



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

TO LL S C É A L A

Facing the Future together

The University launched its ambitious new Strategic Plan in March, laying out a Vision for 2020. See inside for more news and events that shaped the University over the past four months.

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... and more!

500 people gathered outside the Quadrangle to view March's solar eclipse, including Nevenoe Guegan, Laura Boyle and Aonghus Mullins of the NUI Galway Centre for Astronomy.

OLLSCÉALA

Focal ón Uachtarán



A Chairde,

This Spring we launched our roadmap for the future: **Vision 2020 NUI Galway's Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020**. This document will guide the next chapter of our University's growth and I'd like to thank colleagues for their input over the last year into developing such a strong and vibrant plan. I encourage colleagues to read and engage with the plan – more details on page 4.

Of course, central to our vision of the University's future is the recognition of a need for a transformed **culture of gender equality**. Recent events have highlighted aspects of gender inequality, which are of serious concern. As an organisation, and with the support of

the University's Governing Body (Údarás na hOllscoile), we are addressing this situation with the highest priority. A key objective for our institution - and for me - over the coming years will be to advance our agenda of achieving gender equality in our organisation. You can read more about how we are doing this on page 6 and 7.

Our academic reputation and profile continues to grow with the news last week of our strong performance in the **QS Rankings by Subject 2015**, scoring in all 30 subjects and achieving a ranking in nine subjects, an improvement from our ranking in four subjects in 2014.

The QS World University Rankings are a globally respected means of evaluating higher education. We're consistently improving our position on this platform which is a great testament to the efforts of colleagues and the developments in teaching and research that have taken place at this University in recent years.

Subject Rankings:

English Language and Literature (151-200)
History (101-150) *third in Ireland*
Computer Science and Info Systems (101-150) *third in Ireland*
Engineering - Electrical (251-300)
Medicine (201-250)

Biological Sciences (201-250)
Chemistry (251-300)
Mathematics (301-350) *third in Ireland*
Earth and Marine Sciences (151-200) *second in Ireland*

Alumni tell me that these rankings are really important to them as they highlight to employers the quality of education which as students they receive here. Well done to all colleagues in these areas for this excellent performance!

Our researchers too are leading the field with the news that NUI Galway is currently the top performer in Ireland in securing Horizon 2020 funding. European Commission data on H2020 proposals submitted to the first 79 calls shows our University in top place with over €15M in research funding awarded and having won three of the ten nationally awarded ERC Starting Awards.

So, as the academic year draws to a close, we can reflect on a busy and productive year. This edition of Ollsceála is full of great stories of achievement and success, along with some of the challenges facing us. I thank all those who've lent their efforts to this success.

Ní neart go cur le chéile.

James J. Browne PhD, DSc, MRIA, C.Eng
Uachtarán – President

Familiar Faces



1. MEP and Vice-President of the European Parliament, Mairead McGuinness, visited campus to launch the EXPLORE-funded initiative 'European Union on Campus', which aims to promote job opportunities in the EU. Pictured are Aaron Molloy, EXPLORE student partner; Pamela Devins, Career Development Centre; Anne McEvoy, European Parliament; Mairead McGuinness MEP; Annette Dolan, Career Development Centre; and John Hannon, Director of Student Services.
2. Ruth Scales, PhD student in the School of French (pictured third from the left), joined other students in Dublin Castle as she received the coveted Gold Gaisce medal from the President of Ireland. The awards were hosted this year by TV presenter, Mary Kennedy (pictured centre).
3. A number of Galway-based projects aimed at engaging community organisations in academic research were awarded funding by the Irish Research Council (IRC) in a new partnership with The Wheel. Pictured at the funding announcement were: Dr Josephine Boland, School of Medicine; Martin Naughton, Aiseanna Tacaíochta; Deirdre Garvey, CEO, The Wheel; Dr Eucharia Meehan, IRC Director; Jan O' Sullivan, TD, Minister for Education and Skills; and Dr Cliona Saidléar, Rape Crisis Network Ireland.



FÁILTE GO GAILLIMH!

Special 'Day of Welcomes' for Shannon College

As the official integration of the Shannon College of Hotel Management approaches, staff from Shannon were warmly welcomed to campus to meet their counterparts and future colleagues in the University. The 'Day of Welcomes' event saw staff from both institutions meeting one-to-one, and putting a face to the emails and phone calls they have shared over the past few months. Director of Shannon College, Phillip Smyth, was one of the visitors, and he is confident that the integration will be a good fit: "Shannon

College and NUI Galway have achieved much together since 1991. In the words of Séamus Mac Mathúna, the relationship has been characterised by collegiality, encouragement, trust and synergy. I'm sure that Shannon College will prosper and develop in NUI Galway." While Shannon College of Hotel Management will maintain its name, it will become a constituent School of the College of Business, Public Policy and Law. According to the College Dean, Professor Kieran Conboy, the formal integration of Shannon College will

"build on a long-standing relationship that already exists with the College and will provide a fantastic foundation for new synergy and prosperity into the future." An Rúnaí Gearóid Ó Conluain, who is leading the integration, paid tribute to the many staff on both sides who have put considerable time and effort into the integration to date and continue to do so as it nears completion.

Appointments



Director of Student Services

John Hannon has been appointed the new Director of Student Services, taking up the role in March. He will oversee the wide range of student services on campus, from Accommodation to Student Counselling. John was recently awarded the John Roberts Memorial Prize at the University of Warwick. The award is made each year to the best student on the University's MA in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education. He is pictured here receiving the award from Gill Frigerio, Senior Teaching Fellow at Warwick's Centre for Lifelong Learning.

External Appointments

In March, **Professor Peter McHugh** (Mechanical and Biomedical Engineering) was elected Science Secretary of the Royal Irish Academy, Ireland's leading body of experts in the sciences and humanities. A member of the RIA since 2011, Professor McHugh had led the development of biomedical engineering research and education in Ireland.

