

Autumn/Winter 2023



# UCD today

## TRANSFORMING UCD LIBRARY

READ MORE ON PAGES 5-6 



# CONTENTS FEATURES

## The Belonging Project



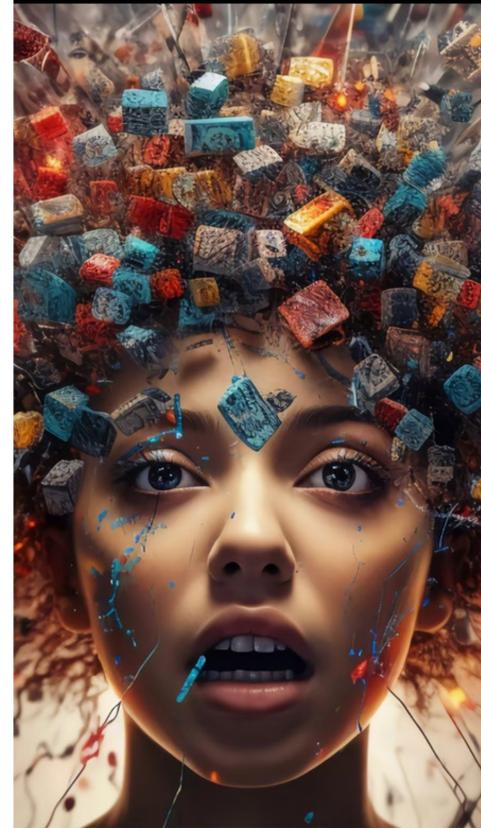
Page 14

## Commuting Preferences in Dublin



Page 22

## Can Wikipedia's Model Save the Internet?



Page 26

## Research Culture



Page 31

### UCD thanks...

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**Cover image:** Professor Orla Feely, UCD President



Prof Orla Feely

## ■ President's Inaugural Lecture 2023

**UCD President, Professor Orla Feely delivered her Inaugural Lecture at UCD O'Reilly Hall on Monday, 25 September 2023.**

Family, faculty, staff, students and invited guests joined Professor Feely to hear about her journey to this moment.

"As I moved up through secondary school, I took for granted that I would go on to university. Looking back, I am aware of what a privilege that was. It was a privilege denied to my parents and theirs and theirs before them: small farmers in Leitrim and shopkeepers in Abbeyleix. My father in particular would have loved the opportunity to attend university, but his circumstances did not permit it. He later often spoke with pride of his four children attending 'the university', as he would refer to it. For him there was only one.

"And when choosing what to study at university, I was again the beneficiary of fortunate circumstances. The 1970s and early 1980s brought advances in technology that seemed to open up new worlds. One year I received from Santa an early pocket calculator with a red LED display and temperamental buttons, and I can still remember giving it hard sums and trying to defeat it. We listened to electronic music on the new Sony Walkman and heard tell of computers for the home.

"Technology seemed to offer an exciting future for a student like me, with my love of maths, and, crucially, for a girl like me. It was only through the 1970s that the number of women studying engineering in Ireland went from a very tiny trickle to a steady, if still small, flow. The late Christina Murphy wrote often in the Irish Times about the opportunities for women in the profession, and the late John Kelly, then Dean of Engineering at UCD, held open days for schoolgirls in the main lecture theatre in UCD Merrion Street, now the site of the grand staircase in Government Buildings."

### **She spoke of her pride in the University:**

"To take one example, visit the Museum of Literature Ireland, MoLI, a partnership between UCD and the National Library of Ireland, and see how our university's first home on St Stephen's Green has been transformed. Take a look not only at the exhibits and exhibitions, but also at the school groups, families and lifelong learners engaging with the activities there, and witness MoLI's award-winning work in fostering social cohesion, inclusion and multicultural dialogue.

"Visit Lyons Farm, our teaching and research farm, or Farm Zero C in County Cork, or our partnership with the dairy industry in Rwanda, and see how UCD researchers are coming up with practical solutions to the challenges of sustainable agriculture.

"Consider the work of Aoibhinn (Ó Shúilleabháin) very recently



Marking the occasion of the Inaugural Lecture, Professor Feely planted a *Quercus Robur*, a native Irish tree, grown in Ireland. *Quercus Robur* is one of the most important trees for Irish wildlife, it is also very long lived and truly majestic when mature. The location is central to campus and this tree will balance a fine specimen on the other end of the O'Reilly Hall lawn, one planted thirty years ago with both eventually framing the Hall, hopefully for the next 400 to 500 years. Pictured at the tree planting are (l-r) Ciaran Beattie, UCD Estate Services; Martha Uí Riada, President, UCD Students' Union; Professor Orla Feely; and Professor Tasman Crowe, Vice-President for Sustainability.

in chairing the world's first Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss. And of course the Citizens' Assembly model itself, now implemented in a number of countries around the world, was developed by UCD Professor David Farrell to see whether a more deliberative form of democracy could work at a time when people felt adrift and disconnected from power."

### **And, looking to the future:**

"Where does the Irish story go from here? This is not obvious, at this time of disruption. The playbook will not be the same as it was previously, but some elements will be the same. Crucially, we will continue to rely for our success on talent, and on the vital portion of that talent developed in higher education. How could it be otherwise, given who we are and the resources at our disposal? We need more than ever the advanced skillsets and global mindsets, the critical thinking and awkward questioning fostered by a strong and confident higher education system.

"And where do countries, where does Ireland, find these talented people with their advanced skills and thereby secure



## ■ President's Inaugural Lecture 2023 (Continued)

competitive advantage? They find them from higher education institutions. In all of those sectors that I listed off just there, we in UCD have very exciting initiatives underway and growing, that are delivering exciting and important ideas and innovations, and great, great people.”

### **She drew attention to the funding gap in third level education:**

“As a country whose main natural resource is talent and whose success has depended so fundamentally on the talent developed in higher education institutions, how can we justify this? Do we really think that with all the changes and competitive forces headed our way, we should be constraining our ability to reflect these with agility and ambition within Irish higher education? We are doing the very best we can in an underfunded system, and we in UCD are delivering extraordinary things, often with financial support from our committed community of donors, which we appreciate so greatly. But we could do so much more if the funding gap even to the international average – though of course we like to portray

ourselves as well above average among knowledge economies – were closed. This gap is the single biggest threat to our university's ability to deliver on our ambitions over the coming years.

The government – drawing on the very beneficial impact of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science – has assessed the funding gap at €307 million per annum and stated their commitment to closing this over successive budgets. There is a €1.5 billion surplus in the National Training Fund. The underfunding of higher education, acknowledged time and time again in international benchmarking, will without question limit what this country can achieve for itself and how we can contribute to addressing global challenges. The National Training Fund can be an important, and is indeed an obvious, element of the solution if the will is there.

I hope the will is there. I have seen how this university transforms lives – it transformed mine. I have seen how UCD and the UCD community – more, I would argue, than any other institution – enabled the transformation of this country. I have

seen how through our global presence and partnerships the world is seeing how we make a difference and wants to get to know us better.”

She concluded: “It is an enormous honour to serve as President of this great university, and I greatly look forward to working with you all and to showing together how UCD truly makes a difference to the world though these extraordinary times.”

The event was MC'ed by Associate Professor Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin, UCD School of Mathematics and Statistics, and guests were addressed by Marie O'Connor, Chair of the UCD Governing Authority. Guest speakers at the lecture were Israel Olatunde, UCD Sportsperson of the Year 2023; Kerri Rowen, UCD Medicine Student of the Year 2023; and Stiofán Ó Briain, Poet and PhD student in Modern Irish at UCD.

The event included performances from the Choral Scholars of University College Dublin and from the Irish folk musician and producer, Dónal Lunny who is musician-in-residence at the UCD Creative Futures Academy, with a student ensemble.



## ■ Transforming UCD Library

**Since the beginning of this academic year, students have been flocking to Level 3 of the James Joyce Library. This floor is now a light-filled oasis for study designed in response to student needs - a significant first step in the overall transformation of this building to create a welcoming and inclusive 21st century library at the heart of the UCD campus.**

The James Joyce Library was designed by Sir Basil Spence, Glover and Ferguson, and opened in the 1970s. When planning for the transformation of Level 3 began, it was with the intention of making the interiors more hospitable, while revealing the strong aesthetic of the building's original sensibility. The architects, Reddy A&U Interiors, worked in partnership with UCD Library, UCD Estates Services, UCD Students' Union and the wider student body, to identify what students needed, and to deliver that in a contemporary and uplifting space.

The design reflects feedback from students and staff about how to improve the experience of studying and working in the building. Level 3 features warm, energy efficient lighting, with wall sconces, picture lights, table lamps and up-downlighters (custom-made for the concrete waffled ceilings) all contributing to a softening effect, transforming the colour of the concrete and raising the perceived height of the ceilings. Natural materials including sustainably sourced wood, cladding of the concrete pillars, wallpapered panels, and open planter screens that allow for the maximum amount of natural light all make the space warm and inviting.

The refurbished floor now offers 535 formal and informal student learning spaces, with different types of study modes and furniture designed to meet a range of needs and help everyone feel included. Study Mode 1 consists of completely silent rooms at the perimeter of the floor, in which there are study pods with larger desks. Across Study Modes 2, 3, and 4, desks and screens get gradually smaller, and the furniture types are mixed to offer variety and choice from high to low tables and high to low-back, adjustable height chairs, some with higher padding for longer duration stays. There are also some 'sit stand' desks to encourage movement during long study sessions, and these are placed in sequestered window seating areas to avoid disturbing others. Study Mode 5, at the centre of the floor offers collaborative study zones, which are for slightly shorter study durations and allow for noisier interactions.

There are also two sensory rooms available with a small number of spaces in each, to support students with sensory needs. The Sensory Study Room provides students with sensory needs the opportunity to regulate their responses to the environment they study in. The Sensory Transition Room is for students who are



finding self-regulation challenging. This room allows them to disengage, to regulate and to re-engage again before moving to another space in the Library. Both rooms offer a variety of seating in a calm environment with a muted colour palette and limited visual stimulus.

Other key features of Level 3 include power for a range of devices at each study desk, 'Zoom rooms' for online meetings, free charging stations for laptops and mobile phones, enhanced welfare facilities, green plants throughout, and an exhibition wall that makes a great location for partnerships highlighting all kinds of research work across the University.

Level 3 is already winning awards! It picked up the IDI (Institute Designers Ireland) 2023 Award for Commercial Design, with the judges commenting that "the sustainable approach and engagement with the community is highly commendable". At the FitOut Awards 2023, it picked up the following awards: Project of the year - Public Sector (Reddy Architecture +Urbanism); Project of the year - Tourism and Leisure (Reddy Architecture +Urbanism); and FitOut Sub-Contractor of the Year (BSG Design - Kitchens, Joinery and Commercial Furniture).

Following the transformation of Level 3, UCD Library and UCD Estates Services are now working with HLM Architects on the design for Level 1, Level 2 and access to the James Joyce Library, consulting with students and stakeholders across the UCD community. Watch this space!



Pictured at the Summit are (l-r): Prof David Farrell, UCD School of Politics and International Relations, Triona McCormack and Tom Arnold, Chair of Food Vision 2030, Ireland's agri-food strategy, and Ireland's Special Envoy for Food Systems, 2021-2022.

## UCD leads 'Ireland Day' at Science Summit at UNGA78 in New York

**The first 'Ireland Day' took place in New as part of the Science Summit at the 78th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA78). Led by UCD, the event brought international experts together at the Irish Permanent Mission to the United Nations (UN) to discuss the important role of research and collaboration in attaining the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to examine how Ireland is contributing to these global objectives.**

UCD has participated in the Science Summit for the last three years and has built on this by leading the first 'Ireland Day'. The Summit brings international thought leaders, scientists, policymakers, philanthropists and community leaders together at UNGA to consider what enabling policy, regulatory and financial environments are needed to support genuinely global scientific collaborations. A key output of the Summit this year will be the preparation of input for the UN Summit of the Future, which will take place during UNGA79.

Opening the 'Ireland Day' event, Ireland's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Fergal Mythen, said, "Universities like UCD are increasingly becoming actors in multi-stakeholder

partnerships to help achieve the UN SDGs. They possess a diversity of skills, novel and inter-sectoral approaches that are needed to develop solutions to global concerns. The discussions taking place today highlight the importance of research in supporting change and will help to build strong collaboration for the future."

The event programme saw leading global experts discuss themes central to the SDGs, including Sustainable and Equitable Food Systems, Deliberative Democracies and Post Conflict Health Cooperation. Event Chair and UCD Director of Research, Triona McCormack, said, "Ireland has demonstrated initiative and leadership in areas such as agrifood research and innovation. We know that research capacity, scientific advancement and improved technology play a key role in enabling the policy responses necessary to achieve the SDGs. Furthermore, our researchers have been instrumental in developing effective models in many of the areas we are discussing today. We're here to explore how we can build on our partnerships with other nations, to learn from each other and to increase cooperation going forward."

Distinguished speakers at 'Ireland Day' included Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, former Prime Minister of Niger and current African Union Special Envoy for Food Systems; John Clarke, Director for International Relations at DG Agriculture in the European Commission; Professor Jessica Fanzo, Professor of Climate, Food for Humanity Initiative Director, Columbia University; Professor Mark Lawler, Professor of Digital Health and Chair in Translational Cancer Genomics at Queen's University Belfast; and Professor David Farrell, Chair of Politics at UCD and research leader of the Irish Citizens' Assembly.



Simon O'Connor receiving the award on behalf of MoLI.

## Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI) wins a prestigious Grand Prix at the European Commission Europa Nostra Awards for Cultural Heritage

**At a special awards ceremony in the Palazzo Del Cinema, Venice, UCD's Museum of Literature Ireland was singled out among leading cultural projects across Europe to win one of five special Grand Prix awards at the European Commission Europa Nostra Awards.**

The awards took place in September and are the European Commission's most important cultural heritage awards. Every year they identify best practices in the conservation and enhancement of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The museum's work in learning, programming and community development was considered by the Europa Nostra to be resonant strongly with European values of openness, integration and democracy.

The award was presented by renowned opera star – and UCD Honorary Doctor of Music - Cecilia Bartoli, alongside members of the Europa Nostra and European Commission. Receiving the award, Simon O'Connor, Director, MoLI said "The founding patrons and partners in

UCD and the National Library of Ireland had the ambition and vision to create a major literary institution in the University's original home that would open reading and writing to all audiences. It is a privilege for us to be recognised here in Venice among so many inspiring European projects with a common moral purpose".

In their citation, the jury said, "This museum is remarkable in its success in reaching out to lovers of literature and non-traditional audiences alike, and in raising awareness of Ireland's rich literary heritage."

The museum is a partnership between UCD and the National Library of Ireland and opened in 2019. MoLI celebrates Ireland's internationally-renowned literary culture and heritage from the past to the present, inspiring the next generation to create, read and write. Alongside its exhibitions, commissions and monthly late-night openings, the museum has developed learning programmes that reach from local community groups to online creative writing programmes broadcast to schools across the country.



Pictured (l-r) at UCD Lyons Farm are: Tom Flanagan, UCD Director of Enterprise and Commercialisation; Donal Tierney, Chairman, Bimeda Group; Prof Helen Roche, interim UCD Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact; Simon Coveney TD, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Dan Tierney, Founder, Bimeda Group and Carol Gibbons, Manager, Regions and Local Enterprise, Enterprise Ireland.

## ■ New €4.8 million Education, Entrepreneurship and Research Facility Opens at UCD Lyons Farm

**Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Simon Coveney TD has officially opened a new €4.8 million state-of-the-art facility (ca. 1,010 sqm) incorporating the AgTechUCD Innovation Centre and the UCD Bimeda Herd Health Hub at UCD Lyons Farm in Co Kildare.**

Funding for the new facility has been provided by Enterprise Ireland, through the Regional Enterprise Development Fund, a philanthropic donation from Bimeda to the University through UCD Foundation, and UCD.

The focus of the AgTechUCD Innovation Centre, the first and only on-farm workspace hub in Ireland, is to promote and accelerate early-stage start-ups and SMEs with disruptive innovations in the agri, agtech, agrifood and veterinary sectors, as they build their innovative businesses into leading enterprises creating jobs. The AgTechUCD Innovation Centre provides clients with preferred access to on-farm experimental

facilities, allowing testing and trialling of products and services in the real-world environment at UCD Lyons Farm. AgTechUCD, which is part of NovaUCD, also runs an annual accelerator programme dedicated to agtech and agri-food start-ups and SMEs.

The establishment of the UCD Bimeda Herd Health Hub will provide a national facility for dairy herd health education, research and consultancy and will support the delivery of state-of-the-art training to undergraduate and postgraduate students in the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine.

The UCD Bimeda Herd Health Hub will also support the provision of UCD's flagship distance-learning graduate programme, the Graduate Certificate in Dairy Herd Health. This programme equips practising veterinarians with the latest tools for analysis of herd data, as well as practical herd evaluation skills, which they can apply in developing holistic herd-level solutions to ensure healthy and profitable dairy herds.



Carmel Mooney



Emma O'Neill

## ■ Fellowships of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

**Professor Carmel Mooney and Associate Professor Emma O'Neill, UCD School of Veterinary Medicine have been awarded Fellowships of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) - Carmel for Meritorious Contributions to Knowledge and Emma for Meritorious Contributions to Clinical Practice. Since 2016, the RCVS Fellowship has been awarded in recognition of outstanding contributions to the profession.**

A UCD graduate, Professor Carmel Mooney is Clinical Director of the UCD Veterinary Hospital, a European Veterinary Specialist (EBVS) in Small Animal Internal Medicine and an RCVS Specialist in Small Animal Medicine (Endocrinology). Her major research and teaching areas are in endocrine disorders of dogs and cats. She has lectured widely both nationally and internationally and has published many research articles in small animal endocrinology. Carmel has been President of the British Small Animal Veterinary Association and the European College of Veterinary Internal Medicine – Companion Animals.

Associate Professor Emma O'Neill is a European Veterinary Specialist (EBVS) in Small Animal Medicine. A recipient of a 2021-22 University Teaching Excellence Award, Emma is passionate about teaching and equipping students with the appropriate skills to help them realise their full potential. Her teaching spans the undergraduate Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Nursing programmes, the Doctor of Veterinary Medical Specialisation programme and Residency training, with extensive experiential clinical teaching within the UCD Veterinary Hospital.



**IN PROFILE:**  
**PROFESSOR COLIN SCOTT**

## ■ In Profile...

### What is your vision for UCD in your new role of Registrar, Deputy President and Vice President for Academic Affairs?

*UCD is an excellent university and I aim to add my contribution working with others to develop a strategic vision which is responsive to our changing environment and to further enhance educational activities and wider University services. In interview for the role I presented my vision in this way:*

*UCD staff, students and alumni will be a proud community of critical and reflective thinkers and life-long learners and innovators, creative, connected, empowered, well prepared and ready to contribute to and to lead in addressing the challenges and opportunities of 21st century life. These challenges include sustainability and climate change, digitisation of society, and well-being.*

*UCD will build strategically on current strengths to support an increasingly diverse student body to flourish, with a highly distinctive offering for learning and student experience characterised by excellence, inclusivity and connectedness.*

### In your time as an academic, what do you perceive to be the greatest changes the higher education system has undergone?

*At the start of my career in the UK in the late 1980s I found it difficult to link my teaching and research to the transformative potential of universities, and I do not think I was unusual in this. I think the growing ambitions towards widening participation from underrepresented groups, and interdisciplinary and transnational research and education are probably the biggest changes I have seen during my career. These changes carry with them stronger ambition for transformative and inclusive education, growing experiential learning, innovative research and*



*wider societal engagement and impact. There are also risks associated with under-funding and over-regulation from government, international organisations, and even private regulators, such as ranking organisations.*

### What are the key societal trends that are affecting students and how should UCD flex in response?

*Students tell me that the biggest challenges they currently face relate to finance, accommodation and mental health and well-being. At UCD we work closely with students and with UCDSU to better understand the challenges and work to address them through the services and supports we provide and through engagement with government agencies and our wider society.*

### What do you see as the emerging priorities for UCD in the context of a developing multicultural and multi-faceted Irish society?

*Ireland has changed greatly in the last decades. We support students from all backgrounds – those coming from Ireland, our diaspora, those who have come to make their homes here and our international students whatever their socio-economic circumstances. This involves ensuring there are appropriate and usable pathways into programmes, but also that*

*students who come to us are well supported to flourish in their studies and beyond. We must ensure we can support a sense of belonging for students and employees of all backgrounds. The University for All approach to mainstreaming and embedding inclusive approaches to learning and student experience is a key aspect of UCD's activity.*

### Do you believe that UCD is a fair institution given that academia is highly competitive? Can the Registrar work to make it fairer?

