

EDI BULLETIN

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences



Welcome

Welcome to the November 2022 edition of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Bulletin. The EDI Bulletin is an initiative of the AHSS Athena SWAN EDI Committee. The objective of the Bulletin is to keep the AHSS faculty updated on the implementation of the faculty Athena SWAN Action Plan and related activities and to document and showcase recent EDI initiatives in the faculty.

It is wonderful to see such a range of EDI activity taking place across the AHSS Faculty. This edition of the Bulletin contains a variety of contributions from staff and students. It features contributions relating to language learning; the Irish World Music Café; conferences and events; launches including the 'Tell your Own Story' launch and the Irish Travellers' Access to Justice report launch; funding successes in COALESCE and the Gender Equality Enhancement Funding; among other stories.

Many thanks to Cillian Foley, AHSS co-op student, for his work on the production of the Bulletin.

Previous issues of the bulletin can be accessed on the [AHSS website](#).

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AHSS Assistant Dean Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



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Athena SWAN Update

Action Plan Update



AHSS was awarded a Bronze Athena SWAN award in 2020. The AHSS Athena SWAN EDI Committee is now working to address actions in Year 3 of the AHSS Bronze award action plan. Some Year 1 and 2 actions require continued attention. For example:

- Action 3.1 requires a yearly review of the AHSS Athena SWAN EDI Committee membership. Each AHSS School/ Dept is represented by two members on the Committee. If any staff member wishes to express an interest in joining the Committee when a vacancy arises, please contact AHSSADEDI@ul.ie to add your name to the succession planning list.
- Actions 5.12 and 5.13 concern awareness of family leave policies. Staff can access information on the different family leave types on the [HR website](#).
- Action 5.20 and 5.21 concern EDI training. Staff should ensure that they complete:
 - [Dignity and Respect Training](#)
 - [Unconscious Bias Training](#)
 - Induction (new staff)



[Other EDI training opportunities](#) available to staff can be accessed on the UL Human Rights Equality Diversity and Inclusion website.

- Action 5.28 concerns transparency in committee appointments. In line with the AHSS Athena SWAN Agreed Principles for Websites, Events and Committees, when vacancies arise on a committee, a call for new participants should be issued to all members of the Faculty. When a new member is appointed, this should also be communicated to all members of the Faculty.

Athena SWAN is a standing item at AHSS Management Committee, Faculty Board and on all AHSS departmental meeting agendas.

Principles for Websites, Events and Committees

In Spring 2022, AHSS Management Committee approved the [AHSS Athena SWAN Agreed Principles for Websites, Events and Committees](#). These principles encourage Faculty to:

- ensure that website and marketing material is representative of all students and staff;
- consider diversity in the selection of speakers at events;
- review committee membership to ensure that it is representative of all staff and students;
- ensure transparency in committee appointments.

A process to monitor implementation of the principles is under development.

AHSS EDI World Café

Following the successful online 'EDI World Café' that took place in the faculty in December 2021, an in-person EDI world café was held on campus in May 2022, organised by the ADEDI Dr. Lydia Bracken and Susan Mulcahy and facilitated by Dr. Chris McInerney.

The world café provided a structured conversational process for knowledge sharing on equality diversity and inclusion (EDI) priorities and challenges in AHSS. The café began with an overview of the context for the café, followed by an explanation of the world café methodology.

Thereafter, participants were presented with three key questions and asked to discuss same in small groups at separate tables. The main themes emerging from the conversations have been integrated into the AHSS Athena SWAN action plan and will inform the work of the AHSS Athena SWAN EDI Committee for the coming year.

Faculty EDI Activity

Graduate Certificate in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Graduations

The inaugural class of the Graduate Certificate in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion graduated this August during the Summer conferring ceremonies. Congratulations to all!

The Graduate Certificate/Diploma in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is designed for learners who wish to develop an interdisciplinary understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and to explore strategies for change. The programmes provide learners with the knowledge and understanding needed to deal effectively with issues of equality, diversity and inclusion at all levels of Irish society, the community and the workplace. More information is available on the programme website.