Professor Alan Ahearne, Head of Economics, has been appointed Chairman of the steering committee governing a new Joint Research

Programme between the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and the Department of Finance. This two-year programme will see researchers and officials working together on research projects relating to the macro-economy and taxation.

NFB researcher, **Dr Dimitrios Zeugolis**, has been elected to the European Council of the Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine International Society (TERMIS). TERMIS serves as an international forum to promote education and research in the field.

New TFO Director

David Murphy is the new Director of the Technology Transfer Office, replacing Acting Director, Jacinta Thornton. David comes to the University from the Financial Services sector, having served as Vice-President for Innovation, Communications and External Relations with Fidelity Ireland. Prior to this, David worked in a number of international engineering positions for IBM, Microsoft and Oracle. He is an NUI Galway graduate, with a BSc in Computer Science and an MSc in Technology Management.





Vision 2020

NUI Galway Strategic Plan
2015 - 2020

FACING THE FUTURE WITH AMBITION

The University’s new Strategic Plan was officially launched by President Browne in March. Entitled Vision 2020, it lays out our ambition for the University for the next five years.

Vision 2020 is filled with ambition. It sets out a vision for NUI Galway across the wide spectrum of University activity, and articulates the values and ideas that set this place apart. The Plan includes over 80 individual commitments, across the four key themes of: teaching and learning, research and innovation, our internationalisation, and our communities – of staff, students, alumni and our partners. Each commitment is backed up with specific targets by which we can measure our success over the coming years.

Introducing the Plan at his all-staff address, President Browne spoke of how our staff can be truly proud of recent successes: “The past decade has been a period of transformation and rapid growth especially in terms of our campus – with the development of new buildings, facilities and research laboratories. Now it’s time to build on the strengths of our people – to invest in and support our organisation as it becomes recognised locally and nationally and internationally as a university of choice, relevance and renown in the eyes of the world.”

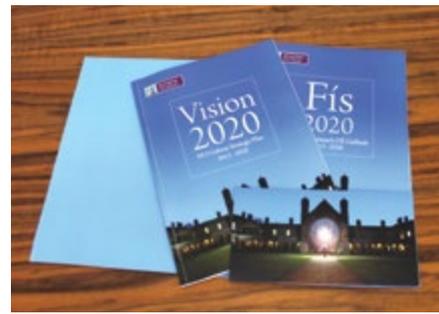
Highlights of the Plan

Over the next five years, the Plan aims to catapult NUI Galway into the top 200 universities worldwide, while securing €100 million in competitive EU research funds. For students, Vision 2020 promises work-based learning experiences across 80% of undergraduate programmes, as well as new accommodation and enhanced facilities for field and water sports. Internationally, NUI Galway will maintain and grow the global spread of its student population, with an ambition to have 25% of the student body coming from outside Ireland. Locally, the University will develop a major Industry and Innovation Hub, and lead Galway’s bid for

European Capital of Culture 2020. The University will also continue its key agenda of achieving gender equality and empowering staff to reach their full potential.

Accessing the Plan

The best way to take in the scope of ambition in Vision 2020 is to read it for yourself, by visiting the dedicated website: www.nuigalway.ie/vision2020. You can read the Plan online, download a copy for printing, or order a hard copy in English and Irish. It’s our shared vision, so share it! It is only by working together towards the same mission that we can face the future with ambition.



Fís 2020
Is mór againn an nasc uathúil atá againn leis an nGaeltacht. I measc na bpobal atá luaite sa Phlean Straitéiseach, baineann caibidil amháin leis an ngaol láidir idir an Ollscoil agus Pobal na Gaeilge agus na Gaeltachta. Chun teacht ar leagan Gaeilge d’Fhís 2020 ina iomlán, téigh chuig www.nuigalway.ie/vision2020 – áit a bhfaighfidh tú cóip leictreonach Gaeilge ann, agus deis le cóip chrua a ordú.

Our Communities

The largest section of the new Strategic Plan lays out a vision for our diverse communities – the distinct groups of people that contribute to the University’s mission on and off campus. These include our students, our external partners, our alumni and, of course, our staff. Look out for the range of commitments and targets aimed at helping us work together as a confident team. See www.nuigalway.ie/vision2020/ourcommunities



Ár bPobail

Baineann an chuid is mó den Phlean nua Straitéiseach le fíis a leagan amach dár bpobail éagsúla – na grúpaí ar leith a chuireann le misean na hOllscoile ar an gcampas agus lasmuigh dó. Is iomaí pobal atá ag an Ollscoil, ina measc ár mic léinn, ár bpairtnéirí seachtracha, ár alumni agus, ar ndóigh, ár bhfoireann. Leagtar amach réimse tiomantas agus spriocanna sa Phlean ar cuspóir dóibh cabhrú linn oibriú le chéile mar fhoireann mhuiníneach. Féach www.nuigalway.ie/vision2020/ourcommunities

The great and the good of Galway graduates attended the Alumni Awards Gala Banquet in February. There was a party atmosphere as the University community gathered to celebrate six distinguished alumni. And the winners are...

Olive Loughnane: Alumni Award for Contribution to Sport

One of Ireland's most well-known athletes, Olive Loughnane graduated with a BComm from NUI Galway in 1997, after competing for the University for many years. A native of Loughrea, Olive has represented Ireland at four Olympic Games and six World Championships in the 20km racewalk. She is World-Champion-in-waiting having been recently awarded the Gold medal from the 2009 World Championship, following Russian athlete Olga Kaniskina's suspension for drug use. This makes her one of only four Irish athletes to have won a medal at the World Athletics Championships.



Contribution to Sport award winner Olive Loughnane with her husband Martin Corkery.

