

Record

of the

Main Speeches

given by the

Provost of Trinity College Dublin,

Dr Patrick J Prendergast

in the

Academic Year 2020 – 2021



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01 September 2020

## **Address to New Academic Staff at the Induction Programme**

*Dargan Theatre, Trinity Business School*

Good morning, everyone,

Good morning to those of you here in the Dargan Theatre and good morning to those attending remotely.

It's a pleasure to be welcoming you to Trinity at this, the start of your induction programme.

This is my first official event of the new academic year – teaching starts for undergraduates in a few short weeks. And this is the largest live audience I've addressed in six months – the Zoom speeches have been going fine but it's great to be talking to a live audience again.

This is a blended event – with attendance a mixture of 'in person' and live-streaming. As such, it's indicative of how we intend to educate our students in the coming academic year: we want to balance in-person contact with implementing the Covid restrictions necessary to safeguard the health of staff and students.

We've spent a lot of time working out how to achieve this – this is an academic year like no other – and we're in unprecedented and fast-changing circumstances. Not all universities are taking our approach - some are only facilitating online teaching. But we think in-person contact with students is vital. Particularly, for new staff members, such as yourselves. It's important for you to meet with students, and for students to meet you.

Your Head of Discipline will be in touch with you over the coming days, if that hasn't happened already, to outline the specifics of your teaching in the first term. The college website has a Covid section which is constantly changing as the situation changes – that website will always have the most up to date information.

It's also, of course, important for you to meet colleagues and to immerse yourself in campus life. This, too, is made more difficult by Covid restrictions. Many colleagues are still largely working from home. And all the usual social events – the talks, lectures, theatre and music performances, sporting events – are much reduced or

have migrated online, providing less opportunities for meeting up. This is unavoidable. They will return.

In the meantime, your School and Department will be reaching out to you over the coming days and weeks to ensure that you meet colleagues, including meeting them online. Do take the opportunity to connect with as many as possible, and do enjoy familiarising yourself with the college during this quiet time.

Normally, not only are there many more staff and students, but there are many more visitors wandering about enjoying the beautiful grounds and buildings. For the moment the college is closed to the public – except those holding tickets to the Old Library.

I look forward to welcoming everyone back when it's appropriate, but for now we might as well enjoy this rarefied quiet. In the coming year, I hope to meet all of you personally. There are 47 here today, attending in person or remotely. You hail from different disciplines, and you're at different stages in your careers - what you have in common is that this is your first introduction to Trinity, at least as staff members.

Today is the start of a two-day induction programme. It's been carefully devised to provide a good introduction to college life and the way that the university is run, and to answer any questions you might have.

The schedule for induction includes sessions on research, teaching, communications, global relations, sustainable development, equality, diversity & inclusion and other priority areas for the university, as well as meeting the three Faculty Deans.

After attending these sessions, you will have a good idea, I hope, of the way we do things here. Trinity is an institution in receipt of both public and private funds. We have a mission in education and research.

In our strategic plan which I have here:





We articulate our mission as:



Trinity is Ireland's highest-ranked university, and very proud to emphasise that we are a research university: we are a member of LERU, the League of 24 European Research Universities.

This ambition is fully achievable since our staff are exceptionally high-performing. Trinity is 28th out of 900 higher education institutions in Europe in terms of numbers of European Research Grants secured. And when it comes to number of ERC grants won *per academic staff*, Trinity is fifth in Europe - just behind Cambridge, Oxford, KU Leuven, and Imperial College London.

We are also exceptionally high-performing in innovation. A fifth of all spin out companies in Ireland come from Trinity. During your time with us, you will be encouraged and supported to commercialise your research.

And we hope you will contribute to the public forum in those fields in which you are experts. Trinity academics are valuable voices, both in traditional media and on social media. Over the past six months in particular, our academics have been helped inform and reassure on the pandemic – not only experts from health sciences, but in all spheres, since Covid and the restrictions touch all aspects of our lives.

We want your voices to be heard, and your research to be appreciated and have impact. To further this, we have truly excellent support staff. We understand that winning competitive research grants and translating research into innovation and advising and informing on public policy, depends on having the rights supports, structures and frameworks in place to facilitate all this.

You are now part of a collegiate community, with a high international reputation. This is the university you have chosen to come to. We're delighted and honoured that you are joining our team. It's wonderful for the university to be benefitting from your expertise and commitment. You will contribute hugely to growing our research and refreshing our educational approach.

We want you to get the most out of your time here. This is a challenging but also a hugely exciting time to be in academia. The changes in higher education in the past two decades are revolutionary in terms of technological advances, applying and commercialising research, extending educational opportunities, and forging international collaborations.

We are in the midst of re-making and re-thinking the way that universities are funded and organised, the way that we teach and do research.

It's probably hyperbole to say it is a 'revolution' but something very fundamental is happening in how universities are working and you are part of that here now in Trinity.

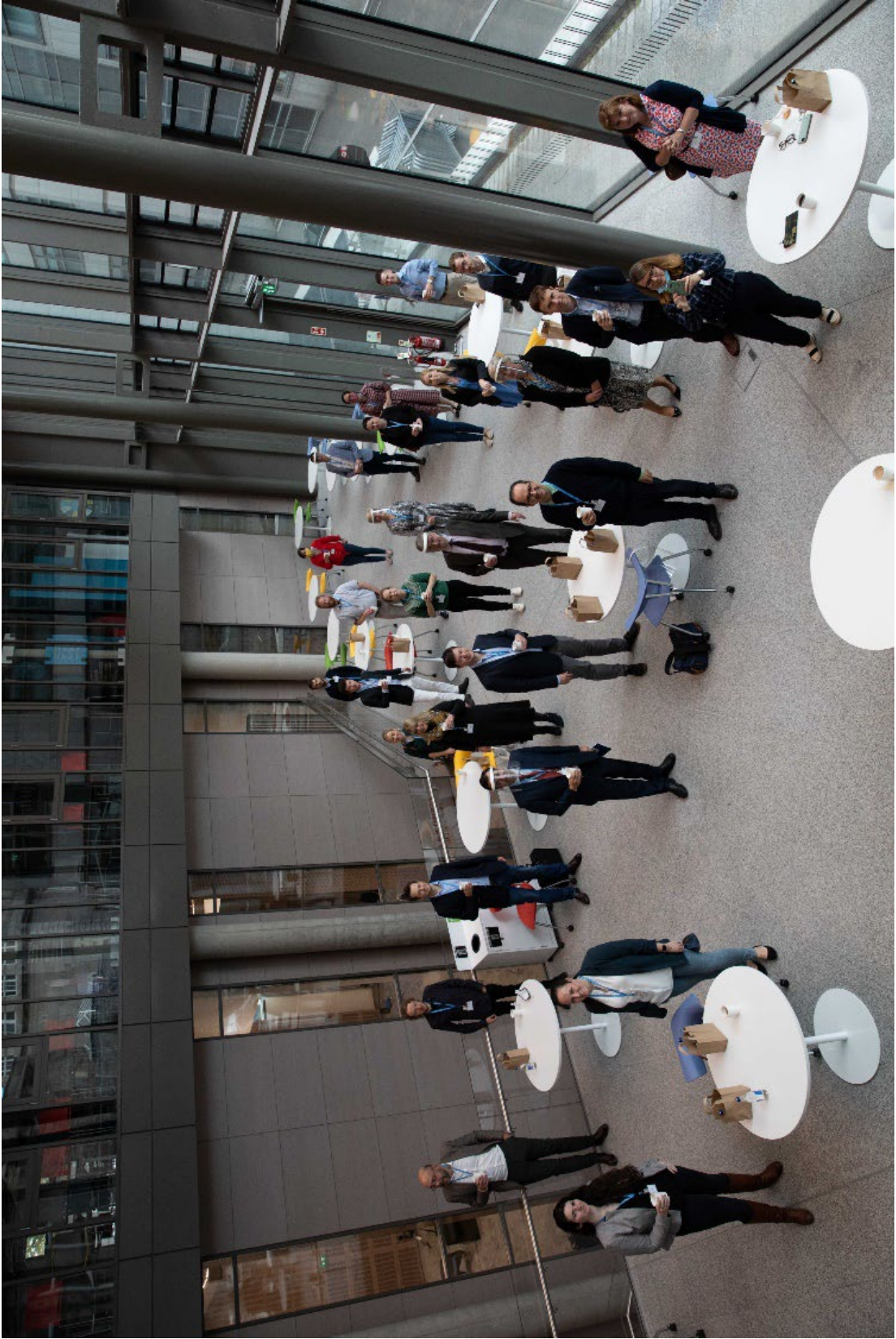
Together we get to decide what's best for the university and how best to achieve it.

Some of the way is clearly signposted. Other paths will emerge as we surmount challenges and discover opportunities.

I thank you again for strengthening our community here. I wish you the very best and I look forward to meeting you all personally and hearing about your research and teaching.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



Provost Patrick Prendergast having lunch (brown bags) in the Luce Atrium of the Trinity Business School, with new academic staff that were ble to join in-person (others joined online). Notice social distancing and wearing of visors.

02 September 2020

## **Address at LaunchBox Demo Day 2**

*Online pre-record*

Good afternoon,

And welcome everyone to the sixth annual LaunchBox Demo Day, and the first to be held online. Judges and participants are joining from US, UK, Germany, Finland, and from all around Ireland. Welcome, all.

LaunchBox was inaugurated eight years ago and it's now part of Tangent, Trinity's Ideas Workspace which is located in the Trinity Business School. LaunchBox is an internationally renowned student accelerator programme, and the embodiment of Trinity's dedication to innovation and entrepreneurship. It empowers our students to forge their own entrepreneurship path, both during and after College.

Thanks to programmes like LaunchBox, and the support of partners like Bank of Ireland, Trinity is now established as Europe's leading university for educating entrepreneurs.

We've received that accolade, for five years running, from private equity and venture capital-focused research firm, PitchBook, based on the number of our undergraduate alumni who go on to create companies that secure first-round venture capital funding. We're hugely proud of our college initiatives in innovation and entrepreneurship, both for the opportunities they provide for staff and students, and the discoveries they bring to the world. Since its establishment in 2013, LaunchBox has supported 80 start-ups and over 200 students to further their entrepreneurial ambitions. Previous startups on LaunchBox have gone on to raise over €69 million in funding and investment, creating over 200 jobs for the Irish economy.

Just in the past year:

- Equine Medirecord, the 2018 winner, has received state approval to operate their system in the US;
- And the first ever winner in 2013, Artomatix, which develops AI technology, was acquired for \$60 million dollars in December last.



Founders from previous years' LaunchBox companies have been involved with the programme this year, sharing their experiences in entrepreneurship with the current participants. Thanks to:

- Iseult Ward and Eric Risser from LaunchBox 2013;
- Sean Judge from 2014;
- Finn Murphy and Dan Hobbs from 2016;
- Pierce Dargan from 2017;
- Lizzy Hayashida from 2018;
- and Aimee-Louise Carton from last year.

All dedicated their time freely to this year's competitors and provided important inspiration. I'm particularly pleased that past winners and participants have remained so engaged with the programme. I believe this collegiality is a key factor in LaunchBox's success.

This year over 70 start-ups vied for a place on the programme. The process is highly competitive - just 10 start-ups are through to this stage to present before the judging panel.

Because of Covid and the lockdown of college from March, this year's teams faced particular challenges. They were unable to work together in person, but the LaunchBox programme placed an emphasis on community-building and a weekly online social event was organised by one or more of the participating teams – the events included everything from quizzes, to cocktail making, to Pictionary challenges, and I understand they were a huge success. Since its inception, LaunchBox has included many initiatives in the digital space so I can well imagine that this year's students made the transition to full online smoothly. Certainly, the short-listed teams would suggest as much – a majority of this year's projects are apps and online platforms which address key societal challenges.

This is the second year that the LaunchBox cohort has included a team who started their work during the Provost's Innovation Challenge. The Provost's Innovation Challenge was a 3 day hackathon around the social problem of over-use of plastics. The strength of the shortlisted teams in this year of lockdown and pandemic is a tribute to the power of the programme and the organisers, of course, to the ingenuity and resilience of the students who have demonstrated the agility to innovate even during turbulent times.

Many people and groups have helped to make LaunchBox the success that it is. I'd like to thank in particular:

- The overall sponsors of the programme, the Bank of Ireland;

- Trinity's Student Start-Up and Innovation Manager, Alison Treacy, who has been managing the programme all summer;
- The judging panel – David Tighe, Stuart Coulson, Diarmuid O'Brien, Aisling Byrne and Lizzy Hayashida;
- And the speakers and mentors who gave of their time and expertise;

And now, I won't keep you any longer from what we're all waiting for. Thank you all for your attention, and let's hear the pitches for 2020!

\* \* \*





03 September 2020  
09 September 2020  
20 October 2020  
26 November 2020  
8 December 2020  
17 February 2021  
3 March 2021  
6 April 2021  
24 May 2021  
21 June 2021

**Provost's Salon with Professor Luke O'Neill  
'Trinity Immunology in the Fight Against  
COVID19'**

*On Zoom from the Yeats Room or Andrews Room*

Good evening,

Welcome, everyone, to the 'Provost's Salon', a new initiative that we're very excited about. At these Salons, we'll be inviting distinguished academics, graduates and members of our Trinity community to talk about their fields of expertise to a select group of invited guests who will participate in a round table discussion.

These Provost's Salons are virtual events – small and intimate. We want a frank and open discussion on issues that matter – that matter for the country, matter for the world. This evening we have <insert number> guests. Everyone here is an important influencer in their own field, and has demonstrated particular interest in Trinity and in the theme under discussion – which is the fight against COVID-19. I'm really looking forward to all your contributions. This is an in house event, not recorded or anything like that; Chatham rules apply so, please everyone, feel comfortable to speak frankly.

Before I introduce our speaker – who probably needs no introduction – could I ask everyone to briefly introduce themselves to the group. Kate, we might start with you...

Thanks, and now: (3<sup>rd</sup> September)

Alan Dargan, Alan Foy, Anke Heydenreich, Annrai O'Toole, Brian Caulfield, Cliona Murphy, Colm Duggan, Danielle Ryan, David McConnell, David Went, Declan Sheehan, Emma Goltz, Fergal Naughton, Fiona Thomas, Gilliane Quinn de Schonen, John Daly,

John Macken, Martin Naughton, Mike Peirce, Patrick O'Sullivan, Paul Coulson, Paul Dreschler, Paul Johnston, Pradeep Kar, Richie Boucher, Sean Melly, Shane Naughton, Stephen Vernon, Terry Gallagher, Terry Neill, Willian Sargent, Yvonne La Bas.

Thanks, and now: (9<sup>th</sup> September)

Jamie Heaslip, Cathriona Hallahan, Liam Murphy, Adrian O'Neill, Francois Eliet & Jane Marshall, Bill Emmott, Rupert Pennant-Rea, Frank O'Keeffe, Orla O'Connor.

Thanks, and now: (20<sup>th</sup> October)

Fergal Naughton, Carin Bryans, Feargal O'Rourke, Jimmy Tolan, Paul Johnston, Alan Duffy, Noel Keeley, Denise Harris and John McEvoy, Tom Clinch, Dick Spring.

Thanks, and now: (26<sup>th</sup> of November)

Catherine Duffy, Colm Kelly, David Butler, Derry Gray, Donal McAuliffe, James Mahon and Ann Barry, Jim Meaney, Julia Hoey, Lisa Dillon, Mark O'Donovan, Priya Nair, Sonya Perkins.

Thanks, and now: (8<sup>th</sup> December)

Leo Crawford, Albert McQuaid, Anne Heraty, Barry O'Dowd, Chris Horn and Karlin Lillington, Donal Donovan, Gerard Ryan, Harry Goddard, Hugh Blaney, Martin Shanahan, Michael Horgan, Nick O'Donohoe, Tomas Sercovic, H.E. Paul Johnston, Aoife Cox.

Thanks, and now: (17<sup>th</sup> February 2021)

Brian Caulfield, Catherine Duffy, Eamonn Sinnott, John Bateson, Joseph Wiley, Kethy Gilfillan, Leo Blennerhassett, Melissa Webb, Michael O'Dwyer, peter Lee, Robert F Murphy, Rory O'Riordan, Sean Hawkshaw, Sean O'Keeffe, Stephen McIntyre, Cliona and Eoin Murphy, Helen Keelan and Guy Johnston, John Chamnay. Gareth Crowe and Sonya Perkins (TDA).

Thanks, and now: (3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021)

Caroline Keeling, Colin Farquharson (EY), Dave Caraher (Horizon Therapeutics), David Kelly (Horizon Therapeutics), Donal Donovan, Fiona Dawson, Gráinne O'Leary (Arthritis Ireland), Hamish McRae, Harry Hartford, James Garvey, John Mahon, Julia Hoey, Liam Booth (Investec), Olivia Goodwillie, Rupert Pennant-Rea, Sean Mulryan, Ciaran Meghan, Terry & Valerie Gallagher, Eileen Punch (TDA)

Thanks, and now: (6<sup>th</sup> April 2021)

Olivia and Roger Goodwillie, Harry Mosley, Peter Gray, Tara Doyle (matheson), William Fogarty (Maples and Calder), Neil Byrne (EY), Carl McCann, Robert Maharry, Adrian O'Neill (Ambassador of

Ireland in London), Paul Raleigh, Linda Hickey, John Spearman, Emma Goltz, Ricky Rose, Barry Fox, Sonya Perkins (TDA).

Thanks, and now: (24<sup>th</sup> May 2021)

Allan Beechinor (CEO Altada), Niamh Parker (Altada, Co-Founder, wife of Alan), Anne Marie O' Sullivan (Kerry Group), Anthony Harte (Bank of America), Chris O' Connell, Dr. Jeff Shermon (Horizon Therapeutics, CSO), Elma Boland (Blacksheep Fund Management), Fernando Vicario (Bank of America), Joseph Cunningham (Ammeon), Pat Linders, Patricia Lawless (McCann FitzGerald, retired), Tony Smurfit (Smurfit Kappa)

Thanks, and now: (21<sup>st</sup> June 2021)

Miréad McCaul, *MSD*; Eugene O'Connor, *Altada*; Louise Grubb; Jim Curley; Barry Devereaux, *McCann FitzGerald*; Anthony Aston, *Senior Counsel*; Tom Bean, *ESB*; Emma Boland, *Blacksheep Fund Management*; Hugh Blaney; Conor & Geraldine Brosnan, *Small Foundation*

Thank you and I look forward to hearing more from you shortly. I'll be convening the conversation with Luke and the discussion afterwards. During the talk, please keep your microphones off, but of course turn them on if you want to ask a question. This is a salon, not a lecture, so interventions are welcome. If you've a question, or anything to add, please either put up the blue hand or just turn on your mic.

\* \* \*

Luke O'Neill is one of the world's leading immunologists. His awards are too many to mention but include Ireland's preeminent accolades for a scientist – the Royal Dublin Society Boyle Medal for Scientific Excellence and the Royal Irish Academy Gold Medal for Life Sciences. He's also a Fellow of the Royal Irish Society, an FRS, and a holder of a European Research Council Advanced Grant. Short of a Nobel Prize, it doesn't get any better.

Luke is a Trinity graduate. He returned to teach here after a PhD in London, and now holds the Chair of Biochemistry. He's married to Margaret and they have two sons.

As anyone who listens to the radio will know, Luke is a natural communicator with a remarkable gift for conveying complex scientific research in lay terms. In the past few months, during the worst global pandemic in a century, the whole country has benefitted from his calm, decisive, non-alarmist advice.

He is part of the team working on Trinity's collaborative COVID-19 Immunology Project and he'll be talking to us this evening about Trinity's and Ireland's response to the pandemic crisis.

Luke, I'll start by asking the obvious:

- Where are we now with the virus?
- Etc, depending on what is topical.....

*At the end of a 30min discussion with Luke, invite questions from guests - if questions have been forthcoming throughout this time can be pushed back. At the end (19:56) thank everyone for attending.*

\* \* \*

04 September 2020

## **Provost's Council 2020**

*Zoom from the Yeats Room*

Hello – I was going to say ‘Good afternoon’ but of course we’re on many different time zones here - so hello to you all, whatever time it is with you. Thank you for being here at the fifth annual Provost Council meeting – more than 40 of you are zooming in – close to full participation.

This is a seminal meeting because we’re looking to give the final push to our *Inspiring Generations* campaign. It’s a key initiative of this Provost’s Council and I’ll come to it in a moment. But let me first address the elephant in the room, or the zoom: the pandemic.

### **\* \* \*Pandemic challenges\* \* \***

We’re in an unprecedented situation for universities globally – and the more global the university is, the more exposed it is to the pandemic. It’s affecting everything, including, of course, meetings like ours.

This time, last year, we were all together in the board room in the new Trinity Business School. How well I remember the energy in that room! Nothing can replace meeting in person. But technology has been a lifesaver. Indeed, I think I’ve had more one-on-one Zooms with many of you, over the past six months, than ever previously. That has been wonderful. Thank you, everyone.

The new term will start on the 28<sup>th</sup> of this month – and staff and students WILL be back on campus.

We’ve guaranteed to facilitate, where possible, in-person teaching, extracurricular activities and Erasmus exchanges – all done in a safe, socially distanced way, obeying the guidelines. With the understanding that the guidelines can change at any moment ... ..

This is the start of an academic year like no other, with all large lectures online and the college closed to the public. Staff and students will present college ID to enter, and visitors to the Old Library will present tickets purchased online. This returns Trinity to how it used to be fifty years ago, when the public tended not to enter. It’s not what we would wish – we’ve done so much to open out

the college to the city, through new gates and entrances. But safety must come first.

The situation is extremely challenging, there's no getting around it:

- challenging for students who face constraints on their college experience;
- challenging for staff delivering online education which is difficult and time-consuming;
- challenging for the college board and administration as we cope with a hit on revenues.

However, it's a shared challenge – every university in the world's going through this. And in that respect, I think it's worth pointing out to this group – I wouldn't be saying this publicly – that Trinity is doing comparatively well. Looking at the situation globally, we're less badly impacted than other universities.

There are a few reasons for this:

***\* \* \*Pandemic: Trinity's comparative advantage\* \* \****

First, we're used to operating in a challenging financial situation. The global recession after 2008 hit Irish universities with particular force. Because of this, here in Trinity we've learnt to be resilient. We're highly cost-effective and we're open to new ways of doing things - an advantage in this situation.

Second, we have multiple and diverse revenue streams. We've learnt that change can come quickly and it's not wise to 'put all your eggs in one basket'. Our funding model has 'four cylinders' – student fees, research grants, commercial activities and philanthropy – plus, of course, the state grant.

As a result, I believe we're better placed than many to weather this storm – yes, commercial revenue from visitor numbers is impacted, but we have other revenue streams, and we've built diversity into each stream. We don't rely on just one philanthropic donor, nor on just one country for international students.

Some universities, in UK and Australia for example, have focussed largely on China. These will suffer if Chinese students don't travel.

In Trinity, our spread is wider. This term we'll be welcoming students from Asia, north America, south America and Africa – at almost the same rate as last year. That's important, not only for revenue, but for maintaining our mission to be a global university.

We're open and we're global, and we want our staff and student bodies to reflect that.

Third, we're in the final phase of our fundraising campaign. Our goals are in sight. Trying to get a new campaign up and running during Covid would have been impossible – but, fortunately, we're well down the road.

Sadly, the pandemic *did* prevent our planned Sydney, Hong Kong and Singapore launches this spring, and that was a blow. Nonetheless, the campaign was well-launched last year, with numerous meetings with alumni around the world. It has traction, visibility and momentum. It's been meticulously orchestrated from day one, and that has really stood to us.

Let's take a moment to look at where we are now with *Inspiring Generations*.

**\* \* \*Delivering the Campaign\* \* \***

We set ambitious targets for this campaign. And we're meeting them. The response has been exceptional, particularly given in the circumstances.

Since March, all live campaign events have been cancelled; at the same time, the impact of pandemic and lockdown has created new, urgent needs. Many Trinity students lost part-time jobs and income; some even faced eviction; others lacked access to suitable study-spaces and facilities.

We put out emergency appeals – for the Student Hardship Fund and the Trinity Access Programme.

The response was phenomenal – Kate will update you on the figures shortly. Our community came through to support students.

Simultaneously, Covid19 created a research imperative. Trinity is a world leader in immunology, ranked in the top 1% of universities world-wide - we have to be part of the global effort to develop tests, treatments and vaccines. The *Covid19 Immunology Project* launched in May with a generous donation from AIB. It's now a key project of *Inspiring Generations* and it's enabling us to recruit brilliant young researchers from around the world.

The generosity and belief of friends and donors at this time has been inspirational. Crisis has deepened solidarity. We've found that

people are prioritising what's important to them, and that Trinity is centrally important to many of us.

The campaign is vital in keeping ambition high in the university and, may I say, also in the country. The campaign's projects are large-scale national initiatives to bring Ireland to the forefront of global research and knowledge.

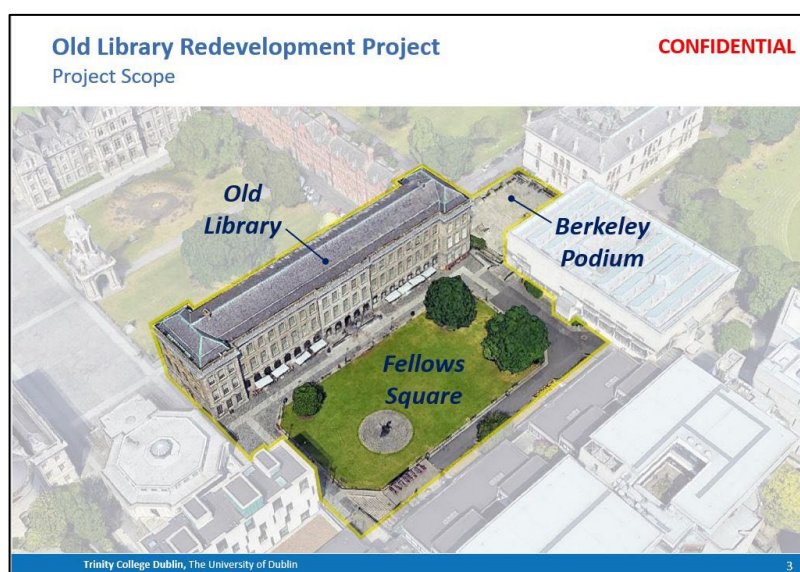
At this time of crisis, when people are turning to universities for reassurance and guidance, Trinity's role as Ireland's leading university is more important than ever. It's up to us to demonstrate purpose and leadership, and to provide inspiration to the rising generations – they rely more than ever on an excellent education for their start in life.

The flagship projects of *Inspiring Generations* allow us to demonstrate this leadership. They are projects which only Trinity can make happen. They provide a strong, compelling future for our students and for Ireland.

The Provost's Council has been indispensable in designing and delivering these projects. Every meeting of the Campaign Cabinet, every meeting of this Provost's Council takes them a step further. Thanks to your commitment, we're on target to meet our campaign goals.

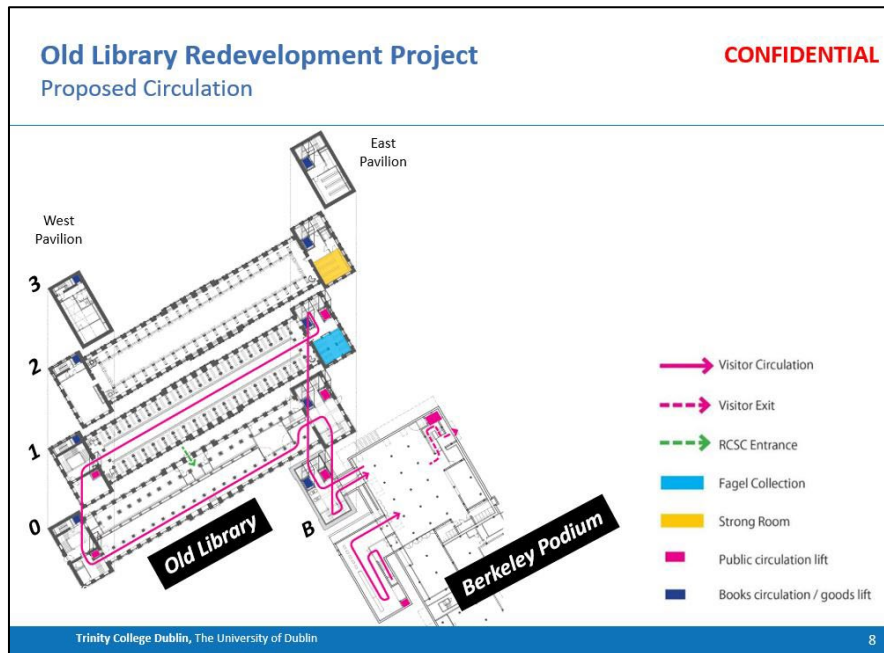
Let me run through a few recent highlights:

- Last month, we got Dublin City Council planning approval for the **Old Library Redevelopment** - in record time. These two slides show the situation: here is the Old Library building and it is today,





We're going to redevelop how the building is used, returning it to its pristine condition. And here's a diagram showing the changes to visitor routes within the building:



With this we'll renovate the whole interior, moving the shop out of the colonnades and into the Berkeley podium, putting in the most advanced fire suppression and environmental controls, and putting a stunning new research collections study centre on the ground floor.



Our next priority project:

- E3 - our Engineering, Environment and Emerging Technologies institute - is well underway. Construction of The **Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry** will commence next year for completion in September 2023. Here it is in the architect's drawing, showing E3LF, as we call it, as it will look near the Lincoln Gate.



We have the planning permission and it's fully financed.

**The E3 Research Institute** is scheduled to open in 2026 as part of the Trinity tech campus at Grand Canal Dock. E3RI, as we call it, will co-locate over 500 researchers and industry labs, to support open, collaborative, challenge-based research. Here is how we envisage the whole site:

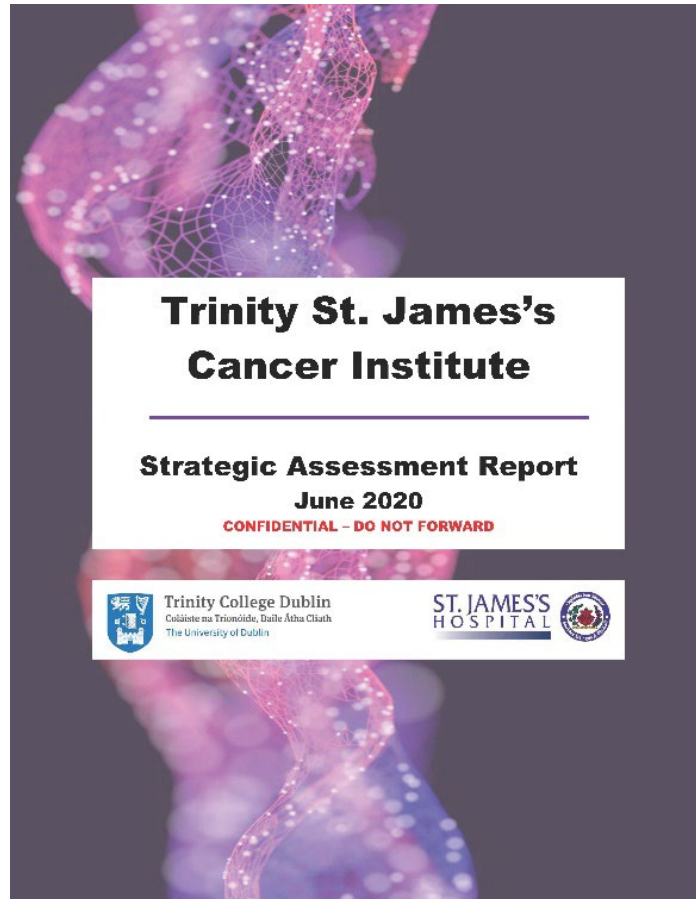


To orient you, here is Pearse Street and here is Macken Street. E3RI is on the corner of Pearse and Macken here with the rest of the five and a half acre site developed in collaboration with a development partner, potentially.

Finally:

- We've just submitted the Strategic Assessment report, as a government requirement, to progress public funding of the **Trinity-St James's Cancer Institute** as a national centre of excellence for cancer patient care, integrating research and clinical practice.

This is the cover of the Assessment Report



– no building designs to show here yet, but with your support it can happen.

Funding for the cancer institute will be secured through a blend of government funding, private financing and philanthropy.

These capital development projects are about creating new advanced facilities to nurture the best talent and pursue world-beating research. They are underpinned by the New Generations programme to fund professorships and tenure-track posts across the university – in engineering, in computer science, cancer and medical sciences, and in the arts and humanities.

Critically, we also aim to fund more pathways to support talented students from all countries and backgrounds to come to Trinity.

Funding the rising generations - giving them the best possible start in their adult lives - is at the heart of all we do.

Creating 21<sup>st</sup> century global education and research spaces to nurture 21<sup>st</sup> century global talent: that's what drives *Inspiring Generations*. Our vision for the university is ground-breaking and ambitious and we believe that now is the time to gear up even further.

We're fortunate in having a strong leadership team in the university now, who recognise that crises can be times of opportunity as well as challenge. Can we capitalize on the current opportunity to create lasting change for our university?

Let's look at the opportunity.

