

ANNUAL REPORT 2013

IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL



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KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS WILL BE THE KEY TO IRELAND'S FUTURE



Established in 2012 under the Government's Public Sector Reform Plan the Irish Research Council, a merger of two former councils, the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) and the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET), operates under the aegis of the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and is an agency of the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

As we develop our society and economy we will increasingly be part of a strong global competition for talented people. Research creates knowledge and enables the growth of creativity and innovation. The mission of the Irish Research Council is to create and sustain a vibrant research community. This community will contribute to the enhancement of our education provision, to our understanding of the world past and present, to public policy, to health, to arts and culture, to improving our relationship with our environment, to economic development and most importantly to societal well-being.

The Council therefore promotes and supports world-class research and research excellence is judged by a rigorous system of international peer review. The Council aims to identify and support the best postgraduate and early career researchers, and to support established researchers to perform at the highest level nationally and internationally. As mandated, we support researchers and research across the full spectrum of disciplines including the arts, biological sciences, physical sciences, engineering and technology, humanities, and social sciences. This approach delivers a diversity of skills, talent and knowledge which contributes to enterprise, the public sector and civic society. Given the Council's wide disciplinary compass, and the reality that many forms of innovation and new knowledge are found at disciplinary borders and when disciplines intersect, the Council has a strong commitment to fostering interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research.

We also have a strong commitment to partnering in our activities. For example, our portfolio contains a number of programmes which are co-funded by enterprise/employers and these programmes involve individual researchers in their formative years being given the opportunity to conduct research outside academia. The programmes are demand led and they form part of the Action Plan for Jobs. We also have a range of partnerships with government departments/bodies which require skills capacity development and/or independent international peer reviewed research conducted in areas of strategic importance and national policy interest.

In addition to this national focus, the Council also represents Ireland's interests in a number of European fora. We are the national agency for a number of aspects of Horizon 2020. We lead Ireland's engagement with the societal challenge to develop an inclusive, innovative and reflective society in Europe. We pay particular attention to the needs of the Arts, Humanities and Social Science communities in the European policy and competitive funding context. The Irish Research Council funded National Marie Skłodowska-Curie Office based at the Irish Universities Association (IUA) provides support to researchers from all disciplines and all domains of research, public or private.

Finally, the Irish Research Council provides advice on research policy and policy for postgraduate education and works to strengthen the benefits from research by encouraging researchers to disseminate and transfer knowledge in the widest possible contexts.

We hope you find this report for 2013 of interest and thank you for taking the time to peruse it. If you require any more information please do not hesitate to contact us or visit our website www.research.ie.



Director

2. OUR PROFILE IN 2013 – SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

FACTS...



- was the first full year of operation for the **Irish Research Council (IRC)** since the merger of IRCHSS & IRCSET.
- Professor Orla Feely named as Chair of the Council in late December 2012.

NEW AWARDS CORE PROGRAMMES 2013

A total of 295 postgraduate students across the Government of Ireland Scheme, Enterprise Partnership Scheme (EPS), and Employment Based Postgraduate Programme (EBPP).

ARTS - ZOOLOGY



- The Council launched the ELEVATE Programme to enable postdoctoral researchers to travel to conduct research anywhere in the world for two years before returning to Ireland for their final year – 15 awards made in the inaugural round.
- A new MOU with the IUA whereby the Council would fund the Marie Skłodowska-Curie National Office was signed.

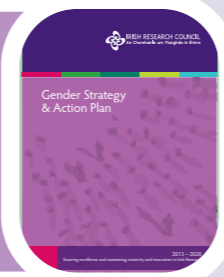


- The Council contributed to the implementation of the National Strategy for Higher Education, the Research Prioritization Report and the Action Plan for Jobs.



- The Council funded research across all disciplines: Astronomy and Space Science to Musicology and Theatre Studies.

The EU Commissioner for Research and Innovation, Ms. Máire Geoghegan-Quinn launched the Irish Research Council's Gender Strategy and Action Plan.



TOTAL FIGURES IN 2013

In 2013 supporting

€31 MILLION

Exchequer funding.

172

Postdoctoral Fellows across 17 research performing organisations.

104

New Foundations Awards supporting researcher activities including conference organisation and travel.

19

Ulysses Awards supporting research collaborations between Irish and French researchers.

€3.3 MILLION

Funding from other sources.

803 SCHOLARS

Scholars across 30 higher education institutions.

19

Principal Investigator led Research Projects and associated teams.



ORIGIN OF SCHOLARS: 270 EU and 25 Non-EU citizens.



GENDER: 155 female scholars and 140 male scholars.

66% OF EPS SCHOLARS & 50% OF EBPP SCHOLARS WERE ALIGNED WITH THE 14 ECONOMIC PRIORITY AREAS

Awards were made across 17 higher education institutions. Awards made across all 11 Primary Areas covering 72 disciplines.

