland's valuable wool industry!"*



# Gambrill & Lam

## Annmarie Gambrill

At Gambrill & Lam, I design, handspin wool, weave on different heritage looms and teach traditional crafts, all based around Irish wool. Work includes fibre preparation and handspinning, weaving on restored looms (including a flying shuttle loom for full-size blankets), and designing one-of-a-kind woven pieces and tweed. I also deliver workshops, talks and demonstrations, helping more people understand the journey from fleece to yarn to finished cloth, and encouraging greater use of Irish wool, including native and heritage breeds.

**County Mayo**  
gambrillandlam@gmail.com  
gambrill.and.lam

### Highlights so far?

The restoration of my old flying shuttle loom is one of my biggest achievements and now I can weave full size blankets in 100% Irish wool. The product I'm most proud of is a one-of-a-kind woven blanket made with Galway wool yarn from Donegal Yarns as the warp, and handspun yarn from my Blue Texel ewe called Ivy. I did the whole process myself from shearing, washing, spinning and weaving.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me because it connects land, animals and people. I work with my own sheep and local fleeces, honouring skills passed down through generations. Teaching spinning and weaving keeps this knowledge alive, supports rural livelihoods and shows how wool can be a resilient, circular material for the future.

*"Irish wool, keeping generations warm for over 4,000 years."*



# Mogosh Wool Craft

## Léna Descottes

I live on Inishbofin Island, where I founded a small local wool craft company. I source wool from our own sheep and from neighbouring farmers, giving me access to a wide variety of breeds. Each summer I work alongside the shearer, continuing to learn. I carefully select fleeces, then store, wash and card the wool before transforming it through felting, embroidery and weaving. I create pieces ranging from wet- and dry-felted rugs to furniture. Being involved in every step matters to me — from caring for the animals and shearing to designing, making and selling the final work. My craft is chemical-free and rooted in ancestral techniques.

**County Galway**  
mogoshwoolcraft.com  
lena.descottes@orange.fr  
📷 *mogoshwoolcraft*

### Highlights so far?

About a year and a half after I began, some farmers started treating the wool with great care, as if they could finally see the treasure it was. It changed everything for me. The work became lighter, and I felt deeply connected to them, as though we were all moving in the same direction — protecting this beautiful fibre so it could be used with the respect it deserves.

### Why Irish grown wool?

What I cherish most in this craft is the deep sense of connection and gathering. I rely on the farmers, on Rory the shearer, and on the animals who make everything possible. Working with wool roots me in the land, its people and older generations. It feels alive, healing, seasonal and guiding — a material that continually inspires creativity.

*“Wool gently guides me and grounds me — it is a tool for healing, a vessel that holds and releases creativity.”*

# Sustainable Rope Ltd

## Katherine Drury

Sustainable Rope, part of the Future Island project, manufactures rope from traceable wool sourced in the British Isles as a natural alternative to synthetic ropes that shed microplastics. Founded by Kate Drury, the company commissions UK-based manufacturing at every stage to ensure transparency and farm traceability. As demand grows, industries such as seaweed farming and land restoration are exploring wool rope as a more environmentally sympathetic material within a circular economy. The company has won several awards and now produces wool logs, braids and fabric for restoration work and consumer products

**West Yorkshire**  
sustainable.rope.com  
kate@sustainable.rope.com  
📷 *sustainable.rope*  
🌐 *Sustainable Rope Ltd*

### Highlights so far?

As more industries and consumers look to natural fibres, wool has a bright future. In setting up and growing the company, it has become increasingly clear that the market and wool processing infrastructure must expand to ensure more companies can access and transition to sustainable products. A sustainable market for wool from these shores is essential to enable primary producers to remain key stakeholders from farm to end product.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is part of the wider story of wool from this archipelago of islands. It strengthens and complements the narrative of our shared wool heritage and makes us stronger on the world stage. Championing family farms, Irish wool demonstrates the diversity of wool and the wider sheep systems embedded in strong communities. It has an important story to tell.