*Our aim is to help students realise their academic potential – we set rigorous standards to ensure that a UCD degree is universally recognised and respected. I think UCD does well at treating students fairly, applying consistent policies and procedures. There is always opportunity to enhance what we do and how we do it. Current actions to enhance universal design principles in teaching and learning and more widely on campus are one key set of actions which further support opportunities for learning at UCD.*

### PhD researchers are the life blood of our research-intensive university. What is your vision for recognising and supporting this community in the future?

*PhD students are immensely important to current and future research at UCD, nationally and internationally. We already have in place strong supports for effective doctoral supervision, development and oversight and are working with the sector more broadly to further enhance financial support for doctoral students.*

### What is your vision for UCD's Digital Campus and how will it drive an improvement in the student experience?

*Digitisation is of continuing and growing importance to almost everything we do at UCD. It is very important that we support students and all our employees to enhance digital literacy*

*and put in place both the educational tools and wider digital technologies to support learning and effective services to students and employees.*

### UCD Library is part of your wide portfolio of responsibilities, how do you see the Library evolving in the coming years as it serves education and research across the University?

*UCD Library, with its five locations and very strong online presence, is a central hub for information, knowledge, learning and research at UCD. I have been very impressed at the way Library teams have broadened their services to our community in recent years, supporting learning and research in new ways, adapting to digitisation of society. Paradoxically, a central aspect of this is making more space for students to study in a wide range of different ways, some individually, some collaboratively, some online and also with support for diversity in student learning needs. The redeveloped third floor of the James Joyce Library exemplifies the transformation in the Library as a learning centre, with further change envisioned over coming years.*

### How do you feel about the multi-role nature of your new position - Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs? Which of the three 'roles' are you most looking forward to; and which one are you most apprehensive about?

*I see the role as involving a number of distinct and equally important functions. The first, as Registrar, is to assure the integrity and quality of UCD's educational offerings and wider academic governance. The second, as Vice President for Academic Affairs, is to promote the development of education and the wider student experience in the University. This includes recruiting students, ensuring access pathways and supports are effective and supporting the development of faculty, tutors and professional colleagues. It also means ensuring the wide range of services*

underpinning student learning, the activities of schools and colleges and the wider student experience are the best they can be. The third role, as Deputy President, is to support, and work with, our President, Professor Orla Feely, to develop and implement University strategy to further advance UCD on our campuses, in Ireland and in the wider world.

As my academic background is in regulatory governance, including the regulation of higher education and I have a strong interest in educational innovation and university strategy, I find it hard to pick a favourite amongst the three sets of responsibilities and see them as inter-related. They comprise a set which creates a unique opportunity to support our students, academic and professional staff and wider community to fulfil their potential and to flourish. As to being apprehensive, I am more excited than apprehensive, but maybe it is sensible to be a bit daunted by the scale of the new responsibilities. I have great colleagues across all areas of Academic Affairs and I am grateful for their warm welcome to my new role.

**Did the Vice-President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion role expose you to the broader university perspective, rather than the perceived 'narrow' School/College path?**

My experience as Vice President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has been very valuable in enabling me to work across the whole University, for example with various key support units around enhancing inclusive approaches to campus activities and engaging with Schools on their Athena Swan applications. It has also given me experience of working across the campus with students and with faculty and professional and technical staff, with UMT and with successive Governing Authorities to develop and win support for EDI policies and strategic actions. I would add that leading a College is not narrow, and does support a view across the University structures and services.

**What was the best part of being Principal of the College of Social Sciences and Law? How do you feel you left your fingerprint on the College?**

Undoubtedly the best part of being College Principal was working with so many wonderful academic and professional colleagues and students to develop and implement a vision for social sciences at UCD. I think the biggest change during my term was the introduction in 2018 of the new undergraduate general entry Social Sciences degree. It is the largest undergraduate programme in UCD, a four year programme with extensive opportunities for developing research skills, internships and Erasmus and international exchanges, with a strong ethos of students as partners. The engagement on this programme has both shaped and been shaped by innovations and diversification across all undergraduate and graduate education in the College.

**What was the best part of being the Vice-President for EDI? What informed your open and inclusive attitude? What is your legacy there?**

It has been wonderful to see the very wide engagement across our campus with understanding and addressing UCD's EDI challenges. There is not so much formal authority in being Vice President for EDI and so you have to work with and empower colleagues and students, challenging them to collaborate and to develop their own thinking on EDI. To be open and inclusive is to empower others very widely as an essential aspect of the ongoing need to embed EDI across all our activities at UCD. We say in EDI work that inclusion is a journey and not a destination and I have learnt to value the process and the journey across all my work, recognising that there is always scope to do better.

**Are you prepared to be deluged by paperwork? What is your typical method of dealing with excess emails and paperwork each day?**

Actually I am pretty much paperless, but that will not prevent some degree of deluge. I hope I can be kind both to others and to myself, to recognise what can be done and to recognise limits, leaving what cannot be done today to tomorrow.

**What does a typical working day look like for you?**

I am on campus all day most days. Much of my work is linked to large official meetings and smaller group or bilateral meetings each of which advances the vision for what we can achieve at UCD. I also spend a good deal of time working on my own on policies and other initiatives. I sometimes get to the gym before the meetings start. I sometimes have lunch with colleagues, but equally often have a sandwich from the UCDSU shop or at an event. Whilst there is a degree of routine, there is also a great deal of variety. I particularly value meeting students and colleagues at events and learning about the extraordinary things that happen at UCD every day.

**How do you remain positive and resilient in the face of challenges and disappointment?**

Happily I have a naturally optimistic disposition and am prepared to be persistent if things are not going well until, so to speak, the weather changes. When I finished as College Principal in Social Sciences and Law my colleagues joked that for every challenge I would only see the opportunity. Work is important to me, but there is life outside too and cycling and walking, singing, reading and time with family all help keep modest work disappointments in perspective.



**Do you welcome challenges from colleagues?**

Yes, I am always happy to engage, to understand differences of perspective and opinion better. We are a learning organisation and enhance what we do through ensuring processes in which we all learn new things about our potential. I believe it leads to better decisions and more effective implementation.

**What motivates you as a Senior Leader?**

I am passionate about trying to improve things and am driven by some fairly simple values related to inclusion, excellence, integrity and, above all, kindness.



Pictured are (l-r): Aidan Prinsloo, Niamh Hetherington, Dr William Kinsella, Dr Daniel O'Reilly and Dr Kevin McDermott.

## ■ Fulbright Awards presented to UCD Scholars

**This year's awardees from UCD are Dr William Kinsella, Head of the UCD School of Education; Dr Daniel O'Reilly, PhD student in the UCD Conway SPHERE research group; and Niamh Hetherington, MA student at the UCD College of Arts and Humanities. The trio were among 37 recipients of this year's Fulbright Irish Awards and were presented with their awards at a ceremony in the US Ambassador's Residence this week.**

Dr William Kinsella will be hosted at Columbia University where he will focus on his research 'Multiculturalism, Special Educational Needs and Inclusive Education'. The aim of this work is to identify the barriers to, and the facilitators of, the effective inclusion of migrant students with additional educational needs in education systems, and in regular classrooms where possible, with a focus on implications for initial teacher education and for the professional education of educational psychologists, special education teachers and special needs assistants.

Niamh Hetherington received an FLTA award at the University of Notre Dame. A primary school teacher and an avid sports fan with a passion for athletics and Gaelic Football, she is currently finishing the MA in Scriobh agus Cumarsáid na Gaeilge.

Dr Daniel O'Reilly will travel to the University of Rochester to explore the impact of platelet biology on neonatal lung disease. A General Paediatric Higher Speciality Trainee and Irish Clinical Academic Training (ICAT) fellow, his research is focused on harnessing platelet activation to identify preterm babies who will develop infections.



Pictured are (l-r): Prof Fengzhou Fang, UCD School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering, Prof John Walsh, UCD School of Earth Sciences, and Prof Joanna Brück, UCD School of Archaeology.

## ■ Three UCD Academics elected to Royal Irish Academy

**Three professors from UCD have been invited to sign the members' book of the Royal Irish Academy, the highest academic honour in Ireland. The trio were among 28 new RIA members elected to the Academy in recognition of their exceptional contributions to the sciences, humanities and social sciences, as well as to public service. They are:**

### **Professor Joanna Brück, UCD School of Archaeology**

An expert in the study of Bronze Age Britain and Ireland, her research themes include the body and personhood, landscape, domestic architecture, material culture and deposition. Her more recent work has focused on 19th and 20th century Ireland, including the 1916 Rising and the archaeology of internment.

### **Professor Fengzhou Fang, UCD School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering**

Professor Fang's specialist areas of interest include micro/nano manufacturing, optical freeform manufacturing, medical device/implants manufacturing, ultra-precision manufacturing and metrology. He has worked with over hundred industrial partners assisting companies to develop their R&D activities.

### **Professor John Walsh, UCD School of Earth Sciences**

A founding Director of iCRAG, co-founder of the Fault Analysis Group and a member of the Sustainable GeoEnergy Research Group within the UCD School of Earth Sciences, Professor Walsh's research interests are wide-ranging, with a particular focus the long- and short-term growth of fault systems and their impact on mineral deposits and geothermal and carbon capture systems.

RIA membership is awarded to those who have attained the highest distinction by their unique contributions to education and research. Admittance to the Academy is the highest academic distinction in Ireland, and those elected by their peers are entitled to use the designation 'MRIA' after their name.

Welcoming the newest entries for 2023, Professor Patrick Guiry, RIA President said: "As Members of the Academy, they will support the RIA by engaging and leading in activities that strengthen the international recognition of the Academy's scholarship and serve the public good through their knowledge and insight."

# SEPTEMBER CONFERRINGS AND WELCOMES AT UCD

In September, Professor Orla Feely presided over Conferring and Welcome Ceremonies for our students. During the conferring ceremonies, she also conferred four honorary doctorates.



Inter-stellar explorer Dr Mae Jemison, the first black woman to travel into space, was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Engineering. Part of the Space Shuttle Endeavour mission in 1992, she served six years as a NASA astronaut and was the first woman of colour to go into space during a joint mission with the Japanese space agency.



Award winning writer and patient advocate, Orla Tinsley was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Literature for her success in influencing and changing Government policy and healthcare, helping to extending life spans for certain health conditions across Ireland. Their writings on the rights of transgender people too also brought the issue into focus, aiding efforts to ensure gender recognition in Ireland.



Highlighting his 25 years on the National Economic and Social Council, Dr Rory O'Donnell was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Economic Science as one of the foremost thinkers about how we make policy in Ireland. He played a central role in enabling the policy makers in Ireland to address the most pressing, intractable and complex challenges our country has faced in the last three decades.



Achieving a trio of firsts during her impressive 45-year-career, Ambassador Anne Anderson was Ireland's first female Permanent Representative to the United Nations and to the European Union; the first female Ambassador to France and Monaco; and the first woman to represent Ireland as Ambassador to the United States. She was conferred with an honorary Doctor of Science for her lifetime of activism and idealism.



Ireland's Fastest Man! Israel Olatunde with Prof Orla Feely following his graduation in September.



## President's Welcome Events

4,550 students attended twelve President's Welcome events. Students were addressed by the Professor Orla Feely, UCD President, Professor Barbara Dooley, Acting Deputy President and Martha Ní Riada, UCDSU President and the event was MCed by Professor Jason Last, Dean of Students. The students were treated to entertainment from Music Soc and each received a scarf in UCD's colours, signifying the start of their UCD journey.

# THE BELONGING PROJECT



“The quality of the material submitted was really excellent and came to us in a broad mix of styles from autobiographical pieces and haikus to stories and reflections,”



**For the best part of two years the pandemic shuttered society leaving people of all ages feeling isolated and, in some cases, scared by what was unfolding. The easy exchanges of everyday life were lost, families mourned loved ones without the comfort of familiar rituals and for some, Covid brought about an existential crisis that made them scrutinise their lives and values more closely than ever before.**

The impact of successive lockdowns and working or studying alone fundamentally challenged people’s sense of their place in the world and it was this uncertainty that prompted research fellow Dr Emma Farrell, UCD School of Education, to start thinking about belonging, whether that’s within a family, at work, in society or even somewhere as seemingly impersonal as a big university.

From this reflection has grown the Belonging Project, a joint venture between the UCD Schools of Education and Philosophy and the NCAD Bureau+. It began in late 2022 and culminated with the August launch of the Belonging Project exhibition which is currently on view in the UCD Village.

Emma’s background is in hermeneutic phenomenology which focuses on how experiences, traditions and culture shape ordinary life. She is a founding member of Jigsaw, Ireland’s national centre for youth mental health, and takes a particular interest in the lived experience of mental health and distress, both of which were affected and in some cases undermined by Covid-19.

“What really inspired me was seeing people struggling to come back into the world post-pandemic,” she says. “They were trying to negotiate this strange dynamic where things were supposed to be safe, yet it didn’t feel as if they were. We’d all been apart for so long that we had lost the rhythm, the routines and the rituals of connection - all things that humans crave. This got me thinking about the opposite of disconnection

which is belonging and what that might mean for people. It was this random collection of ideas that eventually grew into the Belonging Project.”

Dr Farrell was especially interested in how belonging might manifest itself in a post-pandemic university setting where the buzz of daily campus life had been absent for so long. True to her commitment to the lived experience, she invited staff and students to share in writing what belonging meant to them.

Short stories, poetry, essays, autobiographical reflections and interviews telling or describing when, how, or where someone had a sense of belonging were all encouraged, and the submissions were reviewed by a multidisciplinary academic team who gave freely of their time and expertise to whittle the submissions down to the final selection.

“Forty pieces were chosen and each writer was paired with a student from NCAD whose role was to reflect their piece through a visual medium,” says Dr Farrell who adds that the Belonging Project also struck a chord right at the top of UCD when incoming President, Professor Orla Feely, mentioned the project and the importance of community within the University in her inaugural address.

“The quality of the material submitted was really excellent and came to us in a broad mix of styles from autobiographical pieces and haikus to stories and reflections,” Dr Farrell says. “It was



“Maybe I don’t need a thousand welcomes - a few true ones are enough”. Words: Maimua Adams Artwork: Stephanie Agbele.



a friend from NCAD, Robert Farrelly, who first suggested the idea of an artistic collaboration as his students appreciate having good content to work with and we had plenty. The NCAD students started on their artistic creations around January and a bit like the writing, the interpretations were a mix of mediums covering motion pictures, design, illustration and more traditional art forms.”

The project forged strong new relationships between the UCD staff and students and their visual partners at NCAD who spent a semester working on the submissions as part of their coursework and it also brought out the diversity of what belonging and “finding one’s tribe” meant to different people.

For one autistic student his belonging happened when he became a DJ with Belfield FM and could share his passion for music with others. For another it was more a case of not fitting in as his long commute every day (he couldn’t afford to live away from home) meant he couldn’t stay on campus in the evenings to socialise or join societies. However, he too found his belonging when he forged a friendship on the daily bus ride with a fellow student in the same situation.

“There was a real mixture of pre and post pandemic experiences and of people who’d really found their sense of belonging and others who really struggled to find it. It’s important to have both experiences reflected if we are to understand the learning on campus,” Dr Farrell says.

“What was really positive was that this was a project built on goodwill,” she adds. “We got tremendous support from so many people, including my Dad, who made the exhibition stands, and MoLI (Museum of Literature Ireland) who opened their doors to us in Newman House and gave us a wonderful space in which to lay out the Belonging Project exhibition”.

To coincide with the exhibition UCD hosted a day-long seminar which considered the theme of belonging and inclusion from multiple perspectives with contributions from Irish speakers and overseas institutions including the University of Colorado. “They gave us really broad insights into belonging and into the idea of university as a place where individuals belong, where its community creates a sense of belonging and how a university belongs to society



*‘Magic on the Fourth Floor’. Words: Conor Buggy. Artwork: Mikah Smilie.*

more broadly,” Dr Farrell says.

“We had a big gathering to launch the Belonging Project and UCD contributors read their pieces and their counterparts from the NCAD talked about how they transformed them into artworks. The exhibition seemed to touch people which was very moving but also celebratory. I think belonging was something that people had been thinking about privately and we managed to represent it in a powerful way they understood. It is an idea very much of its time that resonated with many.”

*The Belonging Project Team was: Dr Emma Farrell (UCD), Dr Shane Bergin (UCD), Dr Áine Mahon (UCD), Dr Lisa Foran (UCD), Robert Farrelly (Post Studio/NCAD), Rory McDonald (Studio), Claire Campion (NCAD) and John Slade (NCAD).*

**“Forty pieces were chosen and each writer was paired with a student from NCAD whose role was to reflect their piece through a visual medium,”**



Prof Patricia Maguire and Prof Fionnuala Ní Áinle with the award.

## ■ Preeclampsia Diagnostic Tool wins AI Innovation prize at Public Sector Digital Transformation Awards

**A diagnostic tool developed to identify one of the world's deadly pregnancy complications was named AI Innovation of the Year at the inaugural Public Sector Digital Transformation Awards, held at Dublin's Shelbourne Hotel in October.**

AI\_PREMie addresses the significant challenge of diagnosing preeclamptic toxemia (PET) by using biomedical, clinical and machine learning techniques to provide a straightforward assessment of pregnancies at risk of PET complications. Development of the pioneering diagnostic tool, which is currently being piloted in three major maternity hospitals in Dublin, is led by Professor Patricia Maguire, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science, and its team includes Professor Fionnuala Ní Áinle and Professor Mary Higgins, UCD School of Medicine.

"Every seven minutes, an expectant mother loses her life due to preeclampsia complications, and every 40 seconds, a baby is lost for the same reason," said Professor Maguire. "The mission of AI\_PREMie is to get the test to every person who needs it as the whole team

really believes it will save lives. Years of translational research has unearthed crucial biomarkers that, when coupled with clinical data, serve as the foundation for an advanced machine learning model underlying AI\_PREMie.

"This model is poised to revolutionise clinical decision-making in the realm of pre-eclampsia, a condition with no rapid diagnostic test currently available."

She added that winning this award "would not have been possible without the incredible support of the amazing interdisciplinary team based across UCD and the three Dublin Maternity Hospitals as well as Challenge Funding from Science Foundation Ireland."

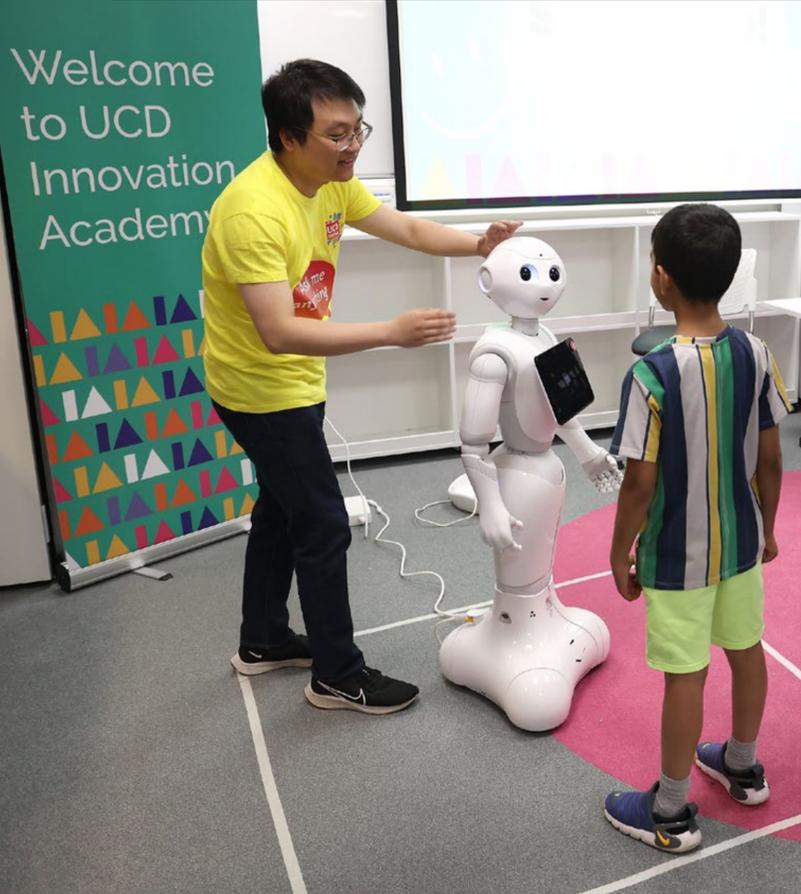
Celebrating significant contributions to advancing digital transformation across Ireland, the Public Sector Digital Transformation Awards recognised eleven achievements of public sector organisations and individuals at its inaugural ceremony. The awards aim to provide a much-needed platform to showcase cutting-edge technologies and innovative approaches making a real impact and improving the experiences of people across Ireland.