16% 2013 scholars funded in partnership with an enterprise/employer partner.

Awards in 2013 directly supported by **57** enterprise/employer partners who provide a minimum of **33%** of financial support for sponsored researchers.

STARTER, ADVANCED AND INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECTS

- A total of 19 project awards made in 2013.
- Success rate was 11.4%.
- 5 Starter, 6 Advanced, 3 Interdisciplinary (AHSS led), awards were made.
- 5 policy Project Awards were made in partnership with the Department of Social Protection, the HSE- Crisis Pregnancy Programme, the Higher Education Authority and Science Foundation Ireland.
- Awards were made across 5 research performing organisations.

POSTDOCS

A total of 74 postdoctoral fellows across the Government of Ireland, ELEVATE and Enterprise Partnership Scheme.

Awards were made across 9 research performing organisations.



GENDER: 33 female fellows and 41 male fellows.



ORIGIN OF FELLOWS: 68 EU and 6 Non-EU citizens.

€

Awards ranged from **€115,000 to €1.08M** (project durations of 1 to 4 years).

3. A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A RESEARCH COUNCIL – EVENT/MILESTONE


JANUARY  Ireland takes over Presidency of the EU/Council.

Enterprise Partnership Scheme (EPS) **55 AWARDS** announced.

 Minister attendance at the 1st Irish Research Council Meeting of 2013, held in Royal Irish Academy (RIA).

Professor Rob Kitchin, former IRC Research Council awardee, European Research Council (ERC) award announced.

FEBRUARY Future Jobs Forum, organised by Silicon Republic, and sponsored by IRC.

 1st of Gender Dimension Workshops.  Event to mark the first awards under the Employment Based Postgraduate Programme.

MARCH  Council becomes the handling agency for the HERA €18m Cultural Encounters fund.

Launch of Women Invent Tomorrow Campaign with Silicon Republic.

APRIL  Down Survey of Ireland.

MAY IRC sponsored RIA event on Open Access.

 Minister of State for Research and Innovation, Seán Sherlock TD, welcomed a Cabinet decision that allowed Ireland to become a member of two European Research Infrastructure Consortia - the European Social Survey (ESS) and the Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities (DARIAH). 

Council Meeting with Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn. EU Presidency conference on Researcher Careers and Mobility – Council sponsored awards presented.

 Presentation of Lindau Nobel Prizewinners Meeting Awards by the Minister for Research and Innovation.


Reception hosted by the President of Ireland, the Patron of the Lindau Nobel Prizewinners Meeting Award.

Signing of the MOU with the Lindau Nobel Prizewinners Foundation and the Irish Research Council.

Professor Michael Breen elected Chair of the General Assembly of the European Social Survey.


JUNE Clontarf castle hosts Presidency event. Director keynote 'Research needs, patient gaps and innovative solutions.'

Launch of the Ulysses mobility call. Visit of his Excellency the Ambassador of Mexico to the Irish Research Council Awards under the Enterprise Partnership Scheme 2013.

 Silicon Republic recognises 100 top women in STEM. Dr. David Hoey, former IRC Awardee, ERC award announced.

JULY Awards for the GOI Scholarships, Fellowships. First awards under the ELEVATE international mobility CO-FUND programme.

Launch of the IRC Alumni Survey conducted by the Warwick Institute for Employment Research, UK.

AUGUST  The Minister for State for Research and Innovation, Seán Sherlock T.D., announced that the Irish Research Council will make research awards totalling some €16.8 million.

 Irish Research Council's Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme is a new and exciting initiative providing postgraduate researchers with an employment-focused educational experience.

SEPTEMBER  The Irish Research Council Annual Symposium at CareerZoo. NORFACE Future Welfare States call launched.

 latest phase of Ulysses research funding programme launched. Meeting with the Irish Research Staff Association. Cultural Encounters – HERA programme launch in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

OCTOBER  IRC internship programme with NASA Research which will see talented early stage researchers from Ireland being given the opportunity to work at NASA's world leading research facilities in the US. Dr. Marie Louise Coolahan, former IRC Awardee, ERC award announced. IRC and other European partners hold the inaugural meeting of GENDERNET. 

NOVEMBER Meeting with Prof. Peter Strohschneider, Chair of the DFG. Inaugural Medical Research Charities Health Research Conference, Rotunda Hospital.

Innovation Ireland Forum – Irish Research Council sponsored. Director of Council elected to the Board of ScienceEurope.

Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting Irish nominees announced for 2014.

DECEMBER  Inaugural Irish Laboratory Awards – IRC sponsor. Launch of the Irish Research Council Gender Strategy and Action Plan by Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn.