**\* \* \*Opportunities: rankings and state prioritisation\* \* \***

First, some good news. You may recall, at our meeting last year, that I raised two issues of central importance for Trinity's future.

The first was the rankings: allowing for caveats, I said that the Rankings can't be ignored and that the broad mission underpinning our new Strategic Plan is to get Trinity back into the Top 50.

Well, this year we rose to 101 in the QS Rankings, tantalizingly close to the top 100, and this week, we also went up in the Times Higher Education rankings. This means the gap between us and other Irish universities continues to grow.

To continue the rise, we need to keep focus on improving the staff to student ratio. The *New Generations* programme addresses this need head on – bringing in new brilliant academics through philanthropy will see us continue to rise in the rankings.

The second issue I raised last year was state support – I urged lobbying the government to prioritise excellence in higher education and research.

Here too, there is good news: the new coalition government has established a Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. This is the first time since the foundation of the state that there has been a full minister dedicated to Higher Education and Research; previously they were separated into different government departments, where, frankly, neither was prioritised.

The Minister in charge of the new department is Simon Harris, who is a significant player, seen as a possible future leader of the Fine Gael party. The appointment of someone of his calibre is an indication of the seriousness with which this government is taking higher education and research.

Universities now have the ear of government. It took me nine months to meet the previous minister for education - it took me just two days to meet Simon Harris.

My message to government – as Provost of Trinity and as the current chair of the Irish Universities Association: yes, we're in a period of crisis, nationally and globally, but let's use this time to create genuine, lasting change.

***\* \* \*Crisis: the Opportunity\* \* \****

It takes courage to seize opportunity in a crisis. Can we do this as a country? We're certainly trying to do this as a university.

One such opportunity to enact lasting change is in the area of online education and remote working. As you've probably found in your own lives and businesses, lockdown has released the potential of online. The technology exists to do some aspects of work and study more efficiently online, and we should continue to build on this. It's to everyone's advantage.

I say 'some' aspects' – we're not proposing a full switch to online and remote. The Trinity Education and Student Experience depend on in-person contact, and Dublin city-centre as a creative and social hub depends on people coming together. We don't want to lose that.

Let's use this time to assert our values - to change what can usefully be changed and to double down on what is important and essential.

We're currently proposing decisive changes to Trinity governance. We want to make the Board more streamlined in its decision-making and less inward-looking. To that end, the board will have fewer members overall, but more external members.

This is only the third time in over a century that we've changed our governance and it's the first time that change is internally driven – previously, it was at the behest of government.



Of course, we're proud of our existing governance. We think the university is well run, as it is, and that our collegiate community is democratic and cohesive. But in a global, connected world, we need more external input.

Who knows what international opportunities may have passed us by, over the decades, simply from being too inward-looking? This Provost's Council is itself an example of the huge benefit of consulting external opinion.

Trinity will emerge from this crisis with better governance and with more flexible working and education practices.

If, on their part, the government can use this time to fund excellence in higher education and research, then we can transform the lives and experiences of individual students and researchers, and transform Ireland into a leading knowledge economy.

**\* \* \*Conclusion\* \* \***

As you'll gather from all I've been saying, I believe that we're at crunch time.

It's crunch time

- for the campaign;
- for sealing Trinity's global advantage;
- and for securing the future of higher education and research in Ireland.

I have a whole 12 months left in office and I look forward to using this time to achieve these goals.

Doing this job is a privilege. Doing this job in this particular decade – 2011 to 2021 – has been dynamic, to say the least! The decade of global recession, Brexit, Covid...

I relish the challenge. And I'm proud of how Trinity has navigated these times. We've seized opportunity without compromising our mission. We're in good shape. With vigilance, strategy, hard work and a bit of luck, we can be in yet better shape.

Of course, I'm only a small part of this. It's the whole Trinity community that puts the shape on the college. Everyone has their part to play and it's because so many - staff, students, alumni and friends - take their responsibility seriously, that the university is in good shape.

Each of you has played your part, and more. You share our vision for what Trinity and Ireland can achieve. Each of you has joined this Council at my personal request, because yours is the outlook and energy I want for our university. You know how to frame opportunity and how to realise ambition. It has been a gamechanger to be able to count on your proactive advice and actions.

I look forward to continuing to work with you all over the next 12 months. There is so much to do. Our next meeting is being brought forward to June. We hope it will be in-person, on campus. But either way, I'll continue to be in touch very frequently, availing of all media and technology to fill you in on progress.

When I think of your efforts, and of the efforts of the whole Trinity community, I'm reminded of some words of George Bernard Shaw. I love these words, particularly because Shaw lived up to them: he was active till the end of his very long life, completing his final play a week before his last birthday, which was his 94<sup>th</sup>. This is what Shaw said:

*"I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch, which I've got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."*

Ladies and Gentlemen – let's make Trinity burn as brightly as possible. Let's hand on this 'splendid torch' to future generations.

Thank you.

\* \* \*





15 September 2020

14 October 2020

**Provost's Salon with Philip Lane of the European  
Central Bank "The Medium Term Outlook for the  
European Economy"**

*Zoom from the Yeats Room*

Good evening,

Welcome, everyone, to the 'Provost's Salon'. This is an initiative that we began a few months back that we're very excited about. At these Salons, we invite distinguished academics, graduates and members of our Trinity community to talk about their fields of expertise to a select group of invited guests who then participate in a roundtable discussion.

These Provost's Salons are virtual events, small and intimate. The maximum number of invited guests is 12. We want a frank, high-level discussion on issues that matter – matter for the country, matter for the world. To that end, everyone participating this evening is an important influencer in their own field, and has demonstrated particular interest in Trinity and in the theme under discussion, which is the medium-term outlook for the European Economy in this time of pandemic - it could scarcely be more important! I'm really looking forward to all your contributions. Chatham rules apply so, please everyone, feel comfortable to speak frankly.

Before I introduce our speaker – who probably needs no introduction – could I ask everyone to briefly introduce themselves to the group? Kate, we might start with you...

Thanks, and now: (15<sup>th</sup> of September 2020)

Emma Goltz, Anke Heydenreich, Richard Barrett, Priya Nair & John Purcell, Robert Finnegan, John Spearman, Feidhlim Boyle, Tadhg Flood, Houghton Fry, Adrian Lee, Sean Hawkshaw, and Fabian Eser (Counsel to Philip at the ECB)

Thanks, and now: (14<sup>th</sup> of October 2020)

Martin Naughton, Fearghal Naughton, John Daly, Richard Barrett, Robert Finnegan, Peter Collins, Stephen Vernon, Michael Jackson, Domhnall and Elaine Slattery, Margaret Clandillon & John

Mulcahy, Finlay Ross, Fabian Eser (Counsel to Philip at the ECB), Sarah McMinn (TDA).

Thank you and I look forward to hearing more from you all shortly. I'll be convening the conversation with Professor Lane and the discussion afterwards. During the talk, please keep your microphones off, but of course turn them on if you want to ask a question. This is a salon, not a lecture, so interruptions are welcome. If you've a question or anything to add, please either put up the blue hand like this, or just turn on your mic.

Professor Lane is a household name. He served as Governor of the Central Bank of Ireland between 2015 and 2019, when he was appointed to the executive board of the European Central Bank, the ECB. He is the ECB's Chief Economist.

We're very proud of Philip here in Trinity. He is an alumnus who graduated in 1991 with First Class Honours and Gold Medal in Economics. He went on to study for a PhD at Harvard, after which he taught at Columbia University, before returning to Trinity as a Lecturer in Economics, rising to become the Whately Professor of Political Economy from 2012 to 2019. He remains affiliated with Trinity as an Honorary Professor.

He has been celebrated with many awards and grants, including the prestigious Royal Irish Academy Gold Medal in Social Sciences, which he was awarded in 2015. His main research areas are in International macroeconomics; European monetary economics; the Irish economy; financial globalisation and cyclical behaviour of fiscal policy.

At this time of economic crisis, his is one of the voices we need to hear. We're delighted he could join us this evening to talk about the medium-term outlook for the European economy.

Philip, thanks so much for being here. It's particularly important to talk to you now because a lot of the discussion in the media, to date, has naturally focussed on the public health dimension of this pandemic, and on the direct impact to businesses of lockdown, but of course the economic implications are far wider. So my first question is:

- What are the economics of pandemics?
- What have been the challenge for policymakers: for the ECB, for the European Union and for national governments?

- Looking beyond the pandemic, a medium-term issue I'd like to discuss is: what is "the new normal" - will there be a re-orientation to new sectors (climate, digitisation) and a permanent hit to others (business travel, offices)?
- Finally, what are the implications for universities?

*[At the end of 30 min discussion with Professor Lane, invite questions from guests – if questions have been forthcoming throughout, this time can be pushed back. At the end (19.55) thank everyone for attending]*

\* \* \*



18 September 2020

## **Address at the Launch of the new Public Affairs and Communications Strategy (PAC)**

*Zoom from the Office in House 1, Trinity College Dublin*

Good afternoon, everyone,

Welcome to the launch of Trinity's new Public Affairs and Communications Strategy.

I'm delighted to be launching this vital strategy just ahead of the resumption of teaching on the campus in ten days' time. Because digital and online is such a key component of this Strategy, there is an appropriateness to launching this online, although we do, of course, miss in-person launches.

This isn't Trinity's first Public Affairs and Communications strategy, but it's the first one directed at the whole university. Previous strategies were aimed at our communications unit, and were intentionally quite inward-looking. In contrast, this new strategy is aimed at the many parts of the university which communicate, or could communicate, with the outside world.

And when I say the 'many parts' of our university – I'm thinking of the three faculties, Science Gallery, Sports, the Old Library, the SFI institutes headquartered here, the Trinity Long Room Hub, GBHI...you get the picture. Trinity is an outward-facing, global university with a mission to engage the wider public in our education, research and innovation. We need a Strategy to help us excel in that mission.

In March, just before lockdown, we launched our new five-year University Strategy. It will run until 2025. It's called 'Community and Connection' and communication is at its heart.

The new Public Affairs and Communications strategy is fully cohesive with the University Strategy with one critical difference – the Strategy is also a Covid19 Strategy. It engages with the implications of the pandemic and what it might mean for Trinity's future public affairs and communications.

I'd like to pay tribute to Tom Molloy, Sally-Anne Fisher and all the team in Trinity Communications – and indeed to all of you who were part of the wider consultation process for this Strategy. A huge

amount of work has been done in a short time-space. This Strategy is connected, cohesive and comprehensive. It's hugely relevant to where we are now, and will provide a guide in the uncertain months ahead, as we navigate this unprecedented global situation. It's also elegantly written. I urge everyone to have a read for themselves. My thanks and congratulations to the team.

Tom and Sally-Anne will talk more about the detail and scope of the Strategy, as will Catherine O'Mahony, Thomas Deane and Sharon Campbell, and Tom will then moderate a Q&A. This Strategy affects all of us, so it's important that the launch should be comprehensive and answer all questions. Please do address any queries to the team.

I'd like to talk briefly now about the importance of Communications and Public Affairs to the work that we all do.

It's strange to think that Trinity appointed its first Communications Officer just twenty years ago. Why then, and why not previously? Well, the need for a Communications Officer came about in response to very significant developments which have collectively transformed higher education. These developments include:

First, the prioritising of research. Of course, Trinity academics have always done tremendous research but until this century, they weren't properly funded. The creation of the national Programme for Research in 1999 and Science Foundation Ireland in 2000, together with massive EU funding through the Framework Programmes was a gamechanger. As a research university, Trinity has impact on a global scale, and this comes with a responsibility to communicate what we do. One of the key objectives identified in this Strategy is "to broaden the public's understanding of a research university".

Second, in 2000 we understood that we were in the middle of a technology revolution which was creating new communication pathways. This revolution is, of course, on-going – and lockdown and remote learning have certainly accelerated our uptake of technology and this launch is a case in point. The ambition identified in this Strategy is to build on our learning so that we can all communicate effortlessly through diverse platforms.

And third and fourth are the globalisation of higher education and universities' increasing centrality to economic growth. Twenty years ago, we didn't foresee a dual degree with Columbia University, nor a situation where Trinity would be a European leader in creating spin-out companies and educating for entrepreneurship - but we did understand that change was coming and we would need to be in a position to communicate rapidly and globally with students, alumni, industry and academic partners.

In short, this century, the role of the university has expanded, both in reach and in depth. Our communications strategy is how we interact with the world beyond the campus – with prospective students and staff, with other institutions and research collaborators, with employers and industry, with alumni and philanthropists, with policy-makers, the media and government, and with the public who seek to engage with our scholarship and ideas.

To communicate to all these groups and stakeholders we need, as this Strategy lays out,

- a coherent framework,
- a clear message,
- alignment of goals with personnel across the university, and
- willingness and ability to engage with audiences on their preferred terms, and through their preferred platforms.

It's precisely because we now have multiple audiences, connecting through multiple platforms, that we need a cohesive strategy. The title of this Strategy encapsulates this: Unity through Variety.

All of you zooming in now, I know that whatever faculty you work in, and whatever sphere, there is an important communication aspect to your job. Your work involves engaging with people outside the campus. That's true of all of us. And though we all have different fields and interests and audiences, in one sense, we are all doing the same thing: we are communicating Trinity's mission.

The more cohesive and integrated we can be, the better we can communicate, and the more benefit we bring the university. For instance, our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*, showcases projects which go across the university. It's in all of our interest to be on-message about all the projects, and not just the ones that we might have a research interest in. We should all take responsibility for communicating clearly what Trinity does and why it matters.

We're lucky in Trinity to have a great Communications team and a great digital team, with whom we work so well and so closely. Let's get behind this Strategy to strength our connection to each other, clarify our message, and present to the world a Trinity that speaks with many voices – but all of them in tune.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



Provost Patrick Prendergast in his office in House 1 for the launch of the Trinity Communications strategy. William Scott painting in the background.



18 September 2020

## **Email update on Covid-19 for all Students**

Dear Trinity student,

We are writing to you to inform you about new measures in Trinity following the Government's decision to move Dublin to Level 3 of the Framework of Restrictive Measures in Response to COVID-19. In the context of moving to Level 3, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science has asked the Dublin universities to reduce student numbers on campus for the coming weeks as part of a wider plan to reduce the number of Covid-19 cases in the capital.

The government has confirmed that higher education is a priority. Trinity will welcome new and returning students to commence learning according to the timetables provided earlier this week. However, following new government guidelines that only teaching which cannot readily be delivered online should be delivered in person, we will have to transfer some teaching that had been planned for in person to online.

In person teaching in the Faculty of Health Sciences and in the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science will continue as planned either because it is laboratory, practical or other teaching requiring physical presence or because it is required for professional accreditation. Trinity had always planned this approach to teaching in these faculties.

However, if your course is in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences some of the timetabled in person teaching will need to be moved online until the present restrictions are lifted. Your School or Course Office will be in contact with you with further details next week. It is important to say that not all teaching will move online because some of it may be deemed to be essential for in person delivery by the academics involved in teaching the course, or by accrediting bodies. Furthermore the timetables will not change because teaching will just switch from in person to online.

It is important to stress that:

- All research activity will continue.
- All lab-based work and practicals will take place.
- The Libraries will remain open. The library will post more information about this on its website.

- We will have some in person events to welcome to new students to College but more limited than previously envisaged.
- The Buttery will remain open to offer a takeaway service.
- Travel to/from the university by public transport is permitted for education and teaching purposes.

Trinity will also take further measures to reduce risks of virus transmission on campus. These include the suspension of extracurricular activities that require physical gathering for the present time, the creation of some one-way pedestrian routes in the campus so that contact can be avoided, and only coming on campus if you have face-to-face teaching activities.

We will continue to update you by email and social media but please also look at the [www.tcd.ie/about/coronavirus](http://www.tcd.ie/about/coronavirus) for answers to detailed questions.

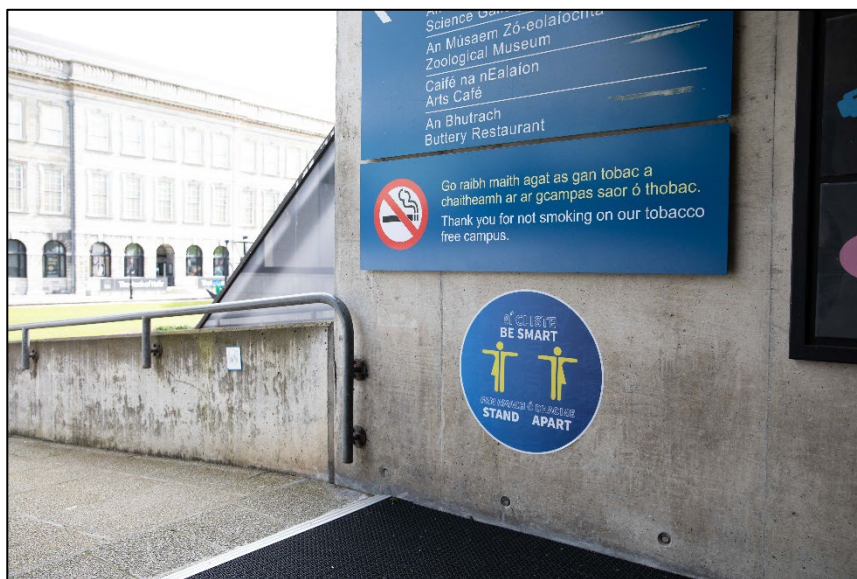
We know that this news will be extremely disappointing for many students. It is not what we would have wished, but these measures are mandated and are in the public interest.

In the meantime, please do stay safe and well.

Best regards,

Patrick Prendergast, Provost  
 Jürgen Barkhoff, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer  
 Áine Kelly, Chair of Resumption of Teaching Working Group

\* \* \*



Signage by the Art's Building, including new signage for social distancing

21 September 2020  
23 September 2020

## **Address to new Postgraduate Students**

*Dargan Theatre, Trinity College Dublin*

Thank you, Martine\*, and good afternoon everyone,

Welcome to Trinity College – or welcome back for those who were undergraduates here.

It's wonderful to see you all. The start of the new academic year, when we meet new postgrads, is always invigorating. But may I say what a particular pleasure it is, this year. The college has been closed to face-to-face teaching since March, when all education and research moved online. I live on campus, in the Provost's House, with my family. It was a remarkable experience to be here for six months without the physical presence of students, professors, or visitors. At times, the peace and calm were to be cherished but it's wonderful to have the campus back open for teaching and research, even if it remains largely curtailed by the Level 3 restrictions.

A special welcome to those of you coming from abroad. Trinity is a global university. Our staff and students hail from many countries and we have vibrant, inspiring partnerships with universities around the world – these relationships are integral to our mission in education and research. This year, of course, global travel has been particularly challenging, which makes your presence among us all the more special. I know some of you have had to quarantine on arrival. Thank you for making this effort.

This is a new college year unlike others. We have to continue to navigate this pandemic and comply with regulations. And these can change day-to-day – as we've just experienced! This weekend, countries were taken off the green list and restaurants closed – we hope only for a short period, until October 17<sup>th</sup>. This is an evolving situation.

It's extremely challenging. But we do appreciate the government's focus on opening up education – both schools and universities. And we hope the campus can remain open for some in-person teaching, and for research. Those of you doing PhDs, who have taken on

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\* Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies

tutorial responsibilities, we thank you. It would be impossible to honour our commitment to small-group teaching without you.

I know that all of you, our postgraduates, will take personal responsibility for demonstrating the behaviours we need to keep the college open for in-person teaching. I know you'll help set an example to undergraduates. Our message is: yes, this is hard. But if we do our bit to flatten the curve, then we can help move Dublin back from Level 3. The better we adhere to guidelines, the sooner they can be loosened.

This is an unusual start to your postgrad life, but in another sense, your experience is timeless. You've now joined the research community of this great university. You're engaging on your own, original piece of research. What can you expect from this year? I'd like to share a few thoughts and experiences with you, and afterwards I think we've time for some questions.

\* \* \*

For those new to Trinity, let me introduce myself. I'm Patrick Prendergast, and I was elected by the staff, and by student representatives, in 2011 as the 44<sup>th</sup> Provost. I've been a Trinity undergrad and postgrad in the School of Engineering, a Professor of Bioengineering and a Dean of Graduate Studies. Between 2004 and 2007, I held this position, as Professor Martine Smith does today, with responsibility for supporting postgraduate students in their research and integration into university life. So I've some insight into the opportunities and challenges facing you today.

Let me say how delighted we are that you've chosen Trinity for further study. With your academic distinction, you had the choice of many universities.

It's a privilege to be nurturing your talent, and when you submit your dissertations or graduate thesis, it will be a privilege to count your learning in the body of our research.

These are privileges we don't take for granted. We want you to get the most out of your time here.

\* \* \*

This university, of which you're now a decisive part, is entering its 429<sup>th</sup> year since its foundation in 1592. We're a globally connected community of learning, research, and scholarship, inspiring generations to meet the challenges of the future.

- We challenge our students to think independently, communicate effectively, act responsibly, and develop continuously - equipping them for lives of active citizenship;
- We pursue research at the frontiers and intersections of disciplines, to the benefit of students, Ireland, and the world.
- And we courageously advance the cause of a pluralistic, just and sustainable society.

Trinity is Ireland's highest-ranked university and it's one of Europe's principal research universities. We are a member of LERU, the League of European Research Universities, which includes the universities of Oxford, Copenhagen, Utrecht, Zurich, and Paris-Sorbonne among its members.

We are globally recognised for research of impact, ranked first in Ireland, and 33<sup>rd</sup> out of 1,500 higher education institutions globally, in terms of securing funding through the major EU Research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020.

Our research frequently makes headlines: many of you will be familiar with our professors from health sciences – including Luke O'Neill and Kingston Mills – who have been such reassuring voices on the pandemic. Trinity has particular expertise in immunology – we've helped position Ireland as first in the world for quality of science in immunology, and our immunologists are part of the global fight to develop new drugs and vaccines for Covid-19.

Our engineers, meanwhile, have just launched a robot, called Violet, which disinfects rooms through UV-C irradiation. Violet is portable and compact enough to operate in tight, crowded spaces which are otherwise hard to clean, such as bathrooms, waiting areas, and the nooks and crannies of public transit.

And you may have seen coverage of Rosie Lavan's book, *Seamus Heaney and Society*, recently published by Oxford University Press. The Trinity Long Room Hub is running an online Heaney event this Wednesday, with Professor Lavan, from our School of English, and other guests, including the actor Adrian Dunbar who'll be reading from Heaney's poetry. It should be wonderful – do check it out, if you get the chance.

These are just two examples of our interdisciplinary research. Trinity has 24 Schools across the three faculties, and about 60 departments within the Schools, and a further 50 or so research centres, as well as ten research institutes and inter-institutional research groupings across the university. That is a lot of multi-disciplinary research!

I think it's helpful to familiarise yourselves with the research being carried out across the university, even outside your area.

Trinity research is organised into 19 interdisciplinary 'research themes' – including, as examples, 'ageing', 'cancer', 'creative arts practice', 'digital humanities' and 'nanoscience'. If you want to get a handle on the range of research in the university, a good place to start is a quick perusal of the research themes. These are on the college website.

Another area in which Trinity stands out globally is in innovation and entrepreneurship. For the past four years, we've been rated the number one university in Europe for educating entrepreneurs, according to evaluation by global research firm, PitchBook.

We recognise the responsibility that comes with this leading position: responsibility to educate talent, incubate research, and produce products and services that drive growth and discovery in Ireland, Europe, and the world.

It goes without saying that you, our postgraduates, are an indispensable part of our mission and you are intrinsic to the university's reputation in research and scholarship. We have a responsibility towards you – to give you the opportunity to develop your skills and talents. And, of course, you have a responsibility towards yourselves, and towards those who have helped you get to this position, where opportunities are open to you.

How we can we help you to best fulfil your great potential?

\* \* \*

Regardless of what field your specialization is in, there are, I think, two main challenges which all postgraduates face:

- firstly, we all ask ourselves the question: do I have the focus required to graduate work, without the stabilising undergraduate structure of tutorials, course work, lectures, and exams?
- And secondly, we're all concerned about how to build a career.

On the first question, I know that the move from the broad undergraduate curriculum towards much greater specialisation can be challenging. Particularly in the beginning. You have two main support tools: your academic mentor and your fellow postgrads. Share your experiences and your concerns. Consult often with your mentor. It may be that, as you explore, you will re-think the terms of your research. That happens a lot. The area of focus at the beginning may give way to new avenues of investigation as you delve deeper into the subject.

The research life can get lonely, so connect with other postgrads. They will have similar concerns to your own. They are like work colleagues. Be generous yourself about sharing knowledge and tips.

On the subject of your Dissertation, you will eventually know more than anyone else in the world, whether you be a Masters or a Doctorate candidate. Indeed, on that particular theme, you will know more than the professor mentoring you. If you persist, there will come a moment, I promise, when you will own your research; when everything falls into place; when all the separate pieces of research and experimentation you've done suddenly slot into each other and make a wonderful pattern.

That's a great moment, which you will have richly deserved, because doing research at this level isn't easy.

On the second challenge, building your career – well, as postgrads, you're at a stage when more is expected of you, and not just in terms of research. Increasingly you will have the opportunity to start taking on responsibilities within your departments and within the university. These may be teaching responsibilities, or helping to organise conferences and events, or looking after visiting professors and speakers, or contributing to commercialisation and innovation projects.

Postgraduates are vital members of the Trinity community – of this collegial group of scholars, students and professional staff working to the same values and in a common mission. You bring dynamism, fresh ideas, energy, and support to the community. You give tutorials. Often you are the mainstay of our conferences and events. And as your research progresses, you deliver brilliant papers, which inspire undergraduates.

The benefit to the university is clear: Trinity's multidisciplinary excellence depends on the quality and commitment of its postgraduates. We recognise this and we know the relationship is mutually beneficial: we do all we can to support you in acquiring skills and building your careers.

if you go on to become academics, you will not just be engaged on research, you will be teaching, publishing, administrating, organising events and conferences, leading teams, collaborating, fundraising, innovating, commercialising, and launching spin-out companies. Academia is a multi-faceted career, and now more so than ever.

And if you choose not to go down the academic path, you will, in any case, need these skills in your other chosen careers.

The reason why employers like to hire postgraduates is not only for your intellect and mental discipline but for the portfolio of skills that comes with immersion in a university.

So use this time well. Seize every opportunity to get involved in academic and departmental life, as well as in student and extra-curricular activities. Be proactive. Learning new skills is essential; taking on responsibilities and building relationships and trust is even more important.

Look to build relationships across the university. No matter what your area of study, there will be someone in another discipline who can enhance it. Explore all opportunities. Don't remain isolated in your department. Open yourself out to different influences.

Yes, Covid restrictions make it harder to engage directly with people. But many events have moved online and societies are being creative about engaging members online - and indeed outdoors. There's no Freshers' Week this year, but do go online to Trinity Sports and the Central Societies Committee, the CSC webpages - societies and clubs are signing people up and they remain a great way to interact socially and to meet people.

And do look beyond the university: build links with other institutions and in other countries. Trinity is a globally connected university with links around the world. Take this time to build international contacts - this is easily done online.

Similarly with industry: Trinity collaborates with multinationals and smaller companies on a huge range of projects. You have the chance to get involved through your research or through the postgraduate courses run by Tangent; Trinity's Ideas Workplace, which is located upstairs here.

All research - whether arts, humanities, science, or health sciences - can be commercialised, and this is something you will start thinking about. Not immediately of course - but once you understand the unique contribution your research is making, you may well start thinking about how to best introduce it to the world - as a product or a tool, or a service or a performance.

Tangent provides a dedicated space to develop entrepreneurial ideas, collaborate with other students and create new value in the form of products and services. It provides education, training and mentorship in creative thinking, opportunity identification and



venture planning. At Tangent, you will have opportunity to work in teams to solve real-world problems set by industry and partner organisations.

If you use your time here wisely, you will be in an enviable position: you will be experts in your particular field with strong mental discipline; you will have developed your people and communication skills and your organisational ability; and you will have entrepreneurial experience, and an enviable network of contacts in industry and in academia. In short, you should be able to choose what you want to do, how you want to do it, and who you want to do it with.

We want the very best for you. Success for us means helping you realise your great potential. So please avail of all the supports and structures in place for you. That includes getting in contact with me, or with the Dean of Graduate Studies, as the needs arises. You're members of the Trinity community and that's a lifelong membership. We're all connected, and we share the goal to realise our great potential - as individuals and as a community.

Thank you. The very best of luck with the great adventure you've embarked on.

\* \* \*



Provost Patrick Prendergast (standing) with (L to R) Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies; Breda Walls (Director of Student Services); and Gisèle Scanlan (President, Graduate Students union)

24 September 2020

## **Address to Visiting and Erasmus Students**

*Dargan Theatre, Trinity College Dublin*

Thank you, Juliette,

And welcome, everyone. Welcome to Trinity and to Dublin.

We're delighted you're here. Trinity is a global university and we prize our diversity and internationalism. Over 40 percent of our staff and more than a quarter of our students come from outside Ireland, from over 120 countries. And, in turn, 40 percent of our students take up opportunities to study abroad, as you are now doing.

This year, of course, travel has been a challenge for everyone. Which means that's it has taken a particular effort for you to be here. Many of you have had to quarantine. Some of you are *still* self-isolating. This speech is being live-streamed – some may be watching at home.

I want you to know how much we appreciate the effort you've made and how much we value your presence amongst us. It's so important to the whole Trinity community that you chose to come here and that you've made the extra effort required this year.

I want you to get the most out of your Trinity experience. Some of you are here for a term, some for the year. Some are language students; others are majoring in other disciplines. We want all of you to have a memorable experience.

This is, of course, a challenging time. It's challenging for all students, everywhere, because Covid19 is global and it's impacting every country and university round the world. College life can't proceed as normal. And it's such a fast-evolving situation. Here in Dublin – well if you arrived ten days ago, you could have gone out to restaurants and to bars, almost as normal. But as of last Friday, these are closed, we hope just for a few weeks, but it will be a government decision to reopen, and it will depend on how well we're containing the spread of the virus.

Whatever country you're coming from, I'm sure that, by now, you're used to hygiene, social distancing and quarantine measures. Yes, these measures are restrictive but they don't have to define your time here.

What can you expect of college life this term?

\* \* \*

In Trinity, we take what might be called a classical view of higher education – which is to say that we believe your time in university should be transformative. We want to encourage students to challenge themselves in their ideas, beliefs, opinions and intentions. We want students to emerge changed from their time here.

We don't see our role as merely vocational – although we do see it as our responsibility to prepare students for exciting careers. But that doesn't mean educating for a first job; it means educating for the dynamic and ever-changing workplace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And we don't think just in terms of career – we think in terms of the whole life. You have an emotional, intellectual and creative responsibility to yourselves, and to your communities, and to the world.

A few years ago, we set out the graduate attributes which we would like all students to acquire in their time here. The four attributes are:

- To think independently
- To communicate effectively
- To grow continuously
- To act responsibly

If you leave college having developed an independence of mind; able to express yourselves clearly and vividly – in writing, speech and online; and if you're capable of adapting to change and imbued with a love of learning; and if you understand your responsibilities to your fellow human beings and to the natural world, and are ready to take up leadership roles – then you will have the right mindset for a successful career. And just as important, you will be ready for active and responsible citizenship, working towards the creation and maintenance of a pluralistic, just, and sustainable society.

This is what we seek for you; this is what a Trinity Education is aimed to deliver.

When we talk about a Trinity Education, we're talking about what you learn in the classroom, and outside. It's what you learn through the curriculum, in the library and the lab. And it's what you learn through extracurricular and social activities.

Let me talk about these learnings – inside and outside the classroom.

**\* \* \* The Trinity Education – Curricular \* \* \***

Whatever you're studying, your course will seek to develop independence of mind and critical thinking. Our college statutes declare (quote) that we "will seek to develop the search for truth... relying not on the imposition of authority or acceptance of received knowledge but rather on the exercise of the critical faculties of the human mind".

These statute were written long ago, but in this age of fake news, misinformation and that truly alarming concept 'post-truth', they remain more relevant than ever. Exercising your critical faculties has never been more important.

The good news is that our curriculum is devised to make you think. As long as you attend lectures and seminars and tutorials, use the library, complete essays and coursework, speak up in seminars to defend your views – as long as you're doing all this, you'll automatically get in the habit of discovery and independent thinking.

How is the curriculum going to be delivered in the age of Covid? It will be a mix of online and in-person.

All lectures will be online. We introduced this during lockdown and both staff and students found it a great improvement, enabling more flexibility and closer engagement.

Some seminars will be online, and live streamed. Through technology like Blackboard Collaborate, students can ask questions during live sessions, and of course you can email any follow-up queries.

We'll have as much face-to-face teaching as public health guidelines allow. These will be small-group sessions in areas that prioritise social interaction and skills training – for instance: lab classes, language learning, tutorials, field-trips and rehearsals.

As long as the regulations permit it, all students will attend some classes in college - your timetable will tell you when to come in. For online, you'll need a good laptop and broadband connection.

We're confident that we can successfully deliver all course work through a blend of online and in-person, but we need you to work with us. There are many supports available to you – your tutor and student counsellors can talk through any and all issues, personal and course-related, and our excellent IT department will be able to help with any technology issues. Do avail of all supports.