Pearse Mee: Alumni Award for Engineering, Science and Technology

Entrepreneur Pearse Mee is a pioneer of the Irish computer software industry. In 1990, he set up AMT-SYBEX to provide mobile meter software for utility companies. Today, AMT-SYBEX supplies 35,000 mobile devices serving 35 million customers of household names in the UK, including National Grid, National Rail and the London Underground. The company employs over 250 people in Ireland and the UK, and in 2014 it was sold to FTSE 100 group Capita plc for €127 million. A native of Galway, Pearse studied Science at the University. There he met Annette, and they later married while he was still a student here.



Pearse Mee was joined at the awards by his wife Annette.

Dr Tom Mitchell: Alumni Award for Arts, Literature and Celtic Studies

Originally from Belcarra, Co. Mayo, Tom Mitchell graduated with a BA from UCG in 1961, followed by an MA in 1962. He continued his academic career in the USA, and was promoted to Professor of Classics in Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania in 1978, before returning to Ireland to take up the Chair of Latin in Trinity College Dublin. He published three major books on Cicero and Roman republicanism, and was elected Provost in 1991 - the first NUI graduate and the first Roman Catholic to hold the post in Trinity's 400 year history. Tom Mitchell was the first chairman of the Press Council of Ireland, and he is currently Deputy Chairman of the Atlantic Philanthropies, and Director of Hibernia College.



HEA Chief Executive, Tom Boland; Lynn Mitchell; and Alumni Award winner, Dr Tom Mitchell.

Dr Morgan O'Connell: Alumni Award for Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

A native of Dublin, Morgan O'Connell graduated from Medicine in UCG in 1968. During his years at the University, he became a Medical Cadet in the Royal Navy, where he remained for the next 31 years. O'Connell's career took him to hospitals across the UK, onto naval ships, and into submarines. He developed a passion for psychiatry, and a special interest in the study of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. This interest led to the Department of Psychiatry at the Royal Naval Hospital becoming involved in the aftermath of a number of disasters including Lockerbie. O'Connell left the Royal Navy as Consultant Advisor in Psychiatry and, though retired, he provides a Consulting Service in Southampton today.



Alumni Award for Business and Commerce recipient Dr Morgan O'Connell with his wife Susie.

Catriona O'Farrell: Alumni Award for Business and Commerce

Catriona O'Farrell means business. She graduated with a BComm from UCG in 1985, and during her Postgraduate in Marketing in the University the following year, she became the first employee of start-up company CashBack Ltd. Under her leadership it became the market leader in tourist tax refund services. Over the next 20 years, Catriona gained international experience and completed an MBA at NUI Galway. She was General Manager of the Galway Advertiser, where she led the newspaper's redesign. In 2011, Catriona was appointed CEO of the Fintrax Group, the world's second largest processor of tourist VAT refunds with a staff of 400, and in 2012, she led the sale of the company for €170m.



Award winner, Catriona O'Farrell, was joined by her husband Sean Connaughton and daughters Lara and Aislinn.

Ms Justice Carmel Stewart: Alumni Award for Law, Public Policy and Government

A native of Tuam, Carmel Stewart was conferred with both BA and LLB degrees from UCG. She was admitted to the Bar of Ireland in 1987, and since then has had a distinguished legal career, in particular in the areas of child and family law. Apart from her legal practice, she has served in a number of national organisations and bodies. In 2012, Ms Justice Stewart was appointed to the Circuit Court Bench and two years later was appointed to the High Court Bench. She has held many important roles in public life, including as Vice-Chairperson of the Employment Appeals Tribunal, and Director of Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC).



Ms Justice Carmel Stewart attended the gala with her husband Noel Grehan.



A CULTURE OF EQUALITY

One of the most widely welcomed commitments in the University's new Strategic Plan is that of achieving a 'transformed organisational culture of gender equality'. March saw two new gender equality initiatives launched, with the potential for real and positive change.

The benefits of gender equality are obvious. We all want to work in a place where every staff member has an equal opportunity to succeed, and equal recognition when they do so. Recent media coverage of the University has made difficult reading at times, and it is clear that we have a lot of progress to make. However, the signing of the Athena SWAN Charter and the setting up of a Gender Equality Task Force have surely demonstrated an appetite for real and meaningful change. Here, we take a look at recent developments, and give some of the background to the issue.

Gender Equality Task Force

The new Gender Equality Task Force held its first meeting on campus in March. Chaired by Professor Jane Grimson, former Vice-Provost of Trinity College Dublin, and comprising 17 members in total, the Task Force has the formidable job of recommending how we can reform our work policies and procedures to better promote gender equality across the University. To have real and positive impact, the Task Force must be truly independent, and it must base its recommendations on best international practice. To this end, members were chosen from both inside and outside the University, and they

represent a wide range of expertise, and different backgrounds and perspectives. A number of members have published research in the fields of equality and diversity, for the Irish Government, EU and UN. They will set their own terms of reference, and make recommendations on a range of issues as they see fit. The Task Force will make interim reports over the next 12 months, and it is committed to consulting widely with staff in the course of its work. At their first meeting, Professor Grimson called on the University community to engage with the Task Force, saying: "Your experience and suggestions are critical to ensuring meaningful and sustainable change."

Athena SWAN

A team of staff and students are currently preparing a submission to the Athena SWAN programme. Based in the UK, Athena SWAN is a Charter and Awards programme that promotes best practice in advancing the careers of women in research and higher education. It was extended to Irish universities this year and – having already signed the Charter – NUI Galway is aiming to be one of the first Irish universities to achieve Bronze recognition through the Awards programme. Hundreds of staff have already made their input via a gender equality survey, and the Athena SWAN Self-Appraisal Team will shortly submit a

'warts-and-all' assessment of our gender policies and procedures. This assessment is the first step in achieving the Bronze Award, which is one of the commitments in the University's new Strategic Plan. The process is a continuous one that will involve regular review from peer universities in the UK.