*“Overlooked for too long for its clever characteristics, wool and those who produce it have an exciting future ahead.”*



# Agile Executives

## Pat Byrne

I have worked across a number of wool sector projects since 2023. I led the DAFM-sponsored study 'Review of Market Opportunities for Irish-Grown Wool-Based Products' and, as founding chair, supported the establishment of the Irish Grown Wool Council and the Wool R&I Hub. I have also contributed to feasibility work on social enterprise models for using wool locally, including a report for NEWKD on the Dingle Peninsula and a feasibility study for a wool utilisation company linked to NPWS projects. I have advised on the "A New Fleece of Life" project and mentored the Curraghmore Farm Leader application, including plans for a female-led Agricultural Arts Centre with a micro wool scouring facility.

**County Kerry**  
agileexecutives.ie  
WestKerryWool.ie  
pat.byrne@agileexecutives.ie  
 patrickoabyrne

### Highlights so far?

I began this work with Kerry Wool CoOp on a modest project exploring modern approaches to scouring. From there, I assembled the consortium for the DAFM markets study and focused on helping establish the Irish Grown Wool Council, with four working groups and a Wool Hub. A key success has been the Hub's role in enabling researchers to collaborate and secure substantial research funding for the sector.

### Why Irish grown wool?


I grew up near Youghal, where Irish wool carpets were a major local employer and wool generated a meaningful annual cheque for farms. When I re-engaged with wool in 2022, I found it had become a lamb by-product that was often not worth gathering. Today, I see Irish wool being recognised again as a future bio-based material with real economic and environmental value.

*"I foresee children sleeping in beds with wool accessories, in houses insulated with wool, and gardens fertilised with wool compost, with sheep instead of robotic mowers."*

# Circular Bioeconomy Cluster

## Michael Noctor

The Circular Bioeconomy Cluster at Munster Technological University supports the development of a circular bioeconomy across Ireland's South-West, connecting farmers, SMEs, researchers and policymakers to turn renewable biological resources into sustainable economic opportunities. Within this work, natural fibres like wool offer strong potential to create additional value at farm and regional levels. The Cluster brings together producers, processors and innovators across the wool value chain, supporting collaboration, research partnerships and funding opportunities that help position Irish wool within a resilient, circular and climate-aligned economy.

**County Kerry**  
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 Circular Bioeconomy Cluster

### Highlights so far?

Among the many highlights of our journey, a few stand out for different reasons. Through the Kerry Science Festival, we contributed to a collaboration with Wise Wool at Curraghmore Farm to facilitate an open felting workshop and wool-themed public engagement experience, reconnecting people with Irish wool. We also contributed to the Leader Wool Project and convened a 22-partner consortium to pursue Horizon Europe funding focused on advancing circular wool systems.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it represents both heritage and future potential. Once a high-value, internationally competitive rural material, it was rooted in farming systems, livelihoods, and export markets. That legacy still matters. In a climate-conscious world, wool offers renewed opportunity through collaboration, circularity, and innovation grounded in land, skill, and community.


*"There is strong grassroots momentum behind Irish wool, and the Circular Bioeconomy Cluster is here to support its future development."*



# Dingle Hub & West Kerry Scotch Mountain Sheep Breeders Association

## Dinny Galvin

Dinny Galvin is a lifelong farmer from Lispole, County Kerry, working across dairy farming and a flock of West Kerry Mountain sheep. Through his role with the West Kerry Scotch Mountain Sheep Breeders Association and in collaboration with Dingle Hub, his work connects sheep farming, local wool, biodiversity, and community-led rural innovation. It highlights both the cultural importance of mountain sheep farming in West Kerry and the practical need to build stronger local wool infrastructure, from better wool preparation and presentation to new uses such as insulation and packaging, so that more Irish wool can be retained and used productively.

County Kerry  
dinny@dinglehub.com  
 Dingle Hub

### Highlights so far?

A key focus has been highlighting the need for local scouring and better presentation of wool to merchants. There is also growing interest in insulation and packaging uses, which could create practical outlets for larger volumes of wool and help build a stronger local wool economy.


### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it is being dumped on many farms. As Ireland needs to build homes for younger generations, wool should be part of that journey, especially in insulation and other practical uses. This could also support local jobs.