## **\* \* \* The Trinity Education – 2. Extracurricular \* \* \***

Now let me turn to the other essence of the Trinity Education – what happens outside the lecture-room.

Surveys have shown that employers value graduates who have developed a capacity for responsibility and initiative through participation in extra-curricular activities. Employers don't just look at what grades you achieved in college – they look at what you *did*, what you got involved in, how you spent your time outside the library. We think employers have got this right – success in career and in life is about your whole way of being.

What do I mean by 'Extracurricular activities'? Well, it means things like:

- getting involved in clubs and societies;
- writing for college journals;
- volunteering and fund-raising for charity;
- debating;
- organising events;
- designing new technologies;
- starting your own business.

This term, extracurricular will also be a blend of in-person and online. We can't have crowded gatherings, so lots of events have moved online. Clubs and societies have been really inventive about this - making use of different technologies to engage their members with virtual webinars and events.

Next week, the first week of the undergraduate term, which we call Freshers' Week, is traditionally when students sign up to clubs and societies. Normally the clubs and societies set their stalls out in Front Square. That's not happening this year, but – as you'll see in the posters up around campus – if you log on to the clubs and societies pages on the college webpage, you can join and get an idea of their activities, both in-person and online. You should, of course, follow your interests – whether that's cycling or orienteering or chess or politics or comedy or jazz – there really is a club or society for everything and you will meet like-minded people.

It's true that not all activities can go ahead in the current climate. Indoor sports for instance and contact sports are restricted, as is group singing and performances. We hope this will change. But there are many options out there. And since there's more scope for in-person outdoor activities, it may be worth exploring things like

the Hiking Society which organises weekly hikes in the Wicklow and Dublin areas.

Some activities, previously done in-person, have proved to work brilliantly online. A great example is our student accelerator programme, LaunchBox, which helps student to incubate and market their business ideas.

LaunchBox is an exceptional accelerator programme. Students who started with an idea as undergraduates are now running companies based around that idea – thanks to the support and mentoring they got here.

To give you a few figures: in the past seven years, LaunchBox has supported 80 start-ups and over 200 students to further their entrepreneurial ambitions. Previous startups on LaunchBox have gone on to raise over €69 million in funding and investment, creating over 200 jobs for the Irish economy.

Thanks to LaunchBox and our other initiatives, Trinity is now established as Europe's leading university for educating entrepreneurs. That accolade is based on the number of our undergraduate alumni who go on to create companies that secure first-round venture capital funding.

As you'll gather, we're very proud of LaunchBox and of our culture of entrepreneurship which we hope you'll tap into in your time here.

Every year over 70 start-up teams vie for a place on LaunchBox. The process is highly competitive - just 10 start-ups get through to the stage of presenting before the judging panel.

When the college locked down in March, LaunchBox teams were unable to work together in person, but they made the transition smoothly. Teams worked together online and a weekly online social event was organised by one or more of the participating teams – the events included everything from quizzes, to cocktail making, to Pictionary challenges, and were a huge success.

Just a month ago the 10 finalised teams presented their projects – and they were as strong as ever.

I'm proud of the creativity and resilience our students showed. None of us actually welcomes adversity, but it's through our *response* to adversity that we grow and develop as human beings.

All of you have already shown resilience and creativity in taking the step to travel and come here in this challenging period. I hope you can take that spirit of adventure and use it to really make the most of your time here.

We want you to engage with your professors and fellow students, in-person and online. We want you to plunge into college life. There's probably no other time in your life when you'll be surrounded by so many talented, dynamic people who have the time, energy and vision to explore different opportunities.

Some of you may have seen the series, *Normal People*, centred around two Trinity students. It was broadcast around the world in April and May. It's based on the book by our graduate, Sally Rooney, and the producer, director and many of the actors, including the male lead, were all Trinity graduates. So it was a truly Trinity production and it did give an idea of what college life is like here.

Of course, that was college life *before* Covid-19. Social distancing complicates things, there's no getting around that. But we're doing what we can to ensure that you still have a transformative time and meet people and make friends. So for instance, we've created extra social spaces for you to hang out. These spaces will be booked as pods – allowing you meet others on your course, or from your School. Do avail of them.

Currently the campus is remarkably quiet. Next week, when undergraduate teaching starts, it will get busier, but will still be much quieter than usual. Trinity is a leading Dublin visitor attraction, as well as a university, and it's also an oasis in the city centre – many Dubliners like to come here to walk, hang out, visit our exhibitions. Now, however, the campus is closed to the public, except those who have purchased tickets to the Book of Kells.

This may be your first time in Trinity so it's difficult for you to imagine just how crowded it generally is. But there's a real beauty to the quietness, and many staff and students are glad of it. Previously half the people one saw on campus were coming from outside. Now, just about everyone you see will be a member of the Trinity community – staff or student. This creates a special, collegiate atmosphere and I believe it can make it easier to strike up contacts. This is your campus. This is your community. Whatever you do in life, wherever you go, you will always be a part of the Trinity community.



I hope that you will feel a continuous connection with this university, and that Trinity will be, for you, a source of strength as you forge your careers in the outside world.

With your intelligence, drive and ability, you have the opportunity to make your mark on the world in wonderful and expected ways. Your time in Trinity will amplify that opportunity. My promise is that we will do everything in our power to help you fulfil your potential.

Use this precious time to develop and expand who you are. I wish you a life-transforming term, or year.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



28 September 2020

## **Email message to Alumni from the Provost of Trinity College Dublin**

Dear alumni and friends,

I hope you and your families are keeping well. As we prepare to 'winter out' this pandemic, I wanted to get in touch to update you on how Trinity is doing.

Today the new academic year begins and we're welcoming students back to the college. The start of the New Year is such an invigorating time – I always think the 'junior fresh' are well-named since they bring such freshness and renewal to college life. This year is particularly evocative because the campus has been closed for six months, since mid-March when all teaching and research moved online.

While we welcome students back, it's not business as usual. It can't be – as of last week, Dublin has been moved to Level 3 in terms of COVID restrictions, which means severe curtailments on all gatherings - indoor and outdoor, social and workplace. Nevertheless, students are returning to live in rooms and in Trinity Hall, including international students, many of whom arrived early in order to quarantine. We had planned some in-person teaching for all students – unfortunately, under Level 3 we have had to curtail this somewhat.

Our priority is to keep the campus open for education and research. We really don't want to move all teaching online again. Ensuring this means making sacrifices and adopting new behaviours. In collaboration with the HSE, we're setting up a testing service for students and staff, which should help reduce the risk of cluster development, and screening is planned for all students living in college and Trinity Hall. The campus remains closed to the public – except for the Book of Kells which may be visited in person, through tickets purchased online, once Level 3 restrictions end. All talks, lectures and exhibitions, including Science Gallery, have moved online for the duration of Level 3.

As alumni and friends of Trinity, you're always welcome on campus. However, to comply with campus access requirements, please contact us in advance to let us know you're coming so that a pass can be arranged (email: [alumni@tcd.ie](mailto:alumni@tcd.ie)). The campus is returning to how it was in decades past when the public tended not to cut

through. We do regret we have had to take these measures, including closing of Front Gate (entrance is now via the Nassau Street entrance, Science Gallery gate, or the Lincoln Place gate). At the same time, there is a kind of serene beauty to the quietness of the college these days.

And it's a particularly good time to visit the Book of Kells, so please do take advantage of alumni priority at this time. The Book has recently been moved to a bespoke glass case in the Treasury room, which is kept in darkness except for a spotlight on the case. Every page can now be displayed on a rotating basis, including some of the most ornate pages which haven't been on public display before because of their sensitivity to light. I saw The Virgin and Child page for the first time a few days ago.

\* \* \*

It's going to be a difficult term, and probably year, for students and staff, there's no getting around that. Mandatory mask-wearing and hand-sanitising is the least of it. Everyone has to get on top of technology for online learning, and many staff have been working flat out to get lectures and tutorials online over the summer.

I think the greatest challenge students face isn't in their studies but in extracurricular and social activities, which are so intrinsic to a Trinity Education. Students can't invite people to their rooms or have parties. They can't gather in the Arts Block for coffee and debate. They can't meet up for club and society activities – except for outdoor events of fewer than 15 people, most of this has moved online. And the Pav and Buttery are currently open for takeaway only, we hope just for a few weeks, but there's no guarantee. Added to this, many of the service jobs which provided students with part-time income, have gone. This isn't college life as we knew it.

I know we all want to do what we can to support students through this. Since the start of the pandemic, alumni have been incredibly supportive – your generosity to the Student Hardship Fund enabled us to support students facing income loss and eviction during lockdown. The Fund remains a priority but students need so much more than income support during this time. We want them to know that the whole community – staff and alumni – is here for them.

\* \* \*

There are no Freshers' Week stalls out in Front Square this year, but our incoming students will still be receiving a warm welcome, with orientation events taking place in person and online. Some alumni have recorded video messages for students telling them

about college and offering alumni-to-student mentoring. If you'd like to become a mentor to new, or returning, students, or have other ways you'd like to support, please contact the Alumni Office at [alumni@tcd.ie](mailto:alumni@tcd.ie) and Jennifer Taaffe, Director of Alumni & Supporter Relations or a member of her team will be in touch.

We do miss welcoming you to college in-person. This August was my first as Provost that I didn't meet graduates during the Alumni Weekend. And it's looking likely that the Christmas Alumni Homecoming, another annual fixture, will also have to be moved online. But alumni online engagement, in general, has really taken off and has been a lifeline during this pandemic. I hope you've been enjoying initiatives like our live webinars, *Inspiring Ideas @ Trinity*, which bring in experts to discuss latest developments in science, technology, business, art, medicine.

\* \* \*

There are many research developments to foreground. As a leading research university during a time of global crisis, Trinity is busier than ever. Our immunologists are among the best in the world and are contributing to the global effort to discover new cures and vaccines for COVID-19. And our engineers recently launched a robot, called Violet, which disinfects rooms through UV-C irradiation and is portable and compact enough to operate in tight, crowded spaces – particularly useful for containing the spread of the virus.

Now isn't the time to scale down our ambition. People are turning to universities for reassurance and guidance, and Trinity's role as Ireland's leading research institution is more important than ever. It's up to us to demonstrate purpose and leadership, and to provide inspiration to the rising generations, who rely more than ever on an excellent education for their start in life.

Our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*, is proving vital in keeping ambition high in the university and the country. The priority projects – E3, the Trinity-St James's Cancer Institute, the Old Library Redevelopment and the Law School - are about creating advanced new facilities to nurture the best talent and pursue world-beating research. They are underpinned by the *New Generations* programme to fund professorships and tenure-track posts across the university and to fund more pathways to support talented students from all backgrounds to come to Trinity.

Support for the priority projects and for New Generations has been outstanding and we're on target to meet our campaign goals. With

your help, we'll make the final push this year and deliver these initiatives which are so transformative for Trinity and Ireland and for global research.

Alumni support for Trinity has always been strong. At this time of crisis, it's proving exceptional. We've found that people are prioritising what's important to them, and that Trinity is centrally important to so many of us.

My thanks to all of you who support us in so many different ways. Do keep in touch and I'll be back with regular updates.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Prendergast  
PROVOST

\* \* \*



Library Square (notice circles on the lawns for people/pods to maintain two meters social distancing).

28 September 2020  
29 September 2020  
30 September 2020

## **Welcome Address to Junior Fresh Students**

*Exam Hall, Trinity College Dublin*

Good afternoon, and welcome.

It's wonderful to see you all here. Congratulations on your achievement. This year, CAO points were decided on the basis of overall school performance. In your time at school you proved your enthusiasm for learning, your discipline and aptitude for hard work, your intelligence, resilience and talent. That's why you're here today. We're honoured and delighted that you've chosen to come to Trinity. We pledge to do all we can to nurture your talent and abilities.

May I say what a particular pleasure it is to see you here today. Like many universities round the world, we closed our campus in March when education and research moved online. I live in the College, in the Provost's House, with my family. It was a remarkable experience to be here for six months without the physical presence of students, professors, or visitors. At times the peace and calm were to be cherished but it's wonderful to have the college back open for teaching and research, even if we are currently curtailed by the Level 3 restrictions.

Every year, new incoming students revitalise the university – by tradition, we refer to first years as 'junior fresh students' and you do indeed bring freshness to the college. This has never been more true than this year. When I look out at you all now, I'm reminded that, whatever happens, whatever fate throws our way, the cycle of learning and education always replenishes itself.

*'Something that will not acknowledge conclusion / Insists that we forever begin'*

- those words were written by the poet Brendan Kennelly, who was for many years a professor here. I propose that we take them as our college motto, and how they resonate today!

A special welcome to those of you coming from abroad. In a period when global travel has been so compromised, it's wonderful to have

you here with us today. I know that many of you had to quarantine. Thank you for making this effort.

This is the start of a new college year like no other. As we continue to navigate this pandemic and comply with regulations, your experience will be unique in the history of junior fresh students in Trinity. But in another sense, your experience of starting college is timeless. Yes, the way we deliver learning has changed greatly this year, but the goal of that learning remains the same – to nurture your talents and sense of responsibility – and like thousands and thousands of Trinity students before you, you are at the start of a life-changing adventure. What will it be like?

\* \* \*

I remember very well my own first week at Trinity, so I've a fair idea how you're feeling – a combination of nerves and excitement, enthusiasm and just a bit of trepidation.

I guess it's because Trinity is such a remarkable, challenging place that we feel this trepidation: we want to live up to it. I do as Provost, and you do as our newest students.

I came here as an undergraduate in 1983 to study engineering. I remember my parents driving me up from Wexford to Dublin, and how proud they were for me.

And I'll never forget how I felt when I first walked through Front Arch into the wide expanse of Front Square – that sense of history all around me and the dynamism and energy of the place.

I've never lost my initial sense of excitement about Trinity. That's why I did my Ph.D. here, and later returned as a lecturer. And it's why I felt so honoured to have been elected Provost by the staff and students to lead this university.

I want all of you to have as good an experience as undergraduates, as I had. I hope that, like most of our graduates, you'll develop a lifelong attachment to the college. I've been thinking about what I can tell you that will help maximise your student experience.

I'm speaking as a former Trinity student, as a lecturer who spent many years teaching undergraduates, and as the head of this university, who wants you to realise your potential - for your own sake. And for Trinity's sake.

I know that College can be overwhelming, especially in the beginning. But it doesn't have to be. The more you familiarise



yourself with how we do things, and the more you avail of our resources, the more rewarding you will find this experience.

**\* \* \* The Trinity Experience – 1. Education \* \* \***

You're now entering a new, exciting phase of your education, where the emphasis is on cultivating independent thought. It's no longer about what you can remember, but what you can discover for yourself. It's not about regurgitating what lecturers say, it's about your own interpretation.

The curriculum is designed to make you think. So as long as you attend lectures and seminars, use the library, complete essays and coursework, do lab work, speak up in tutorials to defend your views – as long as you're doing all this, you'll automatically get in the habit of discovery.

Our curriculum is aimed at preparing you for a world that is ever more global, entrepreneurial, and technological, and ever more flexible in terms of career-building and workplace practices.

By the time you graduate, we want you:

- To think independently
- To communicate effectively
- To grow continuously
- To act responsibly

These are the four Trinity graduate attributes. If you leave college with independence of mind; able to express yourselves clearly and vividly – in writing, speech and online; and if you are capable of adapting to change and imbued with a love of learning; and if you understand your responsibilities to your fellow human beings and to the natural world, and are ready to take up leadership roles – then you will have the right mindset for a successful career.

And you will be ready for active and responsible citizenship working towards the creation and maintenance of a pluralistic, just, and sustainable society.

This is what we seek for you; this is what our education aims to deliver. We recently redeveloped the curriculum to incorporate diverse styles of assessment, moving away from exams, towards other means of appraisal.

And we've created more opportunity for you to take modules outside your core discipline – these "Trinity Electives" mean that science students can now take modules in arts and humanities, and vice

versa. I wish this had been available when I was a student! I never regretted doing engineering, but I would have loved the opportunity to take a module related to history or poetry, or a language. Do be adventurous and brave about choosing modules outside your comfort zone.

\* \* \*

How is the curriculum going to be delivered in the age of Covid? It will be a mix of online and in-person.

All large lectures will be online. We introduced this during lockdown and both staff and students found it has its advantages enabling more flexibility and closer engagement.

Some seminars will be online, and live streamed. Through technology like Blackboard Collaborate, students can ask questions during live sessions, and of course you can email any follow-up queries.

We'll have as much face-to-face teaching as public health guidelines allow. These will be small-group sessions in areas that prioritise social interaction and skills training – for instance: lab classes, language learning, tutorials, field-trips and rehearsals. As long as the regulations permit it, all students will attend some classes in college - your timetable will tell you when to come in, and we're going to provide spaces where you can take online lectures where necessary.

We're confident that we can successfully deliver all course work through a blend of online and in-person, but we need you to work with us. There are many supports available to you. – your tutor and student counsellors can talk through any and all issues, personal and course-related, and our excellent IT department will be able to help with any technology issues. The important thing is to keep us informed and signal any concerns early.

### **\* \* \* The Trinity Education – 2. Extracurricular \* \* \***

We provide a range of services because the whole of your experience at college is important. The Trinity Education is also what happens outside the lecture-room.

Surveys have shown that employers value graduates who have developed a capacity for responsibility and initiative through participation in extra-curricular activities. Employers don't just look at what grades you achieved in college – they look at what you *did*, what you got involved in, how you spent your time outside or

lectures, labs, and the library. We think employers have got this right – success in career and in life is about your whole way of being.

What do I mean by ‘Extracurricular activities’? Well, it means things like:

- getting involved in clubs and societies;
- writing for college journals;
- volunteering and fund-raising for charity;
- debating;
- organising events;
- designing new technologies;
- starting your own business.

This term, extracurricular will also be a blend of in-person and online. We can’t have crowded gatherings, so lots of events have moved online. Clubs and societies have been really inventive about this - making use of different technologies to engage their members with virtual webinars and events.

This week, Freshers’ Week, is traditionally when students sign up to clubs and societies. Normally the clubs and societies set their stalls out in Front Square. That’s not happening this year, but – as you’ll see in the posters up around campus – if you log on to the clubs and societies pages on the college webpage, you can join and get an idea of their activities, both in-person and online.

You should, of course, follow your interests – whether that’s cycling or orienteering or chess or politics or comedy or jazz – there really is a club or society for everything and you will meet like-minded people.

It’s true that not all activities can go ahead in the current climate. Indoor sports for instance and contact sports are currently restricted under Level 3, as is group singing and live debates and performances.

And unfortunately, parties and socialising on campus are currently on hold. You WILL experience all this before you leave college. But for the moment, they can’t happen. I know that you’ll take responsibility to work with us, and with wider Irish society, to keep our country and campus safe.

I do know how hard this is. In my undergraduate years I was a keen member of the Karate Club. I know how bitterly disappointed I

would have been to forego competing. Not to mention the parties and pubs and debates.

We're sorry that it has to be this way. But we have faith in your resourcefulness and creativity. Clubs and societies have been so inventive about keeping activities going online and in-person in a socially distanced way.

There are many options out there. And since there's more scope for in-person outdoor activities, it may be worth exploring things like Hiking and Kayaking – you can meet for outdoor sports with up to fifteen people.

And we've created extra social spaces for you to hang out. These spaces will be booked as pods – allowing you meet others on your course, or from your School. Do avail of them.

Some activities, previously done in-person, have proved to work brilliantly online. A great example is our student accelerator programme, LaunchBox, which helps student to incubate and market their business ideas.

LaunchBox is an exceptional accelerator programme. Students who started with an idea as undergraduates are now running companies based around that idea – thanks to the support and mentoring they got here.

In the past seven years, LaunchBox has supported 80 start-ups and over 200 students to further their entrepreneurial ambitions. Previous startups on LaunchBox have gone on to raise over €69 million in funding and investment, creating over 200 jobs for the Irish economy.

Thanks to LaunchBox and our other initiatives, Trinity is now established as Europe's leading university for educating entrepreneurs. That accolade is based on the number of our undergraduate alumni who go on to create companies that secure first-round venture capital funding.

Every year over 70 start-up teams vie for a place on LaunchBox. The process is highly competitive - just 10 start-ups get through to the stage of presenting before the judging panel.

When the college locked down in March, LaunchBox teams were unable to work together in person, but they made the transition smoothly. Teams worked together online and a weekly online social event was organised by one or more of the participating teams – the events included everything from quizzes, to cocktail making, to Pictionary challenges, and were a huge success.

Just a month ago the 10 finalised teams presented their projects – and they were as strong as ever.

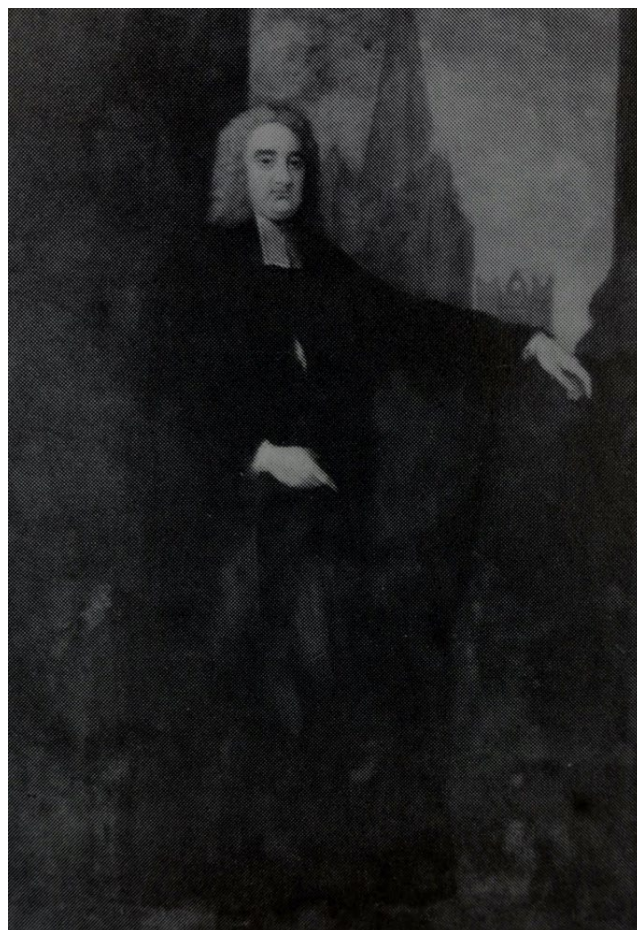
I'm proud of the creativity and resilience our students showed. None of us actually welcomes adversity, but it's through our *response* to adversity that we grow and develop as human beings.

**\* \* \* The Trinity Community \* \* \***

You're now a member of the Trinity community. It's a community of 17,000 undergraduates and postgraduates, some 3000 staff, and 110,000 past students, or alumni, living in 130 countries worldwide.

Membership of the Trinity community is lifelong. What has made Trinity great over more than four centuries is the people that have studied and worked here, and the radical, creative ways in which they have contributed to world thought.

We take huge pride in the achievements of our graduates, from our earliest graduates like Jonathan Swift (whose portrait is here in the Exam Hall),



Wolfe Tone, and the mathematician William Rowan Hamilton, through to our more recent graduates, such as Leo Varadkar, the youngest Taoiseach this country has ever had, and Sally Rooney, author of *Normal People*, which you, like me, may have watched during lockdown, and Paul Mescal, the star of *Normal People*, another graduate.

If you go to the Dining Hall, you will see a frieze in the grand entrance – this is the ‘Benefactors Roll’, which commemorates the Trinity’s benefactors who have supported the College since its foundation in 1592. The founder’s portrait is there on the right, Queen Elizabeth:



Many of our alumni feel such a lifelong connection to Trinity that they seek to support its continuing greatness.

I hope that you too will feel a continuous connection with this university, and that Trinity will be, for you, a source of strength as you forge your careers in the outside world.



With your intelligence, drive and ability, you have the opportunity to make your mark on the world in wonderful and expected ways. That opportunity begins in Trinity. My promise is that we will do everything in our power to help you fulfil your potential.

If I had just one piece of advice to impart for this stage of your lives it would be to keep your horizons open. Now is not a time to close down or narrow your options. Use the precious few College years to develop and expand who you are.

Your time in Trinity will transform how you view the world, and how you view yourselves.

I wish you four life-transforming College years. I look forward to keeping in touch with you throughout your time here – and in the years ahead.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



Provost Patrick Prendergast delivering the welcome address to a small number of students in-person with, seated on the dais (L to R), Senior Tutor, Aidan Seery; Director of Student Services, Breda Walls; and Dean of Students, Professor Catherine McCabe.





08 October 2020

## **Celebrating Michael Dobbs-Higginson as benefactor to Trinity College**

*Zoom from the Provost's Library*

Good morning and Welcome, everyone, on this really lovely occasion: the celebration of a great benefactor and the adornment of Library Square, one of the most beautiful squares in college. I'm sorry we're not all together now in Library Square, admiring the new Gingkoes, and the new benches. Alas, in the current state of COVID restrictions, that's simply not possible. I'm delighted, at least, that we can convene on Zoom.

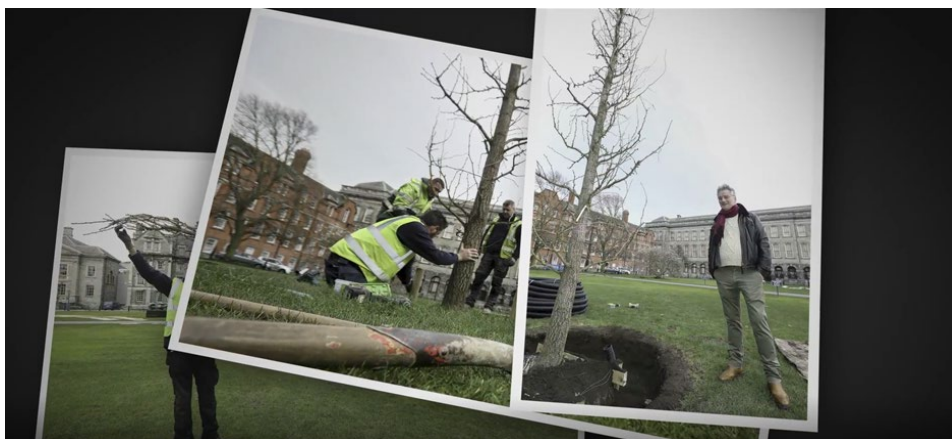
Let's start by everyone introducing themselves:

*[Kate, Michael Dobbs Higginson, his wife Marie-Thérèse, his daughter Justine; Iggy McGovern; Brendan Leahy; John Parnell introduce themselves]*

\* \* \*

Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here with you all, and to meet Justine for the first time. On one of Michael and Marie-Thérèse's previous visits to Trinity we discussed the collapse of the much-loved Oregon Maple trees – and that was the start of a conversation about replacement trees and Michael's own idea for the benches. Let me show this short video which charts the arrival of the Gingkoes and the benches.

*Play the video:*



\* \* \*

As we welcome in this new academic year – unlike any other and, inevitably, characterised by restriction and containment - how lovely it is to be celebrating something new: an addition to the campus. These new benches have now entered the fabric of the college and I can only imagine the stories they will engender over the coming years as they become a popular meeting place.

I'm delighted now to invite our pro-chancellor, Iggy McGovern, to commemorate this occasion. Dr McGovern is a Fellow Emeritus of Trinity and formerly Professor in Physics. He's also an award-winning poet and he will now read a poem he has written especially for this occasion:

*The Gingko Trees Converse*

*For Michael and Marie-Thérèse*

*Across the Asian Plains of Library Square  
We reminisce about our coming here;  
With frontline worker's toss of maidenhair  
We raise a flag in this pandemic year.  
About our feet a trio of limestone  
'rest and be thankful' benches shaped as arcs  
Where students meet to honour or dethrone  
The diverse thoughts of Berkeley or Karl Marx.  
The former spawned the verse of Ronald Knox  
His famous limerick featuring the tree  
That danced around his lordship's paradox  
With us, at least, continuing to be.  
Our favourite visitor, we both allow,  
A Freshman Medic sporting a sarong  
Now executes a true Zen Master bow  
And takes his place cued by The Commons gong.  
We joke that as he is Salisbury-born  
And we two share the Salisburia code  
We're all somehow kin of the unicorn  
That leads us down the long and winding road.  
Hindu, Buddhist, Jew, Christian, Islamist,  
Their diverse avenues, who can gainsay?  
He listens but will gently still insist:  
"Self-knowledge is the first step on the way"*

*Iggy McGovern 2020*

\* \* \*

Thank you, Iggy. That was beautiful.

I must say that as I pass these green young trees and the new benches, I like to reflect on how long they will last, beloved of generations of students, just like the Oregon maples. That reminds me how long Trinity has flourished and that the work of a university is eternal and timeless.

But, in order for a university, to do its timeless work, it needs support. All the work of a university – education, research, innovation, public engagement – needs deep investment. In Trinity, we're so fortunate in our alumni and friends - people who believe in what we do, and who want to give back and support the rising generations of scholars.

Michael Dobbs-Higginson is a former Trinity student, but like Oscar Wilde, he isn't actually a Trinity graduate because he left, voluntarily, before his final years. But again, like Oscar, in his time here as an undergraduate, he gave and received so much. We're so glad that we can claim him as a Trinity man.

I don't need to extol his virtues to this small group. We know him well. Let me just say that in this university, where we emphasise the importance of interdisciplinarity and of educating, not just for a career, but for active and participatory citizenship – Michael is a role model of all that we stand for: businessman, entrepreneur, philosopher, voyager, writer, philanthropist... I was going to say 'a Renaissance Man', but that's too western a concept to contain Michael's understanding of the world which finds its roots deeper into the human soul and in Eastern philosophy.

Michael's adventurous approach to life is what we wish for our students. So it's right and fitting that his name is now honoured in the scholarship programme he has endowed. And it's physically honoured in these benches where generations will sit and think and contemplate life.

Michael, we're so grateful, and uplifted by your generosity. Can I invite you now to talk a bit n about what inspires you in your giving.

*[Michael speaks]*

\* \* \*

Thank you Kate, and thank you, Michael, for those wonderful words. I can't say how much it means to us that Trinity helped educate you in the true sense of the word – 'led you out of yourself'. I hope that our current students, even in this pandemic, are being

similarly 'led out of themselves'. You are helping us to do this, for them.

We've already had some fine poetry, but I'd like, if I may, to read a few lines from Derek Mahon, in commemoration of this great poet and Trinity graduate, who died on Friday. He strikes me as the perfect poet to read for Michael because he too is very much, a Buddhist. A Buddhist formed in Ulster Protestantism. I was struck to find, in one of his poems, a description of sitting on the bench at the Grand Canal, beside the bronze statue of Patrick Kavanagh. Anyone who has walked the canal between Baggot St and Leeson St knows the place where the bench is. I like to think of Derek sitting there, thinking these thoughts, and I like to think of future generations of young people, Trinity students just as Derek and Michael once were, sitting on Michael's benches, also thinking of the flow of life – what Michael and Derek would call 'the Tao'. I'll read the end lines of Derek's poem, 'An Bonnán Bui'<sup>1</sup>

*I sit with bronze Kavanagh on his canal-bank seat  
not in 'the tremendous silence of mid-July'  
but the fast bright zing of a winter afternoon  
dizzy with head-set, flash-bulb and digifone,  
to learn the tao he once claimed as his own  
and share with him the moor-hen and the swan,  
the thoughtless lyric of a cloud in the sky  
and the play of light and shadow on the slow  
commemorative waters; relax, go with the flow.*

Amen to that, thank you Derek.

And now, if this bench were a ship, we might break a bottle of champagne over it to launch it on its way. And a bottle of Leclerc Briant 2010 was personally selected by the Trinity Cellarer, Dr Edward Arnold, and sent to Michael, Marie-Thérèse and Justine so that they could have something of Trinity with them today.

Later we can celebrate with a toast: 'To the Gingkos, the benches, and going with the flow'.

\* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/92166/vii-an-bonnan-bui>

13 October 2020

**Provost's Salon with Helen Shenton  
'Old Library Redevelopment Project'**

*ZOOM from the Andrews Room, Provost's House*

Good evening,

And welcome, everyone, to the first of the 'Provost's Salons', exclusively for Provost Council members.

At the annual meeting of the Provost's Council last month, many of you asked for more detailed updates around the campaign flagship projects. This is the first in a series of four salon events, which I'll be hosting, to update you on progress, and to open up discussion on the projects.

Over the past few months, when the college was in lockdown, we've held a few of these virtual Salon events – some of you have attended them. It's been a great opportunity to talk to our distinguished academics and graduates about their vital fields of expertise. Luke O'Neill on Covid and immunology, and Philip Lane on economic impact, have been two of the speakers.

All Salon events are small to allow discussion and this particular series – on the campaign priority projects – are exclusively for Provost Council members.

Before we proceed with the event, could I ask everyone to briefly say hello and introduce themselves to the group. Kate, we might start with you...

Thanks, and now:

*Eileen Punch, Fergal Naughton, Martin Naughton, Fiona Thomas, Brian Caulfield, David Went, Cliona Murphy, Sheelagh O'Neill, Conor Killeen, Kathy Gilfillan, Alan Dargan, John Daly, Finlay Ross, David McConnell.*

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing more from you all, in the discussion that I'll be convening after Helen Shenton's presentation. During her talk, please keep your microphones off, and of course turn them on again afterwards for the Q&A. We look forward to a great discussion.