Other initiatives

In recognising that gender equality is an issue across Ireland's universities, President Browne has made a formal request to the Irish University Association and Higher Education Authority calling for the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) to carry out an Equality Review of the entire Higher Education sector. A response to this call is expected shortly. In addition, the Registrar is currently leading a review of both the Senior Lecturer Promotion Scheme and the Professorial Promotion Scheme to make sure they are fit for purpose in time for the next round of promotions.

Find Out More

Learn more about these gender equality initiatives, with facts and figures, FAQs and the latest news updates at:
www.nuigalway.ie/genderequality

Primed for the Task Ahead



Professor Jane Grimson: former Vice-Provost of Trinity College Dublin, and Chair of the Gender Equality Task Force

The Gender Equality Task Force had its first meeting in March. How did it go?

It went very well. It was an exploratory meeting and we concentrated mainly on discussing the terms of reference, which we will publish shortly. The sense of commitment in the room, and energy, was terrific. There are people who have considerable expertise in different aspects of gender equality, and that's important. We also have that in the appointment of [Professor] Yvonne Galligan from Queen's University Belfast as an external advisor. Queen's are a leader in the area of gender equality and her experience and knowledge will be very helpful to us. Other people have particular expertise around consultation. Getting a cross-section of views from the University as a whole is going to be critical – finding a way to make sure that people can make their contribution, however they want to do it: confidentially, in groups, formally in writing. Obviously it's important to have people from within the University itself on the Task Force who know how the place ticks and what the issues are. A number of the external members are graduates of NUI Galway. They note the reputational damage done to their alma mater and they are very keen and deeply committed to helping the University put its house in order.

Do you sense that there is a desire in the University for change?

I do. I have a sense there's a desire and a commitment to address the issue. There's concern that people recognise there's not a silver bullet: it needs sustained action over time and that's a challenge. It needs sustained energy, drive and leadership, and the University can't afford to take its eye off the ball. NUI Galway is in a unique position because of what has happened. The gender equality debate is very much in the public eye. A momentum has been created, there's an imperative to do something. They say you should never waste a good crisis. It's obviously critical that actions follow.

What drives your positivity that there will be real change?

There have already been some changes, which is a start. Also, there is certainly a core of people who recognise that gender equality is not just an issue of social justice, it's about the business case of making sure you're making the best use of the talent you have, the importance of diversity in the creative endeavour of research. If you get it right with gender equality, you improve the working environment for everyone. Research shows that diverse teams are more creative. It has also shown that diversity at a senior level contributes hugely to better decision-making. We need more women involved in contributing to decisions at a senior level.

What message do you have for Ollscéala readers?

The message is we want to hear from you. We want to know your views, your experience at NUI Galway: good, bad and indifferent. Do you have suggestions on how the University can improve gender equality? When Queen's started, they started with a series of listening seminars getting the views of staff. We want a cross-section of views from men, women, senior, junior, retired and current. We want to hear from all members of the University community.

Time for critical assessment



Aoife Cooke: NUI Galway Equality Manager, and member of the Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team

The Self-Assessment Team (SAT) submitted the University's Athena SWAN application on 30 April. Could you describe the process of getting this far?

Well, the first step was signalling our intention to submit an institutional application back in September of last year. The SAT was established in October. We asked Heads of Schools and Units to nominate people – we ended up with a team of 19 people, six men and 13 women, with a broad and diverse range of experience. In a workshop in October, Athena SWAN advisors from the Equality Challenge Unit in the UK guided us through what was required to make a good submission. The SAT worked really well as a team, we met on nine occasions between October and April, and unanimously endorsed the submission.

Part of the process was an all-staff survey. How did that go?

We were very happy with the response. We had 968 responses, which was high for a survey of this sort. What really struck us was that we had over 2,300 qualitative responses to 12 open-ended questions. We were taken aback that hundreds of people took the time to write and say something in the survey. It wasn't just a "tick the box" survey. People really thought about it and took the time to tell us what they felt – some good, some not so good, some bad. We have a huge amount of data. We feel we owe staff to circulate a report on the responses which we will do in two steps. We will circulate a report on the quantitative data in the coming weeks. The open-ended questions will take longer to analyse the data rigorously.

Why do you believe Athena SWAN has such potential for change?

I've long believed that Athena SWAN provides a framework for institutional change. It's tried and trusted. Everyone is involved, management are involved and committed, and it can bring about change across the University. Colleagues from Queen's have shown us how they have turned around gender imbalances at senior levels in academia and administration, and Athena SWAN was an important part of it. We've had initiatives over the years to address gender imbalances, we've had procedure revisions, and some programmes designed for women. You could be critical and say that's for "fixing the women". However there is greater benefit having a coherent strategy under an umbrella framework. Results show that Athena SWAN can have real impact across the University.

We've had gender equality initiatives before. What's different this time?

Athena SWAN is a framework. It has the buy-in of UMT and Governing Authority. There's accountability – somebody cares. We're committed to giving an update on Athena Swan to the Governing Authority each quarter. That means it stays very much to the fore, and to me that's really important. It's a real sign that the issue and the framework are embedded in the institution's psyche. Another action that was identified is that the principles of Athena SWAN and gender equality are going to become a KPI for senior managers. Managers will have to account what they have done to make sure that all staff have access to opportunities within Schools and Units. That's really powerful, because that's where change will happen.



RESEARCH IN ACTION

Our new Strategic Plan calls for research that is recognised as being excellent, transformative, and relevant to societal and economic needs. Here's a taste of some of the impact our research community has had in the past three months.

Pishoy Gouda, a final year medical student (pictured above), made the news in March with the results of his survey into **the medical brain drain**. It showed that nine out of ten medical students in Ireland consider leaving when they qualify, with the main reasons cited including a perception regarding better career opportunities, working conditions and lifestyle abroad. The study was the largest of its kind in Ireland and included over 2,000 students in NUI Galway and the country's other five medical schools.

