



# Strategic Financial Leadership Programme

Shaping and empowering  
world-class CFOs and  
Strategic Finance Leaders  
to scale Irish companies  
globally



## The Strategic Financial Leadership Programme (SFL) is a world-class leadership experience for CFOs and Finance Leaders to elevate and optimise their leadership and strategic finance capabilities.

The programme will cultivate a cohort of ambitious, confident, and competent CFOs / Finance Leaders, who are empowered to dynamically change the future of Irish companies to become the acquirer and not the acquired and be global leaders in their field whilst also boosting exports and job creation in Ireland.

The SFL programme will provide participants with the necessary tools and skills to effectively develop and execute international financial growth strategies, aligned to the overall organisation strategy.

Key aspects of the programme will include leading the finance capability of scalable and innovative companies, achieving sustainable growth, understanding and utilising different types of funding at different stages of growth and scaling through internationalisation. This will all be underpinned by cultivating the leadership capability necessary to successfully partner with and be a strategic advisor to the CEO and also influence the wider Executive team.

To successfully grow and scale a company it is essential to have an ambitious and confident CFO / Finance Leader who partners with, advises and constructively challenges the CEO and other stakeholders. They are enabled and empowered to develop a strategic finance function, with relevant and timely funding, suitable for the business growth plans and opportunities to optimise company success.

This programme is designed to shape and enhance a CFO/Finance Leader's strategic financial and leadership skills to support them on their global scaling journey.

This will be achieved through practical and interactive educational modules which are supported by 1-1 leadership coaching and business finance advisory sessions along with facilitated cohort group sessions. These will enhance the module learnings and bring them to life within the business to create long-term impact.

## To be a strategic advisor to the CEO and other stakeholders, a CFO / Finance Leader needs to:

- Look forward, not backward
- Utilise financial forecasting to anticipate and review strategic decisions
- Understand the funding journey at different stages of growth for different business models
- Be able to clearly present the business case for investments, acquisitions and/or projects to non-financial stakeholders
- Understand how to optimise the business performance, by understanding the economic unit of the business and defining the best business model for growth.
- Set a culture of strategic finance within a business, where KPIs are the norm, to track progress against an ambitious growth plan.

**The programme will cover all of these aspects along with a focus on effective leadership.**

# Programme Outcomes

The SFL programme is practical and highly interactive. As a result of participating on the programme, the CFO/ Finance Leader will build a toolkit and skillset to:

- Craft and communicate a Business Plan Pitch Deck combined with a Financial Forecast Model. This Pitch Deck will align with the organisation's overall strategy
- Lead a finance function and team to drive growth and scale globally by developing a strategic financial function within the business
- Manage key stakeholders and build strategic partnerships
- Drive business growth and scale objectives alongside the Senior Leadership Team using strong financial data
- Be a strategic business partner to the CEO & Board
- Enhance personal leadership skills, confidence and ambition
- Understand and implement strategies on ESG reporting, technology and AI in finance and global business dynamics
- Build a strong network among, but not limited to, fellow participating cohort of participant CFOs / Finance Leaders and the funding eco system
- Prepare and present a finale poster (Teaser Document) outlining their journey, achievements to date and strategic finance intent (a visual representation of the Pitch Deck)

## Networking and Peer to Peer Learning

Throughout the programme networking and peer engagement with fellow participants, alumni and international speakers has a strong focus with a view to building long-term networks post-programme.

Classes and cohort groups enable lasting friendships and business connections.