National launch of Horizon 2020.

The HEA and the IRC explore some of the secrets of the season with expert help from third level colleges!

OTHER 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

Danielle Petherbridge is an IRC Marie Curie Research Fellow working on the project entitled *Encountering the Other: Intersubjectivity, Sociality and Freedom*. From 2013-2015, she will be located in the Department of Philosophy, Columbia University, New York. Previously Dr Petherbridge was awarded an Irish Research Council Postdoctoral Fellowship for a study on *Axel Honneth and the Project of Critical Theory* and has recently published a monograph arising from this project entitled *The Critical Theory of Axel Honneth*, Lexington Books, USA, 2013. She was also awarded a New Ideas grant from the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences with co-principal investigator Luna Dolezal for the research project *Recognition, Identity and Cultural Encounters* and is currently working on an edited collection arising from the project entitled *Body/Self/Other: The Phenomenology of Social Encounters*.



Led by Dr Piaras MacÉinrí, researchers at University College Cork completed an Irish Research Council funded project which resulted in what is probably the most representative survey ever undertaken on emigration in Ireland. Using cartographic and demographic data available for the first time in the 2011 Census, they explored Irish emigration today in a fine-grained and broad-based fashion not previously possible. Over the course of a year, they knocked on more than **2,400 doors** in all parts of Ireland, collected detailed online data from more than **1,500** emigrants, surveyed more than **500** intending emigrants at jobs fairs, and interviewed over **50** emigrants at length about their emigrant decisions, experiences and future plans.



In December 2013, Frances Fitzgerald TD, in her role as Minister for Children & Youth Affairs, launched 'An Examination of Recommendations from Inquiries into Events in Families, their Interactions with State Services and their Impact on Policy and Practice', authored by Dr Helen Buckley and Dr Caroline O'Nolan of the School of Social Work and Social Policy, at Trinity College Dublin. The funding was administered by the Irish Research Council under the Research Development Initiative scheme; the research was commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs as a result of the Ryan Report, and set out to examine the implementation of recommendations resulting from five Inquiries into child abuse in families between 1993 and 2010.

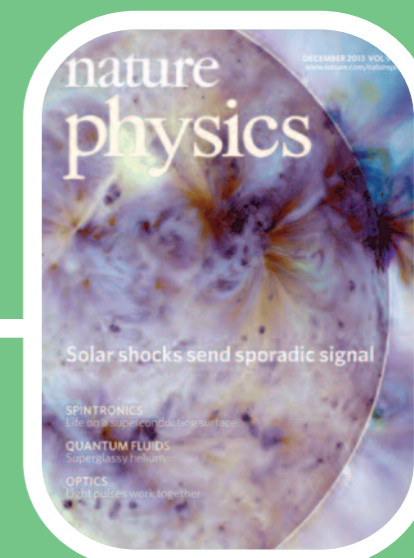


Also in December 2013, the Taoiseach launched a new monograph by Dr Ciara Meehan: *A Just Society for Ireland? 1964-1987* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Drawing on interviews with key players and previously unused archival sources, this book offers a fascinating account of a critical period in Fine Gael's history when the party was challenged to define its place in Irish politics. This publication was prepared during the course of Dr Meehan's Irish Research Council Postdoctoral Fellowship.



EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL AWARDS 2013

There were three successful IRC Alumni in the European Research Council awards in 2013: Marie Louise Coolahan (English), David Hoey (Chemistry), Rob Kitchin (Social Science/Geography).



Dr Eoin Carley, a former Irish Research Council Postgraduate Scholar at the School of Physics, Trinity College Dublin, was first author of an article published in *Nature Physics*: 'Quasiperiodic acceleration of electrons by a plasmoid-driven shock in the solar atmosphere' (2013). Despite decades of study, the link between solar storms and solar radio bursts had remained unclear. This led Professor Peter Gallagher, a solar physicist at Trinity's School of Physics, to establish a radio observatory at Birr Castle in the midlands of Ireland to monitor solar radio bursts. The new research has shown for the first time a direct link between solar storms, shock waves and solar radio bursts. "Our results not only give an insight into the fundamental physics of explosions on the Sun, but enable us to better understand how the Sun affects the Earth and potentially its impacts on our daily lives" according to Carley.





European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

ERC CASE STUDY

Former Irish Research Council Marie Curie COFUND INSPIRE Fellow and University of Limerick researcher, Dr David Hoey was announced as one of the recipients of the highly prestigious European Research Council (ERC) starting grants. Dr Hoey has been awarded €1.5 million to pursue research into developing innovative treatments for bone-loss diseases such as osteoporosis. Dr Hoey was one of two Irish recipients to receive this ERC award and faced tough competition for these grants, as the call attracted 3,329 proposals in total, which represents a 50% overall rise in demand for these grants.