Following a recent announcement by Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton TD, the national Technology Centre for Biorefining and Bioenergy (TCBB) – based here in NUI Galway – will play a significant role in the new Dairy Processing Technology Centre. The new Centre, based in Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, is being funded to the tune of €25 million, and Galway-based researchers will provide expertise on **improving the competitiveness and sustainability of the dairy industry**. With a lifting of the EU milk quotas, the industry is set to expand greatly in the coming years, and the new Centre is an important step in further boosting Ireland's competitiveness.

This wasn't the only good news for the TCBB: in February, it became an Associate Member of the **Bio-based Industry Consortium (BIC)**

in Brussels. BIC aims to create thousands of jobs through an EU drive to convert biological residues and wastes into greener everyday products.

A research team led by Dr Marcus Keane (Engineering) is taking part in the recently launched Horizon 2020 project 'Built2Spec'. The EU-wide project stands for Built to Specifications, and it is investigating how systems and tools can be developed and adapted for **21st century construction sites**, in particular to boost energy efficiency and quality assurance. A total of 20 European partners are involved in the project. The NUI Galway work package is focused on smart materials, imagery techniques and building information modelling.

The results of a two-year study into Chronic Obstructive Airways Disease (COPD) were recently published in the Cochrane Review. The study, which was led by a team from the School of Nursing and Midwifery, confirmed **the effectiveness of Pulmonary Rehabilitation** – a non-pharmacological intervention for patients – in treating the disease. The two-year project brought together the findings of 65 randomised control trials involving 3,822 participants. There are around 110,000 people in Ireland diagnosed with COPD, but many more sufferers remain undiagnosed.

New research by Dr Suzanna Prosser and Professor Ciaran Morrison of the Centre for Chromosome Biology shows that cells of the immune system have a previously undescribed ability. Their paper, published in March in the *Journal of Cell Biology*, describes **the presence of primary cilia on immune cells**. These antenna-like structures are found on almost all cell types in the body, but since the 1960s it has been thought that they do not arise in blood cells. "Cilia have not been described in lymphocytes before, to our knowledge", explains Professor Morrison. The findings have huge significance in the study of how immune cells interact with the body.

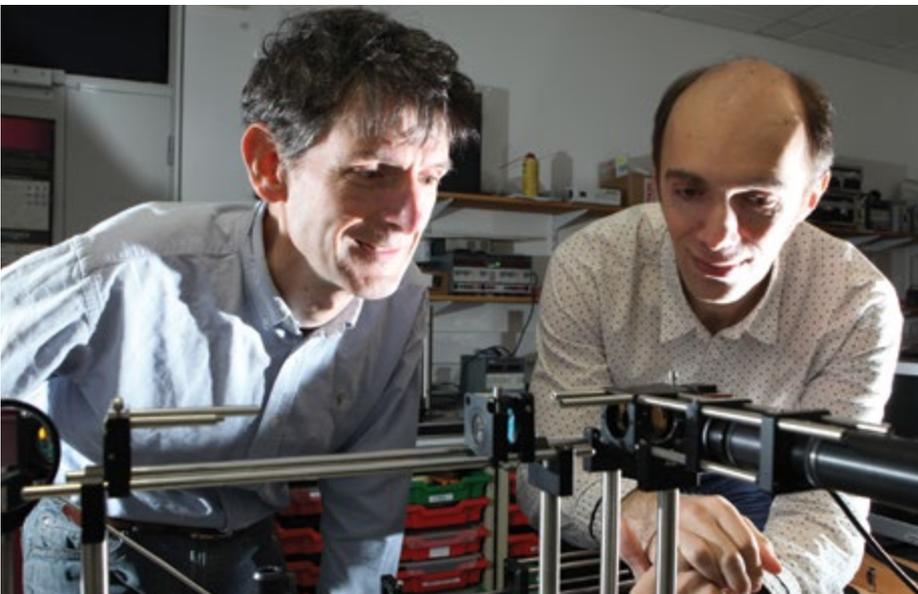
In March, the University hosted its **first climate congress**, focusing attention on the need for action on climate change. The event was organised by the Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security Society, which began operating in the University late last year. The congress attracted high profile experts in the field including Special Advisor to the Mary Robinson Foundation, Tara Shine, and An Taisce representative, Ian Lumley. The talks highlighted the need for national and international approaches to mitigating and adapting to the threat of climate change.



In March, Professor Elizabeth FitzPatrick brought Ireland's ancient legends to life, with a public lecture revealing **the geological twist in the tales of Finn Mac Cumail**. She has found that the places associated with the Fenian Cycle warrior are important boundary points, hunting grounds and areas rich in mineral enrichment, even today. Pictured here are geologist Dr Ronan Hennessy and field archaeologist Dr Paul Naessens, recording the prehistoric cairn known as Carn Seefin (the cairn of Finn's Seat) on the summit of Keeraunnageeragh Mountain in Connemara, for an Atlas of Finn Mac Cumail's Places.



The MARIO robot visited campus in February to launch the 'kick off' meeting of this €4 million European research project. The project aims to advance **active and healthy ageing** through the use of companion robots that can communicate with the elderly, in particular sufferers of dementia. The project brings together researchers from across Europe – many of them pictured here, and it is funded through the EU's Horizon 2020 programme. MARIO is being piloted in our School of Nursing and Midwifery, and pictured up front in red are (left) Dympna Casey, Project Co-ordinator, and (right) Professor Kathleen Murphy, the project's Communications Strategist.



The European Space Agency (ESA) has funded a Galway research project that will develop **technologies that mimic the human eye** for use in large space telescopes. The €1 million contract was awarded to Principal Investigator, Dr Nicholas Devaney (left), and his colleague Dr Alexander Goncharov (right), both from the School of Physics. Their work will involve designing and building a functioning 'active optics' system for use in space telescopes, with part of the work being subcontracted to the prestigious Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Optics in Germany.