Everyday Language Learning: The University of Limerick Experience

Over seventy secondary-school students from two County Limerick DEIS schools, Coláiste Chiaráin, Croom, and Desmond College, Newcastle West, visited the UL campus on Wednesday 28 September 2022 to take part in an event promoting language learning in and beyond school as part of UL Languages Week. The event was funded by the AHSS EDI Outreach Fund under the auspices of the IMPULS (Increasing Male Participation and Uptake in Language Studies) project, led by Prof. Jean Conacher and Katie McAuliffe, with support from Post Primary Languages Ireland.

In addition to a campus tour, the secondary school students enjoyed a range of language and culture awareness activities, including an Escape Room, German HipHop, Spanish Flamenco, Language Portraits and a Big Quiz, facilitated by MLAL colleagues Dr. Anita Barmettler, Garazi Beaumont, Marta Fortes, Dr. Marta Giralte, Lara Jacobus, Catherine Jeanneau, Alba Perez and Charly Poquereau. Assistance was also provided by First Year languages students from the Professional Masters in Education and Cillian Foley, AHSS co-op student, who acted as event photographer.

In exploring the recognised gender imbalance in participation and uptake of advanced language studies at schools and in AHSS languages programmes, the IMPULS project aims to raise awareness among male school students in particular of the potential benefits of advanced language learning for both personal and career development. September's campus event built, therefore, on a series of activities developed in conjunction with the two schools, including online sessions with current language students discussing their experience of studying languages at UL and graduates who shared how their university studies have helped them to build careers as language professionals.

Irish World Music Café at UL City Campus

After two years online, the Irish World Music Café opened its doors again on Monday 26 September 2022 at the UL City Campus. The Irish World Academy of Music and Dance has run the café since 2015 in partnership with the migrant NGO Doras.

This is its first time running in the UL City Campus, with new collaborating partners from the PPI Unit in the School of Medicine. The café is a social space of hospitality and music with a focus on welcoming newcomers to Limerick. The Irish World Music Café runs at the UL City Campus every Monday from 11.30am-1pm.



ROCKING Film Screening

As part of Culture Night on 23 September, the ROCKING Film was premiered at the Hunt Museum, Limerick. ROCKING is an interdisciplinary performance-made-for-film in a creative collaboration between early music and contemporary dance. This project explores lamentation, love and loss through a feminist lens and is inspired by the music and text of Tarquinio Merula's sacred lullaby 'Canzonetta spirituale sopra alla nanna', featuring Dr Yonit Kosovske from the Irish World Academy (harpsichord & artistic direction), Aisling Kenny (soprano), Sarah Groser (viola da gamba), and Isabella Oberländer (dance & choreography).





Irish Travellers' Access to Justice Report

The Irish Travellers' Access to Justice (ITAJ) report was officially launched on 23 June 2022. Funded by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the Irish Research Council under the COALESCE programme, the research documents for the first time Travellers' perceptions and experiences of the criminal justice process in Ireland – particularly with the judiciary and An Garda Síochána.

The report is the culmination of an 18-month long project that Chief Commissioner of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Sinead Gibney has said is a 'landmark study' in both its conduct and findings. It is an authoritative analysis and makes evidence-based recommendations for measures to address Travellers' ability to use the tools of the criminal justice system to protect their rights. Among the key barriers to accessing justice is institutional racism towards Travellers, which was found to be prevalent in the criminal justice system.

Intersectional Irelands

The 52nd IASIL conference (International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures) came to UL in July 2022. The conference theme 'Intersectional Irelands' referenced the diversity in Irish literary subjects; it was aptly hosted by Limerick, which rightly prides itself on local community solidarities. The largest professional organisation in Irish literary studies, IASIL draws scholarship from across the Irish literary diaspora, with Brazilian, Japanese, and European universities well represented this year. Guest writers included Sara Baume, Blindboy, Sarah Clancy, Emily Cullen, Louis de Paor, Felispeaks, William Keohane, Lia Mills, Rosaleen McDonagh, and Donal Ryan, and showcased a venerable list of established and emerging UL writers. A quiet room was made available to neurodivergent attendees attending the conference.

The evening programme was staged at the Belltable, Dolan's, King John's Castle, Narrative4, and Ormston House. Opening IASIL22 to a city audience was a means to make the conference more porous than traditional 'ivory tower' events, and to enliven long-established relationships between UL and the local literary/creative sectors. Conference organisers Dr Tina O'Toole, Dr Sorcha de Brún, and Tracy McAvinue wish to thank the AHSS EDI section, the European Centre for Hate Studies, Limerick City Arts Office, UL Arts Office, and UL50 who, among other sponsors, supported our efforts to make the conference accessible and inclusive.