## Enterprise Ireland Supports

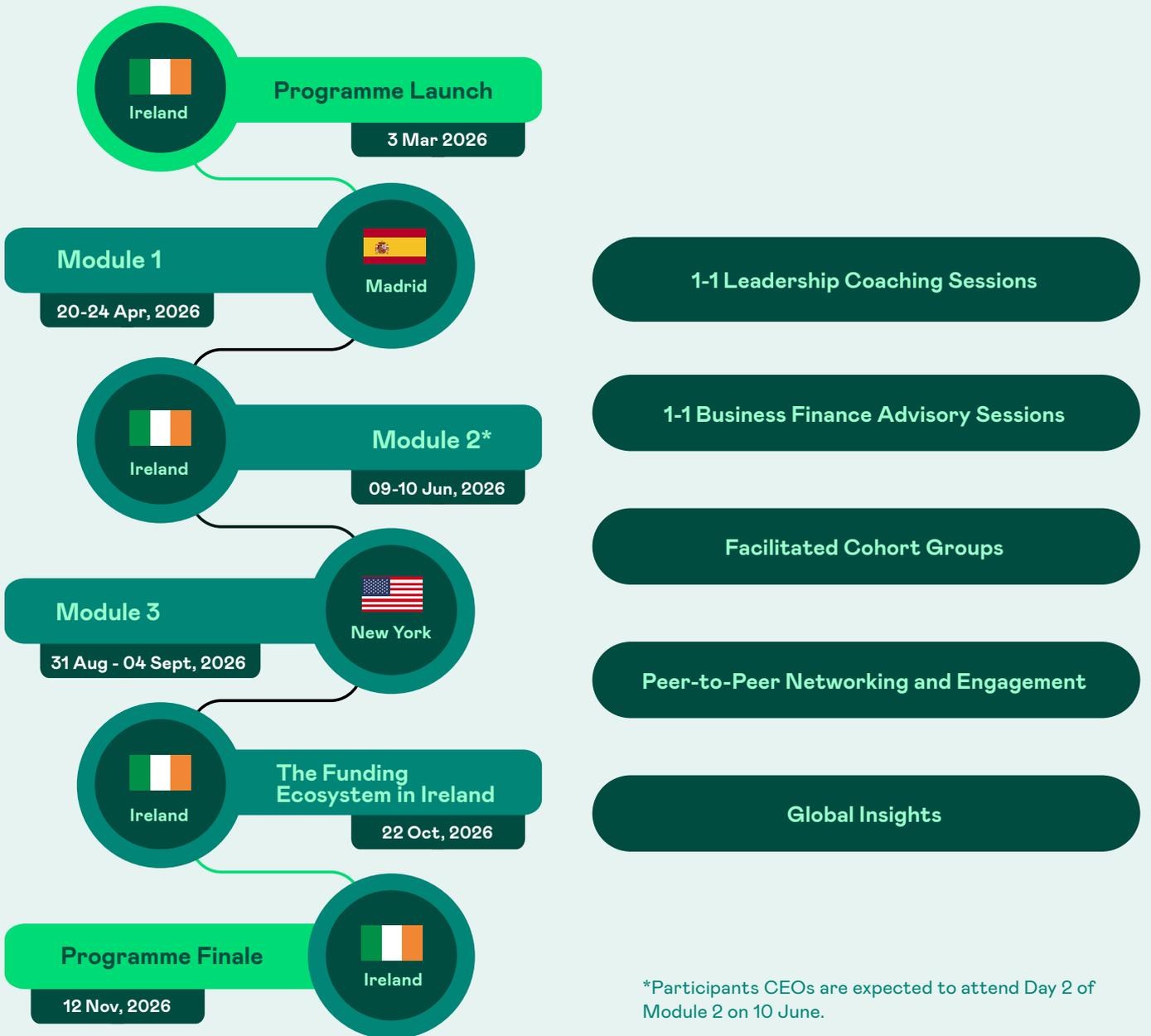
The programme is grant aided by Enterprise Ireland and the EI programme manager will be with you throughout the full programme journey.

The wider Enterprise Ireland team input during and beyond the programme ensuring long-term implementation of the programme outputs.

## Who Should Apply?

- The Strategic Financial Leadership Programme is open to experienced CFOs and Finance Leaders of Enterprise Ireland client companies across all sectors.
- Participants should be part of their organisation's senior leadership team, have the ambition to scale the company and sustainably grow exports and jobs.
- It is essential that participants fully commit to all aspects of the programme and have the full support of their CEO in doing so.

# Your Programme Journey



\*Participants CEOs are expected to attend Day 2 of Module 2 on 10 June.



IESE Business School, Madrid Campus



IESE Business School, New York Campus

## MODULE 1



### Madrid: Strategies for Growth

Module 1 focuses on understanding capital needs and exploring diverse funding options. Macroeconomics will be explored to contextualise strategies within broader economic forces, identify avenues for growth, and analyze emerging trends. This module also emphasises the digital transformation of the finance function and the role of data culture in enhancing decision-making. Additionally, sessions on strategic leadership equip CFOs / Finance Leaders with the skills to drive innovation, support growth initiatives, and align their financial strategies with the organisation's overarching goals.