MAJOR RESEARCH FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

European Research Council - ERC



European Association for Cancer Research Award

REMEDI's Dr Aileen Ryan has been awarded a prestigious EACR Young Investigator Award for her ground-breaking research into bowel cancer prevention. Dr Ryan has identified an 'off-switch' that helps reduce the spread of the disease. By switching off a specific protein in bowel cancer cells, she has shown that an anti-tumour immune response is stimulated, which can in turn reduce the spread of the cancer around the body. The research is funded by the Irish Cancer Society.



One of the most ambitious targets in the University's new Strategic Plan is to secure €100 million of research funding from EU programmes by 2020. Our research community is already punching above its weight in attracting funding from Europe, and in January, Dr Eilionóir Flynn and Professor Martin O'Donnell were approved by the ERC for significant starter grant funding.

Dr Eilionóir Flynn of the Centre for Disability Law and Policy is the youngest of Ireland's ERC Starter grantees this year. Her award of almost €1m in funding for the ground-breaking VOICES project will run for three and a half years. In introducing the theme of her research, Dr Flynn said: "The VOICES project will take a radical approach to develop new law reform ideas based

on the concept of "universal legal capacity", a basic human freedom to make one's own decisions and have them respected by law."

Martin O'Donnell, Professor of Translational Medicine with the HRB Clinical Research Facility, was awarded funding to support his project entitled 'Clarifying Optimal Sodium Intake Project' (COSIP). His research seeks to clarify how much salt is best for our health. Over the next five years, the ERC funding will help investigate the relationship between different levels of sodium intake and physiological markers of cardiovascular health. According to Professor O'Donnell, "It will explore whether one size fits all, or whether people have different sodium intake requirements."

Science Foundation Ireland – SFI

Minister for Skills, Research and Innovation, Damien English TD announced over €30 million SFI investment in scientific research in April, with NUI Galway researchers leading three of the projects and collaborating on a fourth. The funding will be delivered through the SFI Investigators Programme and will involve 23 research projects and over 100 researchers overall.

The NUI Galway projects include:

Dr Laoise McNamara, Mechanical and Biomedical Engineering - This research project will advance understanding of mechanobiology, the process in which tissues in the human body adapt to mechanical forces. Dr McNamara's research will explore how mechanobiology may play an important role in the development of osteoporosis.

Dr Alan Ryder, Chemistry - Many drugs for human health are complex biological molecules

like proteins which are made in living cells on an industrial scale. This research project aims to build a faster, cheaper, and non-contact way of testing these molecules using light, which it is hoped will improve manufacturing, and reduce drug costs.

Professor Vincent O'Flaherty, Natural Sciences - This research targets new technologies for the treatment of wastewaters from industry and households. It aims to create a system for the simultaneous purification of wastewater, production of renewable energy and recycling of valuable nutrient resources, using microorganisms.

Professor Sean Leen, Mechanical and Biomedical Engineering, in conjunction with Professor Noel O'Dowd, UL - This project aims to develop new modelling tools for Irish industry for more accurate design and assessment of materials and structures. The focus will be on welds, which are the most common location of failure in engineering components.



Dr Laoise McNamara is one of the recent recipients through the SFI Investigators Programme

Health and Human Rights



The issue of delivering healthcare fairly using a human rights framework was discussed at the Health and Human Rights Conference on campus in February. The public event was part of the President of Ireland's Ethics Initiative and was organised jointly by the Irish Centre for Human Rights and the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. President Michael D. Higgins opened the event, and is pictured here with Sabina Higgins, and NUI Galway organisers: Dr Diarmuid O'Donovan, Medicine (left), and Professor Michael O'Flaherty, Director of the Irish Centre of Human Rights (right).

New Books



At the launch of *Genetic Discrimination – Transatlantic Perspectives on the Case for a European-level Legal Response*, were (l-r) co-editor of the book, Professor Gerard Quinn (Centre for Disability Law and Policy); Dr Delia Ferri, NUI Maynooth; Professor Emeritus Henriette Roscam Abbing, Utrecht University; co-editor, Dr Aisling de Paor, DCU; Marian Harkin, MEP; and Professor Noel Lowndes (Biochemistry).

The Shadow of Colonialism on Europe's Modern Past, edited by Dr Róisín Healy and Dr Enrico Dal Lago (History) breaks new ground by investigating the influence of the ideologies and practices of colonialism across Europe and its consequences for the lives of ordinary Europeans.

Thomas Fitzpatrick and the Leprecaun Cartoon Monthly, 1905–1915, co-authored by Moore Institute PhD student, James Curry, gives fresh insights into Irish life from the period, from caustic commentaries on women's fashion to the high politics of Home Rule cartoons.

Higher Education and Community-Based Research - Creating a Global Vision, co-edited by Lorraine McIlrath (Community Knowledge Initiative), describes new and emerging perspectives in using community-based research as a tool in higher education.

Law and the Older Person

In January, the School of Law held a conference on the legal rights of older people. Organised by the School's Mental Health Rights Group and the LLM in International and Comparative Disability Law, the event was held in conjunction with the Employment Law Association of Ireland. Older people are often overlooked in decision-making that impacts on their lives. According to conference organiser, Dr Mary Keys: "It is important to discuss openly the role of advocacy in upholding the rights of older people, the Fair Deal scheme and the proposed Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Bill 2013 from both legal and medical perspectives."

Tenancy in the EU

In February, the School of Law welcomed Professor Christoph Schmid, Director of the Centre of European Law and Politics (ZERP), University of Bremen, Germany, to present a seminar on tenancy law in Europe. Professor Schmid is co-ordinator of the TENLAW project – an EU research project on tenancy law across the 28 EU States. Ireland is represented in the TENLAW project by Dr Padraic Kenna, Director of the Centre for Housing Law, Rights and Policy.

New Home for an Ancient Warrior

Banbha's Warrior – a wooden sculpture by renowned Irish artist, James McKenna – is now on permanent display in the foyer of the new Lifecourse and Society Building in the north campus. Originally one of nine foot soldiers that accompanied a sculpture of the Celtic goddess Banbha, the 3.2m sculpture was donated to the University by poet Desmond Egan, who is Executor of James McKenna's estate. Desmond is pictured in the sculpture's new home with University Arts Officer, Fionnuala Gallagher.