# Dis\_orthodox

## Gillian Steel

Gillian is an artist, researcher, filmmaker, and design activist with a specialist focus on textiles and design for sustainment, with a track record of connecting to and engaging with communities. In 2017 she founded ReMode CIC in Scotland and held the role of Creative Director until 2024. Her interests lie in the intersection of natural resources found in the places we live and the potential agency of social movements and communities to connect to these. Gillian has a particular interest in developing broader uses for Irish wool alongside its role in localised ecosystems and the development of hybrid yarns.

County Antrim  
gilliansteel@hotmail.com  
 Dis\_orthodox

### Highlights so far?

My drive comes from a desire to challenge dominant ideas about planetary material resources: those considered viable because they fit current commercial systems, and those dismissed as useless because they do not. I believe these stories can be rewritten from the ground up by reconnecting communities to local materials, skills, and knowledge, and my work has focused on generating and supporting that shift.

### Why Irish grown wool?

The appreciation and revitalisation of Irish wool as a viable resource is a highly important part of reconfiguring currently unsustainable systems of resource access and provision. Irish wool also connects to making skills and community-held knowledge that will play a vital role in broader issues of biodiversity and climate resilience.

*“Mountain sheep farming is a way of life, as well as caring for animals and producing wool. We need to hold on to this before heritage and culture are lost.”*

*“That Irish wool will rise from a fragile position of artisanal product to one of commonplace multiple everyday applications and uses.”*





# European Wool Exchange


## Dr Alberto Costa, Dóra Jamniczky-Kaszás

At the core of the European Wool Exchange Foundation (EWE) is the issue of underused sheep wool in Europe. Since 2021, we have organised the annual European Wool Day to celebrate and promote wool as a sustainable, natural, and versatile fibre with a rich heritage, while raising awareness of the current wool situation across Europe. We highlight the many actors working in the field, create a platform for sharing best practice, and support new collaborations. We are also strong advocates for fibre crafts made with European wool, especially therapeutic knitting, and we are honoured, together with Irish co-hosts, to organise the 6th European Wool Day Conference in Tralee, County Kerry, on 28 March 2026.

### Cyprus

ewe.network

ewe@ewe.network

 [ewe\\_foundation\\_\\_](#)

 [European Wool Exchange](#)

 [ewefoundation-europeanwool255](#)

 [European Wool Exchange Foundation \(EWE\)](#)

### Highlights so far?

The EWE Foundation supports research and runs health and wellbeing programmes using European wool. In health, education, and social care settings, we promote fibre craft projects such as therapeutic knitting, and we also support the development of sensory tools and toys for people living with dementia and autism. Our goal is to bring these proven concepts to Ireland.

### Why Irish grown wool?

With its rich sheep farming traditions, historic wool processing knowledge, and iconic Aran jumper, Ireland is a powerful example of how heritage and innovation can work together. Irish wool is well placed to showcase farm-to-finished-product models, supported by strong storytelling around provenance, craftsmanship, and circular economy potential.

*“Wool is a hug from nature, wrapping us in sustainable warmth while providing a powerful tool for therapeutic knitting to soothe the mind.”*



# Fibreshed Ireland


## Malú Colorín & Jess Leonard

Fibreshed Ireland is a community movement building a regenerative Irish textile system based on local fibre, dyes and labour. As an affiliate of the global Fibreshed network, it supports collaborations with verified provenance, encourages beneficial farming practices and helps communities develop regional fibre processing facilities. In Ireland, the focus is on wool and linen, fostering collaboration between farmers, processors, makers and designers while organising workshops to revive wool skills. The group is particularly interested in supporting community initiatives and small businesses to develop local scouring and spinning, creating a fully local farm-to-textile system.

### Nationwide

fibreshedireland.ie

fibreshed.ireland@gmail.com

 [fibreshed\\_ireland](#)

### Highlights so far?

Fibreshed Ireland is proud to have members doing important work with Irish-grown wool, many of whom are likely represented in this almanac. As an organisation, we continue to advocate for grassroots collaboration to build a regenerative local textile system. Through events, workshops, and symposia, we have helped wool projects get off the ground and supported productive partnerships between stakeholders.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because sheep have been on this island since the Neolithic and are adapted to this climate. Managed well, they can contribute positively to ecosystem restoration, while producing a versatile natural fibre for textiles, construction, horticulture, and more. It makes little sense to rely on petrochemicals or imported wool when this resource is already here.