## ■ UACES Lifetime Achievement Award

**Congratulations to Professor Ben Tonra, UCD School of Politics and International Relations who has been awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award in European Studies from the University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES).**

The Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to individuals who have made a substantial contribution to the development of European Studies as a discipline. The Award recognises and values all kinds of contributions to the profession, including non-traditional achievements.





## UCD Festival

**UCD Festival 2023 a Kaleidoscope of Inspiration and Fun Leaves a Lasting Impression.**

UCD was once again transformed into a festival of arts, science, technology, innovation, discovery and culture on Saturday 10 June 2023. Over 20,000 people took a fully immersive step inside the world of UCD for the eighth annual UCD Festival which featured a host of cutting edge and innovative displays where culture, sport, science and family fun collided, for a free one-day extravaganza.

This summer's offering had one hundred and thirty free events take place across eight zones, over the course of the day, renowned writers graced the stages, sharing their literary thoughts and insights, special guests included, Roddy Doyle, Emilie Pine, Elaine Feeney, Lisa McInerney, Nicole Flattery, Karl Geary, Disha Bose, Michael Magee, Chandrika Narayanan-Mohan and literary curator, Rick O'Shea. The writing and creativity charity Fighting Words hosted a mentoring session in creative writing for children, and to commemorate the centenary of the end of the Irish Civil War, a poetry writing workshop inspired by original documents held in the UCD Archives.

The UCD Festival 2023 embraced sustainability as a key theme in the expanded Discovery Zone, implementing various eco-friendly initiatives. From Insect Hotel workshops to demonstrations on reducing waste through recycling and composting to promoting reuse and collaborating with Recreate for a sustainability creativity area, the festival also demonstrated a commitment to minimising its environmental impact with the installation of refill water stations. In leading by example, UCD inspired attendees to adopt similar practices in their own lives, contributing to a more sustainable future.

This year, festival organisers worked hard to make the festival an inclusive and sensory friendly festival, in collaboration with UCD's EDI committee, [sensory-friendly spaces and activities](#) were created across the Belfield campus. A number of calm, sensory friendly, areas with low-level stimulation were available to festival attendees, specifically developed to accommodate neurodivergent attendees. A programme of sensory friendly activities was on offer, including a sensory friendly bus, a silent disco and a neurodiverse friendly screening of The Super Mario Bros movie.

A big first for the festival in 2023 was the inaugural Michael Byrne Memorial Run, which preceded the day's events, it was the first charity run to be held on the new UCD Running Track in honour of the University's dear friend, 'Old Man Belfield', who sadly passed away in January 2021.

Another first and a notable highlight for this year's Festival was the first collaboration with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, whose



Prof Orla Feely pictured with Morgan Freeman, Academy Award Winning Actor and honorary MC for the Delta Blues musical collaboration, and Joe Csibi General Manager RTÉ Concert Orchestra

events bookended the festival on the Friday and Sunday nights.

On Friday 9 June, music fans were treated to a special Blues Workshop with legendary jazz and blues musicians from The Delta Blues Project Anthony 'Big-A' Sherrod and Jacqueline 'Jaxx' Nassar invited festival goers to discover the inner workings, wonders and history of the gritty and heartfelt Mississippi Delta Blues style of music. The workshop included live musical demonstrations and a pre-recorded introduction to the history of the Delta Blues by the acclaimed Clarksdale blues historian Roger Stolle.

On Sunday 11 June, the festival closed with a spectacular concert featuring American jazz and blues legends from The Delta Blues Project in collaboration with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra. With a very special guest MC, none other than the Academy Award-winning actor Morgan Freeman. The evening was the perfect end to a very special UCD Festival with attendees dancing in the aisles of O'Reilly Hall.

#### About the UCD Festival

Now in its eighth year, The UCD Festival is a fun-filled day and showcases the very best of UCD through performances, engaging talks, hands-on science, interactive exhibits and so much more. The UCD Festival is a day when we open our doors to the friends and families of our local community, staff, students and alumni, providing an opportunity to see behind the scenes, discover something new and meet our students and world-class academics. UCD is constantly evolving with the changing world and festival goers will get to see first-hand some of our breakthrough discoveries and how UCD is addressing societal challenges. The UCD Festival highlights the innovation, creativity and research that happens on campus, and aims to engage, connect and inspire audiences young and old in a day of hands-on fun. This year, the UCD Festival featured a jam-packed programme of over 130 free events, a day like the festival would not be possible without the commitment and enthusiasm of 1,000 students, researchers, educators, and volunteers who deliver a day of celebration, discussion, reconnection, learning, creative workshops and live performances.





Prof William Gallagher with Minister Simon Harris and Prof Mark Lawler.

## Changing the Landscape of Cancer Research across the Island of Ireland

Minister Simon Harris TD, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science of Ireland opened the All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI) Showcase – Vision and Progress event in September. The event highlighted the achievements of AICRI over the past year, shared future plans and engaged with a range of stakeholders from academia, industry, the clinic and those with a lived experience of cancer. It brings together the cancer research community on the island of Ireland to discuss its strategy going forward and show how AICRI can align with cancer care and cancer research at a national level in Ireland and Northern Ireland. It will explore future opportunities that can benefit those involved in cancer research across the island and help strengthen North-South relationships and develop new ones.

AICRI is a rapidly emerging virtual institute which has brought together ten academic institutions and stakeholders from the healthcare sector, cancer patients, cancer charities, industry partners and government agencies.

In March 2022, AICRI was awarded €4 million from the Shared Island Fund as a Strand III (Partnerships of Scale) award under the first round of the HEA North-South Research Programme. This award allows for the creation of an All-Island Doctoral and Postdoctoral Research Training Programme in Precision Cancer Medicine AICRIstart. The programme, led by Professor William Gallagher at UCD and

Professor Mark Lawler at Queen's University Belfast, trains ten doctoral students and ten postdoctoral fellows with significant expertise in precision cancer medicine. By bringing together ten academic institutions on the island of Ireland (UCD, TCD, RCSI, TU Dublin, DCU, QUB, UU, UoG, UL and UCC) in this foundational initiative, AICRIstart will catalyse a unique all-island network of excellence in cancer research.

The long-term aim of AICRI is to build towards a fully integrated, large-scale Co-Centre, which unites cancer research across the entire island, as well as connects East-West into Great Britain, the EU and the US.



Part of the exhibition on show for delegates.

## UCD Global Experience Summit

The inaugural UCD Global Experience Summit took place in the UCD Student Centre in October. This interactive, two-day event was led by staff in UCD Global and explored the diverse range of global engagement opportunities for students and staff at UCD, while also discussing the role of higher education in developing active global citizens. Over 160 students, staff and faculty participated in the Summit which included an opening plenary, thematic sessions (in-person and online), a speed exchange, UCDVO 'Stories of Change' an exhibition, and an African drumming workshop.

The Summit was formally opened by Professor Orla Feely, UCD President and Professor Dolores O'Riordan, UCD Vice-President for Global Engagement. The event brought together a range of national and international speakers and explored topics such as inclusive internationalisation, green

Erasmus, global citizenship education and much more through storytelling, discussion and debate. The keynote speaker was Guido de Wilde from the University of Amsterdam who spoke about building student communities and developing 21st century competencies for the challenges we meet today.



Pictured (l-r) outside the dlr Lexicon in Dún Laoghaire are: Philip Brophy, CEO and founder, Push Me; Mihael Melnic, founder, Snappie; Mark O'Brien, founder, AI Interpreting; and Fergal Meegan, CEO and co-founder, Assiduous.

## ■ New Frontiers Programme Award Winners

**Thirteen early-stage start-ups, based in the greater South Dublin area, incorporating South Dublin, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and North Wicklow, completed the 2023 New Frontiers (Phase 2) Programme run by IADT Media Cube in partnership with NovaUCD.**

The New Frontiers programme provides participating entrepreneurs with access to a comprehensive package of supports including mentorship from some of Ireland's leading businesspeople, funding support from Enterprise Ireland and access to resources including hot-desk facilities from IADT Media Cube and NovaUCD.

Following final pitches to a judging

panel during a showcase event held at the dlr Lexicon in Dún Laoghaire, four of the participating start-ups, Assiduous, Snappie, Push Me and AI Interpreting, were announced as award winners.

Assiduous, a capital markets technology company, was named winner of the One-to-Watch Award, sponsored by IADT Media Cube.

Snappie, which has developed a digital platform for creative agencies that removes complexity out of the website creation process, was named winner of the Best Pitch Award, sponsored by NovaUCD.

Push Me, which has developed a digital coaching platform, was named winner of the Most Likely to Scale Award, sponsored by LEO DLR.

AI Interpreting, which is developing a platform for businesses and Governments to engage with the deaf community using AI sign language interpreters, was named winner of the Best Innovation Award, sponsored by Flynn O'Driscoll.



Dr Paul Shrimpton addressing the audience at University Church.

## ■ Newman's Campaign in Ireland

**Oxford historian Dr Paul Shrimpton, Magdalen College School, Oxford presented two lectures on St John Henry Newman's *My Campaign in Ireland Part I and Part II* at UCD Newman House and the Newman University Church. The lectures were co-organised by Associate Professor Daniel Esmonde Deasy, Director of the UCD Newman Centre for the Study of Religions based in UCD School of Philosophy, and Fr Gary Chamberland, Director of the Notre Dame-Newman Centre for Faith and Reason based in Newman University Church.**

Dr Shrimpton has published *A Catholic Eton? Newman's Oratory School (2005)*, *The 'Making of men': the Idea and reality of Newman's university in Oxford and Dublin (2014)*; and *Conscience before conformity: Hans and Sophie Scholl and the White Rose resistance in Nazi Germany (2018)* (all published by Gracewing Press). More recently, he has edited, annotated and written new introductions to Newman's two-volume history of his time in Ireland, *My Campaign in Ireland* (Gracewing Press).

*My Campaign in Ireland, Part I* brings together all the most important documents penned by Newman in his

efforts to establish a Catholic university in Ireland. As founding rector, Newman was fully involved in every aspect of the university from 1854, when it opened, until 1858, when he resigned. The discourses he composed in 1852, to prepare for the university's foundation, form the first half of *The Idea of a University*, Newman's great classic work on education; but the foundational documents in *My Campaign in Ireland, Part I* demonstrate how he was able to turn theory into practice in adverse circumstances. Filling out Newman's vision of education, they show how he should also be esteemed for his practical contribution to education. *My*

*Campaign in Ireland, Part II* represents Newman's verdict on his frustrating years as founding Rector of the University. In describing the causes of his campaign's failure, he is not afraid to criticise those who shared responsibility with him, not least his co-founder Archbishop Cullen and even Pope Pius IX. These candid writings show Newman's toughness and fairness in his dealings, and how his powers of diplomacy were stretched to the limit. Together with *My Campaign, Part I*, this volume makes essential reading for understanding what happened when Newman tried to make his Idea of a University a reality.



Lead author Giulia Oeschger



Páirc Carroll, Assistant Professor in Transport Engineering at UCD's School of Civil Engineering

# COMMUTING PREFERENCES IN DUBLIN



## It's a cold, wet Monday morning in January. As usual, you have to get to the bus stop, but it's a good three kilometres from your house. How do you get there - and, for all your good intentions, would it be easier - maybe just this one time, and despite the traffic - to just drive to work, and to hell with the high parking fees and sitting in traffic?

Across Ireland, Europe and, indeed, the world, commuters are weighing up these options. What they decide, and how policy makers respond, may be vital as we reimagine and readapt our cities to become carbon neutral and pollution-free.

At UCD, lead author Giulia Oeschger, a PhD candidate at the UCD School of Civil Engineering, and her supervisor, Dr Páraic Carroll, Assistant Professor at the same school, and who is leading the transport strand of the Science Foundation Ireland funded project entitled Next Generation Energy Systems (NexSys) have been investigating this topic. Published in the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Cycling and Micromobility Research*, Oeschger and Carroll found that commuters in county Dublin who had to reach public transport from their homes, or reach their destinations from it, preferred walking over bikes and e-scooters.

Why is this the case, when bikes and e-scooters are invariably faster?

### Safety

"Commuters were put off by safety issues," says Oeschger. "There is not enough infrastructure to allow them to safely use bikes or e-scooters on a continuous route. Cycle lanes can be patchy, and cyclists often find themselves riding in the bus lane in busy traffic. In the survey (sent to a sample in County Dublin), we collected a lot of data about respondents, including gender and age, and we found the female and older respondents were more likely to choose walking for that first and last mile. Those who

chose e-scooters, meanwhile, tended to be 35 or younger, which largely reflected international evidence. They were also more likely to be male.

"We can't necessarily extrapolate why from the survey results, but based on the comments, safety was one of the main issues. There remains uncertainty as to how, where and when e-scooters can be used, and the infrastructure is just not perceived as safe. And international evidence tells us that women tend to be more risk-averse than men. But, outside of this study, we know that in countries with good cycling infrastructure, such as the Netherlands or Denmark - two places with similar or colder climates than Ireland - this gender gap is much smaller. Indeed, it is close to non-existent when the conditions are there for all to feel safe."

"Media coverage of transport and traffic issues is also influential", says Carroll. "If there is a story about a collision between a cyclist and a lorry for example, this will logically lead to a negative perception of cycling for some, in terms of safety. It shows that there is still a lot of work to be done to improve cycling infrastructure. In terms of sustainability, walking is the best option: it is free, it produces no emissions and is good for health. The big limitation for people is the distance or travel time to public transport."

### Practicality and familiarity

Closer to home, another factor of this gender split is quite practical, says Oeschger. "Women may be more likely to combine different purposes:

yes, they are commuting, but they're also taking the children to different destinations, doing the shopping, going to the post office and so on while on the commute. These tasks are more difficult on e-scooters when you have children with you."

The preference for walking is also tied in with confusion over which rules apply to bus, train and tram services, Carroll and Oeschger say. "You can't bring your bike on the DART at peak times, except for a fold-up bike," says Carroll. "Intercity train services have more space for non-foldable bikes, but you have to book in advance, and it books up quickly. People aren't sure what is permitted on which service. We could provide more capacity to accommodate cyclists who don't use foldable bikes and, indeed, we could be more imaginative overall. The solutions are quite simple really. In Singapore, for instance, there are racks on the doors which you can pop your bike onto. If we want to incentivise multimodal transport, these are obvious solutions."

Oeschger says that intermodal trips need to be seamless. "If it's a hassle, if you are worried what the driver or transport operator will say, or there isn't anywhere to safely and securely leave your bike where thieves won't be able to simply break your advanced lock, why would you do it?" she asks.

### Costs

The relative costs of walking versus bikes or e-scooters, also comes into play, says Oeschger. "People are more willing to pay for shared e-scooters than shared bikes. If it is an annual, monthly or once-off fee, people may be more inclined to use the shared bikes than if they have to pay per minute. Although there are shared bike schemes in Dublin, there is not yet a shared e-scooter service in Ireland, so people are not as familiar with them."

Carroll points to the 'Dublin Bikes' scheme, which is publicly operated and run by the City Council with the support of a sponsor, and contrasts that with privately run schemes which, he says, are more expensive because they often work within tighter margins. "For many councils, it takes work to establish and maintain these bike schemes, and it is one demand among many, so it may be easier for them to adopt these private models," he says.

### Solutions

"The frequency of public transport is a key indicator influencing the attractiveness of the bus or train when they have to reach it from a longer distance," says Carroll.

Oeschger says that we can encourage more multimodal transport by integrated ticketing, and examining the data generated by this to help improve planning. "Allow people to bring their bikes or scooters on board, but above all else provide secure parking and safe and continuous infrastructure."

To this, Carroll adds that regulation around e-scooters will create a framework that commuters can understand, but that it's also important to enhance the frequency and reliability of public transport.

"We looked at Dublin as it has a relatively dense public transport network compared to other Irish cities," says Oeschger. "This study, however, is just starting to show what is needed - and what is possible."

*Giulia and Páraic were in conversation with Peter McGuire (BA 2002, MLitt 2007), a freelance journalist and regular contributor to The Irish Times and to Noteworthy, the investigations unit at TheJournal.ie.*



Pictured back row (l-r): Assoc Prof Barbara Coughlan UCD; Angela Dunne National Lead Midwife, HSE's National Women and Infant's Health Programme; and Dr Margaret Murphy Chair of the NMBI Midwives Committee. Front row (l-r): Sheila McClelland NMBI CEO; Dr Louise Kavanagh McBride NMBI President; Georgina Farren, Barrister-at-Law, formerly NMBI; Katie White UCD; Dr Caroline Munyi Migrant Women's Health Co-ordinator, AkiDWA; and Dr Karn Cliffe NMBI Midwife Project Lead.

## UCD Host the NMBI National Student Midwife Debate

**On 10 November, the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems was delighted to host the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland National Student Midwife Debate in the Fitzgerald Chamber, UCD Student Centre. The motion for debate was 'This house believes that midwives will meet all needs of women's reproductive health within Irish society'. Six student midwives, one from each of the six education bodies that provide midwifery education, competed in two teams to debate the motion with one student midwife voted Best Speaker.**

The speakers debating for the motion were Clodagh Vaughan, representing Dundalk Institute of Technology; Ann Nwagwu, representing UCD; and Andrea Pasztor representing University of Limerick. The speakers debating against the motion Aryth Stryker, representing University College Cork; Suzanne O'Toole representing Trinity College Dublin; and Shannon McHugh representing University of Galway.

Shannon McHugh, studying midwifery at University of Galway won the prize for Best

Speaker at the debate, while the team who spoke against the motion were judged to be the winners.

Opening the debate, NMBI President, Dr Louise Kavanagh McBride, said: "This NMBI National Student Midwife Debate takes place annually to allow students to engage and collaborate whilst practise their debating skills on topical issues of relevance to midwifery. Student midwives have a unique opportunity to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the profession of midwifery as they research the topic in preparation for the debate. While we often talk about care, compassion, and competence in midwifery - communication is also key. The speakers this afternoon showcased their exceptional communication and presentation skills."

Katie White, a UCD student on the Higher Diploma in Midwifery recited a powerful and moving poem which she penned herself. The poem was a reflection on the student midwife's practice placement experience as part of their learning.

Associate Professor Barbara Coughlan, Head of Subject in Midwifery, UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, commented: "It was wonderful to host this year's debate in the fabulous Fitzgerald Chamber. The debate is an excellent learning experience for our student midwives and I was inspired by the quality of the speakers this year. The future of midwifery in Ireland looks promising."



Pictured at the Awards are (l-r): Dr Joseph Gallagher, Dr Balwani Mbakaya and Dr Chris Watson.

## SFI-Irish Aid SDG Challenge runner-up prize awarded to UCD-led BIOTOPE project

**Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD, and Minister of State for International Development and Diaspora, Sean Fleming TD, have announced the winners of the Science Foundation Ireland-Irish Aid Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Challenge, following rigorous assessment by a panel of global health experts.**

A runner-up prize was awarded to Dr Joseph Gallagher, UCD School of Medicine and Dr Chris Watson, UCD Conway Institute and Queen's University Belfast, for the BIOTOPE project. In partnership with Dr Balwani Mbakaya, Mzuzu University in Malawi, the team is working to reduce deaths from childhood pneumonia.

The overall winner was the Neosepsis project led by Maynooth University focused on SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being, with a new approach to identifying sepsis in newborn babies.

Pneumonia kills more children than any other single disease with an estimated 935,000 deaths per annum. The BIOTOPE project builds on existing work in primary care in Malawi and will use cellular networks and smartphone technology to develop models to help

categorise the severity of pneumonia cases for treatment, and work on tests to reduce over-prescription of antibiotics. The team will use the additional €893,000 over two years to improve their machine-learning models, finalise the best candidate biomarkers for disease severity, and conduct clinical studies in eight districts. A further group of teams is working on SDG 13, relating to the climate crisis.

The SDG Challenge Programme is a partnership between SFI and Irish Aid (Department of Foreign Affairs), whose purpose is to support transformative, sustainable solutions to contribute to addressing development challenges in Irish Aid's partner countries. Some 146 out of 200 countries or areas have already met or are on track to meet the SDG target on under-5 mortality.



The speakers and session chairs from the UCD Teaching and Learning Symposium 2023 (l-r): Dr Ernesto Vasquez Del Aquila, Head of Teaching and Learning, UCD School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice; Dr Emma Medland, Senior Lecturer, Surrey Institute of Education, University of Surrey; Assoc Prof Paul Ryan, Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, UCD College of Business; Prof Marie Clarke, UCD Dean of Undergraduate Studies; Dr Deirdre McGillicuddy, Asst Prof in Education, UCD School of Education; and Aine Galvin, Director, UCD Teaching and Learning.

