



WEBINAR | BAN THE BOX: EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH CONVICTIONS IN NI

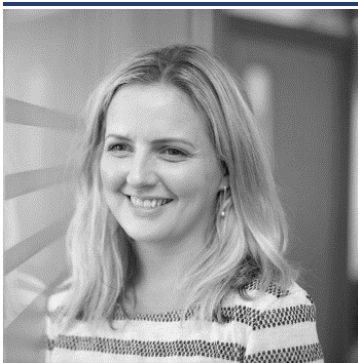
SPEAKER PROFILES



Sara Neilson, Employability Manager, [Business in the Community Northern Ireland](#)

Sara has 18 years employability experience in Scotland, London and Northern Ireland and is passionate about helping to raise aspirations and encourage everyone to engage fully in society to the best of their ability.

Sara leads Business in the Community's efforts in supporting businesses to engage those furthest removed from employment to gain the skills and aptitudes they need to become work-ready. Alongside this, her role involves campaigning to change attitudes of employers towards a more sustainable and responsible approach to workforce development.



Victoria Johnston, Stakeholder Engagement Lead, [Northstone-Farrans](#)

As Stakeholder Engagement Lead with Farrans Construction, Victoria has been working throughout the UK on several strategic building and civil engineering projects. She is passionate about delivering social value in the areas in which she works and a key aspect of this is creating sustainable employment opportunities for those furthest removed from the workplace. Over the past ten years of industry practice Victoria has also delivered stakeholder engagement, community legacy initiatives and company communications, as well as highly successful marketing & PR campaigns for large scale events, product launches and strategic business development.



Jonny Pardoe, Senior Practitioner Disclosure, Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO)

Jonny Pardoe is the Disclosure Specialist in NIACRO and helps people (employers, further education providers, statutory and voluntary agencies, and individuals) understand the impact of having a criminal record in Northern Ireland. For the past two years, Jonny has run the 'disclosure helpline', a service for anyone with any sort of query about criminal records and helps hundreds of people from all kind of backgrounds each year. He has over 10 years' experience of working with and for people who have been in contact with the criminal justice system in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Jonny is passionate about seeing people being treated fairly and being given opportunities to change the ending of their stories for the better. Jonny is delighted to help the campaign to end 'checkbox' prejudice against people with criminal records as it will assist with rehabilitation and reduce re-offending for a fairer and safer society.



Jacob Hill, Founder and Managing Director, Offploy

Jacob Hill is the founder of the social recruitment agency, Offploy. Offploy supports people with criminal convictions to secure employment. Jacob started Offploy in April 2016 after he himself had a brush with the law and found himself in a difficult situation that many of Offploy's candidates face, finding employment with a criminal conviction.

Before forming Offploy, Jacob ran a well-known festival camping business, The Lazy Camper, whilst studying at the University of Huddersfield. Through The Lazy Camper, Jacob received £300,000 investment; The Duke of York's inaugural Young Entrepreneur of the year award; funding from Sir Richard Branson and was crowned Yorkshire's Young Entrepreneur of the year by the time he was 21 years old.

When faced with disappointing sales and significant debt, Jacob made poor life choices which led to his arrest, the closure of The Lazy Camper and a criminal conviction. This is the origin of Offploy Community Interest Company.

Offploy supports both businesses and people with criminal convictions through the recruitment process to ensure both sides gain a successful and sustainable placement. Since forming the organisation three years ago, Offploy has celebrated mentoring over 300 individuals, grown to a team of 15 and has placed over 150 people with criminal convictions into employment. Offploy is on a mission to reduce reoffending and make society safer by placing people with criminal convictions into meaningful, mentored, and sustainable employment.

If you would like to find out more about how Business in the Community supports skills development and enables everyone to engage fully in society and to prosper to the best of their abilities, please [click here](#) or contact sara.neilson@bitcni.org.uk.