*“We have been in relationship with sheep for millennia. They deserve to be honoured by making the most of the wonderful fibre they produce.”*



# FORUM Connemara The Dúlra Project

Sinéad Grimes

FORUM Connemara works at the intersection of land management, conservation, and rural livelihoods across the west of Ireland. Day to day, the organisation delivers peatland and habitat restoration, invasive species control, and environmental management projects in partnership with farmers, landowners, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and local communities. Irish wool enters this work through its connection to farming systems and upland landscapes. Increasingly, the project explores practical, low-impact uses for Irish wool within environmental initiatives, including trialling wool in erosion control, peatland restoration, and other nature-based solutions – helping to reconnect wool as a valued resource rather than a waste material.

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## Highlights so far?

One of the most meaningful aspects of the journey has been bringing farmers, conservation practitioners, and researchers into the same conversation around land management and materials once overlooked. Pilot projects testing Irish wool in peatland restoration and erosion control have demonstrated its potential as a practical, nature-based solution, reconnecting degraded landscapes with undervalued wool.

## Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it is inseparable from the landscapes and people who shape them. It represents generations of land stewardship and rural livelihoods. Valuing wool as a resource supports biodiversity, strengthens farming communities, and helps build circular, climate-resilient systems rooted in care for land and place.

*“When we value Irish wool, we value the landscapes, animals, and people that shaped it. It can be a solution for positive change, not a problem.”*

# The Wool Hub Future Island-Island

Alison Gault and Anna Duffy

Through Future Island-Island, we have explored how Irish wool can become a traceable, place-based bio and regenerative product. Our work began with Rathlin Blackface fleece from Rathlin Island, long undervalued and largely excluded from meaningful local use. Instead of accepting low-grade processing, we approached the wool as a material rooted in landscape, ecology and culture. By gathering, sorting, testing, and prototyping with the fibre, we assessed its performance and design potential. This work has demonstrated that Rathlin Blackface wool can anchor a regenerative supply chain that supports biodiversity, rural economies, material circularity, and the reinstatement of cultural value to a fibre intrinsically connected to place.

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## Highlights so far?

A defining milestone has been returning Rathlin wool to Rathlin Island as yarn and rope, restoring value to a fibre once overlooked. We collaborated closely with islanders to co-design a Rathlin Aran gansey, hats, and a Rathlin Fair Isle, using natural dyes sourced on the island to create a distinctive local palette that reconnects material, maker, and place.

## Why Irish grown wool?

We have transformed undervalued fleece into purposeful products while building skills among islanders and students. This initiative fosters circularity, revives heritage knowledge, and demonstrates how regenerative materials can support biodiversity, rural livelihoods, climate resilience, and community wellbeing.

*“Through codesign our Rathlin wool returns as a circular, regenerative bio-fibre, valued, place-based, and teaching us how to care for our land.”*





# The Galway Wool Co-op

## Blátnaid Gallagher

Blátnaid Gallagher is co-founder of a national wool co-op harvesting fleece from Ireland's native Galway sheep breed. The co-op works with sheep farmers across all four provinces, organising an annual meitheal to support wool collection and ensure fleece is valued as a natural resource rather than a by-product. Its work focuses on the early stages of the wool journey, reconnecting land, farmer, fibre and maker, while collaborating with stakeholders such as Avoca Ireland to support transparency and traceability for consumers.

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### Highlights so far?

Our journey has included national awards, recognition as a best practice model by the EU CAP Network Focus Group 57 for Innovation in Wool, and being highly commended at the EU ARIA Awards 2024. We were also invited to the World Wool Forum in Rome, hosted by Isabella Rossellini and Li Edelkoort. The work began with the realisation that wool from the Galway sheep breed, once central to the Aran sweater, had nearly disappeared from Ireland's wool story.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it sits at the intersection of land, care and culture. It is a world-class biofibre shaped by our climate and landscapes, yet long undervalued. Irish wool supports biodiversity, rural livelihoods and climate resilience through low-input, circular systems rooted in good land stewardship. With transparent engagement, it can again become a viable material for heritage textile industries while restoring value to both fibre and farmer.