## UCD Teaching and Learning Symposium 2023

**Inclusive Assessment: Theory to Practice was the theme of the UCD Teaching and Learning Symposium 2023, which took place in September. This was the seventh annual symposium and the first since 2019 to be held as an in-person event.**

The symposium was opened by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Marie Clarke, who emphasised the importance of students feeling included in their assessment and their studies, while also recognising the challenges in designing assessments that are inclusive of increasingly diverse cohorts. The audience of UCD faculty and staff then heard keynote addresses by two distinguished international speakers:

Dr Joanna Tai, Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning (CRADLE) at Deakin University, Melbourne, took part online and gave a presentation entitled 'Assessment for inclusion: promoting equity

and valuing diversity in higher education'. Drawing on Australian government data on access and progression of different equity groups, and on CRADLE research, Dr Tai spoke of the need to move away from a "deficit discourse" to consider how students can demonstrate capabilities, noting that this was important for validity as well as inclusion.

Dr Emma Medland, Senior Lecturer at the Surrey Institute of Education, University of Surrey, gave a talk entitled 'Addressing the juxtaposition of inclusive assessment through design strategies'. Dr Medland demonstrated the issues students can encounter with the "testing culture" of traditional assessment, and proposed a more collaborative approach to assessment design, based on transparency in assessment, diversification of assessment and student empowerment.

The keynote addresses were followed by an interactive session facilitated by Dr Deirdre McGillicuddy, UCD School of

## UCD Press expands Down Under

**UCD Press is delighted to announce a new distribution, sales and marketing partnership with John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd, across Australia and New Zealand. Wiley will represent UCD Press from Autumn 2023. This new venture will greatly enhance their presence in the Australia/New Zealand academic markets, ensuring every UCD Press title is adequately sold, distributed and marketed well in all regions. The new relationship will further allow current authors to build their profiles and encourage authors from further afield to publish with UCD Press. Finally, the alliance will further enhance UCD's name as a leading research university of international standing.**

Noelle Moran, Executive Editor, UCD Press told us: "UCD Press is committed to a fruitful and wide-reaching working relationship with Wiley Australia and New Zealand. It is extremely good news for our Press, our University, our readers and our authors – present and future."

Maria Hendriks, Senior Director, Head of Education and Trade, Wiley said: "We are thrilled to be representing UCD Press in Australia and New Zealand and look forward to working with our retail partners to increase visibility and sales of UCD Press books throughout the region."

Education. Symposium attendees were asked to share their ideas on inclusive assessment practices that would work well in their contexts, as well as their intentions on how they would enhance inclusive assessment. Practices highlighted by attendees included: choice and variety in assessment; exemplars clarifying assessment criteria as guidance; scaffolding assessment to support all students in achieving their full potential; students as partners in the co-design of rubrics; and reflection pieces as an effective assessment type.

Finally, details were announced of the Inclusive Assessment Workshop Series, where UCD schools and programmes can collaborate with UCD Teaching and Learning on local workshops to enhance inclusive assessment in their discipline.

Watch the keynote addresses and access the presentations from the UCD Teaching & Learning Symposium at [www.ucd.ie/teaching](http://www.ucd.ie/teaching).

# CAN WIKIPEDIA'S MODEL SAVE THE INTERNET?



Prof Taha Yasseri,  
UCD School of Sociology

It was Twitter and now it's X. But many of its users simply call it "the hellsite."

What was once a relatively reliable platform for breaking news, a place to laugh and mindlessly kill a few minutes - or waste an hour - is now drowning in disinformation, hatred and anger. Instead of bringing people together, social media posts seem to be more and more entrenched, and any idea of taking opposing viewpoints in good faith has gone out the window.



Since billionaire Elon Musk bought the platform - and the US courts refused to let him out of the purchase - standards are widely perceived to have dropped. It's a long way from the Arab Spring of the early 2010s, where social media including Twitter and Facebook were used as a communication tool by citizens protesting autocracies. Or, in the previous decade, when Wikipedia, an encyclopaedia that can be read and edited by anyone, showed how collaboration and crowdsourcing could lead to free, reliable information.

The promise of the Internet seemed to sour around 2016, when the Cambridge Analytica scandal laid bare how our personal Facebook data could be misused for political purposes. Facebook never quite recovered its reputation, particularly among younger people. More recently, X was widely criticised for spreading misinformation, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism during the Israel-Hamas war.

But Professor Taha Yasseri, UCD School of Sociology, a physicist and sociologist known for his research in computational social science and particularly on Wikipedia says that the same crowdsourcing that made Wikipedia such a success could also re-energise "the social marketplace of ideas".

"In its early stages, the Internet was so new and exciting," says Yasseri. "Somewhere between that first excitement and the later and more recent disappointments, the actors involved changed. Initially, the Internet was for students at universities, librarians and researchers. When it opened to the wider public, technologies designed with possibilities in mind couldn't adequately respond to the different demands and intentions of new users."

History provides a guide to how - and why - this happened.

**"New technologies have always gone through the same cycle," Yasseri says. "People were sceptical of electricity at first. They said that the print press would be the death of romance. Now, we need to take a moment to regulate and develop good practices that can ensure we benefit from these new technologies too."**

X and Wikipedia don't initially seem comparable. The former is a site with a stream of different

topics attracting a diverse range of contributors with diverse interests; the latter is a collection of pages curated and edited primarily by people with a special interest in, or knowledge of, particular topics.

"Yes, the user base, design, intention and motivation of their users are different," Yasseri says. "But they are both open platforms that almost anyone with Internet access can contribute to, they are both about user-based information-sharing and they are both based on the social web infrastructure. It's not about copying all successful elements from one to the other, but there is much we can learn from one to make the other better."

Over the past decade, much of Yasseri's research has focused on Wikipedia as a model for exploring how collaboration is key to achieving consensus.

"As someone who has studied Wikipedia for years, I had a lingering question: how could we implement ideas from that site to save social media? We can apply these insights to other platforms, including the Community Notes, a new initiative on X, which is based around collaborative content moderation. If a user sees a misleading post, either due to misinformation or a lack of context, they can write a short text to refute or debunk it. And then the Note which received the highest scores by other members of the Community Notes will appear next to the original post. Despite the initial design, the scoring system is no longer based on the note receiving a large number of upvotes, as this was gamed by partisans, according to our research. Instead, they are scored on who supports the note; if the note is backed by individuals who may otherwise not generally agree with each other, that agreement is counted at a higher rate."

Working with an interested colleague, Yasseri observed and collected data. He found that X's community note creators seem largely well-intentioned and that these collaborations seem to be filtering out some misinformation and disinformation, however with some caveats. "There may be hours and even years of disagreement online, but our studies show that when people write about a topic together, their views get closer. The shared experience of co-production brings people together, and that co-ownership seems fundamental."

Yasseri suggests that a similar system could eventually allow users to edit each other's posts, or

for people to add context to posts and comments, potentially further reducing polarisation. He has been carrying out simulations with diverse opinions, edits and direct conversations among editors to further explore how collaboration could work. One idea floated is to decrease polarisation by making it more difficult to unfollow or unfriend other users, but there is little incentive for social media firms to take this action.

One experiment he is working on involves taking different groups with different opinions and getting them to work together to evaluate notes. "This is proving beneficial, and people were very collaborative. We didn't end up with opposing parties unable to work together, and often their notes were of very good quality, even though they never met face-to-face. There are other obstacles," he concedes.

**"The platforms know what they need to do, and that they must adapt, but the business plans of Facebook and X are about maximising profit, so there may be resistance to wider change. But, that said, they also need to think long-term and not just think about the immediate financial benefits - and I think they know this."**

Overall, Yasseri is largely hopeful for the Internet's future. "I am pro-technology and excited about the innovations we have, but that should not blind us to dangers. In this digital universe, the fast cars are there, but there are no traffic laws," he says.

"Look at the history of other technologies: electricity wasn't fully regulated in the US for its first 40 years, even though people were getting shocked and killed. Policymakers are similarly lagging behind when it comes to social media and more generally digital technologies' regulation but, working and communicating with academics, they are realising that they don't need to know everything about a platform to regulate it - they just need to know enough. And when we come up with better regulations systems and double up social norms, the online world will become more reliable, and more fun."

*Professor Yasseri was in conversation with Peter McGuire (BA 2002, MLitt 2007), a freelance journalist and regular contributor to The Irish Times and to Noteworthy, the investigations unit at TheJournal.ie.*



Pictured are (l-r): Prof Stuart Russell, Dr Susan Leavy, Leavy, Niamh Hodnett, Prof Barry O'Sullivan and Prof Debbie Ging.

## AI and Society

**The packed room in Dublin's National Concert Hall for November's AI and Society event reflected the extent of concerns about the potential effects of artificial intelligence on our everyday lives.**

Organised by UCD Institute for Discovery, UCD Centre for Digital Policy and the Insight SFI Research Centre for Data Analytics, the keynote speaker was AI pioneer Stuart Russell, Professor of Computer Science at UC Berkeley, whose work explores the possible risks and rewards of AI for humanity.

Dr Elizabeth Farries, Director, UCD Centre for Digital Policy opened proceedings, welcoming Ireland's AI Ambassador Patricia Scanlon, who summarised the breakneck pace of AI development before Professor Russell took to the podium. In his provocative keynote, the UCD Institute for Discovery visiting professor likened the current competencies of artificial intelligence to only the very earliest days of aviation. "I would be of the opinion that we are at the hot air balloon phase; a lot of hot air," he added.

He spoke of the shortcomings of Large Language Models like ChatGPT, the insidious nature of 'recommender systems' pushing content to our feeds and the urgent need for more control, regulation and intentional design of AI. It was a topical jumping off point for the lively panel discussion that followed.

Moderator and event organiser Dr Susan Leavy, UCD School of Information and Communication Studies, was joined on stage by Niamh Hodnett, Online Safety Commissioner of Ireland at Coimisiún na Meán; Professor Barry O'Sullivan, Director, Insight SFI Centre for Data Analytics; and Professor Debbie Ging, Professor of Digital Media at Dublin City University. The panel expressed views on a wide range of topics, including disinformation, the current Digital Services Act, the upcoming EU AI Act, safeguarding children and online peacekeeping.

## Memories of Monaghan

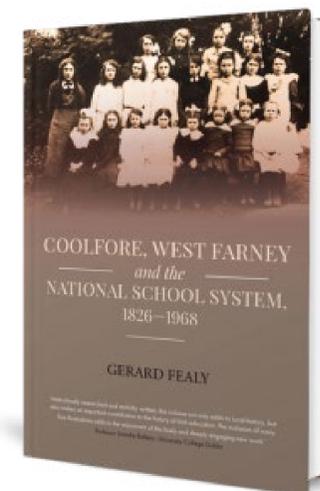
**Congratulations to Professor Emeritus Gerard Fealy, UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems on the recent publication of his book *Coolfore, West Farney and the National School System, 1826-1968*. Gerard decided to research the history of his former school on the 50th anniversary of its closing in 2018.**

Throughout rural Ireland, small single-storey stone buildings can be found, several bearing 'national school' on a stone plaque above the door. These are the schoolhouses that were a common feature of the built environment in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The local national school was and still remains an essential institution in the social life of each parish. This book tells the story of the national school system in Ireland, since its establishment in 1831 to the mid to late twentieth century.

"In researching this book, I consulted several historical documents, artefacts and published sources, and I was also privileged to record the memories of many former pupils and the last

schoolmaster of Coolfore. In highlighting important local developments in west Farney and the wider political and social changes in Ireland over a century and a half, I hope that the book adds new insights into the evolution of educational policy, classroom practices and the experiences of pupils and their teachers in the years before and after Irish independence. In writing this book, I also hope that I have added new and worthwhile scholarship to the social history of Co Monaghan and Ulster."

*Coolfore, West Farney and the National School System 1826-1968* is available to buy in bookshops and on [wordwellbooks.com](https://wordwellbooks.com) at: [https://wordwellbooks.com/index.php?route=product/product&product\\_id=2089](https://wordwellbooks.com/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=2089)



## UCD Ranked Fifth in Europe for Producing VC-backed Start-Up Founders

**UCD has been ranked in fifth place by PitchBook in its 2023 ranking of European universities based on start-up founders who completed their undergraduate education at the University and who have gone on to raise VC funding.**

Pitchbook is a financial data and software company with offices in London, New York, San Francisco and Seattle. Their annual rankings compare universities by tallying up the number of alumni entrepreneurs (at undergraduate, postgraduate and MBA levels) who have raised venture capital in the last decade.

According to the 2023 Pitchbook Report 189 UCD undergraduate entrepreneurs established 174 companies which raised \$2.6 billion in funding in the last ten years.

UCD ranked in 89th on the list of global universities and was the only Irish university in the Top 100 list.

The University of Oxford ranked best overall university in Europe with 286 undergraduate entrepreneurs, establishing 275 companies which have raised \$8.4 billion in funding. Stanford University ranked number one globally with 1,435 entrepreneurs, establishing 1,297 companies raising \$73.5 billion.

The 2023 rankings are based on the total number of founders whose companies received a round of venture funding between 1 January 2013 and 1 September 2023. The analysis is based on PitchBook data for global VC investment as well as the educational information of more than 150,000 founders.



Prof Orla Feely pictured with 2023 UCD Alumni Award winners (l-r): Aedamar Comiskey, (Law); Dr Eileen Furlong (Research, Innovation and Impact); Malachy Browne (Engineering and Architecture); Dr Margaret Faul, (Science); Rachel Kenna (Health and Agricultural Sciences); Alison Darcy, (Social Sciences); Olivia O'Leary, (Arts and Humanities); and Kerry McLaverty, (Business).

## UCD Alumni Awards 2023

### UCD's Finest Celebrated at the 2023 UCD Alumni Awards

The annual UCD Alumni Awards took place in UCD O'Reilly Hall where a number of familiar faces were on hand to celebrate nine graduates from UCD's six faculties who were recognised at the tenth anniversary of the Alumni Awards

The awards are the University's leading annual event honouring outstanding alumni, nominated by

peers and faculty, from across all UCD's disciplines who reflect the very best of ambition, application and achievement having excelled in a range of fields from the Arts to Health, from Business to Health Science, from Sport to Engineering, from Academic Research to the Arts, and from Social Science to Law.

The nine distinguished alumni are: Alison Darcy, entrepreneur, psychologist and technologist (Social

Sciences); Olivia O'Leary, broadcaster, journalist and writer (Arts and Humanities); Kerry McLaverty, CEO LauraLynn (Business); Rachel Kenna (Health and Agricultural Sciences); Aedamar Comiskey, Senior Partner, Linklaters, (Law); Malachy Browne (Engineering and Architecture); Dr Margaret Faul, (Science); Dr Eileen Furlong (Research, Innovation and Impact); and Josh van der Flier (Sport).

As is customary the Gala evening concluded

with a performance from the Choral Scholars of University College Dublin who closed the ceremony with a musical programme centred on the journey to commission the entire collection of thirty-six James Joyce poems to chamber music. The programme was led by Artistic Director, Dr Desmond Earley.

**Winners continued on next page...**

## ■ The 2023 UCD Alumni Award winners

### **UCD Alumni Award for Arts and Humanities, Olivia O'leary** BA 1969 (English, French and Spanish)

One of the country's most respected journalists and commentators, Olivia O'Leary first trained as a journalist with the Nationalist and Leinster Times in Carlow. She then worked for the Irish Times as a parliamentary sketch writer and was also a news reporter for RTÉ. She later moved to the UK and was one of the first women presenters on BBC's Newsnight, returning home in the mid-1980s to present the flagship current affairs programme Today Tonight and its successor Prime Time.

### **UCD Alumni Award in Business, Kerry McLaverty** EMBA 2017

Kerry McLaverty, CEO of LauraLynn, Ireland's Children's Hospice, began her career at the Hospice in 2012 after being headhunted to work at the newly opened organisation, where she pioneered therapeutic family camps and implemented a service wide electronic medical record system. Kerry originally studied Sports Medicine in the US and completed a Masters in Physiotherapy at the University of Ulster.

### **UCD Alumni Award in Engineering and Architecture, Malachy Browne** BE 1997 (Electronic)

Malachy Browne is an Enterprise Investigations Director on the Visual Investigations team at the New York Times and is in charge of investigations that have breakthrough potential to change policy and public debate. The Visual Investigations team at the newspaper combines traditional reporting with advanced digital forensics.

### **UCD Alumni Award in Health and Agricultural Sciences, Rachel Kenna** BSc (Nursing Mgmt) 2003

Rachel Kenna is Chief Nurse in the Department of Health and has been instrumental in improving the population health of people in Ireland and the working conditions of healthcare staff as well as impacting on patient safety. She played a key role in facilitating the rollout of the vaccination programme during the COVID-19 pandemic, the development of a population health screening policy, implementation of strategic health workforce planning and informing patient safety legislation.



*Newly design UCD Alumni Award Trophy designed and produced in collaboration with iForm and the School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering.*

### **UCD Alumni Award in Law, Aedamar Comiskey** BCL 1988

A leading public and private M&A lawyer, London-based Aedamar Comiskey was elected Linklaters' Senior Partner and Chair in May 2021. The firm has 30 offices in 20 countries, with more than 530 partners. An Irish lawyer at the very top of her game, Aedamar is the first female Senior Partner in the firm's 183-year history and prior to this role, was Global Head of Corporate, leading 2,000 people.

### **UCD Alumni Award in Science, Dr Margaret Faul** BSc 1986 (Chemistry), MSc 1988 (Chemistry)

Dr Margaret Faul is recognised internationally as a leader in the pharmaceutical industry and a strong advocate for women in chemistry. Throughout her 25-year career at Amgen, California she has commercialised innovative medicines to treat patients with serious illness, focusing on the process development and supply of drugs for clinical trials and the commercial market.

### **UCD Alumni Award in Social Sciences, Dr Alison Darcy** BA 1999 (Psychology), MLitt 2005 (Psychology), PhD 2007 (Psychology)

Dr Alison Darcy is an entrepreneur, psychologist and technologist and founder and President of Woebot Labs, a cognitive behavioural therapist chatbot. Throughout her career she has combined her skills in technology with her expertise in psychology to make a difference in people's lives. Woebot, an AI-powered chatbot, enables users to monitor and manage their mental health, using evidence-based cognitive behavioural techniques.

### **UCD Alumni Award in Research, Innovation and Impact, Dr Eileen Furlong** BSc 1992 (Pharmacology), PhD 1996 (Pharmacology)

In her final year at UCD Eileen Furlong won the ICI Pharmaceuticals Division Prize, awarded to the candidate who achieved first place in the final BSc (Honours) Degree Examination in Pharmacology. A leading molecular biologist working in the fields of transcription, chromatin biology, developmental biology and genomics, Eileen is known globally for her work.

### **UCD Alumni Award in Sport, Josh Van Der Flier** Dip Sports Management 2013, BSc (Sports & Exercise Management) 2017

In 2022, rugby union player for Leinster and Ireland, UCD Rugby's Josh van der Flier became only the third Irishman to be named World Rugby Men's 15s Player of the Year and was also selected for the World Rugby Men's 15s Dream Team of the Year. The same year, he was named EPCR European Player of the Year, Leinster Rugby Players' Player of the Year, Rugby Players Ireland Players' Player of the Year and Guinness Rugby Writers of Ireland Player of the Year 2022.

# Research Culture



Prof Grace Mulcahy

## Why Research is an integral part of a university.

Research is at the backbone to university life. For Professor Grace Mulcahy the opportunity to interact with and learn from so many colleagues in areas other than her own is one of the best aspects of the UCD Research Culture - one she is proud to be a part of.

Having graduated from UCD with a qualification in Veterinary Medicine, she went on to undertake further studies obtaining a PhD in bovine immunology and began working in a research institute in the UK. She returned to work at UCD in 1991. She went on to become the Dean of Veterinary Medicine at UCD, served two terms as a member of the Veterinary Council of Ireland and was for two years a member of the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges Board of Directors. She now divides her time between teaching and research in veterinary parasitology and work on Research Culture and Research Integrity.

## Why is Research Culture important to UCD?

Research is an integral part of the work of a university like UCD – in a very wide range of disciplines. Although these differ in their aims and ways of working, excellent research in any discipline can be characterised by careful design, rigorous methodology, novelty and integrity. UCD expects all its researchers to ensure that research is conducted following the principles of reliability, honesty, respect for all stakeholders, and accountability. Another characteristic of research is its impact – for example, the contribution medical research might have to improving patient safety, or the effect a new creative work might have on the way society perceives a current issue.