As with all our Salon events, Chatham rules apply so, please everyone, feel comfortable to speak openly.

A bit of good news before we get into the main theme: we've just heard that Trinity has secured €21 million euro from the Higher Education Authority for an innovative, skills-led teaching initiative. This initiative is titled "Next Generation Teaching and Learning for the changing needs of society and enterprise" – which, of course, fits very aptly with the New Generations strand of *Inspiring Generations*.

As of a fortnight ago, college has reopened for in person teaching - in a somewhat more restricted way than we had hoped for. But Ireland is at Level 3 and the number of cases is concerning. I'm sure that our students understand the need to prioritise safety. We're doing everything we can to support them to have a positive Trinity experience within the restrictions.

And, of course, we're proceeding 'full steam ahead' with the priority projects of the campaign which are more vital than ever to safeguarding the future of the university.

In this first Salon, we're looking at the Old Library Redevelopment Project. It's timely that we are starting with this initiative. The Library is at the very heart of Trinity College and we are fully committed to conserving and redeveloping it for future generations.

This is a commitment that is shared by many others who care about safeguarding global heritage and ensuring that our treasures will be accessible to all. It's also a commitment shared by the Dublin city planners - just last week we received the excellent news that the project design had been granted full and clean planning permission. This is a ringing endorsement of our plans, and means we will be advancing the work even sooner than we anticipated.

Philanthropy will be key in powering the Library's transformation and leveraging funding from Government and other sources. With your help, we'll make the final push this year to have the funding in place to deliver this critical project for Trinity and Ireland.

Now I will hand over to the Librarian and College Archivist, Helen Shenton who is leading the Redevelopment Project to tell you more about the plans to transform the Library.

*[Helen speaks and show video. After video, open the floor for discussion. At the end (18.55) wrap up and thank everyone for attending]*

\* \* \*

20 October 2020

## **Email update on Trinity Response to Level 5 – All Staff and Student Email**

Dear Students and Colleagues,

We hope you are well. We are writing to update you about our intended approach to teaching and research following last night's Government decision to step up measures to Level 5 under the Plan for Living with COVID-19.

We know this is a difficult time for many of you who have told us that you are struggling with the restrictions. Some of you are lonely and others are facing increased workloads. We are all worrying about our families and friends as well as our own health. The good news is that because of our preparations earlier in the year not much will change for our university because we were already operating at a very high level of safety.

According to the Department of the Taoiseach's and Minister's websites (1,2), colleges are deemed an essential service and physical presence is permitted for higher education "insofar as onsite presence is required and such education activities cannot be held remotely". Therefore, we should maintain a balance of on-campus and remote learning for the remainder of the semester, with some adjustments across different subject areas.

At this stage, all lectures and tutorials that can be delivered online should be delivered online. Lab and practical classes, clinical skills classes, creative practice or other formative experiential components that cannot be delivered online are to continue to be delivered face-to-face. Clinical and professional placements should also be maintained in face-to-face delivery. Opportunities to physically carry out lab-based capstone projects (e.g., capstone or postgraduate dissertation projects) should similarly be maintained. A tremendous amount of work has gone in to ensuring these activities can be carried out safely under face-to-face conditions and this is wholly consistent with the current public health advice. The Level 5 restrictions aim to reduce the transmission of the virus in the community protecting those activities that can only be done face-to-face and we will all wish to very strongly protect the essential experiential learning which is foundational to our students' learning and cannot be replaced at a later time. This is the official position of the university and we would ask that experiential learning should not be replaced by desk-based work

without very deep consideration for the consequences for the student's learning.

In summary, it is clear that the government understands that some amount of in person teaching is essential and can proceed when organised in a safe manner.

Research may also continue under the new Government advice. The Library will continue to provide essential services to support researchers and students. The Library will maintain access to online resources; access to safe study space with good-connectivity (with some reductions from that under COVID Level 3) and access to as much physical material as possible. Details are being finalised and will be communicated by the Librarian tomorrow.

The bad news is the restrictions already in operation here in Trinity are now likely to continue for the rest of the semester. There is now little chance that we can increase in person teaching before Christmas.

For those who are living on campus or in Trinity Hall, campus residences will remain open under Level 5. We encourage students to remain in residence to engage in the admittedly limited amount of in person teaching that you have, using the library, and engaging in the permitted activities within your pod. We do realise that this is a massive challenge, particularly for our Junior Fresh students who may not have yet generated social bonds among their class - we will endeavour to support you in every way that we can. However, should students want to leave accommodation on the main campus or in Trinity Hall, we will continue to look at requests on a case-by-case basis.

The online study spaces and student breakout spaces around the campus will remain open.

Some sports will continue but it is too early to know which sports exactly. The gym and swimming pool will have to close. The Buttery and The Perch will remain open but only offer a take-away service. Additional changes may be added in the coming days but this appears to be the situation at present. If things change, we will write to you again as soon as we have more updates.

As always, please check with your school or unit for more details or check <https://www.tcd.ie/about/coronavirus/> and our social media channels for updates.

We hope this provides more clarity about what to expect. These are undoubtedly some of the most difficult times any of us have



experienced but the College community has shown great resilience and determination. We believe these qualities will now get us through the rest of the semester.

With best wishes,  
Patrick Prendergast  
Provost  
John Coman  
Secretary to the College

1. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c9158-essential-services/?referrer=http://www.gov.ie/essentialservices/#education>
2. <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/f3bbe-what-level-5-means-for-further-and-higher-education-minister-harris/>

\* \* \*



Marquee erected in New Square as a place for students to study and take online lectures while maintaining social distancing.



21 - 23 October 2020

## **Address at The Good Summit**

*Online*

Good morning, everyone,  
And welcome to the Good Summit.

I'm Patrick Prendergast, Provost of Trinity College Dublin, which has hosted the Good Summit since its inauguration in 2018. The Summit is co-founded by the Methodist chaplain of our university, Julian Hamilton, and by one of our alumni, social entrepreneur, Amr Dawood, a Trinity graduate in maths and engineering.

This year, because of social distancing requirements, the Good Summit is being held fully online, but on Friday there will be a live stream from the Trinity chapel, where a very small and socially distanced audience will hear from some great international speakers, and musicians too. This will be the culmination of a remarkable three days of debate and discussion, convened through online panels, symposia, seminars and conversations. The themes are wide-ranging and include AI, the Arts, Journalism, Education and Ecology – all centred around the Summit's theme this year: 'Let there be Hope'.

The Good Summit was founded by Julian and Amr after they both addressed a peace vigil in Trinity Front Square following the horrific Bataclan attacks in Paris in November 2015.

Coming from different traditions, Christian and Muslim, Julian and Amr took as their starting point the simple and yet, to some, challenging premise that "we are better together". From this the Good Summit has grown.

The aim of the Summit is to cultivate and celebrate the Common Good through Health, Education, Science, Faiths, Politics, Social Enterprise, the Environment and everything that promotes positive social transformation. The emphasis is on positive initiatives and the Art of the Possible.

The Good Summit doesn't so much diagnose where people have gone wrong – although that's also an important task, but the remit is to showcase where people have gone right, have done good, have worked to make the world a better place.

The emphasis on achievement and optimism makes the Summit a genuinely uplifting and inspiring event. Each year, speakers and audiences come away imbued with the art of the possible. That's never been more important than this year. We might say of the Good Summit that had Amr and Julian not already founded it, we would have had to invent it, in order to bring hope during this pandemic, which is proving so difficult and confounding across the world, despite truly heroic efforts to contain its spread.

The Summit has doubled in size each year since its foundation. This year it will address its largest audience yet, with people tuning in from Ireland and UK and as far away as Australia, to listen to remarkable speakers discuss vital issues. Speakers include:

- Mary McAleese, former President of Ireland and now Chancellor of this university, and her husband Martin McAleese;
- Malcolm Turnbull, former Prime Minister of Australia,
- Marc Brackett, founding Director of the Yale Centre for Emotional Intelligence
- Chen Lifang – senior VP and board member of Huawei;
- And Alan Rusbridger, former editor of the Guardian, and currently principal of Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford

The speakers represent a real diversity of interests and expertise. Many renowned experts from Trinity are also participating, including

- Immunologist Luke O'Neill,
- Ethicist and Professor of Ecumenics Linda Hogan and
- Engineering Professor Conor McGinn, together with his creation, Stevie the Robot.

We look forward to hearing from all of these, and more. All the conversations will be staying online – a continued resource and inspiration for schools, universities, and workplaces as well as individuals round the world.

In Trinity one of our core missions as a university is “to courageously advance the cause of a pluralistic, just and sustainable society”.

To that end, our academics use their expertise and research to address societal challenges and to improve our way of being in the world. And the same is true of our students. This year, as last year, a majority of the wonderful student projects incubated through our accelerator programme, LaunchBox, are social enterprises. I'm

proud that our students, like their professors, take a proactive, pragmatic, empathetic and solutions-oriented approach to the common good.

One of the by-lines of the Summit is 'Three Days to Change the World' and the organisers point out that this year global challenges are greater than ever, but they believe this has the potential to lead to greater opportunities. I agree with them.

People often overuse the word 'watershed' but I think it's the right word for this year. We're at a turning point:

- in terms of global relations and how we work together to address crises like pandemics and climate change;
- in terms of the world of work and employment, how we use office spaces and how we commute;
- in terms of how we educate;
- in terms of public health;
- in terms of our economies.

In all this, in our whole way of being in the world, we're at a watershed.

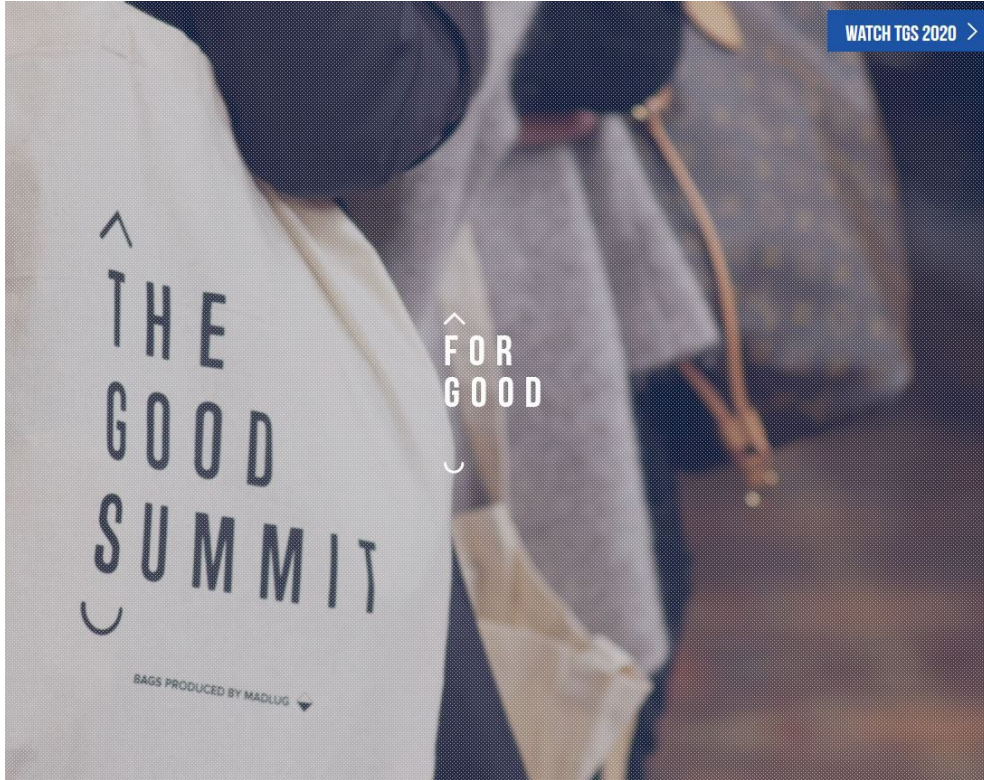
We're reconfiguring how we do things.

Let's try and get it right.

I congratulate Julian and Amr for setting the intention and for asking the right questions; I thank the Small Foundation for their sponsorship and I thank the speakers for bringing your experience and expertise so generously to the search for solutions. I wish everyone a transformative few days.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



21 October 2020

## **Address at the Launch of the Trinity Education**

*Live-streamed from the Public Theatre, Trinity College Dublin*

Minister\*, Commissioner†, Colleagues, Students and Friends,

Thank you all for being here and participating in our launch. It's wonderful to have such high-level national and European support. It speaks, I believe, to the high regard in which Trinity is held in Ireland and Europe, and also to the vital importance of Education in the world today.

Education drives culture, the economy, and quality of life for all.

In a research university like Trinity, education and research are strongly linked, and they spearhead the solutions to global challenges.

“Education”, as Nelson Mandela memorably put it, “is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Mandela's words get to the heart of a university's mission. We do seek to change the world - because knowledge is limitless and there is never any field or discipline that cannot be further advanced through research and scholarship.

And because we have the incredible privilege of educating students, we have a responsibility to create the kind of environment that encourages creativity, resourcefulness, adaptiveness and new ways of thinking and doing.

Higher education, globally, is undergoing a period of rapid transformation. Information technology is now embedded in all learning processes; there is ever increasing mobility around both around education and work; university research is ever more central to economic growth – and innovation and entrepreneurship have become key skillsets for achieving impact and putting education to use for societal benefit.

---

\* Simon Harris, T.D.

† Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

In 2013 we understood that we had to embrace these changes and make them our own, to develop our curriculum to reflect the 21<sup>st</sup> century world.

This was the impetus for renewing the Trinity Education, and my thanks to our Vice-Provost and Chief Academic Officer and today's MC, Professor Juergen Barkhoff, and to Niamh McKay, former Students Union education officer, for explaining the key aspects of this renewal and for giving us the staff and student perspective.

From my point of view, as a Provost now in my last year of office, I believe that the renewal of the undergraduate curriculum may be the most important achievement of my term. I say that in full appreciation of all that we've achieved in this decade – in global relations, in philanthropy, and of course, in research and scholarship. I'm delighted with the new Trinity Business School and the new Centre of Literary and Cultural Translation, and with the new E3 Learning Foundry now under construction. But we create buildings to nurture talent. It starts with talent and that is what the Trinity Education is about: creating the right conditions for talent to flourish.

\* \* \*

Our curriculum renewal began with a seemingly simple but essential exercise: defining intention. What should a Trinity Education achieve? What are the attributes that we believe will help our graduates to build successful careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and – more importantly – to be active and participatory citizens of society.

By focussing on life attributes, rather than on specific skills needed to get the first job, we set our stall out.

The Vice-Provost has already mentioned the Trinity Graduate Attributes, but let me reiterate them because they are the basis of this whole renewal of the Trinity Education:

- Firstly, thinking.  
A university is a place for intellectual growth. How do we want our graduates to think? We want them to think independently – not easy in an age of incessant media and marketing campaigns which seem designed specifically to prevent independence of thought, but more vital than ever;
- Secondly, communicating.  
Critical, independent thinking is great but if you don't communicate your thinking, it remains locked in. How do we want our graduates to communicate? That's easy - we



want them to communicate effectively to diverse audiences across different media – orally, in writing, online and in-person, through different languages, visually, graphically, and on social media;

- Thirdly, development.  
In a rapidly changing world, a graduate should be able to grow and adapt. We don't want our graduates to walk out Front Gate thinking they know everything. We want them to know they are at the start of a journey, a lifelong journey of learning, imbued with a love of learning that will motivate them to develop continuously through life;
- And finally, action.  
How do we want our graduates to act in the world? We want them to act responsibly - to themselves, to their fellow citizens, to the environment, and ultimately as active participants in the society of which they are part.

These four attributes are what the Trinity Education is designed to nurture. All that the Vice-Provost and Niamh have been talking about – the Trinity Electives, open modules, global mobility, co-curricular activities, and the all-important Capstone Project where every undergraduate in this university will do research alongside their professors in their final year --- it has all been designed to get our students to think independently, communicate effectively, grow continuously, and act responsibly.

If we're successful, if our graduates do embed the attributes, then they will be vital participants to a reinvigorated Irish and European economy – as the Commissioner and Minister have said. That's so important – for our graduates personally; and for all our futures.

A compelling future depends on the energy and innovation of our young people, and we believe there is nothing more important than their education.

And, of course, the economy is just one facet of a compelling future, and it is not an end in itself. A thriving economy is dependent on a compelling political, environmental, social and cultural fabric. It's not about either/or. We don't need to tell our students that all economic growth today has to be environmentally responsible. It is often them teaching us.

And if we don't protect human rights and individual freedoms, including the freedom to think differently - then we stifle the creativity that makes discoveries and drives innovation.

For five years and counting, Trinity has been lauded as Europe's leading university for educating entrepreneurs, by private equity and venture capital-focused research firm, PitchBook, based on the number of our undergraduate alumni who go on to create companies that secure first-round venture capital funding.

I believe that our graduates are entrepreneurial because they learn, at a formative age, to connect thought to action, communication to continuous development. And because they deeply connect education to research in a continuous cycle of growth and renewal. And because they learn to take responsibility for their own educational experience – and therefore of their own lives.

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The renewal of the Trinity Education, the development of the Seven Features which have been described, has taken huge planning and commitment by very many people. It has taken seven long years to deliver in full. There are too many people to thank in full but for their outstanding commitment I would like to mention the former Vice-Provosts, Linda Hogan and Chris Morash, and current Vice-Provost Juergen Barkhoff, who acted as Project Sponsors, and the Project Managers Fedelma McNamara and Sheena Brown.

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It seems poignant to be launching it now, at this time when some of the key features are unavoidably compromised. We're doing our best but in the midst of a global pandemic, it's impossible to deliver on all aspects of the Trinity Education.

When we cannot meet in person, co-curricular activities are compromised; and when we cannot easily travel, there is little global mobility, though I'm pleased that, despite everything, many Trinity students have taken up Erasmus study abroad this year.

And in this year of pandemic, Trinity staff have committed fully to our European Universities Alliance, CHARM-EU, with the confidence that the time will come when we can travel again.

But if poignant, this is also a valiant and necessary time to launch. Precisely because it cannot be business as usual, the renewed and revitalised Trinity Education is more important than ever.

I'm glad that we're delivering an education that readies our students for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

I'm glad that we stress that education is lifelong. I don't want our students to think that this period defines them or their education. They are learning a huge amount now: about taking personal responsibility for their health and the health of other people. About online communication and just how far we can go with it. About developing independent thought in a period of enforced solitude.

These are key learnings. I hope students will take them with them, when we move on and through this, as we will. I hope they will find that what they learn in college is a reservoir they can draw on throughout lives that are personally and societally transformative.

Thank you.

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(L to R) Niamh McKay (SU Education Officer), Sheena Brown (TEP Project Manager), Daniel Ferrick (TEP Administrator), Provost Patrick Prendergast, Mary McMahon (TEP project, Central Timetabelling Unit) & Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, Professor Jürgen Barkhoff



23 October 2020

**IUA Webinar ‘*Future of Ireland*  
*‘The Pivotal Role of Universities for Future Skills  
and Innovation’***

*Webinar*

Minister, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It’s my pleasure, as chair of the IUA, to welcome you to this webinar which emphasizes the pivotal role of universities for future skills and innovation.

I’m glad that we no longer have to make the argument for higher education’s vital importance to the country’s future. It’s accepted by all sectors – government, industry and civil society.

And it was explicitly acknowledged by this government when they appointed the country’s first ever Government Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. We will hear shortly from Minister Harris himself. We’re delighted that he is participating.

There is, of course, an enormous amount to be said on ‘the pivotal role of universities’. It’s a very large topic indeed. I look forward to today’s full and frank discussions and to many vital issues being aired.

I’d like to confine my opening remarks to two brief comments:

First, at the risk of repeating the IUA’s eternal call – but it has to be repeated until it’s answered – we cannot bring excellence into our higher education system unless we grasp the nettle of funding. Funding should incentivize excellence and promote the student experience and research as the main driver of the innovation economy. Our research system remains critically under-funded compared to other countries. This means that our competitiveness is suffering. The Cassells’ report explores a number of funding options. It’s up to government to commit to an option and implement it. Otherwise, to use a familiar metaphor, all our efforts are just changing deckchairs on the Titanic.

I note that this Webinar is firmly focussed on ‘skills and innovation’ with particular emphasis on ICT, digital and business skills. As

chair of the IUA, I'd like to make the point, which I think is implicit, but should be underlined, that the pivotal role of globally-competitive research universities in meeting future skills and innovation needs.

Just two days ago, we launched the Trinity Education Project, the comprehensive renewal of our undergraduate curriculum which has been seven years in the making.

At the launch, I made the point, first, that it's our duty to educate students to be flexible and adaptive, in preparation for the continuous professional development that awaits them. That's about mindset rather than specific skill-sets.

Secondly, I noted that when we talk about a compelling future, the economy is just one facet. A thriving economy is dependent on a compelling political, environmental, social and cultural fabric. It makes no sense to talk about economic growth that is not also environmentally responsible. And if we don't protect human rights and individual freedoms, and we don't have a thriving artistic sector - then we stifle the very creativity and the independence of thought that makes discoveries and drives innovation.

In short, I accept that Ireland needs more STEM graduates – and in Trinity, we're meeting this demand through our new Engineering, Environment and Emerging Technologies Institute. But we do our students, and the country, a disservice if, as well as imparting specific skills, we don't help them develop an independent, creative, adaptive mindset and a wider understanding of their responsibilities towards safeguarding civic society and addressing global challenges.

Our graduates need the right skills and the right mindset. Let's put continuous focus on developing both.

I wish everyone a stimulating webinar.

Thank you.

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23 October 2020

**MacGill Summer School**  
**Provost Patrick Prendergast in conversation with**  
**Professor Louise Richardson – Education in the**  
**post-pandemic world**

*Live Online from the Yeats Room, Provost's House*

PJP: Good afternoon. Good afternoon everyone and welcome to our session on education in the post-pandemic world. I'm here, joined by Professor Louise Richardson, my name is Patrick Prendergast, I'm Provost and President of Trinity College Dublin, I have been in this role since 2011. Before that I was a professor of bioengineering, here in Trinity College. I'm with, as I say, Professor Louise Richardson. Professor Louise Richardson is from Tramore, Co. Waterford, attended Trinity College as an undergraduate and then did postgraduate work in the United States where she built a stellar academic career in the area of political science, and terrorism and counter-terrorism, then she became Vice-Chancellor of St. Andrews University in Scotland and is currently the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford. We are going to discuss education in a post-pandemic world, but before we do, we might ask Professor Richardson to tell us a little bit about what it's like being Vice-Chancellor in such a prestigious university as the University of Oxford, and then we'll continue on with some questions relating to the current situation in the pandemic, and then look on to the post-pandemic world. Louise.

LR: Thank you Patrick and good afternoon everyone. Well, it's a huge privilege to be Vice-Chancellor of such a fabulous university, it's a fairly challenging job, but it is an enormously rewarding one, and it's one I would never have had any remote hope of attaining if I hadn't had a fabulous education in Ireland at the Star of the Sea convent in Tramore, the Ursuline in Waterford, and then four wonderful years in Trinity College Dublin where I studied history and political science. What's it like to be Vice-Chancellor of Oxford? As you know it's a very old institution, it's so old we don't quite know how old we are, but between eight and nine hundred years old. It's an institution that doesn't change very quickly, it took eight to nine hundred years for them to appoint their first female Vice-Chancellor, seven to eight hundred years to appoint, to admit women as full members of the university, which is about

sixteen years after Trinity admitted women. Having said that, it is an extraordinary privilege because I can't imagine a more wonderful place to work than in education. I see education as a way to transform lives, to drive the economy, to generate new ideas, and really to incubate the values that are the very foundations of our democracy, so to have the chance every day to interact with smart, ambitious young people, eager to learn, and extraordinary colleagues committed to a whole range of fascinating research is a real privilege. Managing it all and keeping us all working, walking, pointing even, in the same direction is certainly a challenge.

PJP: Our subject is education in the post-pandemic world, and of course we are both leaders of higher education institutions/universities and that'll take most of our time to talk about, but education in primary and secondary and so on, how much, I think people who are listening to us would be interested to know, you mentioned the Ursulines, you mentioned other schools in Tramore, Star of the Sea I think was what you said, how formative is that early education, for you, personally?

LR: Personally I think it is absolutely critical, my love of history was in part because I had a fabulous history teacher in the Ursuline. I think, I mean, having said that, you and I both work in universities, I think the most important education is really early education because the inequalities in our society have an impact so early on and one of the real tragedies for both Trinity and Oxford is that very often so many kids, so many very smart kids, from deprived backgrounds have fallen off the education ladder before they have a chance to apply to a competitive selective institution, like Trinity or Oxford. Now I know Trinity has many terrific programmes like the TAP programme, and we have a number of programmes in Oxford too, but the real tragedy is that too often kids who grow up in families where they don't have books, where education isn't valued, by the time they even start school their vocabulary is so much smaller than a person who grows up in a family where books are read to them and so on, so inculcating a love of learning is the single most important gift I think one can give a child and we rely on our primary schools to do that, and some of them do a fabulous job, and unfortunately, many of them don't adequately compensate for the real social inequalities in the backgrounds of the kids that they receive.

PJP: Great, well obviously your secondary education gave you that opportunity to come to Trinity. Forgive me for using this, taking the liberty, I haven't tested this question on you



beforehand, but I'd be keen as Provost of Trinity to know why you didn't choose, I suppose, the more well-treaded route? I myself went to St Peters College in Wexford. I think I'm the only one who came to Trinity College from my Leaving Cert class, and that's cos I argued too much with the priests, I think, and I thought look, too much, too much of that, I'll go to Trinity and that'll be, that'll be something different at least. I didn't go to UCD or indeed the RTC as it was then in Waterford was the local higher education place. You came to Trinity. Why?

LR: Well I have to say nobody in my family had been to Trinity, or indeed to university, but I was, I read a lot, I was very ambitious, I knew Trinity had a global reputation, I knew Trinity, sorry to all the graduates of the other wonderful universities in Ireland, but to me, Trinity was the best university, and I wanted to go to the best university. And I was enormously glad I did, I don't doubt that I would have gotten an excellent education had I gone to UCD, the system then, as you know, was quite different, you could apply to several universities at the same time, we didn't have the points system you have now so I applied for law at UCD and I applied for history and politics at Trinity, and I got into both and then I had a dilemma because I thought well what I really want to do is law in Trinity but it was too late for that. Anyway, I think the fact that I went to Trinity was enormously significant precisely because there weren't many kids like me there, had I gone to UCD it would have been filled with smart convent girls like me. I did what was then a joint honors course, history and political science, there were thirty-three of us in the class, only a very small handful of us were Catholics, the others actually were girls from Dublin, so I was somewhat socially out of my depth, and that was a terrific experience, it broadened my horizons, it was, I really believe that education is about challenging your assumptions, about making you uncomfortable, about being uncomfortable, and I certainly would have been much more socially comfortable had I gone to UCD. And so I was very glad I wasn't, perhaps it made it slightly harder, slightly harder adjusting and all the rest of it, but I used to say when people asked what was it like adapting to going to America, I said the biggest adaptation was from Tramore to Trinity in the time when I went, which was in the mid to late seventies. And you probably have a very similar story to tell yourself.

PJP: I was the same yeah, because I'm from Wexford, and much the same, I did engineering and many of the guys there, it was an

all boys school, boarding school, St Peter's College Wexford, went to UCD to do engineering and I went to Trinity, and yeah I've never regretted it, and I think it was, there was an element of difference there that benefitted me, when I met other people and I enjoyed that, obviously. Well we've both done well, but as many people who have gone to UCD and other universities around Ireland have done well. Turning to our, bringing those, some of those ideas forward into our topic of education in the post-pandemic world, people say everything's changed, or will change because of the pandemic, and we're in the middle of it now, both of us running large institutions, Trinity has seventeen thousand students and three thousand staff, and Oxford has similar, if not more, in terms of staff. What things are happening within your university now, do you think, that will have permanent, long-term, cause permanent long-term changes in policy or the way the curriculum is delivered, or indeed, will everything return without much change? Interested for your thoughts on that, and then I will give you my thoughts as well because...

LR: I'd be very interested. I'd be very interested in yours too Paddy, and I suspect they won't be enormously different but I would hope that we don't simply go back to the status quo ante, I think we've all suffered so much and put so much effort into adapting to this new world it would be a terrible shame just to revert to where we are. I think in many ways the pandemic has accelerated a number of things that would probably have occurred anyway but would have taken, probably, a generation. You know, the adoption of technology in teaching, for example. We have made many, many leaps in terms of our ability to do that than we would have done. Now, we believe passionately in the power of one-on-one teaching, small group teaching, we always will, but that can certainly be supplemented creatively by technology in a way that it hasn't been before. So I think that will certainly change. One of the other things that I hope, think societally I hope will change, that in recent years university leaders have been forced on the defensive, forced to demonstrate our value for money, forced to demonstrate how, that we're a good way to spend taxpayers money, particularly in Britain, I mean Michael Gove, sadly educated at my institution, famously said, you know, the public have had enough of experts, I don't think we're going to hear that line very much any more because I think universities have demonstrated during this pandemic just how important expertise is. I don't watch RTE a lot but I certainly read the, follow the RTE app, and I know that you rely on experts just as we do in the UK and people cannot get enough of our experts, and what this shows is just the importance of investing in

higher education. Investing in research, just for the sake of research. Because who knows what will turn out to be useful. So there is, I think, too often, a tendency, an understandable tendency, money is tight, for governments only to want to invest in something where there is an immediate assured return, and I think what we've demonstrated is just the importance of investing in smart people doing research that they consider important. It's no secret that Oxford has done very well in terms of developing tests, in terms of developing a vaccine, in terms of discovering therapeutics like dexamethasone, and so on, I think we've really demonstrated just how important we are, how much value we provide to society and I don't think we're going to have to have those arguments again. But let me ask you, are you having a similar sense that technology is changing the way that education is delivered in Trinity?

PJP: I am yeah, one of our top donors asked me yesterday, how is Trinity doing in the pandemic, and I said to him, actually I think Trinity... (*connection drops for a moment*) ...I think is crucial to underline, but one thing that they've made clear is they don't want all their teaching online, even some students in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, where, you know, they don't have labs, they don't have practical work as such, where you have to be there, physically present, they want to come in to the university, they want to meet their peers, it's not so much that they want to meet their professors, they want to meet their, other students in their class, and that, this is a digital age, they are the digital natives, as we call them, and you might expect if anyone would be happy to ditch in-person teaching it would be them, but we find quite the contrary, they want, and value in-person teaching, and it gives them great excitement and it's almost sad to see how grateful they are for the small amount of in-person teaching that we are able to give them during the pandemic. That's, I think, something that won't go away, this, human beings are social animals, particularly between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two, where many of our students are, they are, they want to meet each other, they are kind of genetically programmed to do that, and we want, we want that for them as well, so that's been good. The challenge of course is we have all these eighteen to twenty-two year olds in tightly knit college residences and communities, and they have, I think in Dublin, certainly and partly around the country, Galway had some instances, where the general public, I don't think are as understanding of the students as we, as I am, as a university leader, would like them to be. You know, students, they are in

a difficult situation, some of the student residences, they have small rooms that they live in, they had expected to be able to get out and meet each other, yet they are cooped up in these student residences, and they have to stay in the city, if they are going to do the small amount of in-person teaching that is available for them, so, the pandemic has shown how the challenges of the small residential community that we tend to have for our undergraduate students, and yet at the same time, the value that they place on in-person teaching, so yeah if I had a euro for every email that I've had from a disgruntled member of the public talking about what our students are doing, and I try to say let's not demonise the students, they are, it's so important that they get some positive feedback for all the challenges that they've faced, particularly here in Ireland with the Leaving Cert having been first deferred, and then entirely by predicted grades, and then they come up to university, they're several months late in starting because of the pandemic, and then they find that they've gone to level five. It's a difficult time for them and I'm happy to be, put myself in a position of being an advocate for students and an advocate for understanding of the challenges they had to face. How is it for you?

LR: I think it's an interesting point, some, you know, the real risk of this virus is to the older generation, and really, the costs are being disproportionately felt, borne by the younger generation, and it's one of the many inequalities that this is revealing. And like that, I think it's been pretty tough on students, we're in a somewhat different situation than you insofar as you're in the middle of the capital city, whereas we really dominate the city of Oxford, and all our students, pretty much, certainly all our undergraduates and a significant number of our postgraduates, live in university accommodation, and so they are grouped in households of eight and have to live within those households and that's, that's really pretty tough. It's not what they expected when they came to college, they didn't expect to be exhorted to keep their distance, that's not what one expects coming to university. And over the next few years as the financial impact of this pandemic is borne, it's going to be very tough on them going into the job market, in what will undoubtedly be a very difficult time. We've tried to work very closely with the city, and we've actually required all our students to sign onto a student responsibility contract, as it were, or agreement, to abide by government guidance, to protect the community as well as to protect themselves, because we're hugely conscious of the impact on this city when we bring back twenty-four thousand students and we've got about fifteen thousand staff, so it's, we're a huge impact on

this community and it's very important that we work closely, and we have done, with the city to ensure that they understand that the students are young people, and the students understand the impact of their actions on the community around them.