## MODULE 2



### Ireland: Leadership, Sustainability and Partnerships

Module 2 centres on creating alignment between sustainability and corporate strategy while strengthening the CFOs / Finance Leaders partnership with the CEO. Participants will explore how to incorporate sustainability into the business and assess how financial strategies can support long-term value creation and environmental responsibility. They will also engage in collaborative sessions focused on building trust, enhancing communication, and aligning on shared goals with the CEO. By fostering these strategic partnerships, participants will be better equipped to drive impactful, sustainable growth across their organisations.

**CEOs of all participant companies will join this module on Day 2.**

## MODULE 3



### New York: Leading Global Scaling Implementation

Module 3 expands the vision for international growth, identifying global market opportunities and strategic expansion paths. Participants will also refine their negotiation skills through practical exercises that strengthen their ability to secure advantageous deals and partnerships. To support these goals, the module includes communication workshops designed to enhance influence, clarity, and executive presence, ensuring CFOs / Finance Leaders can effectively advocate for and lead global initiatives within their organisations.

# The Funding Ecosystem in Ireland

This is an event that is designed for participants to meet and understand the key stakeholders in the funding ecosystem in Ireland.

Each of the key funding types (such as Debt, VC, PE, IPO) will be represented by a senior executive from an active funder in the Irish market, who will explain the criteria they look for when funding scaling companies in Ireland.

Hear the funders' side of the story on what their criteria is, how they assess an opportunity and what they look for in a deal. Gain insights into how to prepare for, pitch for, negotiate and contract for a particular type of funding.

This is a key opportunity to meet with professional funders and help build up a network of key funding stakeholders.

## Key Date

05 Nov 2025	Client Briefing. Enterprise Ireland offices, East Point, Dublin. (See registration link below)	 Ireland
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## Programme Dates

03 Mar 2026	Programme Launch and Welcome Dinner	 Ireland
20-24 Apr 2026	Module 1: Strategies for Growth	 Madrid
09-10 June 2026	Module 2: Leadership, Sustainability and Partnerships*	 Ireland
31 Aug - 04 Sept 2026	Module 3: Leading Global Scaling Implementation	 New York
22 Oct 2026	The Funding Ecosystem in Ireland	 Ireland
12 Nov 2026	Programme Finale and Celebration Dinner	 Ireland

Click [HERE](#) to register for client briefing

Click [HERE](#) for programme application form

\*Participant CEOs are expected to attend Day 2 of Module 2 on 10 June.

## IESE Business School

IESE Business School is a globally top-ranked institution for Executive and Custom education as recognized by the Financial Times, with five international campuses and partnerships with 15 affiliated business schools worldwide, IESE offers extensive global reach. Its faculty brings deep expertise in executive education, research, business consulting, and innovation, with many professors having held executive positions or served as consultants for leading global organizations and SMEs.

## Educational Modules

The programmes educational modules provide access to IESE Business School's world-renowned expertise in custom program design, distinguished faculty, innovative teaching methodologies and global campus experience. The modules are designed to reinforce the CFO / Finance Leader's role within their organisation, positioning them as strategic partners to the CEO in driving the scaling agenda. Practical workshops enable peer learning and foster a strong network among participants.

## Programme Team | Executive Education



### Andrea Hayem Programme Director

Andrea is the IESE Programme Director for the CFO Programme and will ensure the programme is delivered successfully. Andrea holds an MBA from IESE Business School and a B.B.A. in Finance from the University of Kentucky. Prior to her tenure at IESE, Andrea gained significant experience in Corporate Finance at Morgan Stanley and EY in Central America. During her time at EY, she managed projects that involved the valuation of numerous regional SMEs and provided critical support for acquisitions and joint ventures.



### Prof. Carles Vergara Academic Director

Carles is academic director of the CFO programme and full-time professor at IESE Business School where he teaches corporate finance in both Executive Education and degree programs. He has extensive experience advising CEOs and executive teams in SMEs across various industries. He holds a PhD in Business Administration and a Master of Financial Engineering (MFE) from the University of California, Berkeley, as well as a B.S. in Engineering from the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya.



### Eric Weber Accounting and Control Professor

Eric Weber is professor of Accounting and Control. He is a member of the Executive Committee of IESE for 23 years and also a member of the Harvard Business School - IESE Advisory Committee. With over 30 years as a management consultant to more than 30 SMEs, he has also held management board roles in a number of these companies.