# Research Culture

## What is UCD Research Culture, can you explain what makes it unique?

The term Research Culture is used to describe the ways in which researchers and research teams behave in planning, carrying out and communicating their research. This encompasses how they treat their peers, any subjects of their research, and how supervisors of research treat their research students and trainees. The concept of Research Culture can also be applied to organisations, such as universities, or other research performing organisations, as well as their constituent parts like Schools or Research Institutes. More broadly, other partners in the research ecosystem, like research funders, publishers of research, and even governments, can influence Research Culture.

By its nature, research and researchers are competitive. There is competition for funding, to solve a problem before somebody else, to produce the best paper, to deliver the best conference presentation.

**Competition, in and of itself, can be healthy, and promote excellence in research. However, without balance, in the form of collegiality, competition can veer into the domain of 'survival of the fittest'.**

I think it is widely acknowledged that at this point efforts are required to encourage a

little more collegiality among researchers – in other words, a positive and supportive research culture, because this raises all boats, and allows more of our researchers to do excellent research.

To achieve this, we must make clear that we value activities such as mentoring early career researchers, considering properly the training and development needs of researchers at all career stages, and advancing research in ways which do not necessarily garner spotlights and accolades directly but nevertheless contribute to the overall research effort. In the same vein, it is important we appropriately acknowledge the contributions of all of those who contribute to research, be they faculty, technical staff, researchers in training, or research managers and administrators.

As we know, what gets measured is valued, and it takes more effort and thought to measure some of these things rather than, for example, how many papers a researcher has produced over a specified time.

So, like other research performing organisations and funding bodies, nationally and internationally, we are conscious of the responsible use of research metrics, and being consistent in how we assess researchers and research, in all our processes.

UCD's Research Culture is not unique – our university exists within a research ecosystem with shared influences and policies determined nationally and internationally. However, I can

say that over the last couple of years we have been conscious of the importance of maintaining a supportive culture, which in turn facilitates both research excellence and research integrity. The initial impetus for the UCD Research Culture Initiative came from our small research integrity team. We became aware of the kinds of difficulties and barriers that researchers commonly faced in their work, most of which were minor, but nonetheless significant - things like communication breakdown within teams, unclear attribution of authorship, and different priorities between principal investigators and individuals on their teams.

**We came up with the idea, supported strongly by UCD President, Professor Orla Feely (then Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact), to survey our entire research community and ask them what they thought of the culture they work in.**

We followed this up with focus groups and developed a roadmap of actions based on these inputs. We repeated the survey in late 2023 and aim to assess what may have changed in the intervening period. We have also been successful in securing external funding of €967,742 for further actions in support of Research Culture, from the Wellcome Trust,

and the National Open Research Forum, which will allow us to expand our activities. One of the things we have committed to do, in partnership with colleagues at QUB, is to develop an All-Island Research Culture Network with other research performing organisations.

## What makes a good researcher?

There are many possible answers to this, and there are many ways to achieve excellence in research. However, as someone deeply invested in the importance of Research Culture, I would say that to be a good researcher means not only being knowledgeable, curious and competent in advancing your discipline, but also being someone who is able and willing to develop and promote the research capabilities of others, and especially to act as a mentor to researchers at an earlier stage of their career.

## What is the biggest piece of research you have been involved in?

My personal research career has involved studying animal viruses, and more recently parasites of animals, and how they interact with their host and affect health. Our group is interested in the One Health concept, and so we aim to apply findings broadly, across species. During the pandemic, we also became involved in some work on outreach on science literacy, and in understanding how to limit spread of COVID-19 in certain occupational settings.

# Research Culture

## Why choose UCD to do research?

UCD is a wonderful institution. My experience of being a student, and then a faculty member here, has been overwhelmingly positive. Clearly, it has developed and advanced enormously since my student days, in terms of physical facilities, but also the scope of research that is valued and possible.

The breadth of disciplines in UCD is considerable, and one of the things I enjoy most about my job, and especially my work on Research Culture, is the opportunity to interact with and learn from so many colleagues in areas other than my own. This has made me realise we have not just one, but many research cultures in our university, and we need to respect the attributes of all of them. I hope that our initiative, in some way, will contribute to the attraction of UCD as a place to do excellent research of which we can be proud, and which will contribute to advancing societal goals.

Seán Dunne is a producer with Drivetime on RTÉ Radio One. He is a graduate of the UCD MA in Politics and International Relations.

## Why is Research Culture important?

At UCD, we care about the culture in which our research is generated. We recognise that a supportive Research Culture underpins research excellence, that collegiality and collaboration are often undervalued measures of esteem, and that promotion of a positive, supportive and productive research culture requires collective action from individuals and teams.

Research Culture and Environment is one of four themes in UCD's Strategy for Research, Innovation and Impact, 'Shaping the Future', which states that 'we want every member of our research community to experience a positive culture that clearly values research and an environment that supports them to reach their full potential'. This aligns strongly with emerging narratives nationally and internationally on the importance of the research environment and the culture within which researchers work for ensuring research quality. For example, *research culture* is singled out as a priority in Impact 2030, Ireland's national research strategy. It will also be included as a research

topic in future work programmes of Horizon Europe and is already flagged as a key theme in Framework 10.

## How are we doing this?

Since 2021, UCD has been proactively engaged in a [Research Culture Initiative](#). Our team designed and implemented a comprehensive survey of the UCD research community to assess their perceptions of research culture followed by a series of thirteen World Café events intended to validate key findings through detailed discussion and to facilitate further input, engagement and ownership of the process by the UCD research community.

The culture of research at UCD exists in a larger ecosystem and so the work of our team looks both inward to the UCD community and outward to the national and international research landscape. In September 2022, we hosted an international conference - *Research Culture – Perspectives from Ireland*. This was the first conference of its kind in Ireland and brought together members of the research community across Ireland, including

researchers, research administrators, funders, and policy makers, for a meaningful conversation about the culture of research.

The activities enabled by our current Research Culture project enabled us to leverage significant additional external funding to add value to our core work programme. A project funded by the Irish National Open Research Forum will develop a training module on the responsible use of research metrics that will be co-designed by members of the research communities at four Irish universities including UCD. It is anticipated the module will be scaled up for use across the Irish ecosystem. Institutional-level funding for research culture from the Wellcome Trust will allow us to study researcher wellbeing in the context of research culture and to establish an All-Island Research Culture Network with our partners in Queen's University Belfast. This will provide a forum where we will offer mutual support and share best practices on research culture issues.



Detail from a Bible printed in Nuremberg in 1493, courtesy of the UCD-OFM partnership.

## ■ 'Ink & Imagination': UCD Special Collections treasures on display at MoLI

**Why did Maeve Binchy draw maps to help her write her novels? How did a Bible printed in Germany more than 500 years ago come to be part of the collection in UCD Library? What do today's Irish poets sound like when they are reading their own work? Which Nobel Laureate enjoyed black pudding and sausages?**

These questions and many more are answered in the exhibition 'Ink & Imagination', now running in the Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI), in the original home of UCD at Newman House on St Stephen's Green. A partnership between MoLI and UCD Library, the exhibition showcases literary gems from Special Collections, covering the personal, the political, and the profound. Many of the items on display were donated to UCD Library and are amongst UCD's greatest treasures.

'Ink & Imagination' invites visitors to encounter rare letters and manuscripts from leading Irish authors, including James Joyce, Edna O'Brien, Maeve Binchy and Frank McGuinness, alongside

precious manuscripts and contemporary filmed readings from the extensive Irish Poetry Reading Archive. It also features a focus on the literary figures who have been associated with Newman House, including Gerard Manley Hopkins and St John Henry Newman. A note from Newman includes a line: "I regret to say I am too old to attempt to answer letters" - which still resonates strongly with many visitors in an age of excessive email.

The exhibition will run through 2024, and entry to MoLI is free for UCD staff and students. Visitors to the Museum have access to three floors of displays celebrating Ireland's internationally renowned literary culture and heritage from the past to the present, inspiring the next generation to create, read and write. They can also enjoy MoLI's magnificent gardens, and the museum's destination café and shop.

More about MoLI: [www.moli.ie](http://www.moli.ie)

More about UCD Library's Special Collections: <https://www.ucd.ie/specialcollections/>



## ■ Advance Centre Programmes

**The Advance Centre used the EU Year of Skills 2023 to highlight the range of modular and full programmes in Digital Transformation, provided by UCD, ATU Sligo and TU Dublin.**

The centre held a series of [webinars](#) concentrating on the skills shortages, opportunities as well as trends and developments in a variety of areas such as Engineering, Cyber Security, Digital Policy, Health Data Analytics, AI, Ethics and Microelectronics Engineering, involving a wide range of industry speakers and academic faculty guest speakers from our partner university departments and lead partner university, UCD.

Further details can be found at [www.advancecentre.ie](http://www.advancecentre.ie) or [info@advancecentre.ie](mailto:info@advancecentre.ie) or contact the Centre Director at UCD, Barry Twomey – [barry.twomey@ucd.ie](mailto:barry.twomey@ucd.ie)



## UCD Employee Awards Launch

Tuesday, 28 November 2023



Pictured receiving their 2023 Values in Action (VIA) Award from UCD President, Prof Orla Feely are members of the Registry Buddy System Team (l-r) Joanna Krawiec, Mary Bushe, Elena Keany, Robert Finlay, Caroline McTeigue, Ari Shields and Alessia Tritto. Missing from photo Jennifer Curley, Conor Kelly and Jean McQuillan. The UCD Registry Buddy System Team is being recognised for their role to welcome and support new and returning staff. The panel of trained buddy volunteers, officially launched in 2019, provides an informal yet structured approach to welcome, include, support and give guidance to new team members over a four-week period.

## Values in Action at UCD

**Now in their sixth year, the Values in Action (VIA) awards celebrate individuals or teams/committees who act as ambassadors for the UCD Values through their daily work, volunteering or establishing initiatives that bring the UCD Values to life. The awards were established by the Employee Engagement Network.**

For the 2023 awards, 29 submissions were received. The adjudication committee has awarded nine UCD VIAs, out of the pool of high-quality nominations that captured the diverse achievements of colleagues to bring our shared values of Collegiality, Creativity, Diversity, Engagement, Excellence and Integrity to life.

The Adjudication Committee was chaired by Professor Joe Carthy, and comprised Dr Rachel Farrell, previous VIA recipient, UCD School of Education; Éimear Ryan, previous VIA recipient, UCD Conway Institute; Rory Carey, Director Culture and Engagement; and Mark Simpson, Culture and Engagement.

The 2023 awardees are:

- UCD Alumni Buddy Programme
- Deirdre Brophy, UCD School of Sociology
- Belonging Project, Dr Emma Farrell and team
- John Hammond, UCD Rugby
- UCD Library Furniture Recycling Team
- Gisela Tuchszer, UCD School of Biology and Environmental Science
- Dr Ernesto Vasquez Del Aguila, UCD School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice
- Buddy System in Action, UCD Registry
- Dr Craig Slattery, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science

Read about the awardees at this link:

<https://www.ucd.ie/engage/engagement/events/ucdawardspage/2023viaawards/>



Pictured (l-r) at NovaUCD are: Prof Helen Roche, interim UCD Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact; Tom Flanagan, UCD Director of Enterprise and Commercialisation; Dr Fiona McGillicuddy, UCD School of Medicine, project lead, MetHealth, an emerging UCD spin-out; Neale Richmond TD; Prof Orla Feely; Dr Martin O'Reilly, CEO and co-founder, Output Sports, a UCD spin-out; and Dr Imelda Lambkin, Manager, Disruptive Technologies, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer, Enterprise Ireland.

## ■ NovaUCD Ideas to Impact Since 2003

**Neale Richmond TD, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, has launched a new report, entitled NovaUCD Ideas to Impact Since 2003. The report highlights the economic and societal impact of NovaUCD and marks the 20th anniversary of the official opening of the hub of innovation and start-up activities at UCD.**

Since 2003, UCD has supported 550+ companies and early-stage ventures through the services and supports provided across the University by NovaUCD, and through business support programmes run and managed by NovaUCD and the entrepreneurial

community has raised €1.3+ billion in equity funding. In the last twenty years, 70 new UCD spin-outs have been incorporated; 1,165+ inventions have been disclosed by UCD researchers; 370+ priority patent applications have been filed and 320+ licensing deals have been concluded with a range of indigenous and international businesses. In addition, ConsultUCD, UCD's managed consultancy service, also based at NovaUCD, has undertaken 220+ consultancy projects since it was established in 2017.

NovaUCD is currently supporting 70+ start-ups and established companies to grow and scale on the national and global stage. Based on the results of a short survey, the results of which are contained within the report, these companies collectively plan to create over 1,100 jobs and raise over €290 million in funding during the next two years.



Pictured are (l-r): Dr Arman Rahman, UCD; Vincent Devine, artist; Ann Fleming (Multiple Myeloma Ireland); Prof William Gallagher, UCD; Dr Maria Prencipe, UCD; PhD students, Caoimhe Burke and Arif Jahangir; and Siobhán Freney (Lobular Ireland).

## ■ Art Exhibition maps the Cancer Journey

**As part of Science Week 2023, an exhibition by Irish artist, Vincent Devine was displayed in the Esker Arts Centre, Tullamore, Co Offaly and in Dundrum Town Centre, Dublin. The work was co-created with patient partners and cancer researchers at the UCD Conway Institute.**

Inspired by the iconic drawing of 'The Vitruvian Man' by artist and scientist Leonardo da Vinci, Devine created a striking image of an androgynous human to visually map the different perspectives and approaches that researchers use to understand cancer at molecular, cellular, tissue and human levels.

Vincent Devine said, "It has been a fascinating journey for me as an artist to explore this world of research that I had no idea about at the outset. I hope that I have captured in some small way how this group of scientists are tackling the key challenge that is cancer,

and how the insights that the lived experience of patient partners can bring to the table can shape the research itself."

At each venue, the public had an opportunity to meet the artist, researchers and patient partners as they bring the exhibition to life. They spoke about the creative process itself and ongoing cancer research efforts, highlighting progress in this area.

Professor William Gallagher, Co-Lead of the All-Island Cancer Research Institute and Fellow, UCD Conway Institute said, "Cancer, its prevention, diagnosis and

treatment are a major challenge for us as humans in society. Working with Vincent has given us a unique opportunity to talk about our work in a very different way, to a whole new audience. We want people to feel hopeful about the impact of the ongoing cancer research in Ireland and how working with patient partners is shaping this to improve the lives of so many people impacted by this disease."

The exhibition was funded through Science Foundation Ireland, with support from the All-Island Cancer Research Institute, the North-South Research Programme (delivered by the Higher Education Authority under the Department of Further and Higher Education), the Patient Voice in Cancer Research and UCD.



*Pictured: Dr Dimitrios Argyropoulos at the Farmtopia kick-off meeting, September 2023 in Athens.*

## ■ Farmtopia: A European project paving the way for digital farming

**Farmtopia, a €5 million Horizon Europe project running from September 2023 to August 2026, aims to democratise digital farming, focusing on small-scale farmers. Coordinated by NEUROPUBLIC AE PLIROFORIKIS & EPIKOINONION, a consortium of 22 partners across 12 countries will address the limited adoption of Agricultural Digital Solutions (ADS) despite substantial investments. Farmtopia has a realistic way of actively supporting over 64,000 farmers in gaining access to ADS within the project duration.**

The project will facilitate the co-creation of ADS to ensure they will solve real problems, fit the needs of small farms, and be cost effective. Thus, Farmtopia will set up 18 Sustainable Innovation Pilots (SIPs). Out of these, nine have been pre-selected, while the remaining nine will

be granted through an Open Call process. These SIPs primarily focus on crops and livestock, addressing the underdeveloped and insufficient existing ADS while also spotlighting regionally important crops. The ADS will be validated in various countries across Europe.

Dr Dimitrios Argyropoulos is UCD's academic lead for Farmtopia's SIP2 on Agricultural Digital Solutions (ADS) in mushroom farming. He leads the Digital Tech Lab within the UCD School of Biosystems Engineering, which is focused on the application of smart systems to the agri-food sector. The newly established Lab is the only one in Ireland equipped with novel technologies to enable research and teaching of digital agriculture such as smart sensors, robotics, agri-food electronics, IoT and machine learning.

More information about the project can be found: <https://farmtopia.eu/>



## ■ Academy of Social Sciences UK Fellowship

**One of world's leading organisations devoted to the study of people and societies, the Academy of Social Sciences UK, has elevated Professor Judith Harford, School of Education to the rank of Fellow.**

Elected for her outstanding contributions to social science, Professor Harford was the only scholar to be elected from Ireland among the Academy's 47 newest Fellows and was one of only four recognised for their excellence from outside the UK.

Commenting on the award, Professor Harford said: "I am deeply honoured to be conferred as a Fellow of the Academy and to join a community of world-leading social scientists. I look forward to advancing the work of the Academy in both tackling and anticipating global challenges."

This year's group of Fellows were selected through an independent peer review process, their work spanning a range of research areas including homelessness and social care in marginalised communities, sustainable investing and behavioural finance, and international drug policy. Many of the new Fellows also made outstanding contributions to industry, policy, and higher education. Professor Harford's research focuses on gender and social class inequalities in education and last year she was awarded the Irish Research Council Impact Researcher of the Year for her work in this area.



Pictured are (l-r): Dr Svitlana Miros, Sneha Shivakumar, PhD student and Priyadharshini Ravichandra, MEngSc Food Engineering student.

## ■ IRC Ukrainian Researchers Scheme

**The UCD School of Biosystems and Food Engineering and the UCD Conway Institute welcomed Dr Svitlana Miros, a Ukrainian Scientist funded by the IRC during 2022. She had worked as a lecturer and researcher for over 20 years in the Department of Genetics and Molecular Biology at Odesa I.I.Mechnikov National University, Ukraine, gaining expertise in the field of Genetics, Mycology, Microbiology, Immunology and Cytology, with a specific interest in growing medical mushrooms and studying their biological effects.**

She told UCD Today: “When the war in Ukraine started in February 2022, my life was changed overnight. My daughter and I fled to Ireland with just a single suitcase. It was an extremely stressful period for us, but we were struck by the warm and welcoming nature of the Irish people. I am eternally grateful for the support and assistance provided by the Irish government. Through innovative initiatives like the IRC’s Ukrainian Researchers Scheme, I have been given the opportunity to continue pursuing my scientific carrier in Ireland.

“I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Ronald Halim, who found my resumé through Help Desk system organized by the Irish Government for Ukrainian students and scientists in July 2022. We jointly prepared a research proposal based on his existing IRC Starting Laureate award to investigate microalgae cell wall ultrastructure for the development of cost-effective algal circular biorefinery system. The proposal was evaluated by the IRC in record

time, and I was very happy when I found out that our application was successful. I started my position as a research scientist in the UCD Algae Group in November 2022, jointly based at UCD School of Biosystems and Food Engineering and UCD Conway Institute.

“I feel inspired to be part of an international research team, surrounded by energetic individuals who are committed to their science. Our research group investigates the use of microalgae for sustainable wastewater treatment, circular food/feed application and biofuel production. I am in awe of the possibilities that algae can bring to circular bioeconomy and hope to bring my own experience in growing fungi to create a unique system that blends both microalgae and fungi for biomass production. My current experiments have shown that the co-cultivation of microalgae and fungi can lead to synergistic effects that enhance growth and biorefinery performance. UCD is an excellent place to realize innovative projects and get invaluable research training. I was pleasantly surprised by the educational opportunities provided on campus through direct training and seminars/workshops. I found myself immersed in a vibrant and collaborative scientific environment, refining my knowledge in flow cytometry and confocal microscopy through access to Conway core infrastructure. Almost every day we are engaged in seminars, training, conferences and lectures. I have one regret – that the day has only 24 hours.

“I hope to bring back the knowledge I gain in Ireland to my war-torn country. This will be my way of expressing my infinite gratitude to the country that has embraced me so warmly.”



Dr Sandra Collins, University Librarian, and Evelyn Flanagan, Head of UCD Library Special Collections, are presented with the poems created as part of the project by Dr Catherine Wilsdon, Creative Producer of Poetry as Commemoration and Dr Lucy Collins, UCD School of English, Drama and Film.

## ■ Poetry as Commemoration

**UCD Library’s Poetry as Commemoration project, funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media, has been running since January 2020.**

Poetry as Commemoration was established by Evelyn Flanagan, UCD Library and Dr Lucy Collins, UCD School of English, Drama and Film, to connect the public in creative ways with the history of the War of Independence and the Civil War, as represented in the collections of archives, libraries, and museums. Together with Creative Producer Dr Catherine Wilsdon, the team developed an all-island programme of activities to bring this vision to life.