Andrew Grene Scholar, Helen S.A. Basini, published 'Gender Mainstreaming Unraveled: The Case of DDDR in Liberia', International Interactions: Empirical and Theoretical Research in International Relations, Volume 39, Issue 4, 2013.

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'The Magdalene Institutions: Recording an Oral and Archival History Project', funded by the Irish Research Council, was conducted by Dr Katherine O'Donnell, Director of the Women's Studies Centre at University College Dublin. The objective of this study was to contribute towards a better understanding of the system of Magdalene Institutions that existed in Ireland through the gathering of relevant archive and testimonies from former Magdalene women and their family members, religious sisters who worked at the Magdalene Laundries, as well as visitors to those institutions and other key informants. The interviews, transcripts and archival materials are available in redacted format through UCD Archives.



WINNERS OF THE IRC POSTER COMPETITION 2013, ANNOUNCED AT CAREER ZOO



MEDICAL LABORATORY OF THE YEAR

The Lahue Lab, Centre for Chromosome Biology at NUI Galway picked up 'Medical Laboratory of the Year' and 'Pharmaceutical Laboratory of the Year' at the The Irish Laboratory Awards (ILA's), running for the first time in 2013. Several members of The Lahue Lab are current or former Irish Research Council Awardees; Aisling Frizzell, Kim Debacker, Anne-Marie Gannon and Norma Keogh. The awards recognise excellence and achievement in the laboratory environment, covering management, innovation, collaboration, personnel development and laboratory equipment supply. The Awards offer a vehicle for all professional Irish scientists, industries and suppliers to advocate their science-based work in a competitive setting. The Awards also contribute to Ireland's ability to measure and maintain standards, to innovate and encourage and to research and develop new ideas which are key enablers in achieving excellence in education, manufacturing and business processes. The Irish Research Council were supporters of these Awards for their focus on excellence in basic and applied research carried out in both commercial and academic labs across Ireland, which is viewed as a key element to the future success of Ireland's knowledge-based economy.



4. RESEARCHER CAREER PROGRESSION AWARDS – OPPORTUNITIES AND NEW INITIATIVES IN 2013

The very competitive Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellow programmes provide a first step in the career ladder for PhD graduates in Ireland. The Council has also complemented this programme by applying to the Marie-Curie Actions Co-Fund for support for career development initiatives. Specifically, support was sought and competitively won to put in place programmes to enable mobility for researchers to gain experience outside Ireland, and also for researchers to come to Ireland and enhance the Irish research system. In 2013 the participants of one career development initiative finished their awards – the INSPIRE programme for postdoctoral researchers – whilst another cohort embarked on their participation in a new initiative called ELEVATE.

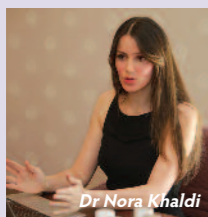
CAREER PROGRESSION CASE STUDY – INSPIRE

The “IRCSET-Marie Curie International Mobility Postdoctoral Fellowship in Science, Engineering and Technology” programme, or INSPIRE for short, was originally established by IRCSET, and currently managed by the Irish Research Council. INSPIRE is co-funded by the European Commission Marie Curie Actions via an award under the FP7 COFUND programme, competitively secured by IRCSET in 2008.

The main objective of the INSPIRE programme was to provide a career support for Experienced Researchers (ERs) based in Ireland who had not had the benefit of a previous period of research mobility. The programme enabled ERs to undertake up to two years of research outside Ireland, with a one-year return period to Ireland. 138 applications were from eligible ERs, and 50 individual Fellowships were awarded. Fellows selected some of the world’s most prestigious research institutions, including the University of Oxford, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Max Planck Institute for the initial outgoing phase of the award and subsequently returned to Ireland to finish their projects.

A survey of the Fellows, in combination with information provided in progress and final reports, clearly demonstrates that Fellows have strongly benefitted from the mobility and career development experience offered by the Fellowships. A small number of Fellows terminated their Fellowships early due to very attractive and beneficial employment opportunities, such as the offer of permanent lectureships. The majority of the remaining fellows completed their research Fellowships by the end of 2013. Those who completed their Fellowships are all in employment with many of them holding permanent, tenure-track and other senior academic positions, further demonstrating the positive career development benefits of the programme.

In addition to gaining advantageous employment contracts, Fellows are also using the experience they gained during their INSPIRE award to help secure further significant research funding: e.g. *Dr David Hoey was recently awarded an European Research Council Starting Grant and commented ‘I am in no doubt that the INSPIRE programme provided me with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable my successful application to the ERC programme.’* Separately, some Fellows have used their newly acquired expertise to embark on a career in industry. One such example is Dr Nora Khaldi, who has founded her own company ‘Nuritas’, which uses a combination of bioinformatics software and experimental approaches to identify bioactive peptides and novel functional ingredients in food.



