

RISE Programme

Structured mentoring and practical experience to **R**etain, **I**nspire, **S**upport and **E**nhance (RISE) undergraduate students from ethnically underrepresented groups in the Chemical Sciences.

Aim: The RISE programme aims to increase the number of Black students, and those from other minoritized ethnic backgrounds, who are pursuing a degree in in the Chemical Sciences and who are going on to take up leading roles in academia and industry in the future.

Why we need the RISE programme: Racism, discrimination and ethnic inequalities exist in the Chemical Sciences, just as they exist in wider society. A recent report from the Royal Society of Chemistry, called the [Missing Elements](#) report, shows that we are failing to retain Black Chemists, and those from other minoritized ethnicities, meaning they are underrepresented at senior levels in chemistry.

The RISE Programme addresses the underrepresentation of Black students, and those from minoritized ethnic backgrounds, who are following a Chemistry BSc programme and progressing into PhD studies or technical roles in the chemical sciences. Addressing the lack of representation at earlier stages is vital to have an impact on the



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numbers from these groups who are taking up leading roles in academic and industry.

The report highlights many parallels with the challenges that women face in the chemical sciences, and there have been many initiatives in recent years to try to address the lack of females in senior roles in the chemical sciences. We must now put the same energy into addressing the lack of Black chemists, and those from other minoritized ethnic backgrounds, who are taking up senior roles in academia and industry in the chemical sciences.

The RISE initiative is coordinated by the Schools of Chemistry in University College Dublin, Technological University Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, and Dublin City University, and supported with funding from the Royal Society of Chemistry. The programme aims to address ethnic inequalities right at the beginning of your undergraduate journey. It will provide opportunities for technical and research placements in Chemistry laboratories to strengthen your CV, provide you with mentors and role models who will support and advise you. It will provide local paid placements, in your home University and in the neighbouring Dublin Universities, to ensure these opportunities are accessible to those with personal or family responsibilities.



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The RISE programme is not there to give underrepresented groups an unfair advantage, it's there to try to address the enormous discrimination and inequality that leads to this lack of ethnic diversity.

If you identify as Black, or from a minoritized ethnic background, and you would like to strengthen your research and technical skills, surround yourself with a cohort of peers and mentors and place yourself in a strong position to compete for postgraduate positions in the future, RISE could be for you.

How does the RISE programme work?: RISE will recruit Black students, and those from minoritized ethnicities, through an application process, based on interest and motivation. Prior experience or academic achievement will not be part of the application criteria, but applicants will need to explain why they feel this programme could help their career development. An *informal* interview will be part of the application process, where the applicants will be asked to explain what they hope to get from the programme.

If you are accepted onto the RISE programme, you will meet the other students from the partner universities for a kick-off meeting in the spring. The three year programme involves:



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Year 1: Students will join a research and/or technical laboratory in their home university for a 4-week paid placement (€400/week). They will be asked to write a short blog on their activities and experiences and will be assigned a mentor who can support their activities.

Year 2: Students will be invited to join a research and/or technical laboratory in *one of the partner* universities for a 6-week paid placement (€400/week). As well as building research and technical skills, the cohort of students from all four universities will come together for networking, research meetings and career sessions. Students will develop their CV, presentation skills and their mentoring.

Year 3: Students will be supported to find paid placements in industry at a suitable stage in the year, which will be decided in coordination with your School/Department. In addition to gaining valuable industrial experience, students will continue to be supported to enhance their presentation and networking skills, receive career guidance and support with postgraduate applications.

Flexibility will be a key feature of all activities during the RISE programme, including placements. We understand that students have personal and family commitments and we will work with you to ensure that you can play an active part in this programme, whatever your circumstances.

For more information on RISE, please visit the [EDI section](#) of the School of Chemistry website, where you will find lots of information on the RISE programme. You can also contact the local lead in your University.



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Project lead, [Elaine O'Reilly](mailto:elaine.oreilly@ucd.ie) by email: elaine.oreilly@ucd.ie for any informal discussion.

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