On Thursday 12 October, a symposium took place in the Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI), reflecting on this very successful two-year project. 500 new poems written over those two years were presented to UCD Library Special Collections, and the day also included a poetry writing workshop, panel discussions on archives and creative practice, and a poetry reading.

The interactions and discussions at the symposium powerfully demonstrated the capacity of poetry to process conflict and transcend division, and to reach people in surprising and compelling ways. This was evident in the appetite for public engagement over the two years, including 150 poetry workshops for adults and children rolled out across Ireland in partnership with Poetry Ireland. Poems created in the workshops have been added to a new archive in UCD Special Collections and a [Virtual Poetry Wall](#) on the project website. A ‘Poetry Jukebox’ sound installation allowed the work of 60 poets to echo through cities across Ireland and is at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) until April 2024.

Ten poets were also commissioned to write a new poem inspired by primary source materials. These poems have been made available on UCD’s Irish Poetry Reading Archive and published in a limited edition letterpress book. Grief’s Broken Brow, printed by Jamie Murphy of the Salvage Press with artist interventions by James Earley, was launched by UCD President, Professor Orla Feely on 22 November.



Pictured at the Inaugural Brian Mullins Healthy UCD Memorial Lecture are (l-r) Philly McMahon; Kate Kilcommins; Jim Gavin; and Ger Brennan.

## ■ Inaugural Brian Mullins Healthy UCD Memorial Lecture

**The inaugural Brian Mullins Healthy UCD Memorial Lecture was delivered by former Dublin GAA Manager, Jim Gavin on the topic of sport and wellbeing in everyday life. Following his address a panel of current and former players discussed the topic with RTÉ Sports broadcaster and journalist, Marie Crowe. The panel comprised Kate Kilcommins, camogie player and UCD Brian Mullins/GPA Scholarship recipient; Philly McMahon, footballer with Ballymun Kickhams and former Dublin player; and Sinéad Ahern, senior Dublin ladies' footballer. UCD GAA Executive and Louth football manager Ger Brennan introduced the lecture.**

Among the many stories and reminiscences of Brian, panel members talked about the positive aspects of sport in promoting good mental health in everyday life.

Brian Mullins was one of the greatest Gaelic footballers ever to

play for Dublin. He was a massive champion of sport at UCD where he was appointed Director of Sport in 2000. In his last role, Brian was Director of Health Promotion driving the Healthy UCD initiative, prior to his untimely death in September 2022.

The annual lecture will address topics that Brian advocated for throughout this career, namely participation in sport and establishing long-term healthy habits that promote wellbeing.

The audience comprised members of Brian's family, UCD GAA squad members and UCD friends and colleagues.

The lecture took place at UCD Wellbeing Day on 23 October. This employee focused day provided information on the policies and supports available to promote good mental, physical and financial wellbeing. Across the day some 800 people attended the 14 seminars held and engaged with the stands hosted by UCD colleagues, support networks or commercial partners.

## ■ 'Igniting a fire within'

**In 2023 UCD Volunteers Overseas returned to in-person volunteering with a range of programmes with partners in India, Tanzania and Uganda. In total 43 students, staff, faculty and graduates participated, an increase from 24 in 2022. The programme is framed within a global citizenship education approach and there is considerable emphasis on the quality and impact of the programme, including workshops on global citizenship education, project planning, health and safety, security and child safeguarding.**

UCDVO's overseas partners welcomed a return to in-person volunteering. In Tanzania, over 100 children with disabilities and their guardians participated in the Matumaini Centre summer rehab camp organized by the Holy Union Sisters in Dar es Salaam. The focus was on assessing current practice, capacity building and strengthening of best practice and sharing of knowledge. UCDVO also facilitated a visit from Ugandan partner Nurture Africa's former physiotherapist to share experience and knowledge from the Ugandan context with staff in the Matumaini Centre.

The health projects were run in collaboration with the School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science enabling fifteen Stage 3 and professional masters students to complete elective placements overseas with UCDVO supervised by a clinical tutor. This successful partnership has been running for ten years contributing to both significant learning outcomes for the physiotherapy students and meaningful support to community rehabilitation and physiotherapy programmes for families and children with disabilities across Uganda, India and Tanzania.

Overall, in 2023, UCDVO engaged with over 580 members of the UCD community across a range of global citizenship education events and programmes, including the Be the Change and Skills in Development



UCDVO volunteers at the final pre-departure global citizenship education workshop.

Education evening courses, the development film series, and inaugural Global Experience Summit run in collaboration with UCD Global.

**"In the end, this journey has reaffirmed my belief in the transformative and mutually enriching power of volunteering. I am forever changed by this experience, and I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity. It has ignited a fire within me to continue seeking opportunities to make a positive difference in the world".** Quote from UCDVO volunteer, 2023.



Gaeltacht UCD Residence Scheme Scholars: Méin Nic Craith, Cáit Ní Leathlobhair, Éamonn Ó Meachair, Erica Nic Dhomhnaill, Dearbhaile Ní Chuinn agus Conal Ó Cuinn. Photo credit: Siva Vigneesh

## ■ A Global Pop-Up Gaeltacht

**In addition to sean-nós song, traditional Irish storytelling, harping and uilleann piping, Irish language learners from Japan, Singapore, Kazakhstan, India, Iran and Mexico sang in their native languages at a Pop-Up Gaeltacht organised by Gaeltacht UCD, UCD Global Centre for Irish Language and Culture.**

Bhí deis ag foghlaimeoirí Ghaeltacht UCD idir baill foirne agus mic léinn, aithne a chur ar an céile trí mheán na Gaeilge ag Pop-Up Gaeltacht i gClub na hOllscoile le déanaí. B'iad mic léinn scoláireachta Theach na Gaeilge, scéim cónaithe na hOllscoile agus a gcairde a chur an siamsaíocht ar fáil; ceoltóirí, amhránaithe agus scéalaithe den scoth. Ina measc bhí an boscadóir Méin Nic Craith ó Ghaeltacht na nDéise, an píobaire Éamonn

Ó Meachair ó Ghaeltacht Mhuscraí agus an scéalaí Ailbhe Ní Ghallchóir ó Ghaeltacht Ghaoth Dobhair. Ceann de bhuaicphointí na hócáide ná an amhránaíocht ar an sean-nós leis na deirfiúracha Lia agus Míde Ní Chasaide, amhránaíocht a thug spreagadh do lucht idirnáisiúnta a saibhreas cultúrtha féin a roinnt. Chuir Sarah Westviko, mac léinn iltheangach ó Singapore tús leis an malartán agus roimh dheireadh na hoíche bhí amhránaíocht ó Saula Akhmetkaliyeva, Hanana Nakano, Andrea García Guzmán, agus ón Dr. Erfan Amirzadeh. Ba é an Ciarraíoch Darragh Ó Caoimh, duine de theagascóirí Gaeilge an Ionaid, a chur clabhsúr leis an bPop-Up nuair a chas sé cúpla véarsa den Puc ar Buille in éineacht lena rang.



Pictured are (l-r): John Barry, Dr Vincent Ogutu, Trish Longmore and Luis Borrallo.

## ■ Strathmore University Visit

**Dr Vincent Ogutu, Vice Chancellor and Luis Borrallo, Director of the Community Service Centre of Strathmore University, Kenya, visited UCD in October.**

Dr Ogutu is an organisational behaviour scholar, he has specialised in the Psychology of Meaningful Work while studying at Rutgers University. He was drawn into the field of innovation creating 'The Innovation Algorithm'. He has taught this system of innovating on three continents giving keynote speeches on the subject at IESE Business School, Spain and also in Ireland, Nigeria, Uganda, Germany and Uruguay including a TEDx talk in Barcelona.

Coordinated by UCD Global, Dr Ogutu and Mr Borrallo met with Professor Dolores O'Riordan, Director of the UCD Institute of Food and Health and UCD VP for Global Engagement. They then spoke with Professor

Aoife Gowen, UCD School of Biosystems and Food Engineering and Caroline Tracey, College Research And Innovation Manager. Followed by a meeting with John Barry, Director of Major Strategic Partnerships and Trish Longmore, who discussed potential collaborations and areas of interest within innovation and sustainability and Erasmus+ programme opportunities. Ending their meetings was an introduction to Professor Tasman Crowe, Vice President for Sustainability and Professor Francesco Pilla, Professor of Smart and Sustainable Cities to discuss sustainability and collaboration opportunities.



Pictured at the official 'Portuguese CAO Launch 2024' are (l-r): Ana Margarida Fernandes Alves, Cultural Attaché at the Embassy of Portugal in Ireland; Seán Gilley, Co-Director, Terroirs Importer and Retailer of Fine Wine, Donnybrook Dublin; Henrique Sousa de Azevedo, Deputy Ambassador and Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy of Portugal in Ireland; Felipe Costi Santarosa, Deputy Ambassador and Chargé d'Affaires at the Embassy of Brazil in Ireland; H.E. Bernardo de Lucena (Portuguese Ambassador to Ireland); Assoc Prof Siofra Pierce, Head of UCD School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics and UCD Head of Portuguese; Dr Richard Mayson, expert on Port and Madeira; Prof Colin Scott, UCD Registrar; and Mme Françoise Gilley, Co-Director, Terroirs Importer and Retailer of Fine Wine, Donnybrook, Dublin.

## Portuguese at UCD

On 26 October the UCD School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics celebrated Portuguese Day to mark the entry of Portuguese degrees into the CAO choices for students starting at UCD in September 2024. UCD will now offer Portuguese (including absolute beginners) as part of the BA Joint Honours degree; the

BA Humanities degree (European Studies, Global Studies); BA International in Modern Languages (BAIML) and the new BA in Education with Gaeilge/Modern Languages.

The day consisted of a Capoeira dance workshop, sponsored by the School, a Porto Wine Lecture and Port Tasting with world

expert Dr Richard Mayson, sponsored by Terroirs, Donnybrook and a Portuguese 2021 comedy (remake of 1940 film) *O Pai Tirano / The Tyrant Father* in UCD Cinema, sponsored by the Portuguese Embassy, Ireland.



Professor Donna Marshall was named to the Vogue Business 100 Innovator List.

## ■ Vogue Business 100 Innovator List

**UCD College of Business Professor Donna Marshall and Visiting Assistant Professor Hakan Karaosman's research in sustainable and ethical supply chain has earned them a place on the prestigious Vogue Business 100 Innovators list which is hand-picked by the publication's global team of editors.**

The [annual list](#) recognises people at the forefront of industry and spotlights people around the world who are fostering new ideas, pushing forward innovation, and changing the way we view the future of the fashion, beauty and luxury industries. It champions those working behind the scenes to create the projects and companies that are driving new ways of thinking and doing business.

"We hope that our work can shine a light on the unspoken issues in fashion, especially at the fashion brand level," said Professor Marshall who is one of the most published women researchers in Europe and Director of Fashion's Responsible Supply Chain Hub (FReSCH), a UN-recognised and EU-awarded action research project.

"We want to make fashion brands aware that they are dealing with people's lives every day, both in their supply chains and in society. The shameful decision-making happening right now in many board rooms and procurement departments across many fashion brands, which is putting barriers in the way of decarbonisation and that exploits the most vulnerable of people, needs to be eradicated."

"Workers in fashion supply chains, at the bare minimum, should be able to live with dignity and respect with a living wage and not have to worry about how they will feed themselves and their families or put a roof over their heads. Abdicating responsibility and pushing problems like these onto suppliers, and ultimately their workers, needs to stop and it needs to stop now," concluded Marshall who is also the Executive Director of the UCD Earth Institute: People, Work, Society initiative.

Professor Marshall partners closely with Assistant Professor Hakan Karaosman, an internationally experienced and award-winning scientific researcher focusing on climate action and social justice in fashion supply chain management. Hakan is the current chair of the Union of Concerned Researchers in Fashion (UCRF). He is also the Chief Scientist and Co-Director at FReSCH which is hosted by UCD College of Business Centre for Business and Society (CeBaS) which is a large, multidisciplinary centre designed to understand and directly contribute to the advancement of business and to provide academic, science-based research solutions to some of the world's biggest problems.



Dr Noa Gordon with Dr David Galvin and Prof Bill Watson.

## ■ Movember Spotlight

**Dr Noa Gordon is working to produce impactful research outputs which will guide policy, enhance national prostate cancer guidelines, and advance medical practices.**

The Newman Fellowship Programme is marking Movember with a spotlight on Movember Janssen Newman Fellow Dr Noa Gordon's research. Noa is analysing data from the Irish Prostate Cancer Outcomes Research (IPCOR) registry to gain valuable insights into the experience of prostate cancer patients in Ireland. The registry contains data on 6,816 men who were diagnosed with prostate cancer and treated in 16 hospitals around Ireland between February 2016 and January 2020.

While there is no national screening test programme in Ireland for prostate cancer, patients are often referred after receiving a Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test showing high levels.

Noa explained the importance of having up-to-date statistics on prostate cancer patients in Ireland: "I think that an overview on prostate cancer is essential. There are high rates of prostate cancer worldwide and in Ireland and the fact is that these rates are growing. Luckily the rates of survival are also growing for prostate cancer."

She has a patient panel on hand to help navigate her analysis by determining what is important to the patient and interpreting their answers on the questionnaires. And while Noa is just

halfway through her two-year fellowship, the results are already promising in determining factors affecting different patients.

Noa's research will be a valuable tool for policymakers in the future. It will also aid patients in determining the best treatment plan that works for them. Noa said: "Every patient has their own point of view, their own perception of what's important in life, what's important to them, to their family. Medicine is not one size fits all and the physician is not the last one that makes the call, it is patient/physician shared decision-making nowadays. What we're doing with IPCOR is giving information for this shared decision-making at a personal level and not only at a national level."

Dr Noa Gordon is supervised by Dr David Galvin and Professor Bill Watson and is based at the UCD Conway Institute. Her Newman Fellowship is supported by the Movember Foundation and Janssen Sciences Ireland.

Programme Implementation Director at Movember, Sarah Ouellette said: "The impact of IPCOR and these efforts led by Noa are transformational for prostate cancer care in Ireland. Many in our Movember community have lived experience with prostate cancer which inspires them to support us by raising funds to save lives. We are proud to support and be a part of this collaboration that amplifies the experiences and voice of men to drive meaningful and lasting change in prostate cancer care."



UCD Staff and Students pictured at the launch.

## UCD Launches Bike Lending Library Pilot

**UCD Bike Library is the first of its kind in Ireland to offer bike lending through a traditional library service. The UCD Energy Institute, in partnership with UCD Library, has launched a pilot, the first of its kind in Ireland.**

The UCD Bike Library will allow users to use the existing library services in UCD to loan e-bikes and folding bikes free of charge using self-service bike bunkers. The pilot programme is one of three research demonstration projects funded by the Higher Education Authority and based in the UCD Energy Institute investigating new approaches to sustainability and will focus on the role libraries and higher education institutions can play in facilitating a modal shift to more sustainable commuting patterns.

Academic lead Professor Francesco Pilla said: "The Bike Library is about democratising cycling. Cycling shouldn't be a privilege, but a right for everyone. The UCD Bike Library is not just about lending bikes to staff and students, but also about finding new ways to give people access to sustainable mobility options and contribute to a greener future.

"The initiative includes Bike Libraries in schools, GAA clubs and community centres and has as a core value the idea that the only way to act on wicked challenges such as climate change and provide long-term sustainable solutions is to have citizens at the centre of the solution itself."

The project is intended to demonstrate that bike libraries can function in a self-service format as with other equipment lending services which libraries offer. The project will develop a framework for bike lending libraries as an open resource for other Higher Education institutions, and organisations of similar size, to implement.

The project will run for two years over which time it is envisaged that it can scale upwards from an initial pilot to a bike leasing service which encompasses the full UCD community.



## UCD-Tanzanian project partnership WECOAdapt

**In the bustling city of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, a groundbreaking initiative is taking place which confronts the climate and sustainability challenges posed by urban development, water and the ecosystem in Tanzania. The WECOAdapt (Water management through ECOhydrology for climate change ADAPTation) project, funded by the SFI Future Innovator Prize Irish Aid SDG 13 Challenge, focuses on reducing and preventing negative impacts of floods and droughts and of unsustainable urban development. It will work on reversing the degradation of water and land resources, and the decline in biodiversity.**

Led by Dr Liana Ricci, UCD School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy, the WECOAdapt project is a collaborative endeavour that brings together a diverse team of experts. On 31 October 2023, the UCD Earth Institute hosted a number of these experts who showcased the strides made by the WECOAdapt project and provided

a platform for the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Dr Timothy Ndezi, the Societal Impact Champion of the WECOAdapt project and founding director of Tanzanian organisation Centre for Community Initiatives (CCI), shared his insights into inclusive cities and empowered communities in the face of a changing climate and shed light on the strategies employed to ensure that the benefits of climate adaptation reach all segments of society.

Dr Given Justin Mhina and Dr Lukuba Ngalya Sweya from Ardhi University presented their findings on the needs and options for inclusive adaptation to climate change and urbanization in Dar es Salaam, providing valuable perspectives on how the project is addressing the unique challenges faced by the local community.

WECOAdapt is an example of a truly participative research project, illustrating the transformative power of interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation to address urgent societal challenges. As the project continues to unfold, its impact on water management, urban development, and ecosystem resilience in Tanzania serves as a testament to the potential of research and international partnerships in building a more sustainable future.

A video of the talks from the event are available on the Earth Institute YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JTVDL0z0NQ>

## ■ Dance Connects in Rural Border Regions

A continued research collaboration between UCD and QUB has led one of two key projects to receive €250,000 as part of the Shared Island dimension to the Creative Ireland Programme 2023-2027. The 24-month project, **Dance Connects in Rural Border Regions**, will commence in 2024. It partners with local authorities of Cavan, Monaghan and Fermanagh-Omagh with researchers Dr Victoria Durrer, UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy and Dr Aoife McGrath, QUB School of Arts, English and Languages, and practitioners of diverse dance communities in their border areas.

Employing an innovative, creative engagement approach combining dance practice-as-research and social science, the project will be delivered through four interrelated actions that respond to the main areas of development identified in the research partners' recent (2023) Creative Ireland/Cavan Arts funded pilot project, Sites of Significance. The Dance Connects project will consolidate new connections forged through Sites of Significance, and also co-develop an innovative method of engaging with dance communities and the general public in further, rural border regions on (and off) the island.

The project strategically builds on the partners' existing relationships to respond to an expressed need for sustainable cross-border exchange that informs policy and is meaningful

to the unique dance ecology of rural, cross-border areas. The project aims to establish a sustainable, rural dance network that engages in cross-genre peer sharing and skill building through a series of dance sharing events with local facilitators at their sites of practice. It will also develop: a publicly available, cross-border dance database; a touring, interactive, digital dance installation and public engagement programme; and website with video, podcasts and reports capturing regionally shared experiences of dance as a professional, enjoyable, social, cultural and creative activity. Further project partners include British Council Ireland, ICBAN (Irish Central Border Area Network) and Scotland Rural Artists Network/Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. [More information on the scheme is available.](#)



*Dance as Research at the- Marble Arch Caves.*

## ■ Supporting a Healthy Future in Manufacturing

**UCD is the lead partner in a European project titled 'Manufacturing a Healthy Future', which is funded by EIT Manufacturing (European Institute of Innovation and Technology – Manufacturing).**

The project is facilitated through I-Form, the SFI Ireland Research Centre for Advanced Manufacturing, which is hosted at UCD. The focus of the project is to strengthen the understanding and engagement of primary school students with STEM and manufacturing, using 3D printing as an exemplar technology.

The project involves the delivery of a 3D printing training programme to primary school teachers, providing the learning outcomes needed to use a 3D printer and design software in the classroom. It also showcases the exciting and innovative career opportunities in advanced manufacturing and incorporates themes of sustainability and the circular economy.

The project has been running since 2021 and has to date successfully trained 200 teachers and engaged over 4,500 primary school pupils across five European countries (Ireland, France, Estonia, Lithuania and Hungary). UCD staff and researchers provide careers content to the teachers during the training, and also provide ongoing technical support for the schools. Over 20

teachers were trained in Ireland this year, in a multi-day course held over the summer.

This year's cohort of Irish teachers are currently putting their skills into practice by facilitating their school's involvement in a national 3D printing competition, allowing pupils to build digital and green skills as they develop solutions to a sustainability-

themed challenge. The winners of the competition will be announced in December, with school groups in the running to win some great prizes, such as visits to the Stryker manufacturing facility in Cork!

