

Ms. Siobhan Airey

Financing the Sustainable Development Goals: Enhancing the role of Law in the Governance of Blended Finance

My research is focused on the international governance of a new kind of financing of the SDGs – where public development aid (or ODA) from donors is used to catalyse private finance via a mechanism called Blended Finance. While the promise of Blended Finance is to move “From Billions to Trillions,” as the OECD, World Economic Forum, World Bank and others proclaim, my focus is on the potential peril to the public interest implied by this financing approach, where governance and democratic oversight remain weak or not well thought out. The risks include the commodification of public goods and services essential to international human rights, with states’ abilities to plan for and meet the needs of their people and the planet in the near and distant future potentially undermined. My research examines how donors are currently governing how their ODA is being used in Blended Finance-supported initiatives. I also examine how the current governance signature of ODA prioritises a particular type of market-focused idea of development to be promoted via Blended Finance.

I have been seconded to the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam and have linked my research insights and findings thus far to a number of their own policy advocacy projects. I am now back in Ireland and collaborating with Dochas (a national network of NGOs focused on international development) to build their knowledge and policy agenda in this area.