FIELD TALK

by Purpose & Means

A little help from my friends

Life as a DPO



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DPO, SIPTU, Ireland

Wednesday 18 November 2026

16:00–16:40 CET

Free online event

fieldtalk.eu

Finding my place in the room

For years...

A quick coffee.
A beeline for my seat.
My phone for company.

“What could I possibly add?”

What I have learned

I have a right to be in the room.

My experience has value.

My route into data protection

The Credit Union

Volunteering alongside
my work at SIPTU

Databases, accounts
and risk management

The turning point

A GDPR conference in 2016

A speech that connected
data protection with
my belief in protecting people

A new direction

Back to study
Training with ADPO

DPO for the Credit Union,
then SIPTU

I had found my purpose.
I still needed my people.

Imposter syndrome

Even when others recognised my work,
I still questioned whether I belonged.

A question for you

Have you felt imposter syndrome during your career?

You are not alone.

Finding my tribe

My journey with ADPO and ICS

Learning

Training and support from people who understood the role

Contributing

A white paper
A place on the Executive
Training committee work

Sharing

Research and guidance
Webinars with colleagues
A voice in the community

Belonging

Trusted colleagues
People I can call
Friendships that last

https://ics.ie/ https://ics.ie/adpo/

My confidence grew.
And I had people to turn to.

Revisting DSARs
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5A9uHY7XwoM

People helping people

Orla Dormer and the Trustworks privacy community

Slack community

Ask a question. Share an experience.
Find someone who understands.

Mentorship Programme

Career guidance from people
with experience to share.

Peer Engagement Programme

Exchange experiences and
learn from each other as equals.

Practical Privacy podcast

Short conversations about real challenges
and the lessons learned.

trustworks.io/company/data-privacy-community

One conversation can make a difference

Connection can begin with an introduction or a simple message.

Eirik Randsborg Lie

A fellow trade union DPO in Norway

An introduction from Tim.
A generous conversation about
our shared challenges and different contexts.

Tor Valstrom

A fellow trade union DPO in Denmark

A LinkedIn message to someone new.
A willingness to share experience
and help me think through an issue.

It starts with reaching out.

Easy ways to open a conversation

Opening the conversation

“Hi, I’m Audrey. How are you finding the event?”

“What did you think of that last talk?”

Getting to know their work

“How did you find your way into data privacy?”

“Are you part of a privacy team, or do you work mostly on your own?”

Finding common ground

“What’s one thing you wish people understood about working in privacy?”

“Who do you turn to when you need to talk through a tricky issue?”

Keeping the conversation going

“How did you approach that?”

“What helped you most?”

Staying connected

“Are there other events or groups you’ve found particularly welcoming?”

“I’ve enjoyed chatting with you. Would you like to connect on LinkedIn?”

One question is enough to begin.

How to reach out cold

A short, personal message can open the conversation.

Why this person?

Say what prompted you to get in touch.

Introduce yourself briefly.
Ask one clear question.
Make the request manageable.

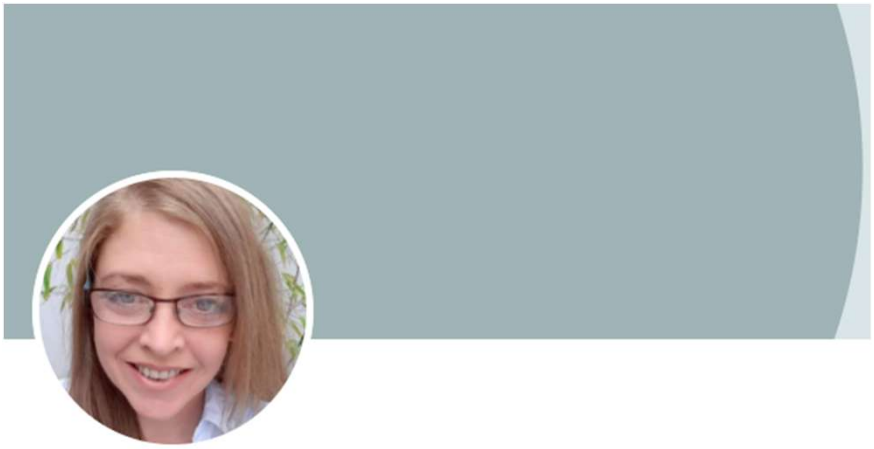
What could you say?

“Hi, I’m Audrey, a trade union DPO.

I noticed we work in similar roles.
Would you be open to a brief chat
about a challenge I’m facing?
I’d value your perspective.”

One person. One message. One conversation.

Start with me



Audrey Barrett Verify in 2 minutes

Data Protection Officer at SIPTU

Ireland · Contact info

350 connections

Open to | Add section | Enhance profile | ···

https://community.icttf.org/home

Share your tribe.

The power of connection



Helping someone else begins the cycle again.