COALESCE Funding

Director of the Irish World Academy, Prof. Helen Phelan has been awarded funding under the Collaborative Alliances for Societal Challenges (COALESCE) programme. Prof. Phelan will work with Professor of Biomedical Statistics, Ailish Hannigan on a participatory project titled 'The arts, data literacy and diversity (ADD)' exploring how the arts can be used to develop data literacy. This research will develop a project that shares songs and data, in partnership with communities from different cultural backgrounds and will combine the arts and statistics to explore the impact of musical sharing on how data is understood and interpreted. The project addresses the UN sustainable development goal of reducing inequality, as many people are excluded from the new world of data by language, poverty, lack of education, and discrimination.



'Tell your Own Story' Launch

The Tell your own Story project (TYOS) celebrated its official launch on 14 October in the UL City Campus. Dr. Marie Connolly, UL's Director of Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, in her opening speech, inspired a deep and critical reflection about the importance of initiatives that bring diversity and inclusion to the centre stage in the Limerick community, the West Region and Nationwide.

TYOS encourages people from diverse cultural backgrounds to 'tell their own story' in Irish media and to give readers and listeners glimpses into their cultures. The ultimate aim of TYOS is to highlight what is shared across cultures and to promote empathy and inclusivity in the wider community.

The project comes from the premise that racism, stereotypes and discrimination arise due to a lack of knowledge in the community and an inflated perception of difference between cultures. TYOS aims to counteract this with a regular, media-based intervention for stereotype and prejudice reduction in news media. From its inception, TYOS has received funding from different bodies and entities, among them the Irish Research Council under the New Foundations Scheme. As part of this, DORAS Luimní acted as community partner, and TYOS has also been receiving training from and has been collaborating with Narrative4. After two training iterations, the project has now 25 participants, who have been trained in interculturality, the Irish media landscape, writing for media, videoing and the creation of podcasts and radio shows.

More information about TYOS is available on the website tyos.ie and on Social Media: @tyos_project (Twitter); TYOS Project (Facebook); tyos_project (Instagram) and tyos_project (TIK TOK)





#LoveIrishResearch Blog

Dr Lydia Bracken's Irish Research Council funded New Foundations project, LGBTI+ Parent Families in Ireland: Legal Recognition of Parent-Child Relationships featured on the Irish Research Council #LoveIrishResearch Blog in June. The blog post describes the background to the research project, which was conducted in collaboration with LGBT Ireland; outlines the main findings and outputs from the research project; and explains how the research connects with Dr Bracken's other research in the field. The Blog post is titled 'The legal obstacles facing LGBTQI+ parent families and why we need to recognize diverse family relationships in Ireland' and can be read online on the [Love Irish Research Blog](#).

Gender Equality Enhancement Funding Success

The HEA recently awarded €50,000 to support a national project on Gender Equality in Language Studies (GELS), under the auspices of its Gender Equality Enhancement Funding. The institutional lead at UL, Prof Jean Conacher (MLAL), will collaborate over the coming year with Project PI, Dr Clive Earls (Maynooth University), and partners Dr Colin Flynn (Dublin City University), Prof Muiris Ó Laoire (Munster Technological University) and Karen Ruddock (Post Primary Languages Ireland - PPLI) to focus on the gender dynamics in Language Studies which see low participation rates beyond school by those not identifying as female.

The project builds on the work undertaken by Prof Conacher as part of the IMPULS (Increasing Male Participation and Uptake in Language Studies) project, which has received support from AHSS EDI and Research funds and PPLI over the past year. Within the new GELS project, partner institutions will form clusters with local DEIS schools to promote institutional and public awareness-raising, enhance networking and HEI-school collaboration, and contribute research expertise to institutional, national and international debates on Gender Equality in Language Studies. An international conference is planned at the University of Maynooth for late August 2023.

Gender, Sexuality and the Irish Free State 1922-1937

On 9 September, Dr Laura Cahillane participated in a seminar organised by Maynooth University Sexuality and Gender Network as part of their decade of centenaries programme. The event was titled: 'Free for Whom: a multidisciplinary symposium on gender, sexuality and the Irish Free State 1922-1937.'