*“Irish wool is a world class fibre beneath our feet. When we value land, farmer, and fibre together, it can once again shape our living heritage.”*



# Irish Grown Wool Council

## Catherine Phibbs

The Irish Grown Wool Council is an all-island, industry-led steering group and voluntary initiative established in April 2023 following a recommendation in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's Review of Market Opportunities for Irish-Grown Wool-Based Products. Our purpose is to transform Irish grown wool from an underutilised and undervalued resource into a branded, value-added product that benefits farmers and the wider supply chain. Through advocacy, public engagement, industry development and brand-building, we connect stakeholders at home and abroad to strengthen the sector and deliver greater value to sheep farmers.

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### Highlights so far?

In 2024, *Shear Success*, a national guide for maximising wool value, reached 50,000 sheep farmers. Produced in partnership with Teagasc and distributed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, it was the first wool presentation resource in 25 years. In 2025, a traceability pilot tracked 12,000kg of clean Irish-grown wool through the supply chain, providing verified provenance for buyers.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish grown wool is a sustainable, versatile fibre with significant untapped potential. When properly valued and utilised, it can help support 50,000 sheep farmers nationwide, add value across the supply chain, drive innovation in businesses, products, medical devices, cosmetics, building materials, textiles, homes, gardens and more. Irish grown wool has the potential to strengthen Ireland's role in building a more sustainable economy.

*“Our hope is to see Irish-grown wool valued and widely used, supporting farmers, fostering innovation and collaboration, and contributing to sustainable economies.”*





# Irish Natura & Hill Farmers Association (INHFA)

## Pheilim Molloy

The Irish Natura and Hill Farmers Association represents the interests of many sheep and suckler farmers across Ireland. We represent our members on the Irish Grown Wool Council and support efforts to increase the value and use of Irish wool. Our work includes promoting research into wool's uses beyond traditional applications, including examining its chemical composition and practical potential. We work alongside academic research to advance knowledge and support the development of new wool-based products, from insulation to composting and other circular applications.

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### Highlights so far?

Given the low value of wool, our focus has been on research that can increase its use and, in turn, its value. One example is the use of wool in research as a growing medium for vegetables.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Greater use of Irish wool can improve farmers' overall economic output, support rural employment, and reduce reliance on synthetic fibres. It also has an important role to play in the bioeconomy and circular economy.

*“Irish wool: powering sustainable farming, strengthening rural livelihoods, and shaping the future of rural life.”*



# Maynooth University

## Máire Nic an Bhaird

Cniotáil & Comhrá, a THRIVE-funded Student Success Project at Maynooth University, connects Irish wool with bioeconomy education through work with BiOrbic. The five-week course with Professional Master of Education students uses knitting and crochet to support spoken Irish, wellbeing and community. Irish wool is explored as a bio-based material rooted in landscape, tradition and sustainability, with students learning its journey from environment to craft. The project sits at the cultural and educational stages of the wool journey, building awareness and equipping future teachers to bring Irish wool, heritage and bioeconomy thinking into primary education.

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### Highlights so far?

One highlight has been introducing students to Irish wool through Cniotáil & Comhrá. Many had never touched Irish wool or tried crochet before, yet engaging with the fibre sparked a deep emotional connection to craft, language and heritage. Witnessing their confidence, curiosity and sense of belonging grow through hands-on creativity has been incredibly rewarding and inspiring.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to me because it connects people to land, heritage and sustainable livelihoods. Working with it fosters care, creativity and wellbeing while supporting biodiversity and circular practices. It embodies traditional skills and knowledge, offering a tangible way to engage with culture, climate resilience and the living story of our landscapes.

*“Ní neart go cur le chéile – there is no strength without unity; may Irish wool continue to weave together community, culture, language and creativity for generations.”*



## John Loughrey

As a local development company, we aim to support wool producers in securing better value for their produce. Our role is focused on enabling practical pathways that strengthen the position of farmers within the wool supply chain and contribute to sustainable local economic development. As a local development company, we aim to support wool producers in securing better value for their produce by enabling practical pathways that strengthen the position of farmers within the wool supply chain. This includes helping projects move from early-stage analysis and development into training and delivery, supporting collaboration, and enabling locally rooted initiatives that contribute to sustainable rural economic development.