The wide variety and high level of positions that INSPIRE Fellows now hold illustrates the breadth and depth of expertise and proficiencies that were gained during the fellowship scheme. The positive effects of the programme on the career development of our INSPIRE Fellows can be clearly observed by looking at the follow-on positions the Fellows secured immediately after finishing their Fellowship. Thus, in terms of enhancing the mobility and employability of early career researchers in Ireland, INSPIRE may be considered to have left a valuable and lasting imprint on the Irish research landscape.

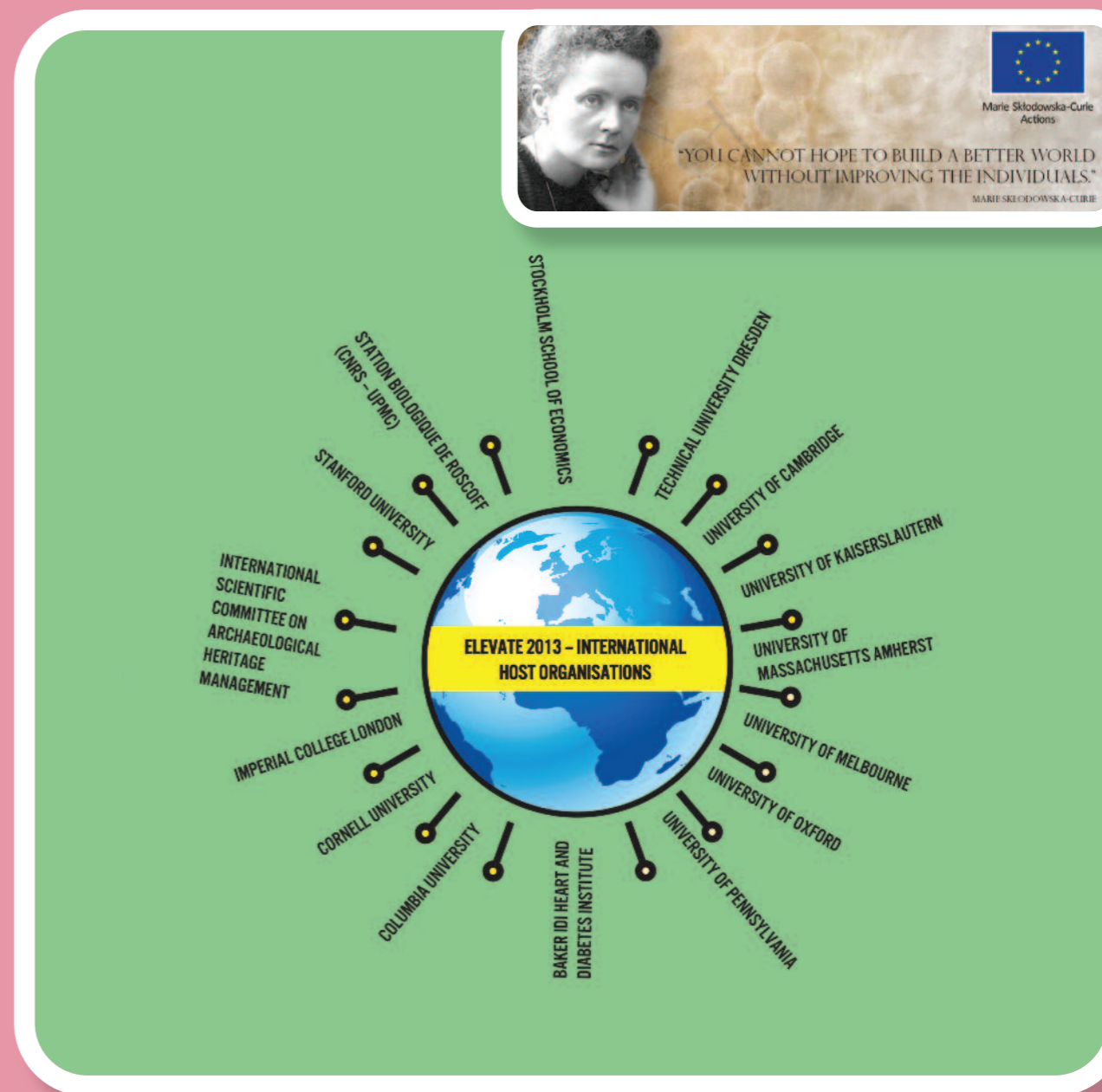
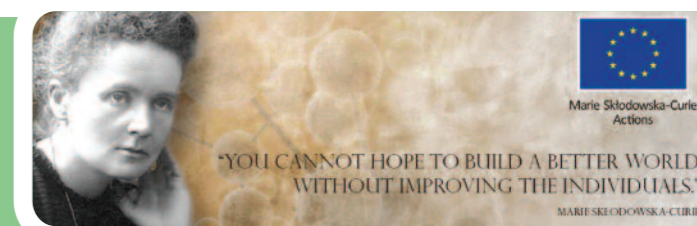