GLOBAL CONNECTIONS



As part of her first official engagement as the new UN Special Rapporteur on Disability, Catalina Devandas (pictured front right), met with staff and students of the Centre for Disability Law and Policy in December.

From South America to the West of Ireland



Her Excellency Silvia María Meregá, Ambassador of Argentina to Ireland, visited campus in April. She is pictured with Professor Brian Hughes, Dean of International Affairs, who presented the Ambassador with a piece of Bog Oak inscribed with the University's name in Ogham. She was accompanied on the visit by Embassy Secretary, Rafael Galetto (left).

Combating Violence against Women Worldwide

A new €2 million project led by Dr Nata Duvvury (Political Science and Sociology) will investigate the social and economic costs of violence against women and girls in developing countries. Funded by the UK's Department for International Development, the project will give policy-makers ways of estimating the costs of violence to national economies. Dr Duvvury will lead an international team comprising Ipsos MORI, London, and the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), Washington DC, on the three-year project. The ambitious project will take a multi-disciplinary approach, and will survey over 4,500 women in Ghana, Pakistan and South Sudan: some of the world's most troubled and underdeveloped regions.

Putting the Learning into Volunteering



Members of NGOs from across Europe gathered on campus to share their experiences of the potential for volunteering as a tool for learning. They were joined by University staff, Galway community partners, Europass Ireland and Volunteer Ireland, in an event funded by Léargas: a national organisation that encourages international cooperation in education and community work. The organisations are collaborating to highlight the informal learning that occurs when volunteers engage in their communities. Formal recognition of these learning outcomes through the European Commission's Europass initiative is an exciting new development for the Community and Voluntary Sector.

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF TEACHING



This year saw the tenth anniversary of the disciplines of Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy in the University. Staff of the two disciplines gathered for a reception to mark the occasion and to recall the challenges of setting up and accrediting their programmes a decade ago. Of course both disciplines have gone from strength to strength since then, and today they are recognised at home and abroad for the quality of their teaching and research. Among our most

enthusiastic and active alumni, graduates of Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy are making their mark across the globe. Pictured at the reception are: Professor Tim O'Brien, Dean of the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences; Dr Rena Lyons, Head of the Discipline of Speech and Language Therapy; Professor Agnes Shiel, Head of the Discipline of Occupational Therapy; Dr Margaret Hodgins, Head of the School of Health Sciences; and President Jim Browne.

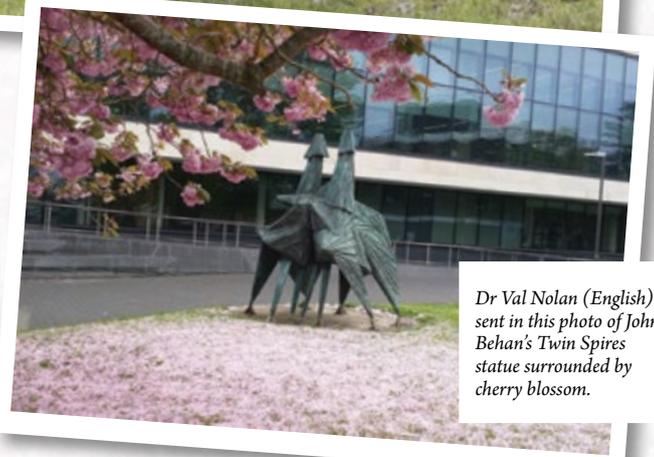
The View from Around Campus

As Spring sprung on campus, we received lots of photos of your events from around the University. Here's a glimpse of some of the things that took place.

Dr Anne O'Connor (Italian) submitted a photo from February's translation conference entitled 'Word-Bridges'. Dr O'Connor (right) is pictured with Dr Lesa Ni Mhughhaile (Gaeilge), and Professors Michael Cronin (DCU) and Ann Thomson (European University Institute, Florence).



Dr Tony Hall (Education) submitted this action shot from the Connacht J1c Rugby League decider between NUI Galway and Sligo. The University was victorious on the day, winning with two tries from Billy Delaney and Peter Claffey.



Dr Val Nolan (English) sent in this photo of John Behan's Twin Spires statue surrounded by cherry blossom.



Volunteer Co-ordinator, Lorraine Tansey, sent in this photo of students presenting their work in the first ever Undergraduate Research Conference in March. The day-long event is aimed at exposing undergraduates to a conference environment and spark their interest in future research careers.



Aisling Nolan from Alumni Relations, enjoyed the Alumni Awards gala with Margaret Wright and Rachel Geraghty from the Galway University Foundation Office.

Dr Annette Harte (Civil Engineering) sent us a group photo from an Engineering training school focused on the "Reinforcement of Timber Structures". The four-day event attracted researchers from across Europe.



Flirt FM Station Manager, Paula Healy, submitted this photo from the National Student Radio Conference held on campus in March. Paula is celebrating ten years as Station Manager, and is excited about the station's new ambition to begin broadcasting on Saturdays.

A picture paints a thousand words. To get your photo into Ollscéala, make sure it is at least 1MB in size, avoid camera phones, and make it interesting with some props or eye-catching arrangements.

€16,500 raised in Campus Cancer Campaign



Doing good – and looking great!



Congratulations to all the staff who took part in February's Cancer Awareness Campaign, in particular the brave souls who had their heads shaved or dyed in the name of charity. The two-day campaign included public lectures, a coffee morning, poster presentations, a choral concert, and of course the live Shave or Dye in the College Bar.

The campaign raised over €16,500 in charity, all of which will help fund the Irish Cancer Society, Cancer Care West, NBCRI and the Galway Hospice. The campaign involved staff and students from across the University, but special praise goes to the event organisers: Dr Grace McCormack, Dr Maria Tuohy, Dr Zoe Popper, Bríd Seoige, Dr Sharon Flynn and Dr Eve Daly.