For more information on the 'Manufacturing a Healthy Future' project, you can visit [this website](#) or contact [michael.golden@i-form.ie](mailto:michael.golden@i-form.ie).



*Irish teachers at the 3D printing training course in Dublin in July.*



Among the award winners at the STEM Symposium presented by Assoc Prof Vincent Hargaden (left) and Prof Jeremy Simpson (right) were (l-r) Dylan Armfield, Simon Rodriguez, Shekemi Denuga, Maryam Roudneshin, Rehan Anwara and Jack Nicholls.

## 2023 UCD STEM Early Career Researchers Symposium

In June, the UCD Colleges of Science and Engineering & Architecture were delighted to jointly host the 2023 UCD STEM Early Career Researchers Symposium in UCD O'Reilly Hall. The event provided a unique opportunity to bring together the vibrant communities of graduate research students and postdoctoral research

fellows from both Colleges to exchange ideas and showcase their research in a friendly, inclusive atmosphere. It was organised by Dr Neal Murphy, UCD School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering and Dr Nicolae Buchete, UCD School of Physics.

The Symposium was very well supported with over 100 research posters on a wide range of topics being presented on the day. A complete list of poster titles and further details of the event are available on the Symposium website at <https://www.ucd.ie/science/research/2023stemsymposium/>.



## Dr Suzanne Crowe Re-elected as President of Medical Council

Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly TD recently announced the appointment of Dr Suzanne Crowe, UCD School of Medicine as the new Chair of the National Screening Advisory Committee (NSAC) following an open competition. The NSAC is an independent committee which advises the Minister and the Department of Health on all new proposals for population-based screening programmes and on changes to existing programmes.

Dr Suzanne Crowe, Associate Clinical Professor in Women and Children's Health, UCD School of Medicine, has also been re-elected as President of the Medical Council - her second term as President. This is Dr Crowe's fifth year with the Council.



Dr Ernesto Vasquez del Aguila receiving his award from Prof Eva Fodor (Central European University) at the opening ceremony in Vienna.

## CEU 2023 European Award for Excellence in Teaching

**The Central European University (CEU) has awarded the twelfth annual European Award for Excellence in Teaching in the Social Sciences and Humanities to Assistant Professor Ernesto Vasquez del Aguila, Director of Teaching and Learning in UCD School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice.**

Dr Vasquez del Aguila is a recognised expert in making education more inclusive, fostering community, and enabling students to contribute their knowledge and experiences in the collective learning process. Amongst his [remarks on receiving the award](#) Ernesto said: "Teaching is electrifying. I aim to create a community of researchers among my students and foster curiosity and the love for learning. I believe it is fundamental to conceive of our students as partners in the process of teaching and learning and to promote kindness, empathy and compassion as skills embedded in our educational practices."

## UCD Conway Institute celebrates 20 years of research, innovation and impact

**An event marking twenty years since the launch of UCD Conway Institute took place in UCD O'Reilly Hall on Friday, 20 October as part of the 2023 UCD Conway Festival of Research and Innovation.**

Five hundred people comprising alumni, staff, students and representatives of industry, charities and the community joined the celebrations. Among them were Maureen and Hilary Daly, the daughter and granddaughter of the late Professor EJ Conway, FRS who is the Institute namesake and first Professor of Biochemistry and Pharmacology at UCD.

This leading biomedical research institute, underpinned by the most comprehensive suite of centrally managed technology facilities in Ireland is part of the legacy of the late Chuck Feeney, the Irish American philanthropist. The initial capital investment for the 11,500 sqm facility on the UCD campus was funded by the Government in partnership with Feeney through The Atlantic Philanthropies under the Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions (PRTLTI).

In a video message, Professor Hugh Brady, President of Imperial College London, who co-authored the original funding proposal to establish the UCD Conway Institute, encouraged delegates to "celebrate the Institute and its remarkable achievements over the last two decades; celebrate the wider impact of PRTLTI, which was truly transformative (for Ireland); and to remember Chuck Feeney, a remarkable character who changed the Irish research landscape forever".

Professor Breandán Kennedy, interim Institute Director acknowledged the vision of Professor Brady and his co-authors, UCD



Pictured (l-r): Prof Donal Brennan, Michael O'Sullivan, Prof Helen Roche, Dr Noelle Griffin, Prof Philip Nolan, Dr Claire O'Connell, Prof Breandan Kennedy, Dr Sarah McLoughlin and Dr Stephen Lalor.

Emeritus Professors Michael Ryan and Paul Engel saying, "They imagined the type of environment where research excellence would thrive and convinced their peers, policy makers and funders that this vision could be a reality that would allow Irish science to compete on the global stage".

To mark the occasion, Conway alumni joined current staff, postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers to share stories of their career journeys stories to date and the impact the Institute had for them.

Freelance journalist, Dr Claire O'Connell facilitated a panel discussion with Conway alumni and previous staff including Professor Philip Nolan, CEO designate Taighde Éireann; Professor Helen Roche, interim UCD Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact; Dr Noelle Griffin, Vice-President and Head of Global Medical Affairs, Pfizer; Dr Sarah McLoughlin, Public and Patient Involvement Coordinator, Cancer Trials Ireland; Professor Donal Brennan, UCD Professor of Gynaecological Oncology and Mater Misericordiae University Hospital; and Mr

Michael O'Sullivan, Director of Operations, UCD Conway (2000-2021).

The conversation provided insight into each of the panellist's involvement with the Institute and what it has meant for them as well as looking to the future and how the Institute can set itself up for continued success in the future. The most vibrant session of the programme was the career roundtables where more than one hundred postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers had the opportunity to speak with over fifty alumni who have progressed to forge successful careers nationally and internationally in biopharmaceutical and clinical trial industries, consultancy and academia.

Professor Roche presented the Conway Festival Gold Medal for outstanding research to doctoral candidate, Ciara Walsh. Speaking afterwards, Professor Roche reflected that "the greatest achievement of the Institute to date has been in nurturing people and providing a research culture and environment in which they are supported to deliver on their potential and ambitions".

## UCD Greenacre Sustainability Hub

**UCD Greenacre Sustainability Hub is UCD's new experiential sustainability hub, situated on an acre of Belfield's woodland campus. It represents a new approach to sustainability education and was initiated by UCD Innovation Academy and supported by their Human Capital Initiative project. UCD Greenacre will offer immersive, hands-on sustainability experiences to the entire UCD community and our partners, to research, explore, experiment and learn how to take meaningful actions for a sustainable planet.**

Professor Tasman Crowe, UCD Vice-President for Sustainability and Professor Suzi Jarvis, UCD Innovation Academy Founding Director welcomed over seventy participants from higher education, enterprise, policy and the community to a 'Design Day' at UCD Innovation Academy. The day kick-started a mission to be a space for collaborative innovation and problem solving, a space to experiment, test, fail, and iterate in addressing humanity's greatest challenges.

UCD Greenacre adjoins St Killian's School and the Carmelite Monastery, situated at the pedestrian and cycling entrance to Belfield and surrounded by the original brick boundary walls, home to a number of beehives.

Previously owned by the Carmelite Monastery and operated as a market garden at the start of the century, the site was sold to UCD in the seventies. Now, 50 years later, UCD Greenacre will return to its roots as a place for sustainable growth. Among the first initiatives at UCD Greenacre

will be UCD Innovation Academy's mushroom farm, previously located outside the Science building. Here, students cultivate oyster mushrooms from spent coffee grounds collected from cafes on campus.

The inaugural pilot projects at UCD Greenacre concentrate on circular food systems, exploring innovative approaches to food production, waste reduction and resource recovery. It will be joined by a plastics recycling unit and a biodigester. A future 'Digital Twin' for the site will allow people all around the world to engage with UCD Greenacre. In collaboration with partners, UCD Innovation Academy aims to evolve the site to energy and water self-sufficiency while utilising the data generated to gamify decision-making in the UCD Greenacre digital twin.



Prof Tas Crowe and Prof Suzi Jarvis welcome participants from over twenty-seven organisations to the UCD Sustainability Design Day.



Pictured at MoLI are (l-r): Simon O'Connor, Director, MoLI; H.E. Ambassador Norio Maruyama; Prof. Mary Gallagher; Prof. Toshie Nakajima; and Ms. Agnes Ayleward, Lafcadio Hearn Memorial Gardens, Tramore, Co. Waterford.

## UCD Centre for Japanese Studies Seminar

**UCD Centre for Japanese Studies (JaSt) held a seminar titled Lafcadio Hearn, French Literature and Toyama's Hearn Library at the Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI) in September. The guest speaker, Professor Toshié Nakajima, University of Toyama gave a talk, facilitated by Professor Mary Gallagher, UCD School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics.**

The seminar was opened by H.E. Ambassador Norio Maruyama. It was organised by JaSt in cooperation with UCD French and Francophone Studies, and attracted more than sixty people from the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Office of Public Works, the Lafcadio Hearn Memorial Gardens in Tramore, students from UCD, Trinity and DCU, the Irish-Japanese community, and the literary circle.

JaSt hosted a second seminar at MoLI on 20 October in cooperation with the UCD Centre for Asia Pacific Research. Professor Shinichi Kitaoka, formerly at the Graduate School of Law and Politics, University of Tokyo, former President of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and former Japanese Ambassador to the United Nations, discussed recent developments in Japan's security and foreign policy.

## ■ We're Breastfeeding Friendly at UCD

On 25 October, the 'We're Breastfeeding Friendly' campaign to promote breastfeeding across the Belfield and Blackrock campuses was launched by Denise McGuinness, Assistant Professor of Midwifery and Niamh Vickers, Assistant Professor of Public Health Nursing, UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems. The initiative is supported by Laura McHugh, the HSE National Breastfeeding Coordinator with responsibility for driving the implementation of the HSE's Healthy Ireland national breastfeeding action plan.

To support the rollout of the initiative, informational stickers have been placed around various locations on campus. In addition, a [helpful video](#) has been created with contributions from Professor Colin Scott, UCD Vice-President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Dr Clare Hayes-Brady and Dr Katherine Fama, both UCD School of English, Drama and Film, Associate Professor Barbara Coughlan, Associate Professor Kate Frazer and Emily Watts, all UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, Professor Ursula Fanning, UCD School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics and Associate Professor Sharleen O'Reilly, UCD School of Agriculture and Food Science. The video can be viewed on the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems YouTube channel.

The next step for the campaign is to appoint more breastfeeding champions across the University to drive awareness and provide support for breastfeeding parents. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Denise McGuinness by email at [denise.mcguinness@ucd.ie](mailto:denise.mcguinness@ucd.ie).



*Pictured at the 'We're Breastfeeding Friendly' launch held in the Kevin Barry Gallery, UCD Charles Institute are (l-r): Niamh Vickers, Assistant Professor in Public Health Nursing and Denise McGuinness, Assistant Professor in Midwifery, UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems.*



*Vaman Shenoy (UCD in the Community Student Ambassador), Theresa O'Leary, Niamh Byrne and Professor Joe Carthy (UCD in the Community) at the UCD Volunteer Fair 2023.*

## ■ UCD Volunteer Fair

**The UCD Volunteer Fair is an annual event which provides volunteer-involving organisations with an opportunity to promote opportunities to the UCD Community. It is a great way for UCD students, employees and alumni to connect and find suitable volunteer opportunities, both on and off campus. The Fair is coordinated by the UCD in the Community team.**

This year the following organisations attended the 2023 UCD Volunteer Fair: Barretstown, DLR Volunteer Centre, Dundrum Arch Club, Fighting Blindness, HOPE Foundation, Irish Girl Guides, Le Cheile Mentoring, Serve the City, STAND (Suas), Text About It (formerly 50808), UCD Alumni Volunteering, UCD Careers Network, UCD Green Campus, UCD Students' Union, UCDVO, Voluntary Service International and YMCA Dublin.

The UCD Careers Network also provided a workshop on how students can use volunteering to further their career, including what potential employers look for in graduates and how you can include the skills you have learned through volunteering to further your career prospects.



Enda Carroll taking part in the PIE Live panel.

## ■ The PIE Live North America event

**Enda Carroll, Associate Director for Learning Abroad at UCD Global, contributed to a panel entitled 'Offshore Education Delivery - Secrets of Success' at The PIE Live North America event in Boston in November where the best outcomes of offshore operations, partnerships and delivery for recruitment strategy and teaching were discussed.**

The panel explored the premise that to be truly global university we must build a network all over the world, and how an in-country presence can exponentially increase institutional reach and open new markets. Enda spoke to the setting

up, development and next phase for UCD's network of Global Centres. She shared UCD's learning experiences and achievements in the journey to create a Global footprint.

The PIE Live's audience was predominantly from the US and Canada, with some representation from the wider global community. The expert speakers at this year's event shared their vision for the future of the global education sector in North America and beyond. Delegates were given the opportunity to network with prospective partners and discover new technology and platforms that respond to current challenges at their organisations and institutions.



Pictured are (l-r): Fiona Sweeney, Head of Outreach at UCD Access and Lifelong Learning; Leona Rogers, UCD Think Again Scholar; Minister Heather Humphreys TD; and Dr Bairbre Fleming.

## ■ Cothrom na Féinne Scholarships recognised as income disregard for SUSI and Social Protection payments

**Over the last year, UCD Access and Lifelong Learning has been working with colleagues in the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Department of Social Protection to recognise the UCD Cothrom na Féinne scholarships as income disregard for the purpose of SUSI and means tested social welfare payments.**

Named after UCD's motto - justice and equity - funded by UCD Foundation through the generosity of UCD Alumni and corporate donors, the Cothrom na Féinne scholarships provide financial, academic and personal support to enable students from diverse backgrounds to succeed at UCD. Cothrom Na Féinne is now the largest needs-based scholarship programme in Irish universities. Both

SUSI and Social Protection now consider the scholarship as income disregard which means that it is not counted as household income and low-income students can retain the full benefits of SUSI and Social Protection payments while pursuing their studies.

The UCD Think Again scholarship is included under the UCD Cothrom Na Féinne umbrella and is specifically

designed for women on low-income to access higher education and to alleviate the financial barriers facing families in receipt of social welfare. Twelve women in this category will benefit from the Think Again Scholarships.

"UCD recognises that students on low incomes face considerable additional challenges in accessing university," said Dr Bairbre Fleming, Director of UCD Access and Lifelong Learning. This willingness to disregard scholarship income means that we have been able to remove structural barriers that face low-income students".



Members of the Microbiology and Parasitology Research Group - Green Lab Team (l to r): Nola Leonard, Ana Vale, Sharon Flanagan, Emma Conlon, Orla Byrne, Tristan Russell and Mary Sekiya (Not pictured: Gina Duggan, Annetta Zintl, Gerald Barry, Grace Mulcahy, Nagwa El-Ghryani and Theo DeWaal).

## ■ Sustainability Awards for the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine

**The Microbiology and Parasitology Research Group in the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine was recently awarded My Green Lab (MGL) Gold Certification. Recognised by the United Nations Race to Zero campaign as a key measure of progress towards a zero-carbon future, MGL Certification is considered the gold standard for laboratory sustainability best practices around the world. The programme helps organisations to achieve their sustainability goals, offering a range of methods rooted in science to dramatically reduce the environmental impact of laboratories without disrupting the critical work underway.**

The Microbiology and Parasitology Research Group began the programme in late 2021, with all members of the Lab answering a questionnaire about lab sustainability (on 14 different topics) as it applies to their work. The questionnaires were collated and analysed by the MGL team, and the Group

subsequently received a 'sustainability score' including specific measures they could apply to improve sustainability. The Group implemented a number of these changes and after a year, they re-took the questionnaire. The resulting improvement led to their gold level certification. The Group is now part of a community of hundreds of labs that have been MGL certified, including several in UCD.

A focus on cold storage energy efficiency has seen the Veterinary Anatomy Dissection Lab awarded the 'Top Biorepository Award - Academic Award' in the My Green Labs Freezer Challenge 2023. Second only to fume hoods, a lab's cold storage (refrigerators, freezers, cold rooms) is likely the next biggest category of energy consumers. The challenge encourages participants to learn how to be more energy efficient with their lab's cold storage, improve sample accessibility, reduce risk, and save costs for their institutions.

## ■ Ulysses Scheme Recipients

**Three UCD academics have been named as recipients of the prestigious Ulysses Scheme, a joint funding partnership between the Embassy of France in Ireland and the Irish Research Council, that fosters the exchange of ideas and approaches between researchers based in Ireland and France. The Ulysses Scheme is named after James Joyce's famous novel to celebrate the Joycean links between Ireland and France.**

The UCD projects selected are:

**Professor Judith Harford**, School of Education – 'Women, agency and the promotion of Franco-Irish cultural relations, 1850-1950'; Partnering with Professor Rebecca Rogers, Université Paris Cité.

**Dr Margaret Samahita**, School of Economics – 'Who suffers more from paperwork? Comparing Administrative Burdens Across Ireland and France as Barriers to Implementation of the National Climate Action Plans'; Partnering with Professor Angela Sutan, Burgundy Business School (LESSAC).

**Dr John Sheekey**, UCD School of Mathematics and Statistics – 'Complexity in Rank-Metric Codes and Semifields for Cryptographic Applications'; Partnering with Professor Jean-Guillaume Dumas, Université Grenoble Alpes.

Commenting on the news of the new awards, the French Ambassador to Ireland, HE Vincent Guérend said: "The Embassy of France in Ireland is delighted to continue our long-standing collaboration with the Irish Research Council and to see the exceptional standard of collaborative research being supported under the Ulysses scheme. The topics being addressed in the latest projects selected for funding are urgent and significant, and the exchange of knowledge between the Irish and French researchers will greatly enhance their investigations and outputs."

Peter Brown, Director of the Irish Research Council said: "More than 700 awardees have participated in the Ulysses scheme since it began in 1997, and a 2019 study of 81 French principal investigators who were awarded Ulysses funding between 2003 and 2017, showed that 73% of collaborations continue after the end of the funded project, such as via Horizon Europe funding and other European funding."

The Ulysses Scheme is funded and administered by the Irish Research Council in Ireland in collaboration with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Embassy of France in Ireland and Campus France.

## Women in Data Science Dublin Event

"The 2023 Women in Data Science (WiDS) Dublin event provides an opportunity to learn about the latest data science advancements from industry leaders and cultivate connections with potential mentors and collaborators in the field," said Jenny Corcoran, an MSc Business Analytics student at UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and the Irish Ambassador for the Stanford Women in Data Science organisation.

"I hope that WiDS Dublin 2023 inspired women to join or stay in data science and develop skills to implement creative, world changing decisions."

According to the organisation's website, WiDS is a worldwide actionable community, incubated at Stanford University, on a mission to change the field of data science across the globe by elevating and empowering women. They strive to reach 30x30: 30% representation of women across all levels in data science education, innovation, and leadership by 2030.

The event was hosted by UCD Smurfit School. It was the largest WiDS event ever held in Ireland and MC'd by Elaine Burke, the former editor of Silicon Republic and current host of For Tech's Sake, a co-production from Silicon Republic and The Head Stuff Podcast Network.



Prof Anne Fuchs with the winning zine entry by Saba Feleke

## Post-Extractivist Legacies & Landscapes Conference

**Led by the UCD Humanities Institute, the Mellon-funded CHCI project, 'Post-Extractivist Legacies & Landscapes', included presentations from 62 academics and artists from Ireland, Estonia, South Africa, the US, Australia, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Argentina, Finland and Italy, across four roundtable plenary panels and ten paper panels. We delivered the conference in a hybrid format, with over 80 guests participating in-person, and 75 people registering to attend online, via zoom.**

A special highlight was a lively and well-attended 'Arts Evening' in the Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI): seven emerging and established writers presented poems and prose writings on mining themes. The 'Arts Event' also included a keynote presentation

from the main project artist, Judy Carroll Deeley, who presented her original post-mining paintings; a co-commissioned (UCD HI and MoLI) sound installation by Ian Maleney was launched, and the winners of the student zine competition were announced.

A key part of the conference included connecting the academic research to landscapes impacted by extraction through a series of in-person site studies and a reflective postcard exchange. Conference participants visited the Abbeyleix Community Bog Project, Glendalough Mines, and the National Museum of Ireland's 'Bog Bodies' exhibition, the first two of which were led by community partners.

Following on from the conference, UCD Estates has purchased four original paintings

produced by the project artist, Judy Carroll Deeley. These will form part of UCD's art collection and will initially be showcased in the UCD Humanities Institute.

For further information about the project, and to view some creative artwork produced through the project as well to listen back to recordings from the pre- and main institutes, please visit our HI webpage and our project website:

<https://www.ucd.ie/humanities/research/chciglobalhumanitiesinstitute2023/>  
<https://extractivistlegacies.org/>



Athletes John Treacy, Donna Evans, Derval O'Rourke, Eamonn Coughlan and Ian O'Riordan.