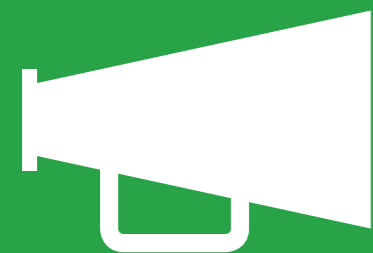
A NEW OPPORTUNITY IN 2013 - ELEVATE

€3.2M

The award of €3.2 million in 2012 to the Council, through the competitive Marie-Curie Co-Fund scheme, supported the launch in 2013 of a fund to enable postdoctoral researchers to travel to conduct research anywhere in the world for two years before returning to Ireland for their final year. Following an intense competition, the first cohort of 15 researchers, across a range of disciplines obtained their awards through the ELEVATE programme. This programme empowers researcher career development and also enhances the forging of international connections.

The ELEVATE initiative has excellent potential to impact on the careers of researchers based in Ireland. The opportunity to work abroad before returning to Ireland and the potential for developing international research collaborations is significant.





A NEW INITIATIVE NATIONALLY - THE NEXT STEP UP: STARTER AND ADVANCED PROJECT AWARDS - PREPARING RESEARCHERS IN IRELAND FOR H2020



IN PREPARATION FOR THE LAUNCH OF HORIZON 2020 THE COUNCIL RAN A FUNDING CALL IN 2013 FOR ADVANCED PROJECT GRANTS. THE CALL IN 2013 FOCUSED ON TRANS-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PROPOSALS AND ON PROJECTS LED BY RESEARCHERS FROM THE ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES DOMAINS.

19



A TOTAL OF NINETEEN AWARDS WERE MADE COVERING A DIVERSITY OF TOPICS INCLUDING ARTS, ARCHAEOLOGY, CULTURE, ECONOMICS, HEALTH, HISTORY AND POLITICS. THREE INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECTS WERE FUNDED WHICH INCLUDED A MEDICAL ENGINEERING/PSYCHOLOGY PROJECT, A DIGITAL HUMANITIES AND A MEDICAL HUMANITIES PROJECT.

5. PARTNERING ON RESEARCH WITH ENTERPRISE, GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC SOCIETY

EMPLOYMENT BASED POSTGRADUATE AWARDS

In Q1 2013 awards and projects were announced under a national pilot 'industrial MSc and PhD' programme called the Employment Based Postgraduate Programme. The Masters or PhD student becomes employed by their Employer Mentor for the duration of the MSc/PhD. The programme provides a 'co-educational' experience and thus provides an opportunity for a researcher in their formative years to be exposed to a research and innovation environment, and to a workplace outside academia. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food partnered on the first pilot. Prior to year end, and in advance of the 2013 pilot, other national agencies and Departments joined with the Council on the programme. These entities were Enterprise Ireland (strategic partner), Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (funding partner), Science Foundation Ireland (funding partner), Teagasc (funding partner). A second pilot call was launched in 2013 which recast a number of key Terms and Conditions to minimise barriers to entry in the programme, thanks to Knowledge Transfer Ireland who advised on the Intellectual Property policy for this important initiative, a key deliverable for the Research Prioritization Action Plan in 2013. The programme is in particular encouraging SMEs with low research and innovation capacity to consider Masters scholars. This allows SMEs to share the risk of investing in research while developing new areas of business and development. Research Scholars on this programme gain valuable work experience during their studies and graduate with a strong understanding of how research applies in commercial and societal contexts.



The Employment Partners on this programme come from a wide variety of sectors and represent the range of business types including micro-businesses, SMEs, large Irish Companies, NGOs/charities and MNCs with bases in Ireland.

SMEs: Small and Medium Enterprises; MNCs: Multi-national Companies



EBP Scholar Daryl Gunning (centre) with colleagues from Daithi O'Murchu Marine Research Station, Dave Evans (left) and Marc Shorten (right). Marc is Daryl's Employment Mentor while he is working on his 4 year PhD project 'The ecological and economic contribution of the detritivore component to novel marine Integrated Multi-trophic Aquaculture (IMTA) systems' with Academic Supervisor Professor Gavin Burnell, University College Cork.



EBP Scholar Maria Deseada Gutierrez (foreground) with her Employment Mentor Dr. Frank Smyth from Pilot Photonics. In the second year of a 4 year PhD project 'Optical Comb Sources, their Demultiplexing, and Use in High Spectral Efficiency Next-Generation Optical Transport Networks' with Academic Supervisor Professor Liam Barry, Dublin City University.



ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

The Enterprise Partnership Scheme is an innovative initiative whereby the Irish Research Council, in partnership with private enterprises and public bodies, awards co-funded postgraduate scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships to the most promising researchers in Ireland. Awardees on this scheme gain additional beneficial experience and insight into the commercial arena while completing their research. It provides industry with flexible and easy access to an exceptional pool of competitively selected, high-calibre researchers and the opportunity to build links with relevant academic research groups. The scheme facilitates the establishment of new relationships and the strengthening of existing ones between enterprise and academia while offering financial support to researchers at an early stage of their career development.

Facilitating the involvement of Enterprise Partners with the education and training of graduates from Irish Higher Education Institutions contributes to the Council's commitment to enabling research with both a knowledge and societal focus. The continuing success of this scheme for 2013 demonstrates the mutually beneficial contexts of collaborative research projects at the postgraduate and postdoctoral level.



The new awards made in 2013 will be directly supported by Enterprise Partners across a range of sectors. These Partners will provide one third of the financial support for these researchers.

55

ENTERPRISE-ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

THE ENTERPRISE PARTNERS ON THIS PROGRAMME COME FROM A WIDE VARIETY OF SECTORS AND REPRESENT THE RANGE OF BUSINESS, ORGANISATIONS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WHO CONTRIBUTE ONE THIRD OF THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE SCHEME AND PROVIDE MENTORSHIP TO THE RESEARCHERS.

THE IRC IS PROUD TO HAVE PARTNERED WITH



FOR A LIST OF OUR 2013 AWARD WINNERS AND MORE STATISTICS PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.research.ie

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT AND AGENCIES FUNDING RESEARCH THROUGH IRC IN 2013

In addition to the core funding received from our parent department, the Department of Education and Skills, twelve departments and agencies funded research through the Irish Research Council in 2013:



Case Study – Partnership with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs

In 2013, a major output of the IRC partnership with the Department of Children & Youth Affairs was the launch by the Minister, Frances Fitzgerald, TD, of the Children's Research Centre report, "Family Wellbeing on a Limited Income: A Study of Families Living at Risk of Poverty in Ireland". The report, written by Dr Lorraine Swords, Dr Brian Merriman and Ms Michelle O'Donnell, was funded by the Family Support Agency through the Council. The report used data collected as part of Growing Up in Ireland, the National Longitudinal Study of Children, to describe the wellbeing of Irish families living on limited incomes and shed light on the factors associated with their wellbeing.

CASE STUDY – Partnership with SFI and the HEA

RESEARCH PROJECT GRANTS: CASE STUDY:

Under the 2013 RPG, Professor Ronan Powell, of Dublin City University Business School, was funded under the Science Foundation Ireland/Higher Education Authority strand of the Scheme. This strand specifically seeks to assess the impact of publically-funded research, development and innovation. The overarching goal of this project is to analyse the premise that R&D and innovation necessarily leads to increased productivity, and to examine which companies benefit most from innovation; and thus, which companies' innovation schemes might best be targeted.

6. A NEW EXCELLENCE AWARD – THE LINDAU NOBEL LAUREATE MEETING AWARD



The Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings Award offers the unique opportunity for up to 600 aspiring young scientists from all around the globe to meet the luminaries of science, the Nobel Laureates, for an intense exchange of knowledge, ideas and experiences. An international competition selects participants. In May, the organisers of the Lindau Meetings and Council signed a memorandum of understanding establishing for the first time the opportunity for the participation of young Irish scientists. Four Irish scientists participated in the 63rd Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting. They were presented with their awards by Minister Sherlock at an event held in the Botanic Gardens, following which, they were presented to the Patron, the President of Ireland, Mr. Michael D. Higgins.



7. ENHANCING KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION

The 'New Foundations' scheme provides support for research actions, the development of networks, participation or attendance, workshops and/or more general dissemination activities designed to better communicate the outcomes and values of academic research in Ireland and beyond. In 2013, 155 awards were made under the scheme, with proposals examining areas from adoption law and practice in Ireland to STEM Education Research and Development.



NEW FOUNDATIONS CASE STUDY:

In 2012, Dr. Marcus O'Halloran, NUIG, was granted a New Foundations award to develop a network of European researchers in the area of microwave medical imaging with the aim of submitting a COST funding proposal in 2013. With the support of the scheme, Dr. O'Halloran secured the participation of several additional researchers for the proposal and was successful in the application to COST in May 2013. This proposal aims to accelerate technological developments, clinical trials and the commercialisation of radar-based imaging technologies.