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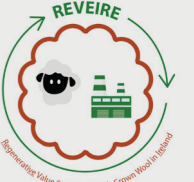
### Highlights so far?

There has been significant research and many studies completed in recent years. Now, there needs to be more practical action, with pilot projects delivered to move the situation forward and create tangible outcomes for producers.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters to the livelihood of our farmers, and it matters for the environment.

# Regenerative Value Systems for Irish Grown Wool in Ireland (REVEIRE)



## Archishman Bose

University College Cork leads the REVEIRE project, an all-island research initiative focused on regenerating the Irish wool industry. Regenerative Value Systems for Irish Grown Wool in Ireland (REVEIRE) aims to transform wool from a farm by-product with negative return on investment into a valuable resource. The project is developing data and evidence to inform Government policies, initiatives and investments to support a sustainable circular bioeconomy. This includes comprehensive life cycle assessment of Irish wool, evaluation of environmental footprints and handprints, and investigation of novel, scalable scouring techniques within a cascading biorefinery model to create value beyond the net zero goal of doing no harm.

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### Highlights so far?

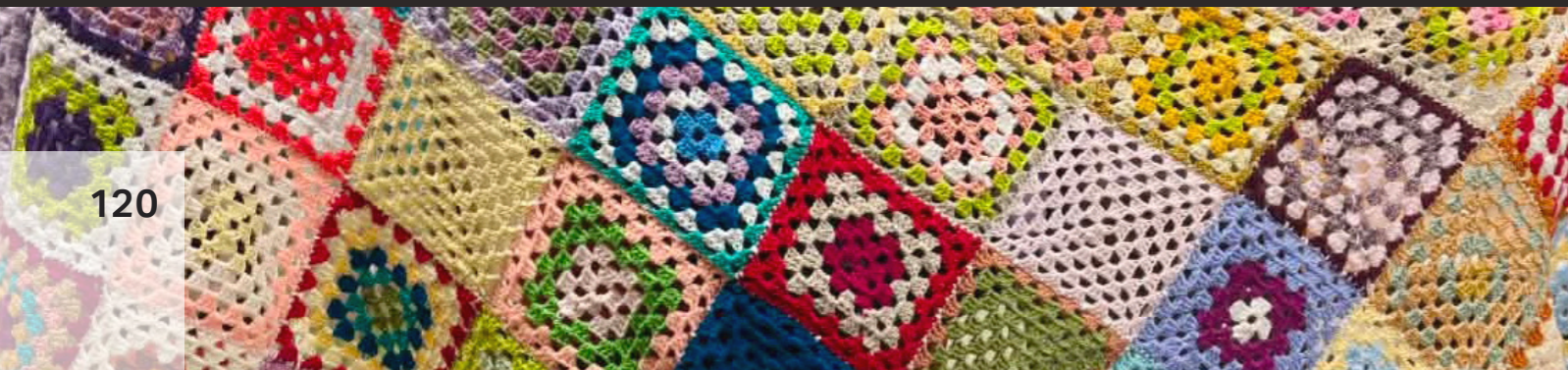
REVEIRE is an academia-industry collaboration (funded under the EPA Research Programme 2021-2030) with the Irish Grown Wool Council as an industry partner. For the first time, the project will provide sustainability values for Irish wool using rigorous techniques compliant with international standards. It is also investigating dry scouring using supercritical carbon dioxide, a water-free technique that could address wastewater challenges associated with conventional scouring methods.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Connecting low-impact food production with sustainable textiles and biobased materials, and "creating value beyond the net zero goal of doing no harm" within a regenerative value system, represents a true circular bioeconomy in action. Irish wool holds value beyond economics, embedded in Ireland's history, society, culture and heritage. As a natural biofibre with multiple applications, its effective processing and use can help unlock a sustainable circular bioeconomy in Ireland.

