



WOMEN OF WONDERMENT  
BY



Inspiring women to  
work in the Social  
Enterprise & Social  
Investment Sectors

## Niamh Goggin

### Small Change

Niamh Goggin has worked in social enterprise, social finance and community economic development in the UK, Central America and Europe since 1991.

Her previous experience includes first Chair of the UK Community Development Finance Association (now Responsible Finance), first Company Secretary of the European Microfinance Network and founding Director of Development Trusts Northern Ireland. She currently works with Big Local, providing social investment and community economic development support for 150 areas across England; is Expert Advisor to Barclays Credit Union Support Programme and is developing a capitalisation strategy for arts organisations in Northern Ireland.

She is a trustee of the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and of UK Community Foundations and a member of the Steering Group for Fair by Design; Tackling the Poverty Premium, with Joseph Rowntree Trust and Big Society Capital.



### What do you love most about the work you do?

I love being able to translate economics and banking gobbledegook so that normal people can understand their impact on their lives. They then realise that there are political and economic policy choices to be made and that they can influence those choices and their implementation, at local and national level

### Who inspires you?

Volunteers that I work with at local level through Big Local. They are busy people, sometimes living in difficult circumstances, who get on and get involved to make their areas better places to live.

### What would be your 3 top tips to someone looking to do what you do?

- 1) Finance and economics are cursed with jargon, but the ideas are not complicated. Work at them until you understand, then translate and talk about them in ways that relate to everyday life
- 2) Finance and economics are imbalanced in terms of gender, diversity, class, experience, power and influence. This can be intimidating, but remember that you can bring a different and important voice to save them from themselves
- 3) It's not us that make the difference; it's the people we work with and for.

### What is your biggest achievement to date?

Although I am neither a banker nor an accountant, I think that I have managed to challenge an exclusive, technocratic approach to social investment in England and to focus on who it is for, over who it is from.