PJP: Yeah, it's, another trend that's been growing in higher education has been mobility, students travelling around, every year, I'm a mechanical engineer so I like my graphs, and I want to see the number of international students increasing every year, and I put that to our Vice-President for Global Relations, and it's one of her KPIs. What we've found in Trinity is we've got just as many applicants as we had last year, so students at least are voting with their feet in wanting to maintain international mobility and move around. How are you finding it in Oxford?

LR: Well this was one of the big surprises. We anticipated a huge financial hit, that we would have, we would lose many of our international students, about twenty per cent of our undergraduates are international, but sixty-four per cent of our postgrads, and we anticipated that we would lose that fee income, we'd lose large numbers of them, and in fact, quite the contrary, we have six hundred more students than we, postgraduate students, than we targeted, and I can't say precisely how many of those are international but roughly sixty-five per cent of them are. So yes, students are so keen on getting an education that they can prepare to travel. We probably like you require them to go into self isolation for their first two weeks here, but that was a small price for them that they're willing to pay. And I think it's an entirely good thing, as somebody who has benefitted from an international education myself, I think it's enormously important and I'm absolutely delighted that we've managed to maintain global mobility. And if we look at the way many governments are responding to this pandemic, many of them are turning inward, and I think that's a very unhealthy development, we're seeing this in competition for the vaccine, we're seeing it across the peace in many of our elected leaders, and I don't think we want to see this, it's not a healthy development, in my view, and I think one of the best antidotes to that is having a whole generation of students who have lived overseas, who have studied overseas, who understand the culture of other countries, and have enormous affection for those other countries. And when they go back to their home countries and have, being, in the Irish case, you know, advocates for Ireland for the rest of their careers. So

yeah, one of the many surprises that we didn't experience this loss.

PJP: Yeah, it is indeed and one of, it's a great positive to know that young people are, I suppose, international, and in their outlook and their understanding. We were going to cancel Erasmus here in Trinity, we had a plan to do that because of course if our students go and we accept students that could lead to transmission of the virus, and I had a rebellion on my hands, my god, the students would, I think they would have knocked down the front door to the Provost's House if I had cancelled Erasmus, and it caused me to reflect and send one of those very early morning emails to the Vice-Provost to say stop the press, don't send out those emails, we have to reconsider, and we did indeed reconsider and we decided that we would facilitate students to go on Erasmus, we wouldn't have it as mandatory, some courses in languages it was mandatory, we'll remove the mandatory element and leave it as voluntary, and well more than half of the students decided that they would indeed go on Erasmus, despite the challenges that the pandemic brought, and I was very pleased to see that. Our international exchange students going to the US, well, many students took up those, and it shows a certain bravery and resilience on their part that is well, it's heartening for us to see. I want to turn to one thing that I think people would expect in this discussion that we have some insights into it, that is digital education and online education. When the pandemic struck here in March, all the universities went online very quickly, and indeed a lot of secondary and primary school teaching was attempted to be done online and I think in some cases, successfully. It's probably one of the things that I expect will remain, much more digital education will remain, even after we have the vaccine, and probably to the benefit of the quality of education that we offer in universities to our students. So we were looking at some of our very large lecture theatres, you know the ones in the Arts block that can take four hundred students and several others around the university and we're looking at these thinking well maybe we'll never need these again, if we can use these big lecture theatres, break them down and use them for some other purpose. Are you having those kinds of conversations in Oxford?

LR: Well, there's no doubt that yeah we shut down very quickly over the Easter holidays, moved everything online for Trinity term and it was, to be honest, fairly rough and ready, but knowing that we would have a lot of courses online again in the autumn we, our academics, worked round the clock all through the

summer and so what we're doing now, it isn't a case, it's not binary, it's not online versus personal, there's real variation in online, and I think the courses we're offering this term online are infinitely better and more creative than they were last time, last term. One of the surprises we found, our academics have told us, we initially we made the decision all the big lectures, and we don't actually have that many big lectures, but all of them would be online, whereas all the one-on-one and two-on-one tutorials would occur face-to-face, and what we discovered in Trinity term was the academics were saying actually, counter intuitively, the one-on-one and two-on-one really worked pretty well online, whereas they found it much harder to give good lectures online and like me I suspect you're spending much of your day on Zoom and Teams and the rest of it, and it is hard I find to sustain attention for an hour sitting listening to somebody talk, and if you're the person talking, you don't derive energy from the audience, you can't read how they're reacting to what you're saying, so I think we have found that online lectures have not been as successful as we thought they might be, although students love having them so that they can replay them if there's something particularly complicated or they want to revise for exams. But your general point is absolutely right, we're going to be thinking of that, how to be much more creative in the ways we teach.

PJP: Great, we have some of the questions coming in online and I suppose we turn to some of them, and one of them is that: 'Given the difficulties with both the British and Irish exam results this year how do you think students should be assessed for college entry in the future?' Now we're, this is a hard question, and a good one. And so I'm, please Louise you have a go at it and I'll give it my best effort.

LR: Well, we had, as you know, an unmitigated fiasco with the A-level results, but it needn't have been a fiasco, it was a predictable fiasco, it was just very badly done, we wrote to the government back in June saying please please don't use this algorithm, if you do you're going to end up disadvantaging all the students you don't want to disadvantage, like the late developers, like the good kids in poor schools and so on, so all of that was completely predictable, so it may or may not be possible to run A-levels or Leaving Cert next spring, but I would have thought over time that it does make sense to have to have some sort of, you have to have some sort of objective assessment of students, and exams are probably the best way to do that. Again I don't know the figures for the Leaving Cert but I know the Southern Trust which is a social mobility

foundation in the UK did a study and I think found that eighty-four per cent, over seventy per cent of teacher-assessed grades were inaccurate, and eighty-four per cent of teacher-assessed grades for deprived kids were inaccurate, so I don't think we've got a better mechanism than examinations, much as I hated taking examinations myself, they are a good test for university and I think perhaps in the future we would be able to have some sort of hybrid, we're doing a lot of hybrid activities now, maybe an examination plus some other modes of assessment, but I do think...

PJP: I would agree.

LR: We would revert to something like the A-level or Leaving Cert. What do you think, Patrick?

PJP: I think so, and I actually had someone talk to me who is an expert in exams and he said to me the written exams were introduced to increase fairness, up to then it had been these oral exams, had viva voce exams which had many biases, couldn't be looked at afterwards, and so on, whereas written exams, on the other hand, the papers were looked at by external examiners, the scripts that the students wrote out could be looked at afterwards to ensure a quality check, and it increased tremendously the equity and equality in the examining system. Now, over time of course it's become problematic, certainly here in Ireland, the Leaving Cert, and the way it's taught, but I would be slow to dispense with written exams entirely and I think that the predictive grades are not better necessarily, so we will probably continue with written exams here at Trinity. You will be familiar Louise with the Schol exams that we run here and we're going to have to do the Schol exams online this year, which is causing lots of people to really wonder about them and will there be more cheating because the exams are done online is the biggest question. So there's a lot to be commended in the written system, it may seem old fashioned but it does have that element of equity that I think we need to be very sure would exist in whatever would replace with written exams. Another question came up there and I'm going to read it out now if I can bring it up again there: 'What will be the various impacts of Brexit (oh dear, the word Brexit) on third level education in the UK and what is the latest on the UK opting in to Erasmus?' Ok. Well that's one for you Louise I think.

LR: Right. Well the impacts are not going to be positive, that's for sure. About a quarter of our staff are citizens of the non-UK EU and while all of them have right to remain and so on, we



worry very much that they will feel unwelcome in a Brexit Britain. I think that's less of a concern now than it was when we voted, well when Britain voted for Brexit. The biggest concern to us is loss of research funding, and loss of access to the European research ecosystem. The European Research Council's sole criteria for funding is excellence and Britain gets more per head than any other country and actually Oxford gets more than any other university, because of that sole criteria. So we hate to lose that and we hate the fact that we will be cut out from this network of collaborators, the government has said that they will contribute the same amount of money into the pot but we are worried that that will immediately become politicised and that the criteria of excellence will be displaced by other more short term government initiatives or priorities. So we worry a great deal about the impact on our funding. We also fully anticipate that we will lose large numbers of European students who will now have to pay international fees instead of home fees. Now thankfully Irish students are exempt for this for historical reasons, which is a big relief, but now a German or a French student will have to pay the same as an American or a Chinese and we fully anticipate that the numbers will decline significantly as a consequence. We are doing a lot of fundraising to try and make up the difference but we'll never be able to make up the full difference. So it's impact on staff, impact on students, impact on research. As for Erasmus, like everything else, with Brexit nothing is decided until everything is decided so we don't know about Erasmus, we have committed as an institution to funding students on something like Erasmus, if we're not able to participate in it, again that will cost us a lot of time and effort and money to negotiate individual arrangements with a host of individual universities. It's unbelievably frustrating. This is a serious act of self-harm to higher education in the UK, there's no two ways about it.

PJP: Yeah. And I would like to say from our point of view in Ireland, or in Europe, it is going to harm European research, because research activity is a curious combination of competitive and collaborative, and if a big player like the UK is removed from that competitive/collaborative environment that drives research, I would worry that the quality and the expertise, not just on the individual research done, but the programmes designed to fund research wouldn't be as good. So, we in Ireland, and we're, both Trinity College Dublin and Oxford University are members of a group called the League of European Research Universities, and we speak for all of the research universities of Europe in saying that Brexit, and if it

brings alongside its exit of UK universities from European research and innovation, will not be good for the European continent's long term competitiveness, vis a vis, the US and China and other regions of the world. I think Louise, the clock is ticking and this has gone much quicker than I thought, we have one minute or so left and we have one question left, a brief one: 'Who are your current inspirations in the world of education?' Wow.

LR: Wow, that one takes time but I'm just going to play to my, the people who inspire me are the academics across the world but the ones I know best are the ones in Oxford who simply picked up tools and spent, said what can we do to address this global problem of the pandemic, and they've done an extraordinary amount of work. I mean, I'm inspired by the people who ran the recovery trial, this trial with twelve thousand patients has revealed the power of dexamethasone, a very inexpensive steroid, which has saved the lives of tens of thousands of people. I'm inspired by somebody you're going to hear from tomorrow, Adrian Hill, who is working on developing a vaccine, I'm just inspired by the many committed academics determined to use their work to, for societal benefit, and there are a great many of them. Sorry I've only given you twenty seconds Patrick.

PJP: Ok Louise, because I agree with you fully and I don't have to, you've said it well not just for the University of Oxford but for all universities around the world, so, Professor Louise Richardson...

LR: Thank you.

PJP: Thank you very much, an inspiring conversation. And we pass back to our general programme. Thank you.

LR: Bye.

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07 November 2020

## Address at the Trinity Undergraduate Open Day

*Online*

Good morning, everyone,

You're all very welcome to the Trinity Undergraduate Open Day. This is our first **virtual** Open Day. We'd prefer to be welcoming you in-person to our beautiful college, but that's not possible under the current restrictions, and we're very glad to have this online opportunity.

Let me introduce myself: I'm Patrick Prendergast, Provost of Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin. I'm a Trinity graduate myself and before becoming Provost I was Professor of Bioengineering here.

As Provost, it's my role to oversee all the college's myriad activities – in education, research, innovation, access, global relations, and public engagement.

Trinity is a powerhouse – as you'll discover if you come here. We collaborate on research with peer universities round the world and with industry partners; we engage with public policy makers and we're leaders in many fields – such as sustainability where we're the first Irish university to hold a College Green Week, and the first campus in an EU capital city to win a prestigious Green Flag. In Trinity, there are never enough hours in the day for all we want to do. We place education and research at the heart of everything. In Trinity, we don't separate the two - education *is* research. It's not about professors *telling* students what to think; it's about students actively engaging alongside professors in a common enterprise of discovery.

There are many distinctive features to the Trinity Education. You'll hear a bit about them today. We focus on global mobility – studying and living abroad and engaging with other cultures – and on taking elective subjects outside your core degree – so even if you're studying science, you can take an elective in, for instance, Mandarin Chinese.

And we emphasise co-curricular activities. We always say that the Trinity Education is about what happens in the classroom and outside. We want you to develop, not just academically, but as

active citizens – to learn responsibility through taking on leadership roles in clubs and societies; to develop initiative by commercialising and marketing your ideas in our innovation and entrepreneurship programmes.

This is the university that we look forward to welcoming you to, if you think this is the right place for you.

How will you make your mind up? This Open Day is designed to inform you, and answer your questions. For the next four hours, we'll be running a few core sessions:

First, there will be course presentations, with Live Q&A with our professors. These will be under 6 broad subject areas:

- Arts and Humanities
- Business and Law
- Social and Human Sciences
- Engineering and Computer Science
- Science and Mathematics
- Health Sciences

Some of you, who haven't yet decided where your interests lie, may wish to attend several of the presentations.

Secondly, there will be presentations, panel discussions and Q&As on the Student Experience. You'll hear about our many sports clubs and student societies and accelerator programmes, where you can develop your interests and take on leadership roles.

And these will also focus on practical issues like how to apply, accommodation, student supports, Trinity Access, fees and scholarships.

There is a lot more than just the academic course involved in choosing the right university, so do engage and ask questions. You'll have the opportunity to speak first-hand to our current students.

Finally, we'll be conducting virtual tours of our campus, so you can see just where you'll be coming to. I should say that these tours, excellent as they are, don't fully convey just what a magical place Trinity is. I do hope we'll have the opportunity to welcome you in-person on campus, once the current pandemic restrictions end. Trinity is a unique place and every year it is refreshed and enlivened by the entrance of new students. They bring their energy and their ideas. Some of you will be among those students next

year. We look forward to welcoming you. Please make the most of this Open Day.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



Provost online from the Yeats Room in the Provost's House



12 November 2020

## **Address at the Trinity St. James's Cancer Institute OECI Award Accreditation Ceremony**

*Zoom*

Thank you Mary<sup>1</sup>, and good morning, everyone,

And thank you for being with us on this critical day for the Trinity St James' Cancer Institute.

We're so proud to be the first cancer institute in Ireland to receive OECI accreditation. Thank you to Thierry<sup>2</sup> and Simon<sup>3</sup> for explaining just how significant that is, and what's involved in it. As they have explained, accreditation is dependent on demonstrating innovative and progressive standards across clinical care, research, clinical trials and education. The bar is high *and* it's wide, which is why accreditation is such a significant achievement: you need clinical expertise *and* patient care, together with research *and* education. That's why it has taken Ireland's largest public hospital partnering with Ireland's highest ranked university to achieve this distinction for the country.

This accreditation is important in so many ways. It's a guarantor of excellence in research and patient care and it signifies deep cooperation with peer institutions and hospitals across Europe.

The OECI's mission is to promote cooperation across European cancer centres and institutes and it works in close collaboration with other pan-European cancer organisations, including the 'European Cancer Patients Coalition' and the 'European Association of Cancer Research'. Such collaboration is very important for Trinity. As a member of LERU – the League of European Research Universities – we are committed to growing our research and education partnerships and to sharing expertise.

In terms of cancer research, this is of course vital. Cancer is a global challenge which can only be addressed by concerted global action, with researchers and clinicians coming together to share knowledge and expertise. Trinity has particular research specialisation which will help to foreground the Trinity St James' Cancer Institute, not only among Irish cancer institutes, but among European ones.

We're ranked in the top 1 percent of universities worldwide in medicine and biological sciences, and in nanoscience and immunology, in particular, we are global leaders. It's thanks to Trinity that Ireland is ranked one of the top three countries globally in immunology. With St. James's, we look forward to building on our strengths in translational immuno-oncology and to sharing this research with our European partners, thus helping to grow global cancer research.

It's now five years since Trinity College and St James's Hospital announced our intention to jointly establish a new cancer institute. We were already long-established partners and we've built on our excellent relationship. My thanks to Mary Day and all the team at St. James's. We're so proud to work with you and so proud of what we're achieving together for cancer care in Ireland and for global cancer research.

It's three years since the government rolled out the National Cancer Strategy which has the fundamental aims of raising Ireland's cancer survival rates to the top quartile in the European Union, establishing seamless patient pathways, and developing a more robust environment for research. The Trinity St James Cancer Institute is central to the delivery of the National Cancer Strategy. So today is, as I say, really important, a key milestone. On behalf of the whole university, I thank OECI for working with us on this accreditation and for giving us this important validation at a key time. I think we're all agreed that, with much of Europe under severe restrictions due to the pandemic, it's great to get an unabashed piece of good news.

Our ambition is to physically build an institute in St. James's Hospital campus. This is one of the central projects of Trinity's comprehensive philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*. As we reach out to friends, graduates and donors to support us in delivering our ambition, it's so important to be able to point to this accreditation, which demonstrates just how well and quickly our plans for the Trinity St James Cancer Institute are progressing. My thanks to the OECI and to the project leaders in Trinity and St. James' Hospital, the founding Director of the institute, Paul Browne – Veronica Campbell, Bursar in Trinity College and Ann Dalton Deputy CEO in St James', and the chair of the group Declan Sheehan<sup>4</sup>.

It's now my pleasure to invite to address us, Ireland's Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, TD. We're honoured that the Minister is attending this launch. A University College Dublin graduate in engineering, he was elected to Dáil Eireann for Wicklow in 2011. Since taking over as Minister of Health in June, in the newly formed



government, he has had, I would imagine, very little time away from dealing with Covid-19. I'm sure, like all of us, he's delighted with the good news of OECI accreditation. The Trinity St James' Cancer Institute looks forward to helping the government deliver the National Cancer Strategy.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Minister Donnelly.

\* \* \*

- <sup>1</sup> Mary Day, CEO St James' Hospital
- <sup>2</sup> Professor Thierry Philip, President OECI
- <sup>3</sup> Professor Simon Oberst, Chair OECI
- <sup>4</sup> Provost's Council member



12 November 2020

## **Address at the E3 (Internal) Forum**

*Online from House 1, Trinity College Dublin*

Thanks, Sylvia\* and good morning, everyone. Thanks for attending. I'm looking forward to a really good discussion.

Let's take a moment, first, to recognise the achievement of getting to this point. I know these are challenging times and it's hard to feel congratulatory when we can't even meet in person. And I know that E3 is a really ambitious project, which you may have questions about. It's the purpose of this event to provide clarity about where we're heading.

But I want to start with acknowledging how far we've come. Six years ago, this month, I recall being invited to give a lecture in Columbia University, New York. I chose to talk about E3. It was something we were already excited about, but it was at a preliminary stage. We knew we wanted to do it; we didn't know *how* we would do it.

We pressed ahead. Many of you were at multiple meetings with me, and others, as we researched and developed our ideas. We crafted a truly compelling offering which inspired Martin Naughton to come on board with a gift of €25 million euro. It wasn't just the size of the donation that was game-changing, it was the endorsement of the project by an engineer and entrepreneur of Martin Naughton's standing. The government obviously felt the same – they came on board with €15 million, meaning we were able to complete the financing with an EIB loan.

That's why we're in this position today of progressing our ambition. Work has started on the E3 Learning Foundry. The financing is in place, and it is scheduled to open in the academic year 2023/24, facilitating a thousand additional STEM students to study in Trinity, and offering advanced new curricula in emerging disciplines, including AI, Climate Science, Environmental Engineering and Science, and Smart Cities.

The E3 Research Institute is scheduled to open in 2026 as the

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\* Professor Sylvia Draper, Dean of the STEM faculty

anchor tenant of our new Technology Campus at Grand Canal Dock. It will co-locate over 500 interdisciplinary researchers to do research with industry partners, targeted at the great challenges facing society today.

We've made E3 one of the core projects of our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*, and it's proving compelling to donors. Already nine of the planned new academic posts for the Learning Foundry have been funded through philanthropy, and I recognise here Eric Kinsella, Beate Schuller, Mike Pierce and the contributors to the John Byrne fund.

To have come this far with such an ambitious initiative is a massive achievement, so I want to thank each and every one of you who has contributed so much to making this possible. Remember - when we started planning for E3, we were in a devastating global recession. Some felt it wasn't the right time for large-scale ambition but in retrospect it was exactly the right time. Look where we are now!

I believe that, particularly in recessions, it's essential to set challenges and plan for an exciting future. We should do so realistically, of course, but in the knowledge that reality isn't something static and unchanging. In truth, we create our own future.

We have the responsibility to deliver, first, the Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry and then the Research Institute. Challenges remain, of course. We need to find funding for additional academic posts in the Learning Foundry, and we need to finance the E3 Research Institute and establish a viable operating model for it.

And the ambition of E3 goes beyond financing. Can we deliver on our core philosophy? Can we work successfully across disciplines – creating sustained research networks to find 'balanced solutions for a better world'. Can we rethink technology and our engagement with the natural world? Can we facilitate engineers, natural scientists, computer scientists and statisticians to come together, with industry, to do challenge-based research? Can we educate undergraduates to challenge themselves to think differently? I believe we can. Already we've geared college research towards interdisciplinarity, through our Trinity research themes. And we're part of an important European University alliance, CHARM-EU which is currently piloting challenge-driven education.

So, yes, we can do this and we must do this. If we succeed we will put Trinity in the vanguard of STEM education, and we will do so at scale, making impact in critical research that is central to the future of humanity – technology, climate, biodiversity, energy,

sustainability.

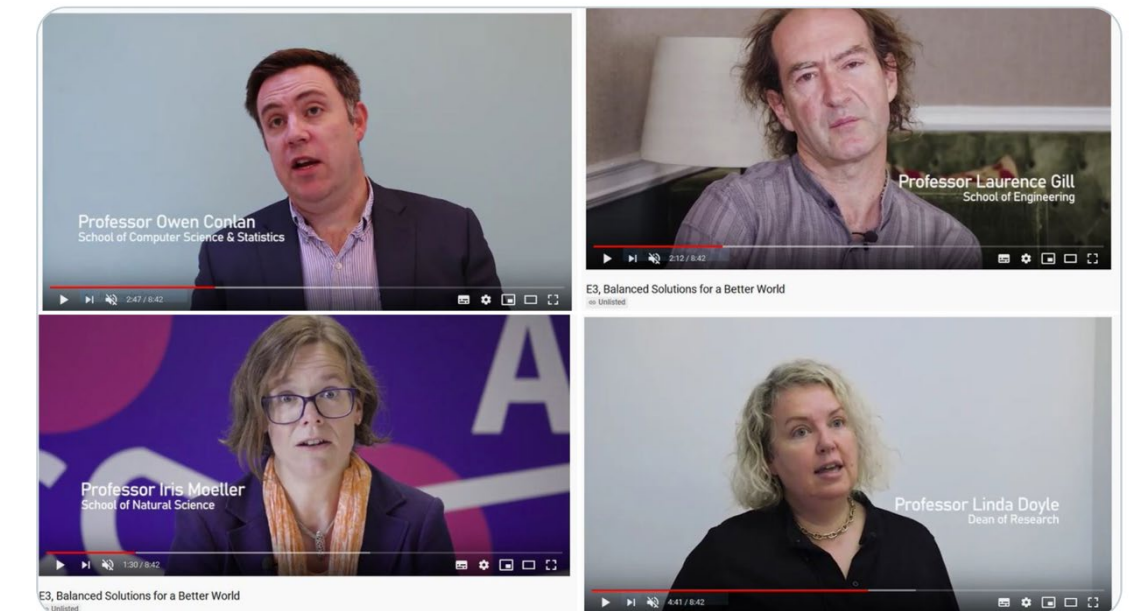
I don't hold with fearmongering, but we're engineers, we're scientists, we know how to read data, we know we're reaching tipping points and not just in one domain – from fossil fuel reliance to biodiversity loss, from over-populated, badly designed cities to polluted oceans. We don't have a lot of time to tip back in the right direction – technology and science are key to achieving this.

Our whole philosophy and tradition in education and research demands that we rise to this challenge. Even more importantly, our students demand it of us, and if we don't meet them on this, they will cease to engage. They will go elsewhere.

Necessity is the mother of invention. We're going to do this because we want to do it, and we have to do it. We've already made great progress, unbelievable progress really, and I look forward to discussing with you how we can complete our mission.

Thank you.

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Zoom screenshot of some presenters: Owen Conlon, Laurence Gill, Iris Moeller, and Linda Doyle



20 November 2020

## **Address at Race & Ethnicity Townhall Meeting**

*Online*

Good morning, everyone, and welcome to this town hall meeting.

This year, 2020, is historically significant as the year of Covid-19, of course, but also as the year when Black Lives Matter became a global movement, with protests across the world, and demands that we reckon with the history of colonialism, and with the racism that continues to disfigure our societies.

This reckoning must be comprehensive across politics, education, history and commemoration. Universities must look again at our curricula and how we arrived at them – and at the topics of our research and scholarship. We must look at how we recruit staff and enrol students, and how we commemorate and celebrate our past and our graduates. Racism is a structural problem, and no institution (including our own) can assume it is immune.

We must be alert to discrimination and bias, including unconscious bias and micro-aggressions. This is not a simple matter – by its nature ‘unconscious bias’ is something that we are unaware of. This is a process and it starts with listening.

At this town hall meeting, we do have a few announcements to make. The university’s first Associate Vice-Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Professor Clodagh Brook, will be speaking after me, and she will fill you in on the new Equality Office, just launched, and the new Black Studies module that the college is planning. We’re very excited to tell you about these.

\* \* \*

But the main purpose of this event is not to inform but to open a discussion across our community on race and ethnicity. Which means that we need to hear from you. We need to create a space where you are heard, and where we can all work towards our shared mission of making Trinity a place that is welcoming and inclusive for all.

Now is the right time to be having this discussion because the HEA survey on race equality in Irish higher education is due to be launched in the coming weeks, and it will support increased work

nationally in this area. This town hall meeting is part of a wider discussion across Irish colleges and universities. It's vital to get this right, as a sector and as a country.

Of course, equality and inclusivity isn't a new mission for Trinity. It's something we've long aspired to. It was an important strand of our last Strategic Plan and in our current Plan, launched in March, we commit to (I quote) "foster an ever more diverse and inclusive student community" – that is Goal 1. Goal 8 - "We will be one Trinity community" - places equality, diversity and inclusion at the centre of the University's ambitions for the next five years, and commits to embed these into all aspects of Trinity life.

We're serious about delivering these goals.

But the events of this year:

- the killings of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd;
- the toppling of the statue of the slave trader, Edward Colston, in Bristol, after years of petitioning the Council to remove it;
- And the xenophobia that Chinese and Asian minorities faced in many countries at the start of this pandemic.

What these events have brought home to us is the presence of systemic and structural racism in our societies, and the barriers to overcoming it. We can't fool ourselves that these barriers are easily dismantled or that setting worthy aspirations is enough. We need to listen, we need to think, we need to act.

We know this from our efforts to bring about gender equality. Sexism is another deep-rooted systemic problem. Our actions in this sphere include adopting the Athena SWAN charter as a proven framework to improve gender equality across the university, and last year we welcomed the government's Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI) to accelerate gender balance at senior positions in Irish higher education institutions.

Our relative success with gender equality should give us hope.

But, as I say, it starts with listening. Only by really hearing the experiences and points of view of people directly affected, can we be serious about bringing about change and addressing discrimination.

I'm very glad we're at this point. I thank everyone who has contributed to bringing us here. I thank our guest speaker, Professor Rowena Arshad from Edinburgh University, who is delivering the keynote, and I thank all of you for attending, and for



your belief that we are ‘one Trinity community’, and your readiness to do all we can to honour this.

Thank you.

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Zoom screenshot of tresenters: Professor Clodagh Brook, Associate Vice-Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Provost Patrick Prendergast; Annmarie Ní Choileáin, presenter; Professor Rowena Arshad, guest presenter from the University of Edinburgh; Prossie Nambatya, presenter; and Lassane Ouedraogo, presenter.



21 November 2020

**LERU Rectors' Roundtable**  
**Theme 3: *Institutional Building Blocks***

*Online*

Good morning,

This session, *Institutional Building Blocks*, dealing with infrastructure, staffing and funding, concerns the resources our universities use to deliver our mission, focussing on that mission as research universities.

All crises bring opportunity as well as challenge, and that's certainly true of this one.

Covid-19 and the lockdowns have presented an opportunity to observe what is essential to the functioning of universities, and what is inessential. What should stay? What must go? What should we do differently?

First, let's look at infrastructure. Further investment in digital infrastructure is a given. We're doing this anyway, but the pandemic has accelerated the trend. Specifically, large lectures, where there is no interaction between speaker and audience, are not a good use of either the professor's or the students' time and, in my opinion, should go. [need new digital inforstructures for this to be done smoother, but 'goodbye' to the large lecture except for a few ceremonial occasions....]

Similarly, conferences – like this one – can be done successfully online. It saves the participants time and it saves the planet from excess air travel. We should still have in-person conferences to spend time together, but they could be occasional, rather than routine. Conference facilities in our universities need to prepare for change, and renevenues form these sources will drop.

Conversely, the crisis has proved that some of what we do cannot be moved online – for instance, laboratory and other equipment-dependent research is location-based and site-specific. This is obvious.

What is not so obvious to me before COVID is 1) just how much students value in-person teaching and being physically in the university. And that's not just science students in labs. Humanities

students prefer to study in the library and to have in-person tutorials and seminars. Professors may be happy to convene these online, but students aren't. And my second observation 2) is how quick some professors are to quit in-person teaching.

And in Trinity we place a huge emphasis on extracurricular – we have 180 student clubs and societies. The sports clubs are location-dependent - requiring members to meet in playing fields, courts, pools or gyms. Societies *could* meet online – our debating societies, for instance, have held Zoom debates. But again, the students are very clear that this is no substitute for live events.

The past nine months have demonstrated that we can move many activities online, but as research universities are never going to be exclusively virtual campuses. Let's invest in digital infrastructure for what is best done online, and physical infrastructure for what is best done in-person. I created a group called 'Trinity Futures' which has reported to the Board of the university about how we will do this.

What will this mean for costs and funding? There are significant savings to be made from the shift to online. For instance, we don't need to continue building large lecture theatres and we don't need to require staff to relocate. We could reduce on-site working of administrative staff by 40%, or create remote working hubs outside the expensive capital city.

Many academic staff could do the bulk of their teaching and research remotely, and only come into college once a week. In that case, they won't all need individual offices on campus.

A legacy in many public sector universities is a high level of administrative staff. Many of these need reskilling and retraining for a digital world. Can we take this opportunity to make our universities leaner and more competitive?

A shift to online presents obvious opportunities to enrol more students who prefer to study part-time while they continue to working. There will be a renewed emphasis on micro-credentialling as a result of this.

I think we can learn from other higher education institutions here. As a research university, we in Trinity anyway have tended to have systems more oriented around the professors than around the students. But this will be increasingly harder for us to defend. If many students don't want to go through a whole degree programme in one step we will need to facilitate that.

In conclusion I think there is an opportunity to bring more flexibility into our systems, and to make it more efficient. And we should seize the opportunity.

But I will end on an important point: excellent education and research needs investment. Laboratories and equipment must be cutting-edge and whether teaching is delivered online or in-person, a low staff to student ratio is optimum. Any country which views this crisis as an opportunity to cut state investment in higher education is making a huge mistake.

The pandemic has led to economic recession. To get out of it, Europe will need to create jobs and drive growth. The best way to do this remains investing in our future – in the education of young people and in the research that improves how we live in the world.

Thank you.

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24 November 2020

## **Welcome Address at Rooney Prize for Irish Literature 2020**

*Zoom from the Yeats Room*

Good evening, everyone,

Welcome to the 44<sup>th</sup> annual Rooney prize-giving, and the first to be held online. Eight months on from the first lockdown, we're all well used to online events. They work very well, particularly for occasions like this with citations and readings.

Of course, some events have been shelved this year - but this was never going to happen with the Rooney Prize! We're very possessive of its position as one of the world's longest-running literary prizes.

Here with us this evening, let me welcome:

- The benefactors of the Prize, Peter Rooney and John Curran, who are here with friends;
- Members of the Judging Committee: Jonathan Williams, Carlo Gébler, Rosie Lavan, Michael Cronin, Eiléan Ní Chuileanáin and Sinead MacAodha,
- Staff from TDA, from Trinity's School of English and from our Oscar Wilde Centre for Creative Writing, which administers the Prize;
- And, of course, this year's winner, who is here with friends and family, and publisher.

We'll be hearing shortly from Peter and Carlo, and from the winner who will do a reading. I hope everyone has some champagne or whatever their preferred drink is, ready to toast the winner.

This event is being recorded – it will be included with the press release in our formal announcement on Thursday.

Most of you, I think, are very familiar with the Rooney Prize. For those who aren't, it's awarded for an outstanding body of work by an emerging Irish writer, under forty years of age, and is valued at €10,000. The prize has been awarded annually since 1976, through the generosity of the late Dr Daniel Rooney, who served as US Ambassador to Ireland, and his wife Patricia. Their nephew, Dr Peter Rooney, became the benefactor of the Rooney Prize in

2018, continuing the Rooney family's long-established support for Irish Literature.

Since 2006 the Prize has been administered by the Oscar Wilde Centre for Irish Writing, of the School of English, here in Trinity. It's a tremendous honour for the university to administer this prestigious prize and one we take very seriously. Literature and creativity is a particular strength of Trinity's, foregrounded across three Schools - the School of English, the School of Languages, Literature and Cultural Studies, and the School of Creative Arts – and through the Long Rub Hub, the Oscar Wilde Centre and the Trinity Centre for Literary and Cultural Translation.