8. LEADING FOR IRELAND IN EUROPE - ENGAGING INTERNATIONALLY TO BENEFIT THE IRISH RESEARCH COMMUNITY

In March 2013, the Council began the management of an €18m research funding programme on the topic Cultural Encounters on behalf of 19 other national research funding agencies through Europe. This consortium known as HERA – Humanities in the European Research Area - was established to promote an awareness of the importance of humanities to the understanding of fundamental changes in contemporary European society. It links national programmes and joint research programmes to generate new knowledge on social, cultural, political and ethical developments. The Irish Research Council was selected to be the handling agency for the programme and the Council is delighted to play this role for our HERA partners.

This research programme funded 18 humanities-centred projects on Cultural Encounters. October 2013 saw the official launch of these projects in Dubrovnik. This successful event organised by the Irish Research Council brought together a consortium of Project Leaders and Principal Investigators to meet with members of the HERA network. The conference featured networking events and presentations from all eighteen Project Leaders. The objective was to grant awardees a unique opportunity to meet, share ideas and expand their research network.

Looking forward to 2014, the Irish Research Council was voted by the HERA board as the preferred organisation to act as the handling agency for the next Joint Research Programme 3 'Uses for the Past'. HERA continues to expand with the welcome addition of five new research councils to the consortium.

New Opportunities for Research Funding Agency Cooperation in Europe (NORFACE) is a partnership between fourteen social sciences research councils across Europe was established in 2004, when the network successfully bid for an FP6 award to coordinate activities. The twelve partners involved are the research councils for the social sciences from Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Canada and Austria participate in NORFACE as associate partners. This partnership is built on a history of less formal co-operation and joint activities between the Nordic and UK research councils. NORFACE formalises this existing working relationship and provides a framework and a vision for a durable multi-national strategic partnership in research funding and practice. It is an ambitious programme of communication, enquiry, sharing of experience and action.



REPRESENTING IRELAND'S INTEREST IN TWO ESFRI INFRASTRUCTURES

In Q1 2013, the Government decided to formally join the European Social Survey (ESS) and the Digital Arts and Humanities Research Infrastructure (DARIAH). The Irish Research Council has been designated the agency to represent Ireland in these legal entities. In May 2013, the IRC nominated expert Professor Michael Breen, UL was elected Chair of the General Assembly for ESS.



NASA RESEARCH

The Irish Research Council announced an internship programme with NASA Research which will see talented early stage researchers from Ireland being given the opportunity to work at NASA's world leading research facilities in the US.

These internships will be of 10 -15 week duration and will be based at the NASA Ames facility. This facility is among the world's leading research centres and hosts researchers across all disciplines.



BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Now in its sixteenth year, the Ulysses scheme continues to support Irish and French researchers across a range of mutually important research areas. The scheme is designed to support new research collaborations between Irish and French researchers, and collaborations have often continued long after the Ulysses award has finished. Ulysses provides a crucial mobility experience for early stage researchers and in many cases leads to further research funding. In 2013, nineteen researchers were funded under the Scheme.

APPENDIX 1

Council Members

Professor Orla Feely (Chair), Vice-President for Research, Innovation & Impact. School of Electrical, Electronic and Communications Engineering, University College Dublin

Professor John Brewer, President of the British Sociological Association, Department of Sociology, University of Aberdeen

Professor Thomas M. Cooney, Academic Director of the Institute for Minority Entrepreneurship, Dublin Institute of Technology

Dr Ivan Coulter, Chief Executive Officer, Sigmoid Pharma Ltd

Professor Caroline Fennell, School of Law, Head of the College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences, University College Cork

Professor James P. Gleeson, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Limerick

Professor Sheila Greene, Fellow Emeritus, Professor of Childhood Research and former Director of the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin

Professor Anita R. Maguire, Department of Chemistry, Vice President for Research & Innovation, University College Cork

Professor Rowena Pecchenino, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Head of Department of Economics, Finance and Accounting, National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Professor Sean Ryder, Head of the Department of English, Chair HERA Network Board, National University of Ireland, Galway

Professor Alan F. Smeaton, Director, Insight Centre for Data Analytics, Dublin City University

2013 Council Executive

Dr Eucharia Meehan, Director

Dr Gemma Irvine, Assistant Director, European Research Council Joint Delegate (SET) & SSH National Delegate

Dr Johanna Archbold

Ms Sorcha Carthy

Ms Fiona Davis

Ms Margaret Egan

Ms Angela Ennis

Mr Paul Kilkenny

Dr Ross McKiernan

Dr Eavan O'Brien

Ms Sharon O'Rourke

Dr Kate Ryan

Ms Olive Walsh

Postdoctoral Internship holders in 2013:

Dr Mark Dunleavy

Dr Ian Miller

Dr Zsuzsanna Zarka



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