**Núria Mas**  
**Economics Department Professor**

Núria Mas is a professor in the Economics Department at IESE Business School and holds the Jaime Grego Chair of Global Healthcare Management. Prof. Mas has served as an advisor to the European Commission and various public sector institutions, and she is involved in several SMEs and boards.

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**Álvaro San Martín**  
**Economics Department Professor**

Álvaro San Martín is a Professor of the Managing People in Organisations Department, and Chair of Family-Owned Business. He holds a Ph.D. degree in Management with a specialization in Organisational Behavior from INSEAD.

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**Julia Prats**  
**Department of Entrepreneurship Professor**

Julia Prats is a professor in the Department of Entrepreneurship and the Bertrán Foundation Chair of Entrepreneurship at IESE. She is also the Academic Director of the school's Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center. Prof. Prats has served as an advisor and board member of several startups and SMEs.

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**Kandarp Mehta**  
**PhD from IESE Business School**

Kandarp Mehta holds a PhD from IESE Business School, and has been with IESE's Entrepreneurship Department since 2009, focusing on creativity in organizations and negotiations. He is actively involved with creative industries and international institutions supporting SMEs.

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**Paula Ramo**  
**Programme Co-ordinator**

Paula is programme coordinator at the International Custom department of IESE Business School. She manages the technical and logistical elements of the SFL programme and will be a key contact for all participants.

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# Leadership Coaching

Our team of experienced Leadership Executive Coaches will constructively teach, challenge, reframe, encourage and develop participants leadership skills /style to grow as a Strategic Finance Leader. A reflection on leadership style and setting a plan to develop leadership skills will bring classroom learnings & diagnostics into personal one to one coaching sessions and applying what is needed for both the participant and the business to grow.



**Brendan Dowling**  
Lead Coach

Brendan leads the team of qualified and experienced Leadership Coaches on the SFL programme. Brendan is an executive coach and has been working on various leadership programmes in the design and delivery of coaching and training to help leaders and their companies scale. He is also a Chair / INED to a number of scaling SME companies in Ireland. He is the author of 'Accelerating Company Growth'.

Brendan started his career as a chartered accountant having trained and qualified with KPMG, before moving to London to work with PWC, specialising in corporate finance & recovery. He then worked as an entrepreneur in the telecoms and media industry for over 30 years.

# Business Finance Advisors

Our team of Business Financial Advisors (BFAs) are all highly experienced finance professionals who have occupied CFO roles during their careers. They will bring their own personal experiences gained over many years, in national and international markets, to provide practical insights into financial, organisational and leadership matters.

They will challenge, support and assist participants to think more strategically.

Our BFAs, many of whom have undertaken leadership programmes, are committed to giving something back and ensuring the success of participants as they scale their businesses globally.



**Brian Murphy**  
Lead Business Finance Advisor

Brian leads the team of highly experienced Business Finance Advisors. Brian is a partner in Xeinadin, a leading Ireland/UK accountancy firm. His clients, both domestic and international, include companies in the healthcare, technology, professional services, real-estate and charity sectors. He has held and continues to hold various INED roles in sectors including insurance, outsourced services and ICT organisations.

Brian has previously been a business advisor on a number of leadership programmes for both CFOs and CEOs. He is a Chartered Accountant by profession.

# How to Apply

This is a competitive process and places are limited. Submission of an application is not a guarantee of a place on the programme.



## Programme Fees

The programme is subsidised by Enterprise Ireland. After applying grant-aid, the direct cost to an SME is in the region of €25,000 for a CFO. A higher fee applies to large companies.

Fees include all educational, coaching and advisory elements, accommodation and meals in overseas modules and Ireland-based module and all meals, including dinner, at programme launch and finale.

Flights and other travel costs are arranged and funded by the participant.

## More Information

For further information about the programme, please contact:

Daryl Regan, Enterprise Ireland

Strategic Financial Leadership Programme Manager.

Email: [daryl.regan@enterprise-ireland.com](mailto:daryl.regan@enterprise-ireland.com)

Telephone: 01 727 2772



**QR Code to application form**



\*Successful companies will be notified as soon as possible and will be invoiced for payment prior to the programme start date



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