We are one of three universities on this island to jointly run the Ireland Chair of Poetry Trust and, together with one of our benefactors, Stephen Vernon, we recently instituted the Pollard International Poetry Prize, now in its third year.

The great value of literary prizes is that they draw readers' attention to work that might otherwise get overlooked in a crowded field. And, of course, they offer support to talent – both financial support and the great 'oxygen of publicity'. That's certainly the effect of the Rooney Prize, which comes as such a boost to emerging writers.

This is my last Rooney Prize, as Provost – next year I step down from this role - so I'm feeling quite elegiac and, of course, sorry not to be meeting with you all in person.

I'm an engineer, who loves to isolate himself with a book, so this event is always one of the highlights of my year. Being Provost, you never have enough time for yourself, but luckily – because Trinity administers the Prize – I can count reading the winners each year as essential work. I've been introduced to authors who have given me enormous pleasure, and I love to keep an eye on them and follow their progress. This year alone, three recent winners – Sara Baume, Doireann Ní Ghríofa and Mark O'Connell - have all produced new books, which received a great deal of positive critical attention. I well remember the year Doireann won, 2016, since that was the fortieth anniversary of the Prize, a wonderful night, one of the highlights of my whole Provostship.

My congratulations to the judging committee for upholding the Rooney's long-established reputation for spotting winners.

Because of this reputation, people pay attention to the Rooney Prize. I imagine this year again, the winner will be doing a victory lap of interviews, following our announcement. And hopefully that will lead to a great boost in sales. One brilliant effect of lockdown has



been an increase in people reading. It's wonderful to be introducing an expanded audience to a remarkable new voice. This Prize feels more relevant than ever.

Now I know everyone is impatient to meet this year's winner. So without further ado, may I invite Carlo Gébler, on behalf of the judging committee to give the citation.

*[Carlo gives Citation]*

*[Peter speaks, presents the winner Stephen Sexton with the trophy (virtually). Also announces the Rooney Writer Fellowship]*

*[Stephen Sexton speaks/reads]*

I'm also so delighted at this, my last Rooney Prize-giving, to hear Dr Rooney's wonderful announcement of the Rooney Writer Fellowship in the Trinity Long Room Hub, starting next year. This will be transformative – for the college community, for whoever gets the Fellowship of course, and for Dublin as a city of literature and culture. This represents such a flowering of what the Rooney family started 44 years ago, and it's a beacon of Peter Rooney's dedication to literature. On behalf of the whole university my great thanks. Welcoming the first Rooney Writer Fellow next autumn is going to be such a highlight for the College.

And thank you, everyone, for being here and joining us tonight. Next year, I hope we'll return to in-person event in the Salon of the Provost's House, and I hope to attend, as a guest perhaps.

I hope you all have a great end of year.

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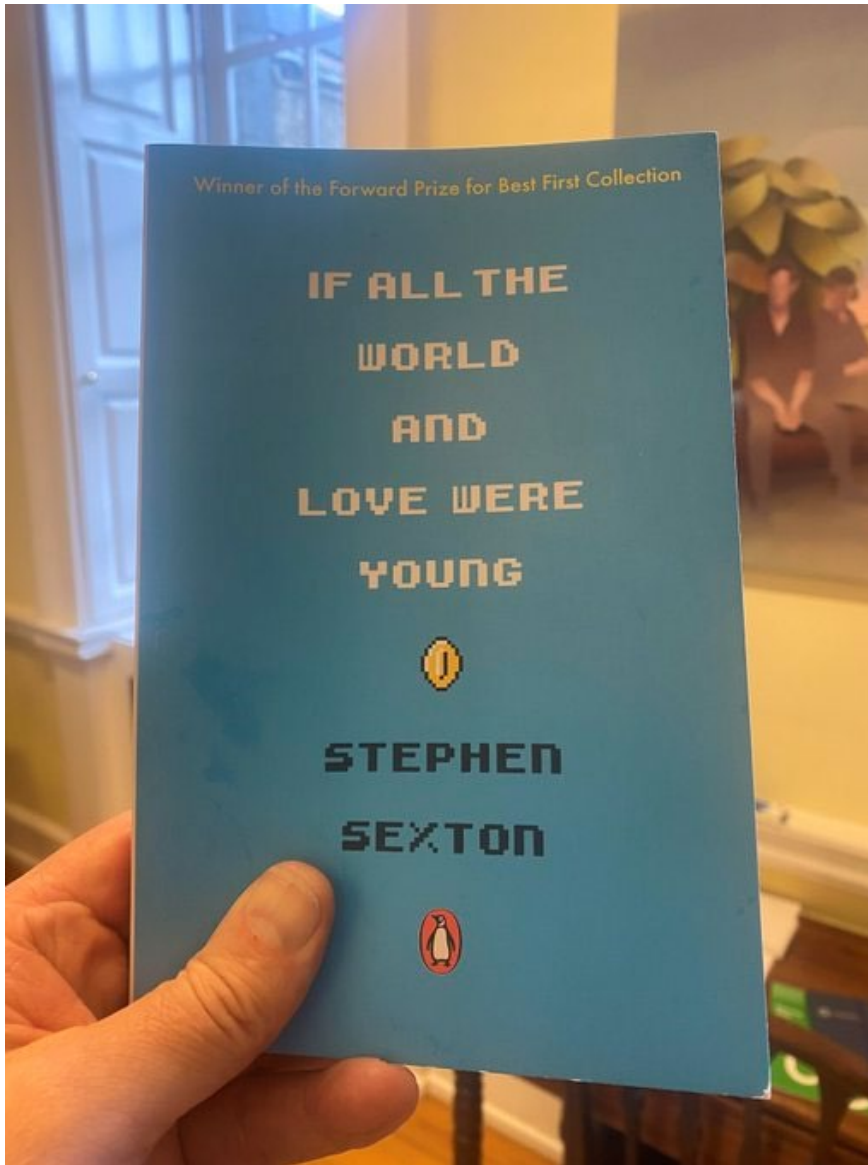


Photo taken by the Provost in House 1 office of the book that won the Rooney Prize in 2020

25 November 2020

## **Provost's Salon for 'Trinity St James Cancer Institute'**

*Zoom*

Good afternoon,

And welcome, everyone, to this 'Provost's Salon'.

At the annual meeting of the Provost's Council in September, many of you asked for more detailed updates around the campaign flagship projects. This is the second in our series of four salon events to update you on progress, and open up discussion on the projects.

Since the summer, with the college in lockdown, we've been holding a few of these virtual Salon events – some of you have attended. It's been a great opportunity to talk to our distinguished academics and graduates about their vital fields of expertise. Luke O'Neill on Covid and immunology, and Philip Lane on economic impact, have been two of the speakers.

All Salon events are small and intimate. This particular series – on the campaign priority projects – are exclusively for Provost Council members. As I say, this one – on the Trinity St James's Cancer Institute – is the second in the series. Previously we invited our chief librarian, Helen Shenton, to talk about the Old Library Redevelopment Project.

Before we proceed with the event, could I ask everyone to briefly say hello and introduce themselves to the group. Kate, we might start with you...

Thanks, and now:

*Fergal Naughton, Brian McKiernan, David McConnell, David Went, Declan Sheehan, Dermot Smurfit, Richie Boucher, Stanley Quek, Stephen Vernon, Stuart Coulson.*

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing more from you all in the discussion I'll be convening after the presentations. During the presentations, please keep your microphones off, but of course turn them on again afterwards for the Q&A. We look forward to a great discussion. As with all our Salon events, Chatham rules apply so, please everyone, feel comfortable to speak freely and frankly.

This is a timely moment for the Trinity St. James's Cancer Institute. Just this month, we were officially designated the only Cancer Centre in Ireland to be accredited by the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes. We now join a fellowship of 53 of Europe's most prestigious cancer centres.

Trinity is leading this project, in partnership with St. James's Hospital. Together we will transform cancer care in Ireland by combining world-class science with clinical expertise to improve patient care - from prevention and diagnosis to treatment and survivorship.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Stanley and Declan for their very significant support for this project. Philanthropy is playing a vital role in delivering this Cancer Institute for Ireland – helping to accelerate progress and to leverage funding from Government and other sources.

At this Salon, we'll be hearing from three key players instrumental to progressing the Institute. We'll start now with Professor Paul Browne, professor of Haematology in Trinity and consultant haematologist in St. James's and the founding director of the new Institute. He will fill us in on the latest developments. Paul...

*[Paul Browne\* speaks]*

Thank you Paul. Now I'll invite Professor Veronica Campbell†, our College Bursar and Director of Strategic Innovation.

*[Veronica speaks]*

Thank you, Veronica. And now, Professor Maeve Lowery‡ who is Professor of Translational Cancer Medicine at Trinity, Consultant Medical Oncologist at St James Hospital, and the lead for the clinical trials Programme at Trinity St. James's Cancer Institute.

*[Maeve Lowery speaks]*

*After Maeve has spoken, open the floor for discussion and Q&A. At the end (15.55) wrap up and thank everyone for attending]*

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\* Professor Paul Browne, Professor of Haematology and Founding Director of the TSJCI

† Professor Veronica Campbell, Bursar, but also Co-Chair with Ann Dalton, of the project team to establish the TSJCI

‡ Trinity Professor and person who takes a leading role in fundraising

26 November 2020

**Welcome Address at 18<sup>th</sup> Annual IUA HR  
Conference**  
***‘Working Smarter in our new Environment’***

*Online*

Minister\*, Colleagues, Distinguished Guests,

As chair of the Irish Universities Association and Provost of Trinity, it's my pleasure to welcome you all to this important and timely conference. It's an annual event and a chance to discuss issues vital to the running of universities, and an opportunity to get together.

This year, the conference has particular significance because of the pandemic and lockdown and the HR issues that these raise. The challenge of Covid-19 is a theme of this conference but looking to the title, 'Working Smarter in our new Environment', this points to long-term trends, which have been accelerated by this pandemic, but not created by it.

In the future, including after a vaccine is rolled out, the trend of remote working is likely to continue and with it, the uptake in technology. As far as universities are concerned, not only education and research, but management, administration and HR activities, will be delivered more frequently online – though certainly not exclusively. Our future is hybrid and we will need to determine the right balance of online and in-person.

Over the past nine months, online working has been by necessity. We can regard this time as a kind of laboratory – what has worked with online? What hasn't? Which technologies are fit for purpose? Which need to be overhauled? Is our learning equal to technological advance, or do we need to prioritise time and resources to educate staff and students to get the most out of online? What specific issues emerge when people work more from home? All these questions and more, have arisen and, in some cases, been answered during the pandemic.

HR will have a crucial role to play in whatever 'new working environment' evolves from the forced experiment that we are all now

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\* Minister Simon Harris, TD, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation, and Science.

going through. It's great that this conference is capturing learning at a pivotal point.

The sub-themes of the conference are the 'three R's' – Resilience, Resourcefulness and Responsibility. It's agreed that these attributes are the ones that HR managers should develop for themselves and should help staff to develop.

The pandemic has put particular focus on how we work and where we work. And it has put focus on wellbeing, which is of course, a central HR issue. Getting this right is something that needs constant vigilance. If we change how we work, teach and research, then we also change - or at least we re-prioritise - the issues that may impact on wellbeing.

For instance, if many of us are working and studying from home, is collegiality put at risk? What about mental health and exercise? The HR issues which this conference addresses - including consent, harassment and the work-life balance – are all directly impacted by whatever work and study environment is in place in a university.

As we take steps to incorporate online and remote into our learning and working practices, as we move towards a hybrid work environment, we should make sure to consider all the permutations of what we're calling 'working smarter in new environments'. In the rush to embrace the new, it's easy to overlook potential problems. The optimum, as we design our future, is to envisage it so completely that we pre-empt problems. That's the great value of holding this conference at this critical time.

The organisers have put together an excellent programme. I thank and congratulate the Trinity HR team and the conference sponsors, Arthur Cox and Perrett Laver.

This year, which has been hugely difficult for the third level sector, has seen a significant advance. When the new government was formed in June, it delivered something that we've been requesting for many years now: a dedicated Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation, and Science.

The title may sound a bit of a mouthful but I believe that every one of those words is necessary and it gets across the essential nexus of education, research and innovation. Previously these were divided out between two different ministerial departments, and now we have an opportunity create coherence. It brings cohesion, integration and decision to have them together in the one department, and it's great that this has happened in this year of crisis when we need to seize opportunity.

We're also particularly pleased at the appointment of minister to the new department. Simon Harris, TD for Wicklow, is a senior member of the Fine Gael party. He brings his energy, dynamism and experience to the new post. I believe he shares the vision of Trinity and the IUA that the best way for a country to drive economic growth and improve the wellbeing of its citizens is to invest in education and research.

May I now ask Simon Harris, TD, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to address the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual HR IUA conference on 'The Consent Framework'.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Minister Harris.

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27 November 2020

**Transcript of Provost Patrick Prendergast  
Interview**

*'The Future of Universities after the end of Level 5'*

*Newstalk Breakfast with Ciara Kelly & Shane Coleman*

Ciara Kelly: Now, Ireland's Oldest University is proposing to end all physical lectures for larger classes and reducing the number of staff working on campuses turning existing labs into student accommodation and joining us for more on this is Dr Patrick Prendergast Provost of Trinity College in Dublin. Patrick, tell us the plan for large classes like in the Arts Block; law studies, English... we're looking at no lectures, is everything online?

Patrick Prendergast: No, this is not the case and in fact what you are quoting from there is a discussion paper, a draft discussion paper that is doing the rounds in the various university committees to find out opinions of staff and students about how after the pandemic things may change as regards to the delivery of education and as regards working on the campus. So ideas like the ones you have mentioned there are being floated and discussed as part of this discussion in the college which I think is an important thing because things will change after the pandemic and we need to be ahead of this working out how best to do those changes and to do them in a way that helps us to deliver what we do in education and research.

Ciara Kelly: I have had a look at the discussion paper, a lot of it, and a lot of it is about peoples working conditions. What about students' conditions? I have two children in university, both of whom are doing all their lectures online currently. It's far from adequate and no comparison to them actually going in and out of the campus.

Patrick Prendergast: Yeah, you're right and we hope in the next semester we will be able to, as restrictions ease and as we understand better the transmission of the virus, we will be able to bring back more in-person teaching. At the moment we have in-person teaching where it is essential for pedagogical reasons in labs and practicals and so on but really in the next semester we would like to be able to bring in in-person teaching where students would benefit from it, and we recognise very much that face-to-face teaching is important for student wellbeing and

student welfare and for that reason really if we can at all every student should have the opportunity to do in-person teaching.

Ciara Kelly: But do you, I mean small class tutorials, they are going to continue but do you think big lectures are coming to an end?

Patrick Prendergast: Yes I would say it is possible that the era of the very big lecture with the 400 students in a lecture theatre with the lecturer way down the front, yes it may be that those lectures are better delivered online and that the students get more out of it. I have heard some students say they get more out of the large lecture online than they do going in to the very large lecture theatre where the lecturer may only be a dot in the distance.

Ciara Kelly: Ok

Patrick Prendergast: So, yes.

Ciara Kelly: Other things that are in the paper, things like the selling off of buildings. Trinity College a landmark in Dublin, historic, iconic, selling that off to private concerns. That's a concern for the whole of Dublin not just Trinity students.

Patrick Prendergast: Yes and if it were true it would be a concern for me as well but that's not proposed to sell any historic campus buildings but Trinity is always, like every university in Ireland, is always buying and selling buildings and that will continue. We have quite a few buildings that are outside the main island campus in other parts of the city and those may very well be sold and we may buy other ones.

Ciara Kelly: So no plans to sell anything within the walls of Trinity in College Green.

Patrick Prendergast: Absolutely. No plans. Let's scotch that one straight away.

Ciara Kelly: Alright. OK. You're reassuring us here slightly. Can I ask you lastly, a good news story for Trinity? Some female statues being commissioned for the first time.

Patrick Prendergast: Yes, well the magnificent Long Room in the Old Library which many people have been in which has the Book of Kells and the Brian Boru Harp. In fact when Prince Harry and Meghan visited Trinity about a year ago it was her that first said to me, she looked at this long list of male busts 20 on one side and 20 on the other and she said "Where are the women,

Provost?” and this had been raised before but I think at that stage we thought we must do something about it and myself and the Librarian began that process.

Ciara Kelly: I do find that slightly extraordinary Patrick that it took Meghan Markle to point out to you that there were no women in the Long Room.

Patrick Prendergast: Well no, we had seen it before, I mean but it is something that we long wanted to do something about and now we have 4 names after a consultation process with the college community and others and with philanthropic donations we have the resources to commission these busts and get on with it.

Ciara Kelly: Look thank you for speaking to us this morning about all of the changes that lie ahead for Trinity College. That is Dr Patrick Prendergast, Provost of Trinity College.

END

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27 November 2020

## **Arrangements for the Christmas/New Year Period and Semester 2 – All Staff and Student Email**

Dear Students and Staff,

We are writing to you about the likely outlook for teaching and research for semester two following the Government's decision to ease the level 5 restrictions.

This move out of level 5, and further recognition by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science that some students require additional support over and above that which can be provided online makes it possible to plan for an increase in the amount of in-person teaching next semester especially in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences where current restrictions have made in-person teaching particularly difficult. On foot of the Minister's clarifications we also see potential for more extra-curricular activities. The College Sports Centre including the pool will re-open next week and be accessible by appointment. The expansion of these teaching and social activities will play an important role in improving the learning experience of students and promoting physical and mental well-being.

Therefore, in the next semester we will be able to increase the amount of face-to-face teaching in small group seminars and tutorials, especially in those programmes that under level 5 have been entirely online. This will of course be done while fully adhering to social distancing and public health guidelines. Large lectures will remain online for all of semester two. As we continue to monitor the public health situation carefully, details of the precise balance between face-to-face and online teaching will be made available at least two weeks in advance of any changes.

To facilitate students who cannot attend face-to-face teaching for health reasons or due to other circumstances we will increase the amount of hybrid teaching offered in semester two. This move towards more hybrid teaching will be incremental and will take different formats, such as more recorded lectures or more teaching events that combine face-to-face with online presence.

Of course, in this pandemic nothing can be predicted with certainty until a successful and comprehensive vaccination programme and we may well be back at level 5 for a period in 2021. However we now have a greater understanding of the risks involved and how to

mitigate those risks and, as a result, and recognising the value of on campus activities for student well-being, we are aiming for some more on-campus activities, in-person engagement and small group teaching even if we do return to level 5 at some point. In this regard, we are encouraged by the Government's recent guidelines which allow universities to plan in a manner that "is best suited to their own context and the requirements of their staff and students" and the Government's call for an incremental increase in face-to-face activities on campus where possible and safe.

As far as research is concerned, researchers should continue to follow the guidelines that have governed research until now across the various levels but as restrictions ease, conditions for researchers will be closer to normal.

Overall semester two will still be challenging, but an increase in on-campus teaching and hybrid teaching brings us closer to where we want to be. This has been a truly extraordinary year. If we have learned one thing, it is that the future is difficult to predict but charting a course is essential.

### **Christmas/New Year Period**

We know this is a difficult time for every single person reading this email. Collectively, the Trinity Community has shown enormous resilience and continues to do so as we head into the final month of 2020. To help prepare for exams, the College has drawn up detailed plans to help students who want to study or remain in the residences on campus over the Christmas/New Year period. Study space will be available on campus over the period, except on 25 December. We will share that information next week by email and on the website at [www.tcd.ie/about/coronavirus](http://www.tcd.ie/about/coronavirus).

To provide support for our students over the Christmas/New Year holiday break (23 December – 3 January), Student Counselling Service, College Health Service, Assistant Junior Deans and Assistant Wardens cover, Chaplaincy pastoral services and College Security will be available throughout the period.

A number of activities are also being considered to ensure that students living on campus, in Trinity Hall, Kavanagh Court and in Binary Hub have the best possible experience in College accommodation over the holiday period and we thank all staff and students who have gone the extra mile to serve the community at this time.

In addition, all students can participate in the '12 walks of Christmas', daily 5km guided walks around the city, and a mobile

catering van will be on campus on some days during that period with take away refreshments, tea and coffee to purchase. We will bring you more details of all of the activities when available. International students who will return home during the break between semesters might have to self-isolate for 14 days after arrival. In order to maximise their time at home Schools and programmes will facilitate them to take their classes fully remotely for the first two weeks of semester two while they have to self-isolate, including for any mandatory onsite classes such as labs and practicals.

### **Keeping safe**

Any increase in onsite activities and in-person teaching is only possible because the public health situation is improving. Here in Trinity the College Health Service have been testing students in significant numbers and have a good sense of what is happening on the ground. Thank you for your efforts in helping reduce the spread of COVID-19, both on and off campus. It will be vital to maintain those efforts over the Christmas period despite the temptation to relax safety measures. It is essential that anybody who travels abroad over the Christmas period obeys the rules around self-isolating on their return.

Please remember to maintain social distancing, wash your hands regularly, wear face coverings inside and outside when less than 2m apart (see [video here](#)), cover your coughs and sneezes, stick to your pods and avoid congregating after tutorials or lab sessions and large social gatherings. But please also find a way to enjoy the break and rest before we enter into 2021 with the hope that College life can begin to return to normal for students, teaching staff, researchers and administrative staff who have all been forced to study and work very differently in 2020.

Stay safe. Stay well. Bigí slán agus sábháilte.

Patrick Prendergast, Provost

Jürgen Barkhoff, Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer

John Coman, Secretary to the College

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01 December 2020

## **Trinity Innovation Awards 2020**

*Online from the Andrew's Room, Provost's House*

Thank you, Leonard, and good evening, all, and welcome to the 4th annual Trinity Innovation Awards.

As we begin the transition from Level 5 to Level 3, it's good to be here online with you all, celebrating something as important as achievement in innovation, and something for which Trinity is a national and European leader.

It's now seven years since we launched our first Innovation and Entrepreneurship Strategy which established the Office of Corporate Partnership and Knowledge Exchange, and also seven years since we launched our student accelerator, LaunchBox. Already at that time, innovation was emerging as a particular strength of the university's. Bringing additional focus and resources to it has yielded significant returns:

- 1) We continue to excel in national and EU competitive research funding rounds. Our talented PIs, with the support of the professional staff in TR&I, annually win over 30% of national and Horizon 2020 funding, and a whopping 50 percent of ERC awards granted to Ireland.
- 2) For the the sixth year running, Pitchbook has ranked Trinity number 1 in Europe for educating graduates who go on to become successful entrepreneurs as measured by the level of VC-backed ventures.
- 3) In the last two years Trinity has created more High-Performance Start-Ups (HPSUs) than in the previous 10 years. This places Trinity at the top of the leadership board in Ireland in terms of HPSUs and positions us competitively amongst our peer European universities.
- 4) Last year we opened the Trinity Business School, with the second floor devoted to Tangent, Trinity's Ideas Workspace. which brings together, in one place, Trinity's dynamic programmes in innovation, creative thinking, and entrepreneurship for staff, students and the wider innovation community beyond campus. These programmes include the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Certificates in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, the first of their

kind in Ireland, and recently-approved courses such as Climate Entrepreneurship and Healthcare Innovation.

- 5) Tangent is central to Trinity's innovation strategy for Dublin that includes plans for a new campus at Grand Canal Quay and the establishment of a globally competitive innovation district in our capital. We've now submitted planning permission for the innovation hub at Grand Canal Dock, which will house many companies, starting in Q1 2022, with a cafe and public square. Programming will begin in the new year.

This past year, of course, has been unlike any other. Some research projects have been delayed through the closure of laboratories. But Trinity Research & Innovation have been front and foremost, through the contribution of our professors to the national discourse on topics ranging from health to wellbeing to economic impact, as well of course as in the search for cures and vaccines. This evening we recognise how important our university's response to Covid has been, through the Societal Impact Award.

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Trinity's innovation output is driven by a deep research pipeline, underpinned by 19 research themes distributed across 24 schools, 5 major Trinity research institutes and 3 SFI centres, spanning nano science to neuro science, digital humanities to creative technologies and immunology to oncology.

If Trinity is a high global performer in innovation, that's because of the excellence of our academics and researchers. So it's right that we created these awards to acknowledge and recognise them.

We have seven categories of award for innovation including Lifetime Achievement and the Provost's Innovation Award. It goes without saying that competition for these awards has been intense given how much talent we are choosing from. As with all our Awards, being nominated, or noted, is very much an achievement.

It's vitally important to recognise the work of outstanding individuals. But also these awards give us the opportunity to put emphasis on innovation, and to measure and evaluate how it is impacting the university. The different award categories allow us to track different kinds of innovation and people at different stages of their careers.

Innovation is a community activity. There are many people to thank tonight for their support for these awards and for innovation in Trinity:

- Knowledge Transfer Ireland and Enterprise Ireland for supporting the technology transfer unit within Trinity;
- The national and international funding agencies;
- The IDA for their active collaboration in engaging companies. The industry groups AmCham, IBEC, AsiaMatters and the Ireland Canada Business Association; and
- Our Industry partners, who support and collaborate with our Schools, Institutes and Research Centers; and
- A special word of thanks to Atlantic Bridge for their ongoing collaboration with the Bridge Fund.

And I thank finally all our winners and nominees and indeed all staff who are constantly seeking ways to make their research impactful. The difference you make is immense and your lead is inspirational.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



03 December 2020

**Opening Statement - Oireachtas Joint Committee  
on Education, Further & Higher Education,  
Research, Innovation & Science**

*Committee Room 2, Leinster House*



Chairman\*, members of the Committee, thank you for inviting us to address you today on the impact of Covid and other key matters in higher education and research.

We'd like to start with the impact of Covid-19 and our responses to it.

Our universities responded quickly as the crisis unfolded, rapidly moving all teaching online in response to public health restrictions. We successfully completed the academic year and graduated all doctors, nurses and other essential workers. University staff and facilities were deployed in the frontline fight against Covid by providing testing, contact tracing and other key activities.

Our researchers also contributed greatly in areas such as medical technologies, infection control, health and safety and mental well-being. Many of our colleagues have been directly involved in the national effort.

It is reassuring that QQI has confirmed that the quality and integrity of teaching and exams were upheld in the shift to online in higher education.

\* \* \*

Plans for maximising in-person teaching in this academic year were curtailed to a very large extent in September on the advice of government. On-campus site was restricted with most classroom activity done online while laboratory and practical sessions and small-scale tutorials continued on-site where possible.

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\* Paul Kehoe, T.D.

We wish to acknowledge the huge effort of our staff over the last 9 months. Their focus, and ours as university leaders, has been to ensure that the experience of students is as good as it can be despite the restrictions.

Students have shown remarkable resilience overall but we know how challenging Covid is for them.

We have provided a range of extra welfare and mental health supports for students with a particular focus on targeting more vulnerable groups in recognition of the heavy toll on student well-being.

Our students tell us that they want more on-campus activity and we wholeheartedly agree. We have outlined how we can safely provide more on-campus activity and we hope that public health guidance facilitates us to do this in 2021. This also includes extracurricular and co-curricular activities to enable students to have at least some limited level of on-campus experience.

Our universities have added more than half of the 5,000 or so extra college places funded by government.

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The Covid crisis has had a severe impact on university finances. The current estimate is that our seven universities will run a combined deficit between the last and current academic years of €102m.

- Student accommodation revenues have fallen with average occupancy rates reduced to 65%;
- Ancillary and commercial revenues have been devastated and likely to remain so for much of 2021;
- Costs have increased with greater online and digital investment required and to fund the substantial public health measures;
- Costed extensions have been required for research contracts.

The extra funding provided by government in the July and in the recent Budget is warmly welcomed. However, the Covid funding only extends to the end of this year so we ask for your support in seeking additional funds in 2021 through a Supplementary Budget to cover the additional known costs and unavoidable revenue losses arising from Covid.

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That takes me to core funding....

The serious underfunding of higher education and research remains to be tackled. We welcome the commitment of Minister Harris to this Committee that he will act promptly on the funding issue once he receives the EU study on the issue early in the New Year. We note particularly the Minister's comments that this issue has been, and I quote, "shirked for far too long" and that "2021 needs to be the year in which we settle this question". We look forward to the Minister delivering on that promise and to the support of the Committee in securing it.

While student numbers have increased by about one-third in the last decade and continue to rise, State funding per student has fallen by almost 40%. This is unsustainable.

On the question of the future role and changing needs of universities....

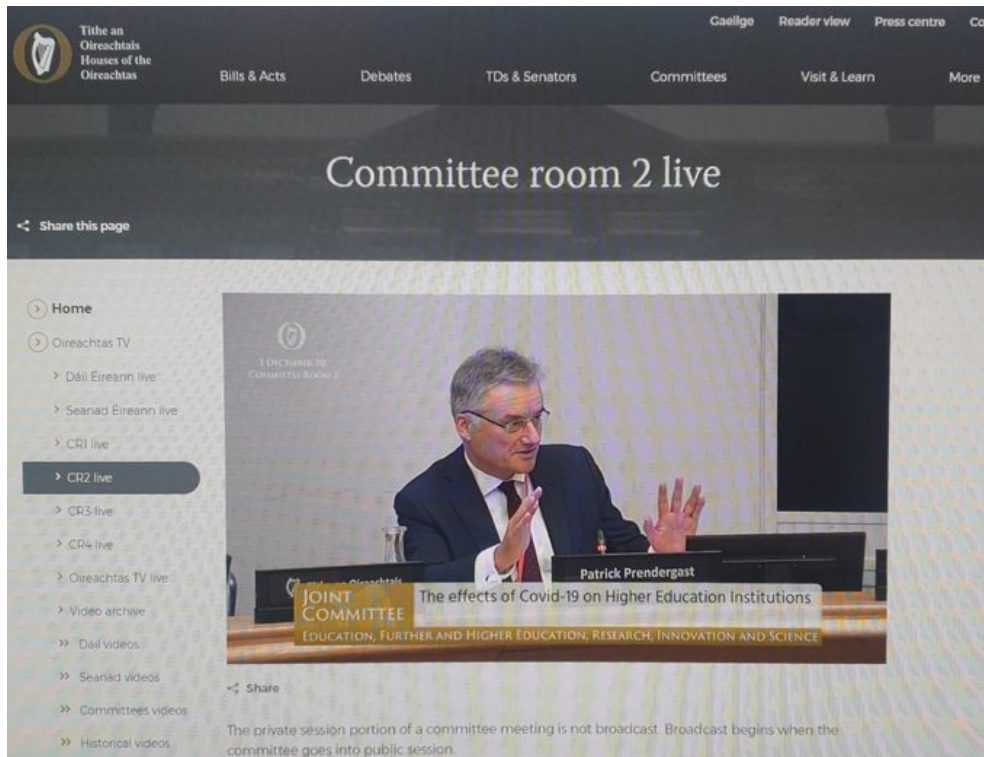
As outlined earlier, the Universities have proven to be remarkably agile in its response to Covid and, more than anything, Covid has shown that our talent and innovation capacity is THE key resource for Ireland's future.

We are committed to ensuring that our universities continue to provide the pipeline of high-quality educated people and research for the Irish economy and Irish society overall.

- We will continue to adapt to changing skills needs through a more flexible range of courses, such as the recently announced Multi-Campus Micro-Credentials programme.
- Sustained additional investment is also needed in research and innovation to enable Ireland to compete internationally for jobs and investment. The Committee's support in securing that strategic investment is sought.
- The promised revision of the HEA Act is eagerly awaited. It must be based on a model of strong accountability to all stakeholders with a capacity for autonomous universities to remain agile and responsive to the changing needs of society.
- The Employment Control Framework which has capped the number of permanent staff we can employ despite the rapid growth in student numbers must be replaced with a devolved structure with universities managing their own workforce within a defined budget.

We look forward to discussing these and other issues with the members of the Committee.

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Provost Patrick Prendergast speaking to the Oireachtas Committee on Education



08 December 2020

## **Announcing Trinity East – All Staff and Student Email**

Dear students and staff,

Over the last number of years, we have been working to develop the site owned by the College at Grand Canal Quay. Currently called the Trinity Technology Enterprise Campus (TTEC) it is a 5.5 acre site bounded by Pearse Street, Macken Street, the DART line, and Grand Canal Quay – as shown in the image below.



In 2018 we launched a plan for this site with the then Taoiseach Leo Varadkar T.D. and we published a manifesto that captured a vision for TTEC as a catalyst for a new innovation district for Dublin – called the Grand Canal Innovation District.

In 2020 the Government formally endorsed this plan and published the report from the Grand Canal Innovation District advisory group. In the last few weeks we reached two important milestones for this ambitious plan. First the planning permission for the site was submitted. It is intended to build a new 5,500m<sup>2</sup> innovation hub and to establish a public interface from the site with a new public square and an events space. CGI images of this proposed development can be found here and below.



At its meeting of 18 November, the Board also agreed a new name for TTEC – ***Trinity East***. With this name Trinity paves the way for an eastward expansion of the college to encompass the campus at Grand Canal Dock as the home for new activities in education and research.