*"A local, small-scale wool treatment facility."*

*"Developing high-value, sustainable wool-based products, ensuring adequate returns to primary producers in a regenerative value system will be a true success story of a circular bioeconomy in action."*



# SPRINGWOOL



## Tim Yeomans

The Centre for Applied Bioscience Research responds to challenges in biotech and food systems. Around five years ago, wool emerged as a bioresource we began working with. Building on the Wool Feasibility Study 'Review of Market Opportunities for Irish-Grown Wool-Based Products' commissioned by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, we secured DAFM funding for the SPRINGWOOL project. This project focuses on removing bottlenecks and providing a springboard for innovation in the Irish grown wool sector, supporting research, collaboration, and sector-wide development.

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### Highlights so far?

We are proud that the SPRINGWOOL project was, at the time, the largest research project ever funded to support the wool sector.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool matters because it is such a useful resource that, over time, has been increasingly devalued. We want to support the re-establishment of wool as a mainstream, desirable material.

# The Wool Partnership

## Declan Rice

The Wool Partnership is a LEADER Cooperation project between six LEADER Local Action Groups/companies to optimise the use of both existing Irish grown sheep's wool; much of which is of limited fabric quality linked to the largely meat-focused commercial interest in sheep and the potential of higher-quality wool being produced for fine fabric use. The partners have produced a report on the existing situation nationally and within their individual regions. It identifies pathways to increased and more profitable use for producers, for existing wool fleeces and increasing the number of finer wool breed flocks. The partners now propose to select optimum routes to improvement and support these at local, regional and national level.

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### Highlights so far?

The LEADER companies have been active in supporting producers and/or processors at key stages of the value chain. This includes R&D on alternative uses of existing fleeces, promotion of fine wool native breeds, marketing supports, and fabric weaving equipment purchase. The partners believe that the LEADER programme, alongside associated initiatives within Local Development Companies, can provide wraparound support to many stakeholders in the wool sector.

### Why Irish grown wool?

Irish wool is local. LEADER Companies support local people, small businesses, and communities. There is clear professional interest and community value in supporting the future of Irish wool use.

*“There is massive experience in Ireland in terms of adding value to bioresources; we just need a fraction of this focused on wool to make a significant impact.”*

*“The renaissance of Irish wool production and value-added sustainability can only be good for rural Ireland’s economic and social quality of life.”*



# About Future Island-Island

Future Island-Island is an AHRC Green Transition Ecosystem (GTE) programme led by Ulster University, in collaboration with Queens University Belfast, Glasgow School of Art and University of the Arts London, working with partners across research, industry, and communities to explore how creative, design-led approaches can support more sustainable futures.

The project brings together place-based research, material innovation, digital tools, and community collaboration to develop practical responses to environmental, economic, and social transition, with a particular focus on island and coastal contexts.




Across the programme, Future Island-Island supports work that connects:

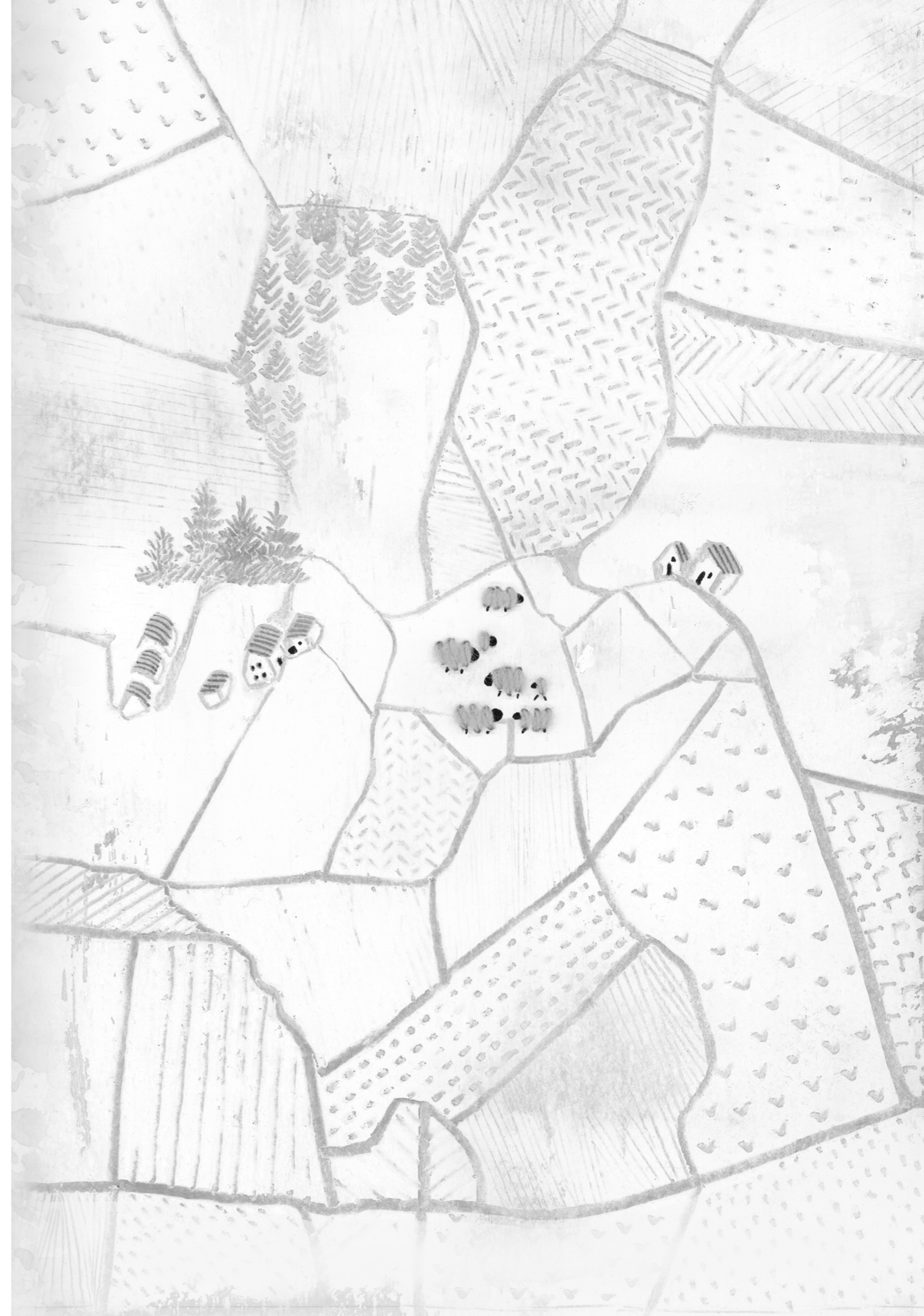
- local materials and circular systems
- heritage, culture, and contemporary design
- community knowledge and future-focused innovation
- education, prototyping, and public engagement

Within this context, wool has emerged as an important material and cultural focus. Through projects on Rathlin Island and beyond, Future Island-Island has explored how undervalued fleece can be reimagined as a traceable, place-based, regenerative resource linked to biodiversity, rural livelihoods, heritage skills, and circular design.

The Irish Grown Wool Almanac has been developed as part of this wider effort, to acknowledge and celebrate the people and organisations shaping the wool landscape on the island of Ireland.

For more information  
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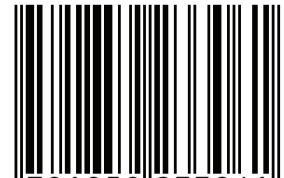


A watercolor illustration of a rural landscape. The scene is divided into several irregular fields by thin, brownish-green lines representing fences or hedgerows. The fields are filled with various patterns: some have vertical lines, some have a herringbone or chevron pattern, and others have small, repeating motifs. In the center-left, a cluster of sheep is depicted in a field with a herringbone pattern. To their right, another field contains several sheep. In the upper left, a tree with a textured, brownish-green canopy stands near a small structure. In the lower left, there are several sheep pens or huts, some with striped patterns. The overall color palette is soft and muted, featuring light blues, greens, yellows, and browns. The style is delicate and artistic, typical of watercolor painting.

**“Our hope is to see Irish-grown wool valued and widely used,  
supporting farmers, fostering innovation and collaboration, and  
contributing to sustainable economies.”**

Catherine Phibbs, Irish Grown Wool Council

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