



Maynooth University Graduate Career Story:

Shauna Burke, BBS Business & Management



My name is Shauna Burke and I joined ESB almost 18 months ago in September 2018 as part of the company's Commercial Graduate Programme, having graduated from Maynooth University the same month with a BBS Business and Management degree. I have learned so much during the past year and a half which has flown by so quickly and I have to say, I have had a brilliant experience so far.

I am currently on my 2nd rotation of the 3-year programme. For my first 12-month rotation I was placed in Procurement in Enterprise Services on ESB's newly formed Group Sourcing team where I worked as part of a large team of buyers who are based all over the country. My office was in Matthews Building which is just off Merrion Square and right behind the site where our new office building is being constructed. My primary role as a buyer was managing tenders with a value from €3k to €300k with a primary focus of ensuring best value for money for the business in all tenders complete while also ensuring compliance with procedures. I carried out over 20 tenders during my time there which covered a diverse number of areas. These include everything from a tender for the non-technical graduate development programme, a tender in relation to professional services for process improvement, a tender for the digital employee engagement survey to tenders for office chairs and car park space painting - as you can see there was a wide mix which kept me on my toes. As a direct result from these diverse and varied tenders, I gained detailed knowledge of the tender process from initial kick off stages to finalization and wrap up. Other important roles I carried out as a graduate buyer in procurement related to the publication and analysis of quarterly and annual governance reports while simultaneously becoming adept at the various reporting and contracting systems used. Another skill I developed during my year in procurement related to event management as I was given responsibility to organise a number of key events in the procurement calendar from our first ever sustainable procurement workshop, to the very first Group Sourcing workshop in Port Laois as well as trips to various plants and stations around the country with my colleagues. My year in procurement was certainly a busy but enjoyable one and my time there really helped increase my overall knowledge of ESB and the workings within the company that keep it functioning. I also got to meet a huge number of people from various parts of the ESB group and as a result, widened my network greatly.

My second rotation, which I am halfway through now, is in our Strategy, Innovation and Transformation business unit (or SIT for short). As part of this role, I am based in ESB's Corporate Innovation hub, X_Site which is based in Dogpatch Labs in the CHQ building – a unique space unlike any other I've come across in ESB. Dogpatch Labs is a start-up hub which provides a platform for innovation

and entrepreneurship and whose primary goal is accelerating the growth of Ireland's start-up ecosystem. The purpose of ESB's X_Site is to provide a safe environment where new business concepts that have been surfaced from within ESB, are validated and transformed into viable business propositions/ventures. ESB X_Site has been in operation since 2016 and has been instrumental in bringing an innovation culture and community to the fore within the group. My role in X_Site is like that of a project manager. I have been allocated a number of ideas from our innovation pipeline and I have been tasked with exploring the viability and commercialisation prospects of these ideas. As a direct result of this, I am learning about areas of the business which I had no understanding of prior to this rotation, from technical engineering aspects such as demand response and building management systems to innovation concepts such as design thinking. Other tasks I have been given as part of this role include working on SIT's new Corporate Innovation strategy as well organising and planning this year's graduate mini-incubator, which is a 2-day event held for all 1st year grads, where they are introduced to the world of innovation in an action-packed couple days. My time in X_Site thus far has been both interesting and exciting. Aside from the work itself, the environment really helps stimulate collaboration and communication. One of the highlights of working in X_Site has been the opportunity to meet and interact with a huge pool of people I would not have met had I not been based here as well as providing me with insight into the start-up community here in Dublin.

The commercial Grad programme is a fantastic programme where personally, I feel I have been greatly supported by those around me, from my colleagues in both rotations, to the other grads on the programme to my brilliant managers and well as my mentors which I was provided with as part of the programme. I'm looking forward to the next year and a half to see where in ESB it takes me. I'd like to take the opportunity to wish you all the best of luck over the next few years – I hope you have a fantastic experience.

For details on the 2021 ESB Graduate Development Programme, in the following areas

- Engineering
- IT
- Commercial
- HR
- Marketing
- Finance & Accounting