A webinar will be organised in the new year to update the College community on the future plans for Trinity East and what has been achieved to date.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Prendergast  
PROVOST

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08 December 2020

## **Transcript of Provost Patrick Prendergast Interview.**

### **The Pat Kenny Show, Newstalk**

Pat Kenny: Now those of you that have a student in your lives will know that the university experience is quite different this year with blended learning and little or no on campus activity. Something that is less talked about is how universities have had to adapt and how they have been affected by Covid19 and in particular how they have been affected financially. Professor Patrick Prendergast is Trinity College Dublin's Provost and he is also Chair of the Irish University Association. Paddy, good morning and welcome.

Patrick Prendergast: Good morning Pat

Pat Kenny: It's good to talk to you, now, the normal income for a university such as Trinity College Dublin is made up of a number of different strands. How have they been affected?

Patrick Prendergast: Well quite dramatically affected in some respects of course a significant part of our funding, 40% in Trinity College's case, comes from the Government and Government grants and that hasn't been affected, I think that's worth saying but significant also are revenues from things like accommodation, student accommodation that we rent and in Trinity's case at least other ancillary commercial activities and they have been very seriously affected and means there is a significant hole in the universities finances in that regard.

Pat Kenny: I mean you would have how many, I don't know, tens of thousands or more going to the Book of Kells for instance.

Patrick Prendergast: Yes indeed and that commercial activity generates many millions, maybe 20 million in profits every year. That and accommodation and other activities have almost been reduced to zero since March. So this is very significant and is probably going to continue very significantly also into the coming academic year. So that is a worry, we have come to depend significantly on revenue from such commercial activities to I suppose bridge the gap between what Government funding

is and what is required to run the university and to deliver education and research at the quality that people expect.

Pat Kenny: Now the question of the students themselves, is there much reaction to off-campus learning or blended learning and they feel they don't get bangs for their buck and what impact that might have?

Patrick Prendergast: I think the students and the staff too of course, but the students in particular, we have 18,000 students here in Trinity and I think they have had a tough time. It has been recognised I suppose by the wider public how difficult it has been for students in many cases to do 100% of their activities online. Now we can do face to face activities such as practical and labs and so on but that's not relevant to all students. So quite a number of our students would like to come back on to the campus to do in person activities in the next semester after Christmas and we, and other universities, would like to facilitate that if we can at all. I think it is really important for student wellbeing that they're able to do in person face to face activities on the campus, even if those activities aren't essential for teaching and pedagogical reasons I think they are indeed essential for student overall wellbeing.

Pat Kenny: Well we all await the vaccine and as you know your colleague Professor Luke O'Neill has been keeping us on this programme up to speed and indeed the whole country up to speed on the development of the vaccine and how we will hear about the rollout at the end of this week. And presumably once the extremely vulnerable are protected by a vaccine that you can get back to normal activities among the less vulnerable I suppose, get them back to normal more quickly?

Patrick Prendergast: I think that will be possible alright, but the question that many of us are asking is what we have learnt from having to do online teaching since March and what elements of that are indeed useful and should be continued even when we get back to normal times. In particular elements of online teaching have proved useful, they have allowed students that might not otherwise be able to get to the campus to do lectures and some of the very large lectures that we have had in the past you know with several hundred students and the lecturer way down the front of the lecture theatre, what's the teaching value of such lectures and maybe they can indeed be better done online. And that's the sort of thing we are thinking about. I think that's really important.

Pat Kenny: Yeah, we used to do the simplex crossword at the back of the lecture theatre because there was no point in trying to hear the lecturer at the front of the theatre.

Patrick Prendergast: I think Facebook and other things have taken over from the simplex or the cryptic crossword now. But often times a lecturer is looking out at a sea of faces and wondering really how many are paying attention to what's going on. And online, at least my daughters tell me, who are students in Trinity that sometimes the experience can be better for large lectures now. For the small in person tutorials and seminars, I do think they need to be in person and I think the students gain a lot from that and we must get back from that if we can at all in the next semester.

Pat Kenny: Now in addition to the loss of revenue this year have you had extra expenses?

Patrick Prendergast: Well we have because many universities have had to increase the counselling services, increase the medical services that's being provided to students. Provide all the complex PPE for the onsite activities that are happening so absolutely, we in Trinity here have put up big marquees on the main squares so students can come in to the college and do their studying in a socially distanced way. Those kind of costs have to be paid for and they are quite expensive. And indeed online education itself, the software and the technology to deliver online education is not cheap either, we have had to upgrade all of those facilities and the lecturers have had to upskill in how to use them so absolutely.

Pat Kenny: Now I am talking to Dr Patrick Prendergast who is Provost of Trinity College and also Chair of the Irish Universities Association. Paddy I noticed that in 2019 you had a surplus in Trinity College, not all colleges probably have the luxury of a surplus so there was already a crisis in funding. Going forward compensating for the losses in 2020 and possibly in 2021 but also going forward what is to be done about the funding of third level?

Patrick Prendergast: Well something needs to be done, that much is being agreed by all people. I was having conversations like this one when I became Provost 9 years ago. Many people didn't think that there was a crisis in Irish higher education. They thought it could be sorted by increased savings or something like that but at least now we are in a situation since the Cassels Report that everyone in the system agrees that there is a

funding crisis that needs to be addressed. What can be done? Well increased public funding is one thing and that's the usual way in most European countries, increased public funding or increased private funding which would mean funding coming from individuals who can afford to pay. I myself think it needs to be a balance of both. I think higher education is a public good and should be funded as a balance between public funding and private funding. I do think that the public funding has reduced far too far for a country like Ireland as Minister Harris has said "this nettle needs to be grassed". "It's been kicked into the long grass", was some metaphor used or something like that, for far too long. So we are looking forward to a good thorough discussion about this in the new year about how the crisis can be dealt with and we do have a crisis OK Trinity managed to balance its' budget last year but that's only by cutting its number of staff that we have teaching our students. We have a staff student ratio of 18:1 but if you look in comparable universities in the UK or continental Europe it's more like 14:1.

Pat Kenny: So that means you slide down the international rankings because it's a complex algorithm they use to work out rankings but part of it would be the ratio of staff and students and if you go too far adrift of that you just slide down the rankings.

Patrick Prendergast: And that's what's happened in Ireland. All Irish universities are in the same boat as we try to tackle how to deliver high quality education with not enough lecturing staff. And now we have managed to balance our budgets but you might say we have balanced our budgets at a cost of the quality of the education we deliver and this is something that is not sustainable in the long run, not sustainable for our young people to have to be not getting the university or higher education they would be getting if they were in another country. So we do have to increase public funding to allow us to hire more lecturers and indeed to improve the quality of the laboratory and other facilities. This was done during the boom up to 2008 but since then there has been no significant infrastructure in higher education. We need to get back to doing that as well. It's not just about the people, it's also about the equipment and the labs and so on.

Pat Kenny: Well the message is anyway, never waste a crisis and this crisis has kind of brought everything to a head because you will be in a deficit this year. That will have to be compensated for somehow then the ongoing challenge for all third level institutions but we'll talk no doubt about this in the new year Paddy, thanks very much for joining us. Professor Patrick

Prendergast, Trinity College Dublin's Provost and Chair of the  
Irish Universities Association.

END

\* \* \*





16 December 2020

## **Provost's Christmas Message to Alumni**



The Christmas Tree lit in Front Square

Dear Fellow Alumni,

Christmas has come to the College with the Christmas Tree lit in Front Square and the Carol Service streamed from the College Chapel to some 500 alumni around the globe. In a year where so much about college life has been different, we celebrate our traditions with particular affection.

Since I was last in touch at the start of the Michaelmas term, the whole of Ireland – and Trinity with it – moved to stricter lockdown for the month of November. With the easing of restrictions in December, we welcome a little more activity back in college. Now, as we prepare for the Christmas break, we can take stock of the year and the truly remarkable commitment of staff and students. Thanks to everyone's efforts, we've been able to continue our mission to deliver excellent education and research, whilst meeting our responsibilities to minimise physical contacts and prevent transmission of the virus.

And despite all, it has been a year of significant achievement. We completed the Trinity Education Project and launched it in October – it is the most comprehensive renewal of our undergraduate

curriculum in a century. Achievements in research and scholarship have been myriad - with many books making national headlines and great success in scientific funding both nationally and at European level. Many colleagues, advising the government on the pandemic, have now become household names, and we thank them for their commitment to the public good.

Remarkably, in this year we've advanced all the priority projects of our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*. In spring we began work on the site for the Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry, scheduled to open in 2023, which will increase by almost 50% the number of students in engineering, computer science and natural sciences; in autumn we received planning permission for the Old Library Redevelopment Project which will ensure this magnificent building and its priceless treasures are secured for future generations; and in October the Trinity St James's Cancer Institute became the only cancer centre in Ireland to receive accreditation from the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes. These initiatives, coupled with our *New Generations* programme to recruit students and staff, will transform Trinity to benefit Ireland and the world.

Alumni are central to all our achievements, and this year, in particular, your generosity has been outstanding. You have been here for us in so many ways – from your phenomenal response to our call for support for the Student Hardship Fund and more recently the Trinity Access Programme, to your ongoing volunteering, mentoring and careers advice to students, now delivered through digital platforms. Our connection with you, our alumni, is very important to all of us in Trinity. For the first time ever, the College Board has approved an alumni engagement strategy to further develop the connections between graduates and their alma mater.

In ordinary times, we would be looking forward to welcoming many of you back to the college for the Alumni Homecoming. We can't do that this year but I hope that you will tune in to our Seasonal Soirée concert on Friday 18 December at 7pm. This virtual event will feature well-known faces and some new friends, performing songs, poems, music readings and even dances. To join us for performances from The Mornington Singers, David Norris, Niamh O'Flannagain, Clinton Liberty and Trinity Orchestra – please click here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/TCDAumni/live>

This is my last Christmas message as Provost. A vaccine rollout is a very real prospect before I finish in the summer, thanks to great science and the benefits of global communication. Like all of us, I can't wait for life – the true Trinity life of community and connection

- to return. For now, the tree is lit, the choirs are carolling and it's beginning to feel like Christmas – 'everything is going to be alright'.

A very happy Christmas to you all.

Patrick Prendergast  
PROVOST

\* \* \*



18 December 2020

## **Message for the Trinity Seasonal Soiree for Alumni**

*Streamed Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December*

Alumni, Friends, Trinity people around the world,

I'm here in the salon of the provost's house and I'm glad to have this opportunity to say a few words to you as we draw to a close a year that has been like no other that any of us can remember.

It's impossible not to feel impressed by all that our community has done to get us through this year, and it's impossible not to feel optimistic about the year ahead.

Staff and students came together to adapt to online education. It wasn't easy but we did it. Students completed their exams and progressed or graduated, and the college completed its important work in research and scholarship. In fact it proved a great year from research with Trinity academics continuing their scholarly output in published work, and winning even more prestigious grants to fund their research.

\* \* \*

Throughout a difficult year, alumni and friends have been here for us.

You've continued with mentoring programmes, and donated to the Student Hardship Fund, and the Tech2Student. You've also engaged brilliantly with our online events – the Inspiring Ideas Webinars, the summer concert 'Inspiring Sounds', and now this seasonal soiree.

When we cannot meet in person, it means a lot that so many around the world are taking the time to stay connected with the university.

If the pandemic has shown us anything, it's that Trinity truly is a community. We support each other.

Without giving hostages to fortune, I think – given the great vaccine news – that we can cautiously predict that next year we WILL be meeting in person.

\* \* \*

In the meantime, in this my last Christmas as Provost, I'm sorry not to be hosting the Alumni Homecoming on campus – but we've put together a wonderful online soirée for tonight with Christmas music, poems, dance and readings.

It's my pleasure now to introduce the first performance - **The Mornington Singers**, a choral group set up for and by alumni, and conducted by Professor Orla Flanagan.

Wishing you all a wonderful evening, a happy Christmas, and a resurgent new year!

\* \* \*

18 December 2020

## **End-of-year speech to the Trinity Communications Forum**

*Online from House 1*

Thanks, Tom and good morning, everyone,

It's great to be here. Thank you for inviting me.

If I may, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you all – that's the whole Trinity staff – for the tremendous work you've put in this year. Because of your commitment, we've managed to deliver on our mission in education and research, despite very difficult conditions. It has been, as much as anything, a *communications* challenge, which is why it's so apt for me to be meeting with you now.

The challenge has been to communicate with each other, with students, with alumni, with our academic and industry partners, with donors and with the general public. It has been a multi-faceted challenge:

- In the first place, of course, we've had to communicate the safety precautions that the college has adopted. These precautions have affected not just staff and students but the many Dubliners and visitors who use our campus. It has been a question not only of communicating through multiple platforms, traditional and online, but also of also communicating through our personal behaviour.
- Staff and students have had to adapt very quickly to online education and research and to online support services. It has been a steep learning curve in terms of getting up to speed with new technologies.
- All the many branches of the university involved in holding events have had to manage the switch to online – that includes CSC, Trinity Sport, the Trinity Long Room Hub and TDA. All have had to find ways to engage members with online events. In some cases, there is no substitute for in-person communication, but in general, people have found truly imaginative and innovative ways to host virtual events, and the take-up has been impressive.

- Numerous staff members – particularly, but not exclusively, in the faculty of health sciences – are playing a crucial role in communicating with the public on issues related to Covid-19. Their expertise has been absolutely invaluable in terms of helping the public to understand the pandemic, and getting buy-in for the regulations.

These are the specific challenges we've faced this year. And I think it's fair to say that, as it turned out, we were well-prepared. I don't want to get too self-congratulatory here, because we can all point to things that went wrong or could have been better. And as a general rule of thumb, I prefer seeking ways to improve than resting on one's laurels. But, praise where it's due.

Our university was not found napping. Since the start of the new millennium, when we appointed our first ever Director of Public Affairs and Communications, we have looked to bring cohesion and integration to how we communicate. We have understood the need to communicate across the university and across different media and digital platforms. We have been proactive.

For this I thank our Communications team, our IT department and I thank each of you individually. It's your willingness to learn new technologies and to take responsibility for communicating with all stakeholders - students, alumni, the media, the public, each other - that has enabled the well-functioning of the university in this uniquely challenging year.

I think we can all see the benefit of our cohesive, aligned approach. And seeing the benefit, I think we are all now ready to build on it. We are open to any and all ways that will enable us to communicate better, across more platforms, with ever more integration.

In September, we launched the first Public Affairs and Communications strategy directed at the whole university and approved by the College Board. I meet quarterly with Tom and Sally-Anne to review progress against objectives.

We're fortunate to have such a strong and integrated Strategy. This Forum is part of its implementation. As we focus today on key issues for Communications – next year's priorities, social media and GPDR – let's keep in mind a few key questions:

- First, how can we keep the whole Trinity community updated on ongoing and planned activities?
- Second, how can we ensure consistency of voice across all our College communications? That's such a challenge. We don't want homogeneity but we do want unity and consistency. How



can we achieve this? Branding isn't always a popular term – it sometimes seen as too corporate – but however you want to call it, in any large institution, consistency is paramount. And it doesn't just happen. It needs to be actioned.

- Third, how can we prepare for the future? I understand Tom will discuss with you his 10 predictions for the next year – I'm sorry I won't be able to say to hear them!
- And, finally, are we ensuring that we've placed student welfare at the heart of our approach? When we focus on issues like social media and GPDR, have we consulted with students? Have we taken on board the effect on them of our decisions?

Inevitably next year will bring the unexpected, although nothing, we trust, on the scale of a global pandemic. Let's develop both the mindset *and* the technologies to deal with the unexpected.

The mindset we need is one that is open, candid and adaptive. That's how we communicate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That's why our new five-year university Strategy is called 'Community and Connection', and the Communications Strategy is called "Unity in Variety".

I wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a new Year, which all going well with the vaccine, will be the most renewed New Year any of us can remember.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



22 December 2020

## **Christmas Zoom Call for Student Residents**

*Zoom from the Andrews Room, Provost's House*

Fellow residents of the College!

Good evening.

Term has ended and, for two weeks, we have the college more-or-less to ourselves. This doesn't signify as big a change as usual because the college has been so quiet all year. Still, there are fewer people around and those of you in rooms and halls will certainly feel it.

I hope you're all well, or as well as can be expected. It has been a challenging year for all, I know. For some, this may not be how you had imagined spending Christmas. We hope you are comfortable and please know that there are supports available to you throughout the holiday period, and events too. The junior dean will outline these for you shortly.

I've been a resident of this College at three stages of my life:

- as an undergraduate in the 1980s, I had rooms in Botany Bay.
- as a staff member in the 1990s, I lived briefly in New Square.
- And now, as Provost I've lived with my family in the Provost's House for the past nine years. That's been marvellous of course.

After the busy Michelmas Term, I've always really welcomed the peace and calm that descends on College over Christmas. It's different this year – but still this is my last Christmas living in college and I intend to savour it. I hope you can also draw appreciation from this unusual time.

As residents, we embody a tradition going back to the foundation of the college, 428 years ago, when all Fellows and Scholars lived in rooms on campus. 1689 was an historic year - civil war across Ireland forced all the resident Fellows to flee the campus - and so was 1916 when the college became a garrison, following the Rising. This year, 2020, is another historic year – in the spring most residents had to leave college because of the pandemic and now more residents than ever before are spending Christmas here, also

for pandemic-related reasons. It's a strange feeling to know that you are part of history in the making. This is a tale you may be telling all your lives: the year you spent Christmas in college in a city in lockdown – it's looking like a post-Christmas lockdown.

You're far from your families, and struggling with the uncertainty of a radically changed situation. I congratulate you for your resilience and courage. I'm glad that we have this forum to support each other.

Despite the long tradition of college residency, it's only in the past two years that we've started holding receptions specifically for residents. That's thanks to Philip, Hazel and their teams. In 2019 they conceived the idea of bringing all residents together so that we feel a sense of community. We held two great receptions on campus last year. At the time, no-one could have imagined the situation we would be in this year. But the way it has turned out, we've very lucky that we now we have a tradition of resident receptions and gatherings to draw on. I think we have all appreciated it this year. In April I enjoyed meeting residents online. I'm hopeful that before I leave office in summer, we might meet in person.

For now, I thank Philip and the Assistant Junior Deans and Warden and Assistant Wardens, and the SU and GSU reps, for organising this and for all the work they've put in over this challenging year, helping to support residents.

And to you, my fellow residents, I can only say that I intend to take a well-earned break. I have considerably less social events than usual – indeed after Christmas Day, it looks like I won't have any – but I don't intend filling the gaps with too much work. I want to rest and take stock and I urge you to do the same. Take walks, watch Netflix, read books, zoom friends and family.

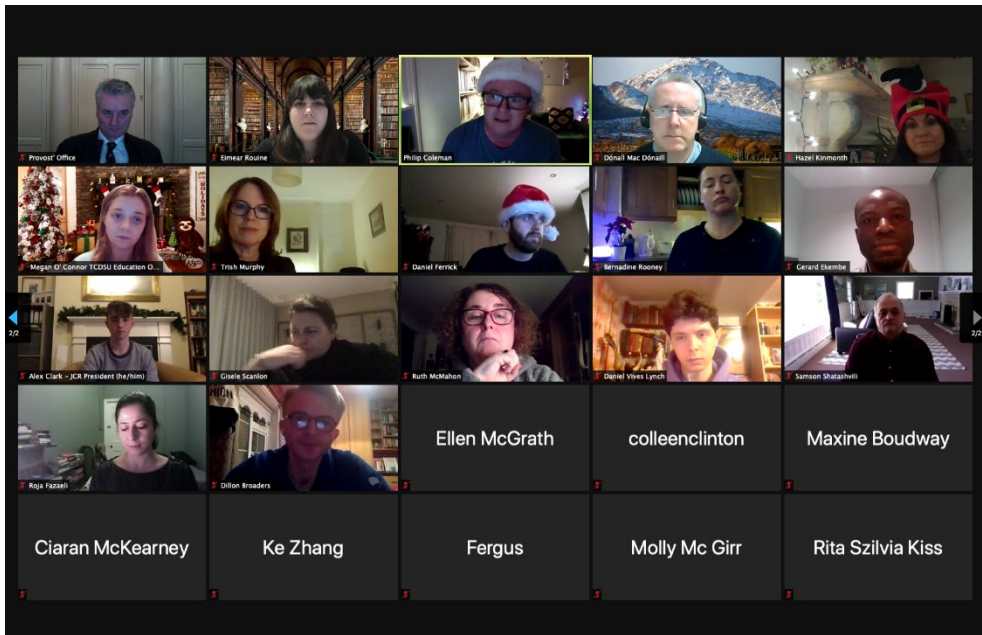
And writing down your thoughts and memories of this exceptional year might be something you will appreciate later.

It's hard to think now, but soon this will all change and we will forget how it was. We should think about making a record of it while our memories are fresh.

Have a very happy Christmas and a lovely New Year.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



Zoom screens during the Christmas zoom call with residents



08 January 2021

## **Important Information on Semester Two Teaching and Related Matters – Email to All Students**

Dear students,

We know that many of you are studying and preparing for exams and are pressed for time but please take a few minutes to read this email with information about teaching in the next semester and campus operations. When we wrote to you just before Christmas, we were hopeful that we would be able to expand in person teaching and other activities on campus and undertook to communicate our plans for semester two this week.

As you will be aware, the public health environment has deteriorated dramatically and unexpectedly. The situation domestically and overseas is currently very serious and is likely to become even more serious in the weeks ahead. Covid-19 infection rates across Ireland are at an all-time high. On Wednesday, the Government clarified that universities should restrict onsite attendance further, only allowing the most essential work to take place. These restrictions are in place until the end of January but will most likely be extended beyond this period.

In adjusting our plans to this situation, we have a number of key messages for undergraduate and taught postgraduate students:

- **All semester two teaching in lectures, small group classes and tutorials will continue online or move online.** If there was no in-person teaching on your course last semester, there will not be in-person teaching in the coming semester. In semester two teaching will be completely online in the following Schools: Computer Science and Statistics; English; History and Humanities; Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies; Mathematics; Law; Religion; Social Sciences and Philosophy; Trinity Business School. Students in the above Schools will not need to physically attend Trinity for semester two except for project work or using the library.
- **Some essential practical or lab-based work in other Schools will continue where feasible. The decision on this will be taken by your school based on local conditions and requirements.** Schools and programmes with practical classes or other lab-based activities including capstone research projects are assessing the new situation to determine what can be delivered safely in the current

situation and what amendments to teaching formats or scheduling changes might be needed.

For students who cannot attend scheduled in-person teaching events alternative formats or hybrid teaching will be put in place.

We are working on enhanced protective measures and all face to face teaching in semester two will strictly adhere to the public health guidelines and sectoral provisions in place at the time.

We will give a more detailed breakdown before the start of the semester of what teaching will look like subject-by-subject.

- **Every effort is being made to ensure scheduled placements will go ahead**, and arrangements are being put in place so that students required to be in clinical settings receive priority access to vaccination. Students will also be required to attend face-to-face teaching sessions in the Health Sciences where it is deemed essential to meet the requirements of professional regulators. Students in these subjects will need to be in Dublin for semester two.

There is no hiding the fact that for many of you these arrangements will be a disappointment. This is not what we had hoped would happen, but it reflects the best health advice and current government policies for the sector. We will continue to monitor the public health situation and government guidelines continuously and will be flexible in adjusting our plans where necessary. It has to be our top priority to reduce risks to you and your family and reduce the amount of movement nationally in line with the Government's strategy to contain the virus, while ensuring the best possible educational experience for you under the current, difficult circumstances.

There are further important decisions around learning and research in Trinity. These are summarised below:

- **Online learning:** We will provide additional training and resources to improve the quality of online teaching and the provision of online teaching material, including recording of lectures.

If you are unable to get Wifi in your accommodation, you should contact your tutor or the postgraduate advisory service for help as there is some financial help available. Student study spaces are still open on campus although these should only be used as a last resort. Students and staff should currently reduce access to campus as much as possible.

- **Exams and assessments:** As you will have seen from yesterday's [email](#) from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic



Officer and Senior Lecturer, we have made important changes and reinstated some additional mitigations. While exams will go ahead as planned next week, students severely affected by illness or other adverse circumstances can decide to defer their exams (as a first attempt) until the summer. Undergraduate students doing written exams that count towards their finals will also have the right to repeat exams if they believe the exams did not reflect their abilities. This does not apply to students doing clinical exams. Please continue to check your Trinity email and Blackboard for updates on exams and assessments.

- **Library service and study space:** The physical libraries remain open. The opening hours until further notice are as follows:

Berkeley, Lecky, Ussher, Hamilton libraries

Open 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday (bookable). Counters staffed 10am to 4pm

John Stearne Medical Library

Open 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday (bookable). Counter staffed 9am-4pm

Kinsella Hall (study space; no counter services) Monday to Friday

6pm to 10pm (bookable) and

Saturday and Sunday 8am to 10pm (bookable)

1937 Reading Room (study space for postgraduate students only; no counter services)

Monday to Sunday (8am to 10pm) bookable.

The Joint Research Collections Reading Room will remain closed until further notice. The Library booking system has been updated today to reflect the current COVID-19 situation.

For full details see our Library website, [Library opening hours](#) and the range of [Library Services](#).

- **Research:** Essential on-site research activities can continue on campus. Given the situation, we ask the research community to work from home unless you are carrying out time-sensitive essential work that cannot be done at home. All on-campus safety protocols remain in place and will be amended immediately if government guidelines change.
- **Accommodation:** All students with essential accommodation needs in Dublin for semester two can continue to reside in College accommodation. This includes students who are

already currently in residence for exams. We ask all students travelling from within Ireland who do not have essential teaching to refrain from returning to their college accommodation until the semester begins. Anyone returning to Trinity from overseas is reminded that the rules around quarantine have become much stricter over the Christmas period. Anyone who has arrived into Ireland from Great Britain or South Africa since 8 December is advised to self isolate (stay in your room) for a period of 14 days. Anyone returning to Ireland for semester two (regardless of nationality) should consult the following governmental information about travel to Ireland:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/b4020-travelling-to-ireland-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>. Please note that all residential safety protocols remain in place and will be amended in line with Government guidelines. All regular student residential supports also remain in place for semester two.

- **Access to Campus:** Please note that until 31 January access to campus and College buildings is limited to
  1. Residents
  2. Essential researchers (as submitted by Head of School/Unit)
  3. Students with pre-booked time slot in the Libraries/Study Spaces
  4. Students with an exam location agreed in College
  5. Essential staff (as submitted by Head of School/Unit)
  6. Pre-approved visitors

The Science Gallery gate will not be open from Monday and access to Campus will be via Lincoln Place and Nassau Street gates. These arrangements will apply initially until the end of January.

- **The Buttery:** The Buttery will continue to be open.
- **The Student Health Service** is providing services to students again by prior appointment only. Appointments for telephone consultations are being provided via online booking. The Student Health Service operates from 9.15am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday only. GP Clinics are open by phone on 01-896 1591. For COVID-19 queries phone 01 896 1556.

We would like to thank all staff in Catering, the libraries, Estates & Facilities, College Health and others who are ensuring the continuity of all vital activities on campus.

This is an immensely difficult time for many people. Some of you are probably isolating right now and some of you will have to isolate later in the Semester. Others will have good reason to fear for friends or family. In light of this, we have increased student supports. Those that need support should not hesitate to contact Student Counselling. We have a range of self-guided courses in areas such as managing anxiety and our counsellors also offer one-to-one support where needed.

[https://www.tcd.ie/Student\\_Counselling/](https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/) is the first port of call for those who need help.

While there is a lot going on, it is worth reflecting that neither Trinity nor the other Irish universities have been overrun by Covid-19. In September, some feared that third level institutions would be a major danger to public health. The fact that this has not happened is a reflection of the responsible behaviour of the vast majority of students and staff over recent months. Your sacrifices have ensured that universities in these difficult times were able to continue teaching, learning and research and have remained safe places while doing so. While the next few weeks and months will be again be tough, we are confident that as a community we will continue to support each other and rise to these challenges together. The start of vaccinations in Ireland and across the globe gives us reason for optimism that an end is in sight.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. We will stay in touch. In the meantime please stay safe,

Best regards,

Patrick Prendergast  
Provost/Propast

Jürgen Barkhoff  
Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer/An Leas-  
Phropast/Priomhoifigeach Acadúil/Agus An Leas-Uachtarán

\* \* \*



08 January 2021

## **Closing Address to students at Unitech Mid-Term Week**

*Online from the Andrews Room, Provost's House*

Thank you Brian\*.

Good afternoon, everyone, and happy new year.

I'm delighted to be with you all on this, my first official college engagement of the new year.

We're honoured to be hosting this mid-term week. We would have loved to welcome guests in-person to our beautiful college but, particularly now that the Covid situation has turned so grave, in Ireland and across Europe, we're relieved that this a completely virtual event. And very happy that so many are attending.

I guess by now we're all veterans and experts of online education, research, and events, and it's no surprise to find Unitech members adapting so well to this. I like very much the quote from Einstein: "The measure of intelligence is the ability to change"<sup>†</sup>. Unitech is all about the exchange of ideas across languages and cultures, and across the corporate and academic worlds. When we exchange, with others, we also open ourselves to the possibility of change.

It's great to see all Unitech members – students, universities and corporate partners – adapting smoothly and enthusiastically to virtual exchanges. Traditionally, during every Unitech MTW, students work closely with corporate partners on real world problems. This year it's happening virtually and it's been a great success, I'm told. I congratulate students and I thank our corporate partners. This past year has been truly challenging for so many of us but, and I'm particularly aware of the challenges for students. It has been incredibly tough to have to miss out on the vital in-person interactions – academic and social – that are so much part and parcel of student life, not to mention travelling and getting work and experience abroad.

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\* Professor Brian Broderick, Trinity School of Engineering & Representative of Trinity as a UNITECH Academic Partner

<sup>†</sup> <https://www.unitech-international.org/news/the-network/item/mtw-going-virtual>

So being able to go ahead with this MTW and work on real-world problems with corporate mentors is really important.

I'm sure it has proved a really stimulating intellectual challenge and I hope that relationships have been built up through the connection.

Unitech is a key initiative for Trinity and for me personally. As an engineer, I really see the benefit of this network. And as a former member of the governing board of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, the EIT, I've spent a lot of time thinking and strategizing about how to improve the connectivity between corporate, academic and research partners and students across Europe.

Both EIT and Unitech are motivated by the huge opportunity that exists for connectivity and the sense that we are not yet, as a continent, or a Union, exploiting this opportunity as well as we might. The past decades have seen wonderful growth in academic collaborations and student exchanges, but in terms of recruitment, or graduates moving countries to build careers, or relocating to start businesses, we have a long way to go, compared to, for instance, the United States. Within the EU and the single market, we've successfully removed legal barriers but we need to remove cultural and linguistic barriers. Unitech understands this and is addressing it in a completely proactive, pragmatic and responsible way. The future of Europe and our young people depends on initiatives like this.

Unitech always looks ahead. It doesn't seek to do the same old things, in the old same way. It prioritises, as Einstein says, 'the ability to change'. I'm biased of course, but I think this adaptiveness is a feature of engineers in general. It is very manifest in the theme of this MTW, 'Digitalisation and Sustainability' and in the various sessions: 'green electrification', 'implementing plastics recycling to address climate change', 'plant-based meat using digital technology', 'producing Hydrogen using IFX products'.

Just reading through the titles of these sessions, I get excited as an engineer. The whole approach is so proactive and solutions-oriented. There's this very can-do attitude – how can we address these challenges? And is there an opportunity within the challenge? That's the way to look at it.

It also ties in really strongly with our new initiative in Trinity which we're particularly excited about: the Engineering, Environment and

Emerging Technologies initiative or E3. Let me tell you a little bit about E3 because it correlates very well with Unitech.

E3 is a landmark initiative by Trinity to develop sustainable solutions for a liveable planet. It emerges from our understanding that the global challenges we face, like climate change and sustainability, can't be solved by old ways of doing. E3 seeks to break down traditional silos between disciplines and sectors, and to rethink technology and our engagement with the natural world. This is particularly vital as we seek to deliver a post-COVID green future, one based on a real circular economy – a future where engineering and emerging technologies continue to improve standards of living and to reduce poverty, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

E3 is being developed in two stages. Work has started on the Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry which will co-educate engineers, natural scientists and computer scientists in a state of the art building, which will open on our main campus in autumn 2023.

A few years after that, the E3 Research Institute will open as the anchor tenant of the new Trinity Technology & Enterprise Centre (TTEC) in the Grand Canal Innovation District, which is located 10 minutes from our core campus near Dublin's Docklands.

Both the Learning Foundry and the Research Institute will work closely with Unitech International. Trinity was among the first universities in the world to found an Engineering School - that was back in 1842. Over the past two decades, Unitech has been a big part of our continued growth and development and now E3 will take us to the next level.

I thank and congratulate all involved in organising this MTW, particularly Marta and Franziska in the Unitech Office, and the Unitech IT Support Team, and our Trinity students who have supported the running of this event throughout this week, and.

In two years' time, in 2023, Trinity is due to host another Unitech event: the General Assembly. I won't be Provost then, but I'll still be part of this great university and I look forward to attending that event, which will be, we hope and expect, in-person.

I look forward to meeting in-person with some of you then. For now, this MTW has been a truly positive and inspirational event in a very challenging week. This is, I trust, the dark before dawn. We look forward to a new administration in the United States in a few weeks, and to them rejoining the Paris Agreement, and we look

forward to a vaccine rollout around the world, and to seeing staff and students back in college in person.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



15 January 2021

## **Video Address to all staff**

*Released by email and Twitter*

Hello everyone,

First, I wish you all a Happy New Year, and I hope you all had a good break over Christmas.

