



# CREDIT UNION DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION EUROPE



**16<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> September  
2026**



**Carlton Hotel Dublin**



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# Who is the audience for this programme?

## To be eligible to participate in DE, you must:

- Be an employee or volunteer of a credit union, trade association/foundation, credit union service / support organisation or the wider co-operative / regulatory / government sectors in which credit unions operate.
- Be willing to dedicate a reasonable amount of work and personal time to development related activities of your choosing.
- If attending from overseas, you must have graduated from your home country's DE course.

# What will you learn?

The Credit Union Development Education (DE Europe) is an immersive training and development programme which has been specifically designed to provide individuals with insights into the co-operative principles, the credit union system, and international development issues that challenge credit union members, their communities and wider society today. This is a unique opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and play a vital role in the development and sustainability of credit unions across the globe.

The DE Europe training course is a 6-day residential event held at the Carlton Hotel in Dublin and is facilitated by Marlene Shiels (UK) and Lois Kitsch (USA). You will meet and connect with peers from all parts of the world within the credit union sector, including frontline staff, volunteers, chief executive officers, directors, regulators and government officials.

This unique experience is filled with an invigorating mixture of group work, individual tasks, influential speakers, and presentations designed to prepare you for the future. Upon completion, you will join an alumni community where you can stay in contact with other credit union peers as part of the Worldwide Foundation for Credit Union's Global DE Alumni network.

# What to expect.....

DE is a dynamic program delivered through individual engagement, group work, classroom learning and immersive experiences. To maximise your experience you must:

- Attend every session
- Leave your title at the door
- **Trust the process**

# How will you benefit?

- Learn new skills to add value to your credit union and advance personal / career development. This course covers credit union outreach, problem-solving, technical support, teamwork, and public speaking.
- Understand how local and global issues are interconnected and recognise why cooperation is essential for credit unions to thrive.
- Learn how co-operative principles and credit union values can help differentiate credit unions in today's competitive financial market place and help achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal's (SDGs) in your community or region.
- After finishing the course, you'll become a certified Credit Union Development Educator (DE Europe) and earn a prestigious DE badge, recognised across the international Credit Union community.
- Gain access to a network of over 4,500 graduates from Asia, Africa, the Americas, Canada, the Caribbean, Europe and the Philippines.

# Meet Your Facilitators

**Marlene Shiels OBE** has a career spanning almost 40 years in the credit union sector both in the United Kingdom and Globally. She was a founder member of Capital Credit Union, and CEO for over 24 years. Marlene is currently the Chair of the Committee of Experts which was set up by the Kenyan Government in 2025 to develop recommendations to transform the Kenyan Credit Union sector into a global leader in co-operative finance. She is a Board member of the African Co-operative Development Foundation. Since 2022 Marlene has been a Board Member with the Money and Pensions Service and she is also the Chair of the MAPS Devolved Government Steering Committee.

Marlene has held various other positions including Chair of the Financial Conduct Authority Smaller Business Practitioner Panel, a Board member of the World Council of Credit Unions and ABCUL; she was the first non-banker to hold a Board position on the Chartered Banker Institution (the oldest banking institution in the world today) and she proudly held the role of advisor on financial inclusion to HM Queen Camilla for over 8 years.

In 2016 Marlene was awarded an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) from the late Queen Elizabeth II. She also holds both ICUDE and AADE status and is a founder of the European Development Education Programme which is entering its 26 year.



**Marlene Shiels OBE**



**Lois I Kitsch, ICUDE**

**Lois Kitsch** is a globally respected leader in the credit union movement with more than 45 years of experience in championing co-operative values in financial services. Widely known for her work building the co-operative conscience of the American credit union sector, she has inspired leaders to strengthen their organisations by embedding cooperative principles at the heart of their business models.

Lois previously served as National Programme Director of the National Credit Union Foundation's Development Education (DE) Programme, delivering transformational learning experiences for credit union leaders worldwide. She is also Co-Founder of CUdifference, working directly with credit union teams to deepen their commitment to cooperative purpose and member impact.

She has worked with credit union leaders across six continents and more than 40 countries, helping organisations strengthen member relationships and expand service to underserved communities. Lois has received numerous international honours, including the Herb Wegner Award, the World Council of Credit Unions Athena Award, and multiple lifetime service awards recognising her global contribution to the movement.

# Visiting Dublin

We're delighted to return to Dublin for this year's residential course. The programme will once again take place at the stylish Carlton Hotel, conveniently located beside Dublin Airport.

The hotel offers a fitness centre, free Wi-Fi, ample workspace, and a complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport. Just 20 minutes from Dublin city centre, it's an ideal base to enjoy the sights and energy of Ireland's capital.

Dublin is renowned for its rich literary heritage and was designated a UNESCO City of Literature in 2010. With so much to see and do, you might enjoy a guided city tour, visit Dublin Castle, explore the National Museum of Ireland, or discover the history of Guinness at St James's Gate.

Find more inspiration at [visitdublin.com](https://www.visitdublin.com).



# Take the Next Step

The DE Europe programme will run from **16-22 September 2026**. The cost of the programme is **€3,000\***, which includes accommodation, meals, course materials, social events, and organised tours. This not-for-profit programme is made possible through the commitment of experienced volunteers who are dedicated to advancing the credit union movement and supporting credit unions and individuals in promoting its core philosophy.

For more information or to request an application form please email us @ [info@de-europe.com](mailto:info@de-europe.com)

\*A limited number of partial / full bursaries may be available.