Power to the People!



NUI Galway became the first Irish university to offer free cancer screening for staff, with the launch of the Pink Power and Blue Power campaigns in February. With support from Cornmarket and the Bons Secours Hospital, the campaigns offered free breast cancer checks to female staff and free prostate exams to male staff, targeted at those age groups in which the cancers are most prevalent. 300 staff availed of the screenings, with follow-up tests and treatment given free-of-charge where needed. Pictured are Kilian Walsh, Consultant Urological Surgeon; Gerry Burke, CEO Bons Secours Hospital; Ivan Ahern, Marketing and Distribution Director, Cornmarket; Triona Lydon, Pensions and Investment Officer, NUI Galway; Dr AnnaMarie O'Connell, Consultant Radiologist; and Roddy Murphy MD, Cornmarket.

Day-Today opens in Corrib Village



Staff and students in the north campus have a new choice of eatery, since Day-Today opened its shop, deli and café in Corrib Village in January. The store supplies a wide selection of groceries, a variety of hot food and a new range of Brazilian products, which has proven very popular among our international students. Officially opening the store were (l-r): Karl Reinhardt, General Manager; Karen Hughes, Commercial Services Office; Laura Enright, Corrib Village resident and Voice of Ireland Star; and 'the pizza guy'.

TeenTech Hits Campus



April saw 300 teenagers from 30 schools descending on campus to take part in TeenTech: an industry-led initiative that gives young inventors and innovators a head start. Over 140 scientists and engineers were present to share their passion for technology, with displays from some of Galway's biggest tech companies. Pictured are Dean of Science, Professor Dónal Leech, and TeenTech CEO, Maggie Philbin, who you might recognise from presenting BBC science programmes 'Bang Goes the Theory' and 'Tomorrow's World'.

Going with the Flow in Múscailt



Cast from the GUMS production of hit musical Cabaret helped launch the annual Múscailt Arts Festival in February. The theme of this year's festival was Float Away, and among a jam-packed programme of art and theatre were an exhibition of wood-turned vessels in the Hardiman Building, a display of wicker creatures by James Fleming at the O'Shaughnessy Bridge, and a wave of balloon creations in the foyer of Áras na Mac Léinn.

A Fond Farewell



The University said goodbye to a popular character on campus when Pat Collins retired from the Buildings Office in March. Pat worked here for 40 years, starting out in stores management back in 1975, and acting as Cleaning Services Supervisor in more recent years. A well-known figure, Pat's leaving do was a social event, surrounded by friends and family, where he recounted his four decades on campus and all of the changes to the staff and surroundings over that time. On behalf of his colleagues in the Buildings Office, and all of those he helped over the years, we wish Pat a happy and relaxing retirement. Pat is pictured (centre) with his colleagues: John Gibney, Director of Physical Resources, and Dean Pearce, Head of Facilities Management and Services.

Onwards and Upwards for EXPLORE



Do you recognise the Quadrangle from the air? This photo was taken by the 'Aether Drone Project' team, just one of the groups funded through this year's EXPLORE initiative. Dr Eugene Farrell (Geography) teamed up with students Fionn Delahunty and Darren Kelly to acquire the drone, which they will use to conduct aerial surveys of Ireland's beach-dune systems. Over the past three years, EXPLORE has helped bring more than 80 new ideas to life, funding collaborations between over 500 staff and students. The EXPLORE model has sparked interest in other universities too, with UCD recently launching their own pilot inspired by the Galway initiative.

Big Fat Cheque from Big Fat Table Quiz!



The first Big Fat NUI Galway Table Quiz raised over €2,500 for Console, a charity that helps provide support for people affected by suicide. With 150 staff taking part in the quiz, it was a truly campus-wide event. Pictured handing over the proceeds are: (front row) Margaret Tierney of Console Galway; quiz organisers Nicola McNicholas, Dr Aideen O'Doherty, Dr Pat Morgan and Professor Pól Ó Dochartaigh; (back row) Phelim Kelly, Students' Union; quiz organisers, Dr John Caulfield and Dr Jill McMahon; and Declan Higgins, SU President. Console is the SU designated charity.



In April, Spraoi Early Learning Centre commenced as the new operators of the University Crèche following a recent tender process. The crèche has been refurbished with new and colourful equipment for learning and play. Pictured at the launch were Dr Pat Morgan, Vice-President for the Student Experience (centre), and mother-and-daughter Spraoi owners, Mary and Theresa Murphy. To visit the crèche or to register your child, contact Crèche Manager, Niamh Heneghan, on 091 493739.

Desktop Diary

May 2015							June 2015							July 2015						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	16	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31		

Just some events to look out for over the next three months.

Notes on Nature, throughout May

The Special Collections team will display highlights from the University's natural history collection in a spotlight exhibition throughout May in the Special Collections Reading Room.

Fleadh Cheoil na Gaillimhe, May 15-17

The County Fleadh will bring hundreds of traditional musicians to campus, all competing to represent Galway at the National Fleadh Cheoil in Sligo in August. Come along and listen to the cream of the county's musicians.

Yeats Day, June 13

Celebrations will take place across the country to mark 150 years since the birth of W. B. Yeats. Look out for events and exhibitions on campus.

The second Big Fat NUI Galway Table Quiz, June 17

Biochemists, Dr Ciaran Morrison, Dr Elaine Dunleavy, Dr Derek Morris and Dr Stephen Rea, were named 'biggest brains on campus' in the first staff table quiz in February. Can anyone beat them? Look out for details of the second quiz, returning to the Oslo Bar, Salthill on June 17.



International Criminal Court Summer School, June 15-19

This year's ICC Summer School will be hosted by the Irish Centre for Human Rights. The event will attract legal professionals, academics, researchers and NGOs from across the globe to Galway for five days in June.

NEWEST