Minister Jack Chambers TD opened the eve



Prof Barry Smyth.

## Second Science of Running Symposium

**An estimated 180 people attended the second annual Science of Running Symposium in UCD in September. The symposium was organised by Professor Brian Caulfield and Dr Donnacha O'Driscoll from the Insight SFI Research Centre for Data Analytics in UCD in collaboration with the Jerry Kiernan Foundation. The audience was made up primarily of enthusiasts from running clubs all over the country along with a number of elite athletes, some industry folk and academic colleagues.**

Minister of State Jack Chambers TD opened proceedings by highlighting the importance of running and exercise and the benefits that all runners, amateur and professional can get from the advancement in knowledge of the science of running. Murt Coleman, the chair of the JK Foundation thanked Insight for running such a great event and thanked participants for supporting the foundation which in turn supports young Irish athletes.

The audience was treated to some excellent talks on leading edge research on running in terms of training techniques, injury prevention, performance enhancement and dietary monitoring.

**Professor Barry Smyth** (Insight UCD) presented the latest findings from his ongoing, and very impactful, programme of analysis of millions of training sessions and race performances by athletes of all levels across the world to identify trends in training that improve performance

outcome – Train slow to run fast was the take home message.

**Dr Colin Griffin** (Sports Surgery Clinic) explained what exactly the Achilles Tendon is, what it does and how to protect it when maintaining an intensive running schedule. In his talk he explained how appropriate training for the achilles can deliver the same performance boost as that achieved using the new wave of supershoes, only with a lot less expense!

**Professor Kieran Moran** (Insight DCU) provided details of a series of running related research studies that are about to be launched by Insight investigators. Participants will, through the use of a specially designed App and monitor, record various metrics before, during and after training sessions. This series of studies will address issues such as performance prediction, injury risk identification and development of personalised recommendations for training.

**Dr Calibhe O' Doherty** (Insight UCD) borrowed from his popular 'Born to Run' module to deliver a fascinating talk on how walking and running evolved in the human species and how unique the mechanisms of upright walking and running are in the animal world. Then extrapolating from the natural design of the body he considered the latest technologies in shoe design to enhance our natural running ability.

The final presentation from **Professor Kate Pumpa** (UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science) was a one stop shop for your basic dietary needs, not just for running but for a general healthy life. The talk was full of intriguing tips on how to eat better for a better life, and Professor Pumpa was in high demand for follow-up questions over the lunch break. Did you know that eating two kiwi fruits ninety minutes before going to bed can reduce the time it takes to fall asleep and the amount of times you wake in the night?

There were a number of chat and network sessions giving attendees the opportunity to talk one-on-one with the researchers and guest elite athletes.

Reece Ademola, who is a young athlete representing Ireland in the long jump and is hoping to be Ireland's first representative

in the discipline at the next Olympics briefly spoke of the support he has received from the JK foundation and how it has helped him to compete on the world stage.

The final session was a unique opportunity to listen and chat to some of Ireland's most successful athletes both past and present. The Irish Times sports journalist and former NCAA runner, Ian O' Riordan, chaired a fascinating chat with John Tracey, Eamonn Coughlan, David Gillick, Derval O'Rourke and Donna Evans. The conversation covered multiple aspects of running including motivation, injury avoidance, training habits and staying fit. Along the way they talked about the joy of winning Olympic and world medals and the heartbreak of finishing fourth (twice!). This wasn't just an opportunity to learn but to hear about some of the most famous Irish historical moments from the people that made them happen.

After a Q&A session with the audience that had to be cut off or we would have been there all night, there were only two questions that people wanted to ask; Where can we get the information presented today & what is the date of next year's event? In response: video summaries and slides will soon be available on-line and although the date is not yet set, there will be another symposium in 2024.

## Golf

UCD Golf member Emma Fleming won the women's title at the Golf Ireland Intervarsity event in October. Emma narrowly missed out on overall winner by just three shots. The UCD team of Emma Fleming, Calum Ward and Anraoi Collins came second in the team event.



Eve McMahon, U21 World Champion ILCA6 Olympic class in Tangiers, Morocco.

## Sailing

UCD Ad Astra Elite Sport Scholar and sailing sensation Eve McMahon added another remarkable achievement to her collection in October by clinching the 2023 ICLA U21 World Championships.

This young talent, who is also a Stage 2 BComm International Student with aspirations for the Paris 2024 Olympics, faced a gruelling six days of intense races in Tangiers, Morocco. In the end, she emerged victorious in the U21 championship for her ILCA6 Olympic class.

In a display of her sailing prowess, McMahon secured her first gold medal of 2023, accumulating a total of 54 points over 11 races, a comfortable 14 points ahead of Switzerland's Anja von Allmen, who took second place. Italy's Carlotta Rizzardi claimed the third spot with 81 points.

While facing a challenging moment on the final day of the event when her boat capsized, McMahon demonstrated her resilience by recovering and securing an eighth-place finish, ultimately cementing her status as the U21 World Champion.

## Rowing

UCD alumnus Paul O'Donovan won gold in the LM2x at the World Rowing Championship in Belgrade in September.

UCD alumna Katie O'Brien secured her place at the Paris 2024 Olympics following her performances at the World Rowing Championship.

## Table Tennis

UCD graduate and former Ad Astra scholar Colin Judge won a bronze medal at the European Championships in Sheffield in September.



UCD Cycling Men's Team Pursuit who won gold at the Team Pursuit TT national Championships. Jason Kenny, Rhys Kenny, Sean Landers, Conor Murnane.jpg

## Cycling

The Team Sprint, Team Pursuit and Time Trial Track National Championships took place in August at Sundrive Velodrome and UCD Cycling enjoyed a lot of success.

Clodagh Ní Ghallchóir won gold in the Women's 500m Time Trial. The Men's Team Pursuit of Jason Kenny, Rhys Kenny, Sean Landers and Conor Murnane won gold. The Women's Team Pursuit of Catherine Mahoney, Jennifer Neenan, Clodagh Ní Ghallchóir and Orla Walsh won silver.

Maeve Gallagher of UCD Cycling was named Best Young Irish Rider at Rás na mBan.

## Athletics

At the 2023 World Athletics Championships in Budapest, a number of UCD present and past athletes had a fruitful event.

Sarah Healy ran in the second of the 1500m semi-finals, signing off with an U23 national record of 3:59.68 to become only the third Irish women to ever break four minutes alongside Ciara Mageean and Sonia O'Sullivan.

Sarah Lavin posted a remarkable championship performance in the semi-final of the women's 100m hurdles, finishing in fifth in the new national 100m hurdles record of 12.62. Lavin also broke the 100m record in September with a time of 11.27 at the Citti' di Padova meet in Italy.

Mark English produced two season best times at the Championships, including one in his 800m semi-final in a time of 1:45.14.

Ciara Mageean ran an incredible race in her 1500m final. Mageean finished fourth and did so breaking the national record with a time of 3:56.61.

Ciara Mageean continued her outstanding 2023 season with another record-breaking performance at the Diamond League Meet in Brussels. The UCD alumni athlete finished second and broke her own Irish 1500m record from the World Championships with a time of 3:55.87.

At the Irish Universities Athletics Association Road Relays, both the women's and men's UCD Athletics teams successfully defended their titles.



Cian McPhillips of UCD Athletics during the IUAA Road Relays

Roisín O'Reilly, UCD Athletics during the IUAA Road Relays

The women's team, comprised of Renee Crotty, Aoife Coffey, Danielle Donegan and Róisín O'Reilly, secured an impressive victory. Róisín anchored the team, leading them to triumph with a finishing time of 33.39 and a significant 47-second lead. The UCD men's team clinched gold for the third consecutive year. The stellar team of Mark Milner, Jonas Stafford, Darragh McElhinney, Cian McPhillips and Luke McCann put on an outstanding performance, winning with a time of 42.41 and an impressive 34-second lead.

At the 123.ie National Cross-Country Championships in November, UCD members past and present enjoyed success. Elite Sport Scholar Jonas Stafford came second in the Men's U20 race, while former Sport Scholar and alumna Danielle Donegan finished third in the Senior Women's race. The Women's U23 race had a 1-2 UCD alumni finish, with Donegan claiming first place and Aoife Coffey coming second.



UCD Rugby u20 side who won the Conroy Cup.jpg

## Rugby

The UCD Rugby u20s won the Irish Universities Rugby Union (IURU) Conroy Cup in October beating UCC in the final on a scoreline of 22-7.



Ad Astra Academy Director Professor Barbara Dooley hosting a Q&A with Academic Alumni Matthew Coffey and Katie Farrell who co-founded SQUID at the annual UCD Ad Astra Academy Breakfast.

## Ad Astra Academy Update

The Ad Astra Academy held its Annual Breakfast Morning on 8 November in the Student Village. This event allows the scholars from all three of the Academy's scholarships - Academic, Elite Sports and Performing Arts come together along with their Academic Mentors, Heads of Schools, Associate Deans and College Principals. The highlight of the morning is a Q&A session hosted by the Academy Director with alumni of the Academy. This year the Academy Director, Professor Barbara Dooley was joined by three alumni, Matthew Coffey, Katie Farrell and Dónal O'Shea. Academic Alumni, Matthew and Katie are co-founders and CEO and COO of SQUID, a company which is now in the Irish, UK, Canadian and Middle East markets and talked about their journey to date and plans for the future,

whilst Elite Sports Alumni, Dónal discussed the balancing act of being a GAA hurler for Galway and Salthill-Knocknacarra whilst obtaining his degree in Economics and Finance.

Ad Astra Performing Arts alumna Caitriona Ennis is currently on tour in New York, performing with Druid Theatre Company's critically acclaimed production of Sean O'Casey and Dublin Trilogy, *The Plough and the Stars*, *The Shadow of a Gunman* and *Juno and the Paycock*; alumnus Ross Gaynor recently appeared in Bottom Dog Theatre Company's *Gravity (A Love Story)*; alumna Anna Mitchell, who recently completed her MA in Classical String Performance at the Irish World Academy in Limerick, is currently performing with the Southbank Sinfonia in London.

Ad Astra alumni Conor O'Rourke and Mollie Mollumby presented a new musical comedy *Shauna Carrick Wants A Dog*, co-written by Conor O'Rourke and Shauna Carrick, directed by Mollie Mollumby and recently performed as part of the Dublin Fringe Festival.

## UCD places third in Global Business School Network Africa Business Concept Challenge

The team placed third in the international challenge which saw 87 teams compete from 58 universities around the world.

"As a new Global Business School Network (GBSN) member, we have been delighted to collaborate with Makerere University on the Africa Business Concept Competition and the success of the team is certainly an added bonus," said Dr David Nyaluke, team mentor and UCD College of Business Proudly Made in Africa Fellow.

"I am delighted that the team's dedication was recognised and I congratulate the participants for their great team effort."

The Challenge, now in its third year, is designed to assist young people from the African continent who have an entrepreneurial orientation and a desire to serve their community, among other qualities. With a focus on promoting responsible business, the competition identifies high-potential young people for mentorship and investment.

The combined team included UCD Smurfit

School students Luca Massari, MSc Digital Innovation; Udit Raj, MSc Strategic Management; and Mohit Santani, MSc Strategic Management; and Lillian Nalubega, MBA Project Management and Dennis Asiimwe, MBA Project Management, from Makerere University Business School.

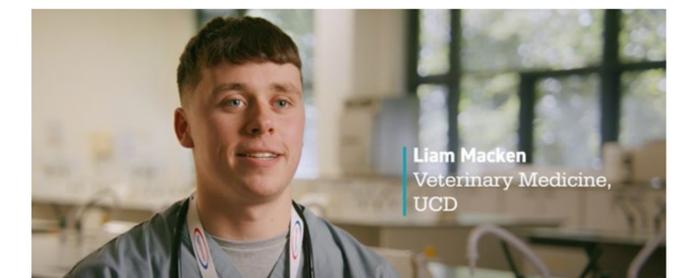
The team developed Project M.I.A.S.C. (Made in Africa Speciality Coffee) and identified the following challenge: Uganda is the world's eighth largest coffee producer, but only 10% of its coffee is processed locally. Despite being responsible for around 12% of global coffee production, the sector only contributes about 4.6% to Uganda's GDP. Uganda's coffee industry faces many challenges such as low wages for farmers, high unemployment, and low productivity, resulting in a failure to leverage the potential value of the industry. Climate change, deforestation, and unpredictable weather patterns further exacerbate the issue, impacting crop yields and quality, but these issues can also be addressed by focusing on organic speciality forest coffee farming which supports tree care and planting.

Analysing data from a local cooperative, the price of graded coffee ready for export is USD 2.1/kg while the price of ready-to-take coffee fully processed is USD 5/kg. This solution aims to fully process and make coffee at the source in Uganda. This will triple earnings, create needed jobs and promote sustainable practices.

The case supported UN Sustainable Development Goals: #1 No Poverty, #8 Decent Work, #10 Reduced Inequality, and #12 Responsible Consumption & Production.

## Irish Universities Association's Skills Campaign

The UCD School of Veterinary Medicine was chosen to represent UCD in the Irish Universities Association's 'Work Ready Skills' campaign, with final year Veterinary Medicine student Liam Macken speaking about the important skills he has gained through his studies in UCD. The campaign focuses on growing existing business



and enterprise relationships to ensure that IUA members can address skills needs across sectors.

Liam was filmed during his Small Animal Medicine clinical rotation in the UCDVH, with the video highlighting the skills our students and graduates develop through their studies – skills vital to the success of Irish enterprise.



*Pictured (l-r): H.E. Mr Norio Maruyama, Japanese Ambassador; Ciarán Micheál Maher; and Assoc Prof Naonori Kodate, Director, UCD Centre for Japanese Studies.*

## UCD Student awarded a Japanese Government's MIRAI scholarship

**Ciarán Micheál Maher has been selected as the representative of Irish Higher Education Institutions and will visit Japan on the 2023/2024 MIRAI\* Visiting Japan Programme. He is a Stage 2 BSc student (Environmental Biology/Microbiology/Plant Biology/Zoology) and will take part in his first-choice area, Group 5: Environment and Green.**

\*MIRAI (Mutual understanding, Intellectual Relations and Academic Exchange Initiative) means future in Japanese, and the programme is run and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan.

The Embassy of Japan in Ireland had to choose from a very strong field of candidates again this year from across the country, and this result attests to the calibre of UCD student applicants. There was a two-stage selection process, and the selection panel put together by the UCD Centre for Japanese Studies nominated Ciarán to the Embassy. During the process, the Centre provided hands-on guidance and helped him with the final application.

## Cornell University and UCD Students' Study Trip to Brussels

**In December, a red-eye flight from Dublin brought a cohort of students from Cornell University and UCD, taking the European Industrial Relations and HRM module, to Brussels.**

The students were accompanied by Dr Darragh Golden, module coordinator and acting director of the Cornell-UCD programme, UCD School of Business who, along with Dr Bianca Foehrer, organised an intensive programme, which included visits to the European Parliament, the European Commission, as well as the social partners, European Public Services Unions (EPSU) and BusinessEurope. The study trip has been a cornerstone of the Cornell-UCD programme for a number of years now and for many of the students it is the highlight of their sojourn in Europe. This year was no different.

While in Belgium, the Cornell-UCD contingent were hosted by the Irish College, Leuven. The college has a long history of hosting scholars since its founding in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by Irish monks, and we received a hundred thousand warm welcomes. On the first day, the group was taken on a walking tour of Leuven, a charming medieval citadel with a fascinating history. The

students participated in lectures on the EU's institutions and the policymaking process.

On Thursday, the European Parliament beckoned, and students met with Irish MEP Barry Andrews, himself a graduate of UCD. Fielding students' questions, the encounter was in many ways preparatory for Mr Andrews' forthcoming re-election campaign, such was their rigour. From there we made our way to the offices of EPSU, where Pablo Sanchez, EPSU official, and Silvia Rainone, senior researcher at the European Trade Union Institute, presented on EU social dialogue and the European Semester, respectively.

The following day students attended BusinessEurope where the students learned about a number of important topics, including social clauses in Free Trade Agreements and the recent EU Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages. The latter subject also informed one of the final two sessions with Commission official, Jose Garrido Otola, from Directorate General Employment, the EU's labour ministry. This Directive has been described as historic and will be a feature of not only industrial relations and international human resource management modules, but also the day-to-day function of practitioners. The final seminar was given by Istvan



Vanyolos, also in DG Employment, on the future of Social Europe, which, along with all the other contributions, left us all with plenty of food for thought.



Gold Awardees at the UCD in the Community Volunteering Awards 2023.

## UCD in the Community Volunteering Awards Ceremony

The 2022/23 UCD in the Community Volunteering Awards ceremony took place in the UCD Global Lounge on Wednesday 8 November 2023. 61 students from across the University were recognised for their outstanding contribution to society through volunteering. The UCD in the Community Student Volunteering Awards were established in 2020 with the aim of celebrating and recognising student volunteering in the community (with volunteer-involving organisations) and in UCD activities, such as clubs, societies, peer mentoring, class representatives and the SU. The awards draw on a strong tradition of student volunteering in UCD, both on and off campus. There are three awards available to UCD students, Bronze (20 hours of volunteering), Silver (40 hours of volunteering) and Gold (60+ hours of volunteering). Volunteering must be completed by students in the previous academic year.

Outside UCD, students contributed to community organisations including Jigsaw, Oxfam, 50808 - Text About It, Children in Hospital Ireland, Dublin Simon Community, National Council for the Blind Ireland, Foodcloud,

Culture Night, Dublin City Volunteer Centre, St Patrick's Festival, South Dublin Community Volunteers, Gorm Media, Saudi Students Club in Ireland, Enable Ireland and SAOL Women's Project.

Friends and family of the awardees were welcomed to the ceremony by Professor Joe Carthy, Director of UCD in the Community. Professor Carthy congratulated and thanked all of the volunteers for their contributions and encouraged them to continue volunteering into the future. Guest speaker Associate Professor Hilda Loughran, UCD School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice, spoke about the importance of volunteering as a means of social inclusion and the value of volunteering in building student's sense of belonging to the UCD community. Richard Otroshchenko (DN710 Economics, Year 2) Bronze Awardee, Riley Colson (BSc General Nursing, Year 3), Silver Awardee and Andrea O'Reilly (BSc Physiotherapy, Year 3) Gold Awardee, spoke about their personal volunteering experiences, before certificates were presented to all the awardees in each category.

## A Summer in Washington

Current Ad Astra Academy Academic scholar, Aoife Devlin along with Eimer Conlon, an Academic scholar who graduated from the Academy this year obtained places on the Washington Ireland Program Class of 2023. This prestigious program involved an eight-week work placement in Washington DC, combined with an extensive curriculum focusing on leadership and service. The programme included extensive networking opportunities such as visiting the Irish Mission to the UN, the Carnegie Corporation and the Harvard Club of New York. Previous placements here have included internships in the offices of politicians like Barack Obama and Hilary Clinton, as well as within embassies in Washington.

### Aoife sent us this update:

"This summer I travelled to Washington DC as a member of the Washington Ireland Program class of 2023. The aim of this program is to develop leaders through a comprehensive eight-week programme of personal development, policy debate and community service.

As part of this I undertook a six-week placement in the office of Congressman Brendan Boyle on Capitol Hill. As a Law with Politics student this was an absolute dream placement and over the course of my time there I learned all about the political system there and the different interests at play, and had the chance to meet extraordinary people.

The work placement is just one aspect of the program as we also participated in curriculum sessions and service days where we heard from inspiring speakers, debated important policy issues surrounding the future of the island of Ireland, and visited charities and organisations doing amazing work in various areas affecting the DC area. We even got the chance to tour the west wing of the White House!

A trip to New York towards the end of the summer also provided us with exceptional networking opportunities such as visiting AIG, the Irish Mission to the UN, the Carnegie Corporation and even enjoying a dinner at the Harvard Club



Aoife and Eimer with fellow Program participants on the Hill.

of New York besides so much more. I was also privileged to host a speaker session with Barry Ó Séanáin in the Irish Arts Centre where we learned so much about the impact of the Irish arts in the US, and the diaspora.

This summer was invaluable to my personal professional development. In addition to the amazing professional and networking experiences I received, I also made life-long friends in the rest of the class and connections that will last a lifetime. I am extremely grateful to the Ad Astra Academy for their support in making this summer a reality. The lessons I learned in the workshop series over my first two years in college undoubtedly helped me play a part in navigating an extremely competitive selection series and the financial support I was provided with was absolutely essential in enabling me to undertake the program."