Bringing together various disciplinary perspectives, the event explored the lived reality, particularly for women and sexual minorities in the new State, and the values, policies, laws, practice, and literature relating to genders, gender identities, and sexualities.

The poster features the title "FREE FOR WHOM?" in large, bold, yellow letters on a dark green background. Below the title, it reads "A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY SYMPOSIUM ON GENDER, SEXUALITY AND THE IRISH FREE STATE 1922-1937". A central text block mentions a plenary talk by Professor Mary McAuliffe (UCD) on "The Public and Private Afterlives of Irish Revolutionary Women in the First Decades of the Irish Free State". The poster is divided into two columns: "FREE EVENT WITH LUNCH SUPPLIED" and "OTHER SPEAKERS INCLUDE". The event is scheduled for Friday, September 9th, 2022, from 10am to 3.30pm in Room 0.32 (Seminar Room), Iontas Building, Maynooth University. A list of speakers includes Dr. Lorraine Grimes (MU), Dr. Conor Heffernan (UU), Dr. Máire Nic An Bhaird (MU), Claire McGing (IADT), Dr. Laura Cahillane (UL), and Dr. Caoilfhionn Ní Bhreacháin (UL). Tickets are available at a provided URL.

Launch of Podcast 'Hate Crime on the Two Islands'

A Podcast series co-produced by UL and Sussex University has launched. Entitled 'Hate Crime on the Two Islands', it explores the issue of hate crime and law reform processes relating to hate crime across our two islands.

It is written and presented by Prof Mark Walters and Prof Jennifer Schweppe, and produced in association with a former UL student, Kate O'Donovan. The podcast is available here.

The Legendary Ingrammettes

The Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, supported by the AHSS EDI section, welcomed Gospel masters 'The Legendary Ingrammettes' to Limerick on Wednesday 21 September for an interactive workshop and performance.

The Legendary Ingrammettes are recipients of the 2022 National Heritage Fellowship, the United States' highest honour in the traditional arts.

Researcher Profile: Mark Ryan

Mark Ryan is a fourth year Ph.D. researcher, a Teaching Assistant in Applied Linguistics and a MLAL Scholarship recipient specialising in gender- and sexuality-based discrimination in the Irish context. Mark was the overall winner of the 2022 Thesis-In-Three competition at the University of Limerick where he presented his research below:

Homophobia is more than slurs and statements such as, 'I hate gays'. As explicit gender- and sexuality-based discrimination becomes increasingly unacceptable in many domains of life, implicit homophobia is still prevalent, and manifests as a discursive phenomenon. My Ph.D. is by Publication and is a suite of three interconnected studies based on the premise that language has the power to shape how we think and act. It aims (i) to investigate how exactly implicit homophobia occurs in the Irish context, (ii) to develop a linguistic 'toolkit' to allow implicit homophobia to be challenged, and (iii) to equip people with the skills and information necessary to be reflective about their own language practices and avoid 'saying the wrong thing' without feeling policed or judged.



Why? Well, on 22 May 2015, the Republic of Ireland held a referendum to include a provision for same-sex marriage in its Constitution, and this passed with 62% of the vote, and 61% voter turnout. This was a huge cultural shift for Ireland but was also a milestone globally as it was the very first time same-sex marriage was legalised by popular vote anywhere in the world! While it really is tempting to take this as a sign that all is well when it comes to matters of gender and sexuality in Ireland, my research would suggest that this may not be the case, and indeed that there are a number of linguistic practices at play both in the media and in everyday interactions, that consistently construct LGBTQ+ people as somewhat different, inferior, or even dangerous to the rest of society. Implicit homophobia is something many people experience on nearly a daily basis in the seemingly innocuous things people say.

As such, my research investigates the subtle ways that we can manipulate language to allow homophobic sentiments to be expressed without losing face – in a hidden way. Very often, implicit homophobia is a precursor to much more extreme forms of hate and violence (and I'm sure we can all too easily recall harrowing examples from the media). And so, I want to get to the bottom of this type of discrimination and show that sometimes how we speak about things influences how we think and how we act, and very often it is rooted in attitudes and ideologies that are, at their core, discriminatory, although they may not appear to be at first glance. As former president of Ireland, Mary McAleese said, 'There is more to be done, for the work of dismantling the entire architecture of homophobia is still not complete.' I hope to apply the findings of my research to the creation of training programmes and resource kits and workshops for parents, schools and businesses to help achieve this goal