The pandemic has surged again.

It isn't the start of the new year we'd been hoping for. With the vaccine roll-out, things *will* improve but, in the meantime, we need to remain vigilant, and be patient.

\* \* \*

For now, let me take this opportunity to thank you all for your work at this challenging time for the College, and for society. I know that it's difficult for all of us. And for each of us it's difficult in different ways.

Many staff are juggling work with home schooling. Others are living on their own and feeling isolation. Several, I know, are actually ill with Covid. Others again have sick family members, or elderly parents who need our care.

Still others are working in the healthcare system and experiencing first-hand the present surge in the virus. For some, lockdown has proved a good time to do research; for others, it has been terrible to have so many conflicting demands. The challenge - for each of us - is personal.

I don't compare my experience with others - challenging as I find it having to live and work in the same place here in a desolate city centre - but no family member is sick, yet, and my kids can organise their own study day.

\* \* \*

My job is to be your Provost whatever the circumstances, and I'm no expert in anything to do with healthcare, but I would like to remind all staff working from home to mind themselves - we don't have to be available 24 hours a day. We do have to switch off to look after

our physical and mental health. Based on public health advice from the College Health Service, *do* find ways to exercise and get fresh air where possible. And *do* avail of the supports available – there are plenty of these, from the Employee Assistance Programme to videos on the college website.

\* \* \*

Some staff are still coming into college to provide essential services including catering, support work, maintenance, security and library work. We cannot pull down the shutters on the whole College as there are students and colleagues who depend on us, so my sincere thanks to all of you - for continuing to carry out your essential duties, and for the care that you're taking to do so in a safe and responsible way, following health guidelines.

\* \* \*

Trinity is a community of staff, students, and alumni – and we aim to look after each other. That's why our current Strategic Plan was given the name 'Community and Connection'. We decided on that name and wrote the Plan in 2019. We couldn't've known then just how important that theme would be.

It's all of you who are ensuring 'community and connection' during this difficult period. You're progressing education, carrying out research, minding our students, staying in touch with alumni, and contributing to vital discussions in wider society. Thanks to everyone - and please remember, stay safe, mind yourselves, and let's look forward to better times when we will have put this pandemic behind us.

Take care.....

\* \* \*



Message to colleagues from Provost Patrick Prendergast

Provost recording message in a room at top of the Provost's House



19 January 2021

## **Address at the Launch of The Education Matters Yearbook**

*Live-streamed online from The Public Theatre (Exam Hall) with pre-records*

Thank you Brian\*.

Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to the launch of *Ireland's Education Yearbook 2020*.

All of us in education – whichever area we work in - rely on this Yearbook for an indispensable and comprehensive analysis of the key developments of the year.

Crucially the *Yearbook* outlines not only the main happenings at all levels of education, but it connects the levels too. Here in the university, we receive students after the early childhood, primary and secondary stages. How they perform here is greatly dependent on how they developed in the prior stages. And, in turn, their experience as undergraduates helps determine their approach to postgraduate and further training throughout their lives.

If all of us working in education, can work together to address issues and provide opportunities in a cohesive and connected way, this is greatly to the benefit of individual students and to Irish society as a whole.

In Trinity, our current Strategic Plan has been given a name, for the first time ever – previous Strategic Plans were only given dates. Our current plan is called 'Community and Connection'. This speaks to our wish to connect across all our faculties and disciplines, and across our whole wider community of students, staff, alumni and friends.

The title also speaks to our awareness and appreciation of being part of the comprehensive Irish, European, and global education systems. We're connected

- to the primary and secondary schools;

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\* Dr Brian Mooney, Managing Editor, The Education Yearbook

- to peer universities around the world with whom we team up for student exchange programmes and research collaborations; and
- to employers who offer internships and training programmes.

If we don't connect, if we don't build community, we leave our students short-changed, and we fail to advance Ireland's innovation economy. If we fail to use education to create community, then education will be a divider rather than a maker of society.

\* \* \*

In his introduction, Brian calls this *Yearbook* 'the most important edition we are ever likely to publish'. Strong words, which capture the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown – Brian calls the pandemic 'a once-in-a-century event in the world of education'. I think we'd all agree. And we are fortunate to have this means of capturing this once-in-a-century event.

A *Yearbook* acts as a kind of memory capsule, preserving what happened and when. This is always very useful. During a pandemic, it's vital.

This *Yearbook* captures the different stages of Covid and lockdown, as they happened, as well as the profound impact on education. Whether we're working in management, IT, research, creches, special schools - all of us have experienced what Damien White, in his article, nicely titles: 'Before Covid, BC, and Altered Direction, AD'.

This *Yearbook* captures the breakneck transition between BC and AD. Today's policy-makers hoping to harness the learnings and opportunities of the pandemic will thank Brian Mooney, as will future historians.

\* \* \*

Historically, Ireland has kept ahead of the curve in education. I don't want to get complacent about this because I think we can always do more. But through key initiatives, including free secondary school education in the 1960s, the decision to use EU structural funds for training programmes in the 1980s, and the establishment of SFI and the IRC in 2000 – we have managed to prioritise education and research at strategic moments – to use current management-speak: we have been good at knowing when to pivot.

Now as we seek to design a post-Covid future which matches economic growth to sustainability and creativity, I believe we're at another pivotal moment. Education – more education, better education, joined-up, connected education, spanning pre-school to life-long to re-training – investing in this is how we will design a compelling future.

\* \* \*

I have just six months left to serve in my term as Provost of Trinity. It's been a rollercoaster! But I'm proud that, whatever the current pressure is—global recession or global pandemic – we have always looked to create change for ourselves, rather than to have change done to us. I'm proud of the initiatives coming down the line – the Grand Canal Innovation District, the Engineering, Environment and Emerging Technologies Institute, the Trinity Education Project and the New Generations programme to bring more diverse staff and student talent to the university. All these, and more are advancing and progressing well.

As educators, we're dedicated to leading out and leading on. The idea of 'going thus far, and no further' is anathema to us. Poet Brendan Kennelly got it right when he wrote "*Something that will not acknowledge conclusion, insists that we forever begin*".

*The Education Yearbook*, by its nature and execution, is an exercise in continuity and progress. It cannot but lead us onward. My thanks and congratulations to Brian Mooney and all the contributors for making this Yearbook so seminal.

\* \* \*

It's my pleasure now to invite An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, to say a few words. It's a great honour to have him launch this Yearbook, and not only for his position Taoiseach, but for his deep commitment to education, manifest throughout a long career of public service. As Minister for Education and Science from 1997 to 2000, he increased spending at all levels of education and introduced special needs assistants to schools.

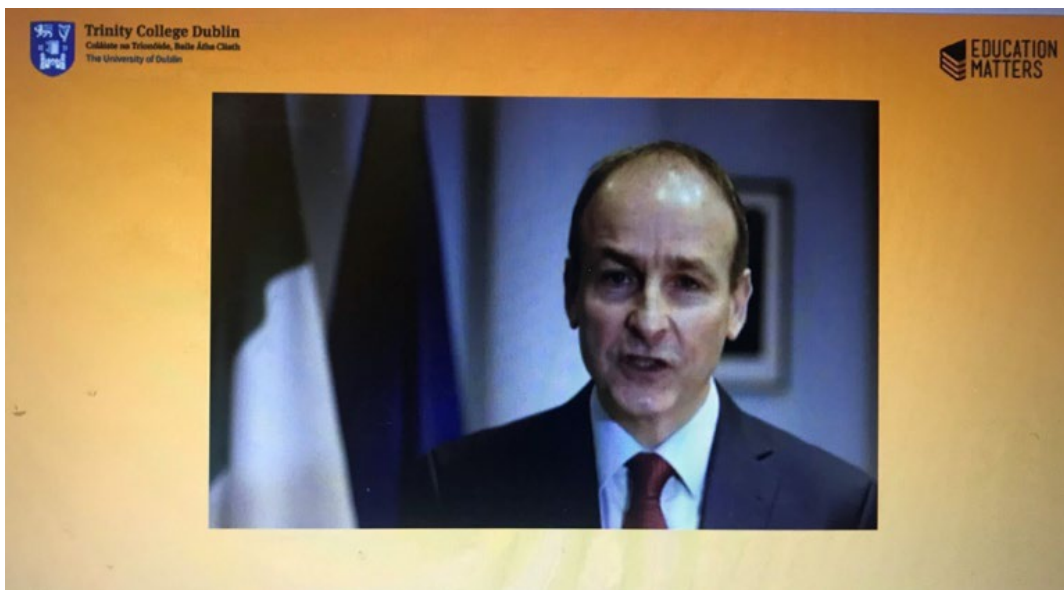
As Taoiseach, he delivered on his election promise and created a new, dedicated Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. I trust this move will prove to be one of those pivotal moments for the Irish education.

Colleagues, friends, An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin.

\* \* \*



Dr Brian Mooney, Editor



Mr Micheál Martin, Taoiseach





Professor Jane Ohlmeyer, Chair of the IRC



Provost Patrick Prendergast, from the Yeats Room of the Provost's House

\* \* \*



25 January 2021

## **Address to the 527 Entrance Exhibitioners of 2020**

*Recorded in the Dining Hall and released online in the week  
commencing 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2021*

Good evening, and welcome all: entrance exhibitioners, parents, and teachers.

Thank you, Dr Mitchell for outlining so eloquently what being an entrance exhibitioner means. Trinity has always placed a high value on achievement and excellence. I congratulate all here – the students of course and the parents, guardians and teachers who helped you achieve.

In Trinity we hold this event for Entrance Exhibitioners every year, welcoming our new high-achievers to college. It's a very long-standing initiative of the university but two years ago it was renewed and updated when it was decided to reward the student with the top points in each school - provided they have achieved 500 points or over in the Leaving Cert, or its equivalent in international exams.

Under our new system, there's a very large – over 50 percent - increase in the number of Schools from which Entrance Exhibitioners come, and much greater geographic diversity.

This year we're awarding 527 students from 455 schools across all 32 counties in Ireland, and from 15 countries in Europe.

In Trinity, we seek students who demonstrate aptitude for the education we offer, regardless of background. We want students who have a passion for learning, and who are disciplined, creative, and resilient. We want students like all of you.

We're delighted that you've chosen to bring your exceptional talents to Trinity. To parents, teachers and careers guidance, who may have pointed students towards Trinity, I thank you and I pledge to deliver on your trust. We want the best for our students and that means helping them to develop intellectually, emotionally and creatively, so that they can build dynamic careers and be active, engaged and responsible citizens.

To our Entrance Exhibitioners, I know that, thus far, this has been

a very different college experience to what you imagined or hoped for. This time last year, when you were already perhaps planning and hoping to come to Trinity, I'm sure you pictured a different start to college life.

A lot of aspects of education can work well online, I'm sure you'd agree. Lectures for instance are often better accessed online. But for things like seminars, there is no real substitute for in-person, and the same goes for student clubs and societies, and for making new friendships, which is such an essential part of the first year of college.

Everyone in the country was asked to make sacrifices to keep the community safe. For some the price has been particularly high and I think that is the case for junior fresh students. I've been really conscious of how hard it has been for you. I would like to say thank you for the effort you've made. And, thankfully, there is light on the horizon. I'm hopeful that before your first year is out, you will see the campus more its usual self – busy with people, events and activities.

I'm hopeful that, before very long, you will start to experience the true Trinity Education. You've got a taste of it already. But I'd like you to experience sports clubs, debating societies, drama and music performances at full fettle – which means with live audiences.

Because when it comes to the Trinity Education, it's not just what happens in the library, lecture-room, and laboratory. It's the whole college experience, and that includes:

- getting involved in clubs and societies;
- volunteering and fund-raising for charity;
- debating;
- organising events;
- writing for college journals;
- designing new technologies or products;
- starting your own business.
- And taking the opportunity to work and study abroad.

As Entrance Exhibitioners, you've arrived at the university with all the confidence of proven academic success. Knowing you can perform well under pressure will give you assurance next time you're called on to excel. And when you meet with setbacks – as is inevitable for all of us – then you will have the confidence of this early achievement to draw on. That's a great advantage in life.

In your final undergraduate years, you will engage on research projects alongside your professors. By graduation, you will have carried out original research - in the laboratory, library, or fieldwork.

Before those final years, you'll have another chance to be recognised by the College, through the Scholarship Examination, which you're invited to sit in your second year.

The reward here is rather greater than the entrance exhibitions, I have to say: scholars get free room and board for up to five years – the best deal in town!

My advice to you now is to make the most of every opportunity. At the junior fresh stage, it's seldom clear what career you'll have or where life will take you. It pays to follow interests outside your course, and to be open to experience. Your future isn't carved in stone. It's waiting to be created.

This evening, we celebrate the people and establishments that have enabled you to come this far: your parents, guardians and homes; your teachers, head teachers and schools.

Every year our university is refreshed by the arrival of new intellects and talents. This is what keeps our campus dynamic and continually evolving. I look forward to seeing all of you here make your mark on this great university.

I wish you the very best of luck.

Thank you and congratulations.

\* \* \*



26 January 2021

15 March 2021

**Provost's Salon on Seamus Heaney 'The  
Borderlines of Poetry' with Chris Morash, Rosie  
Lavan and Roy Foster**

*Online from the Andrews Room, Provost's House*

Good evening,

And welcome, everyone, to this very special Provost's Salon.

In these challenging times of social distancing, the Provost's Salons have proved a great way to stay in touch, and to invite distinguished academics and graduates to talk about their vital fields of expertise.

In keeping with Trinity's multidisciplinary, the Salons have ranged across humanities, science and health sciences. Luke O'Neill on Covid and immunology, and Philip Lane on economic impact have been two previous speakers.

Tonight, we turn to poetry and the great Seamus Heaney. Before we start the Salon, may I first ask everyone to briefly introduce themselves. We like these Salons to be small, so we limit the invitation to special friends and alumni who have a particular interest in the chosen theme.

Our guest of honour this evening is Marie Heaney. Marie, we're so pleased you can be with us. If you'd like to start us off, saying hello, and then I'll ask the rest of you to come in.

[On 26<sup>th</sup> of January, 2021]

*Carmel Naughton, Brian Kingham, Kathy Gilfillan, Paul Gannon & Anna Devlin, David & Liz Challen, Terry & Valerie Gallagher, Peter Rooney, Emma Goltz, Jim Curley, Joe Linders, Denis Corboy, Stephen Vernon, Terry Neill, William Sargent, Patrick and Evelyn O'Sullivan, Liam and Jackie Strong, Hugh and Breda Mackeown*

[On 15<sup>th</sup> of March, 2021]

*Finlay and Kathryn Ross, Marcus Beresford, Kathy Gilfillan, Mark and Cindy Pigott, Veronica Campbell, Houghton Fry, Carmel and Martin Naughton, Neil and Deirdre Naughton, Norah Daly, Rosalie Haddad, Conor Killeen, Kevin Brolley, Ambassador Dan Mulhall and*

*Greta Mulhall, Tom and Leslie Foley, and Kate Bond, Sinéad Pentony and Deirdre Tracey (from TDA)*

Thanks everyone, that's great. During the discussion, may I ask you to keep your microphones off, but of course turn them on again afterwards for the Q&A – or before if you have a question during the discussion.

\* \* \*

Seamus Heaney was an Honorary Fellow of this College and he was hugely supportive of our School of English, and of Creative Writing. His encouragement of young, aspiring writers was legendary. I had the honour, as Provost, to welcome him to college on a few occasions. I recall in April 2013 we announced the launch of our new Centre for Cultural and Literary Translation with an event, *Translating Seamus Heaney* – Seamus was joined then by his long-standing translators from Italian, Polish, Hungarian, Russian and Spanish. That was a wonderful night.

And in 2012, he was in college for the announcement of a prestigious new professorship in his name. The endowment of the Seamus Heaney Professorship of Irish Writing was transformative, both for our School of English and for the teaching and research of Irish studies, globally.

[On 15<sup>th</sup> of March, 2021]

We owe the endowment of the new chair to the friends and benefactors of Trinity College, in particular to Mark and Cindy Pigott and Martin and Carmel Naughton, who are all with us tonight.

I recall on that evening back in 2012 when the new professorship was announced, Seamus spoke of how honoured he felt, and he said:

*“I greatly appreciate the generosity of the donors, which is clearly underpinned by their special interest in poetry.”*

That special interest in poetry draws us all together this evening.

In 2014 we appointed the inaugural Seamus Heaney Professor of Irish Writing. Professor Christopher Morash is a Canadian by birth, and is a graduate of this University, and is a highly distinguished scholar in Irish Studies, who has researched and written on the poetry of the Famine and on Irish Theatre and Media, from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Since joining Trinity, he served as the university's Vice-Provost and Chief Academic Officer between 2016 and 2019. His most recent book, to be published later this year, is



on W.B. Yeats and he has also completed a work on Dublin as a city of literature.

It's my pleasure now to hand over to Chris to introduce our guest speakers and to moderate the discussion.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



28 January 2021

**Book Launch: On Our Own Ground, vols 2 & 3 by  
Dr Edward Culleton**

*Online*

An Leas-Chathaoirleach, Minister, TDs, Councillors, Chief Executive of Wexford County Council, Fellow Wexford people, Distinguished guests\*

Good afternoon,

I'm sure I won't be the first to say it, or last to say it, but I wish I were 'on our own ground' of Wexford right now.

Nothing beats meeting in-person in Wexford and, for me, preferably in Oulart, or best of all, Raheenaskagh, Oulart. It's been months since I've been home there – I got down before Christmas to see my mother - and it's looking like many months before I'll be allowed back. We do miss our own ground, our own place. My father ran a haulage business in Oulart and the names of the parishes and townlands of this book are a familiar lexicon to me. This book should carry a 'homesickness' warning.

Or maybe a 'bittersweet' warning is the right phrase. This book makes me nostalgic for Wexford. But while we're confined to 5 kilometers – and for good reason, I'm not complaining – then it's certainly the next best thing. It's wonderful to have this piece of Wexford in my hand – to read about my county in such scholarly detail, to admire the beautiful photographs, to be reminded of its history and topography.

Today we launch Volumes 2 & 3 of *On Our Own Ground*, bringing to a close the project to map and illustrate every parish in Wexford, describing its most significant sites, man-made and natural. I should think that the readership of these volumes is wide: they are impeccably researched, rich and exacting enough in detail and editing to satisfy the scholars and academics amongst us; and succinct and entertaining enough to appeal to the wider public.

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\* 1) Leas-Cathaoirleach Wexford County Council, Garry Laffan  
2) Chief Executive of Wexford County Council, Tom Enright  
3) Director of Service Wexford County Council, Carolyne Godkin

Anyone living in County Wexford or wanting a deep knowledge of it, will want a copy for their shelves – whether it’s to check information on a site you already know, or to get ideas for outings and excursions. I know Wexford very well, but even so, I found a huge amount to discover in these pages: including new information about places I’m familiar with - even that the next townland to Raheenasky, Kilnamanagh, once had a church and a holy well. And introductions to places I didn’t previously know. For the moment, I’m just reading about them; I’m waiting for the day I can get to Wexford again and begin a whole new relationship with my home county through the medium of these great volumes.

For the Wexford native, there are additional pleasures. For instance, the first chapter of the second volume, opens with Enniscorthy where my mother’s people come from and where I was born, and it begins:

*‘On a vantage point, high above a fording point on the river Slaney at Enniscorthy, Philip de Prendergast built a stronghold early in the thirteenth century’.*

As you can imagine, I kept reading! What a brilliant opening, even if your name isn’t Prendergast.

I must say I’m sorry we lost the Norman ‘de’ over the centuries. I think Patrick de Prendergast sounds very well. But I don’t propose to reinstate it. I’m sure I’d be taken down a peg or two if I did!

In its clear, lucid, and deceptively effortless way, this book is a model of what we call, in academic circles, multidisciplinary. It combines history, archaeology, cartography, geology, philology, art, photography. Take for instance the descriptions of the townland of Kerloge: we learn that its name is a corruption of Killiloge, which, in turn, is a corruption of *Cill Allóc* or *Ellóc*, the patron saint for whom the town is named; that parts of the medieval well of St James’s still exist near the existing church, and that the particular character and formation of the rocks at Kerloge was made through glacier movement 25,000 years ago. All that in a few graceful lines!

The book has many researchers and writers including, among others, the head of Information Services in Wexford City Council, Catherine Kavanagh who led the mapping element with her team. This diversity of contributors accounts for its multidisciplinary, and credit must also be given to the project leader, author of volume 2, and co-author of Volume 3, Dr Edward Culleton.

Dr Culleton is a graduate of Trinity College, where he obtained his doctorate on the glacial geology of North Wexford under the

supervision of the much-remembered Professor Frank Mitchell, whom Dr Culleton calls a ‘distinguished polymath’. That’s a good description of Professor Mitchell, a noted figure in college history, who also served as Junior Dean and Bursar.

And ‘Polymath’ is also a good description of Dr Culleton himself - a soil analyst, geologist, historian and curator, who has certificates and degrees in disciplines across science and humanities. As well as working as a soil analyst in Ireland and Brussels, he co-founded the Journal of the Old Wexford Society and proposed and oversaw the creation of the National Heritage Park at Ferrycarrig. He brings all his knowledge and interests to bear on this project.

I think Dr Culleton probably prefers the term ‘polymath’ to ‘multidisciplinary’ but they are much the same thing, really. In Trinity we pride ourselves on our multidisciplinaryity – on our success in bringing together researchers from different schools and departments to work on cross-disciplinary projects. I’m very proud that our graduate, Dr Culleton is such a shining example of this, and it should be said that he is an early adopter. It’s only really in recent decades that universities have started getting good at multidisciplinaryity – Dr Culleton was a natural from early on in his career.

Finally, I’d like to pay tribute to another feature of these volumes which must strike readers – we might call it egalitarianism. Every building and site is judged and appreciated on its own merits. Whether its an ornately stencilled Pugin-designed church or a plain Quakers’ Meeting House; whether an ancient ruin or the high tech Opera House; whether a political monument or an historic fish-market or pottery house – everything is given its place and its due. Everything is recognised as part of the fabric of County Wexford. Such inclusivity is key, I think, to multidisciplinaryity. It’s only when we stop trying to highlight or foreground our own particular discipline and interests above all others, that we can come to the balanced view necessary to understand an issue or theme in its entirety.

And focusing in such caring detail on the local and the immediate uncovers truths that are universal. I’m reminded of Joyce on Dublin or William Blake: ‘to see the world in a grain of sand/ And Heaven in a wild flower’. We don’t have to travel to be amazed. We just need to open our eyes to what’s around us. Now as we’re confined to 5 kilometer periphery, that’s such an important message: we can see a huge amount in 5 kilometers!

I congratulate Wexford City Council, Dr Culleton and his co-author

for volume 3, Celestine Murphy. And all the other contributors, too many to name: the photographers, cartographers, researchers, librarians, information analysts – all who have helped create these marvellous volumes.

In lockdown, we're told, people are reading more – so I urge everyone to buy this book, Wexford inhabitants and visitors alike. It is my very great pleasure to launch it here this evening. Thank you.

\* \* \*



Dr Culleton's books, Vol. 1 and 2 (with Vol. 3 being in press)

03 February 2021

**Informal COMPET videoconference of Ministers responsible for Research: “Research Careers in the Broader EU context”**

*Online [2021 Portugal.EU Conference]*

Dear Ministers, Good morning,

Thank you for inviting me to participate in this vital discussion for the future of European research and competitiveness. I'll limit myself now to two main points, further to a general round-table discussion.

The first issue I'd stress is the necessity for cohesion and alignment – meshing - between EU funding and national funding. This isn't happening enough at the moment. We need a complete talent pipeline of funding mechanisms for researcher careers. Instead the flow gets overloaded in some places, and is reduced to a thin trickle in others.

I'm sure lack of coordination affects every member state. Let me sketch the situation in Ireland: until recently the preference was for national bodies to award very large grants to leading scientists – often from abroad - with fewer funds available to early-stage researchers building their careers. This created a gap in the pipeline. There was also a preference to fund applied research co-funded with industry, rather than basic research. This created an innovation gap - it's basic research that leads to spin-outs because universities, not industry, own, the IP – and it risked leaving Irish researchers uncompetitive for ERC funding, where fundamental breakthrough research is needed.

Our national funding system has now been fixed – the government listened to universities - and the routes to a research career reinstated. But I'm sure similar issues arise in other member states. As a priority, we should look to coordinate national funding with Horizon Europe and other instruments to ensure that a pathway forward exists for researchers at all stages of their careers. Now is a good time to do this, because, like all massive crises, Covid has created a kind of Ground Zero and that's a good base for a reset.

The second key issue for me, as a University President, relates to the priority of 'translating R&I results into the economy' and tying that into the priority to better promote and reward research careers.

I feel that the ERA, as a whole, could be bolder about this. In Ireland we're a bit in advance, so our experience here is relevant.

A few weeks ago, I was chairing interviews for a new Chair professor. One of the candidates had significant industry contracts as part of their portfolio. The two externs on the interview panel – who came from high-ranking EU universities – reacted negatively to this. They felt he was 'just going to go off and work with industry'. By contrast, the Trinity people on the panel were enthused about his experience and confused as to why 'going off and working with industry' would be a bad thing.

In my university, Trinity College Dublin, we've spent the past decade emphasizing innovation and entrepreneurship at all levels. We facilitate and encourage our faculty to start-up and spin-out and partner with industry. We've set up an Office of Corporate Partnership and Knowledge Exchange with a dedicated professional staff to help with this. As a result, we average about six new spin-outs a year and over 25 license agreements, plus numerous patents and innovation disclosures.

For the students, we have in place accelerators and programmes aimed at developing innovation and entrepreneurship skills. These are hugely successful. The undergraduate teams competing in our programme, LaunchBox get mentorship, funding and access to investors to help commercialise their ideas. Since 2013, LaunchBox has created 81 start-ups, many of them in social innovation, that have gone on to raise over €9.5 million in funding and investment and create 130 full-time jobs. And remember, these are student-founded companies!

And within the ERA, we're one of just nine universities participating in three KICs – the Knowledge and Innovation Communities established by the EIT - we're in the Climate, Health and Raw Materials KICs. I'm a big believer in what they're doing – that is the creation of whole ecosystems of innovation, a massive ambition and the only such funder on the planet!

Trinity was also an advocate and a driver, from the outset, of the European Universities initiative and we're now in an alliance, CHARM-EU, with four other EU universities. I'm excited by the potential of these Alliances which enable the creation of curricula rooted in mobility of researchers. Let's facilitate students, professors



and entrepreneurs to move around regions in Europe for work and study, as easily as around the US.

In our experience, it's never too early to get students thinking about innovation. Don't wait till they graduate. Create programmes and accelerators for students. It's empowering for students to translate their commercial ideas and ethical concerns into products, services and solutions. That's the way to solve the challenges in the world today.

Spin-outs, licenses, and industry partnerships provide vital route to new career paths for researchers. Researchers should also be incentivised to 'go off and work with industry' and universities should be enablers of this, promoting new career paths that includes creating entrepreneurial businesses.

In Trinity and Dublin, we're now taking the next step by creating an innovation district allied to the university. This is about providing common space for the innovation assets of our city to interact and leverage from each other, including multi-national research labs and indigenous companies, to join up with the start-up economy.

Universities provide this common ground full of young talent where these partnerships can flourish, with ambitious researcher developing their careers at the heart of it.

Ideally, Dublin's Innovation District will connect to others across the European Research Area, creating a vibrant ecosystem where education, research, industry and government policy work together, in flow.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



18 February 2021

**Transcript of Provost Patrick Prendergast  
Interview  
*Trinity College Examines its Colonial Past.***

*Newstalk with Shane Coleman*

One of the world's oldest Universities, Trinity College Dublin, is embarking on an extensive project to examine, interrogate and reflect on its complex colonial legacies. The project was sparked by the Black Lives Matter protests and Trinity's financial and other connections to the slave trade. Joining Shane to discuss the project is Dr Patrick Prendergast, Provost of Trinity College Dublin.

**Shane Coleman:** Now one of the World's oldest Universities Trinity College Dublin is embarking on an extensive project to examine, interrogate and reflect on its complex colonial legacies to discuss this we are joined by the Provost of Trinity Dr Patrick Prendergast. Patrick can I cut to the chase I read this this morning and I have to say my eyes did roll a little bit and I thought this is classic white middle class guilt at play here. Am I wrong?

**Patrick Prendergast:** Well yes you are, it's not guilt what we are looking at here is Trinity's history and it reflects the history of the whole country in a way. Irish people were involved in colonialism and of course Ireland was a colonised country so there are two things going on, and we want to have a close look at this we want to see the impact that Trinity has had - good and bad - in its history and reflect on it so I don't think it's anything to do with middle class or anything like that, it's got to do with properly understanding and reflecting and learning from history.

**Shane Coleman:** Why do we need to do it though? We know Trinity had links to the British empire we know the record of the British empire was a far from glorious one we know all that what do we need to explore and why do we need to explore it?

**Patrick Prendergast:** Well I mean we do need to explore it because it does impact on current life as we have it. And one of the global movements that makes us reflect a lot on this is of course BLM and during the things that happened last year many of the students in Trinity asked themselves questions about how the institution that they are students in - and many of the alumni as well - how it behaved at the time, how it may have propagated some of the ideas that we currently have in our minds and wanted answers to how

that happened and whether indeed there are legacies of it that we need to address in current times. So it's not just about looking at the history it's about looking at how we are acting now as well, in particularly issues like naming of buildings and scholarships and so on and we have many collections as well within universities not just Trinity College other ones in Ireland as well, of course - and around the World - that were formed in colonial times, and we have to ask ourselves questions about what's right to do with those.

**Shane Coleman:** Would you be doing this if it wasn't for the BLM movement?

**Patrick Prendergast:** I'd like to think we would have got around to it but certainly the BLM movement and things that happened last year accelerated everyone thoughts about this, about colonialism, about the consequences of slavery, and so on, that we are still living with in society today.

**Shane Coleman:** Sorry to be cynical Patrick did it also create a need to quickly get on side in relation to these matters and public opinion?

**Patrick Prendergast:** Well I mean there is nothing wrong with getting on side with matters, I would say yes it made us think about it more and determine that we would indeed better understand it. I think getting on side yea that might be a cynical way of looking at it so I don't think that's the right phrase to use not so much getting on side but rather facing up to issues that happen in the past that are causing things to happen in modern society that are still relevant and important that we understand.

**Shane Coleman:** Just very finally people who went to Trinity will know the library one of the libraries in Trinity is called The Berkeley Library after George Berkeley the well-known philosopher but also a slave trader, I mean, are we likely to see a change in the name of the library in Trinity College do you think?

**Patrick Prendergast:** Well just I wouldn't say George Berkeley was a slave trader. He was a slave owner. He did own slaves but he didn't buy and sell slaves for profit but he did own slaves so we are open to that, I don't know if it will come to that but it shows you indeed why it is important to investigate these things because there are some students who have said that we should and there are other staff and students who say that we shouldn't. We will only know how to answer the questions when we do a proper study of it. And know all the facts, but indeed know how to interpret those facts in the context of what motivates people currently. So potentially is the answer to your question.

**Shane Coleman:** Potentially, OK listen thank you for talking to us this morning Dr Patrick Prendergast Provost of Trinity College Dublin.

\* \* \*



19 February 2021

## **Address at Trinity College Dublin, The University of Sanctuary Launch**

*Zoom*

Thank you, Dean of Students, and Good morning, everyone,

It's an honour to be here at this launch of Trinity College Dublin as a University of Sanctuary. This is one of the occasions when the whole Trinity community of students, staff and alumni is reminded of the sheer transformative power of education – for the individual, and for society.

In Trinity we have a mission, enshrined in our current Strategic Plan, to

*“courageously advance the cause of a pluralistic, just and sustainable society”*

and I quote

*“to embed a culture of equality, inclusion, respect and dignity across all aspects of our operations, to provide a foundation for the flourishing of all our students, regardless of their background, through instituting a robust Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.”*

Let's focus on that phrase - 'All our students, regardless of their background'.

In many ways, the history of Trinity College, and the history of education in Ireland and Europe, has been the story of striving to improve access and end discrimination. Astonishing as it is to recall, for most of Europe's history, only young, physically-able, white, male citizens were enrolled as university students, with a few notable exceptions.

In the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it became normal, rather than exceptional, for women, different ethnic groups, those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, mature students, and those with physical disabilities to attend university. And in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Trinity helped pioneer the rights of people with intellectual disability to a third level education.

With each 'opening out' of education to a new group, it was realised that not only had countless individuals been denied the full exercise of their potential, but society had been denied the benefits of their talents.

This is at the heart of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy – we're dedicated to this mission because it's what best serves individuals and society at large. It's a question of human rights and pragmatism.

It makes no sense, and it's a grievous waste, to allow people's talents and intelligence lie fallow because we have failed to remove barriers to third level education.

For each group, the barriers are different. In 2019 the Irish Refugee Council noted that 'the biggest barrier preventing young people in the Irish Asylum system from progressing their education is financial'. They are designated as international students, but they're not in a position to pay International Student fees.

University of Sanctuary was set up in Ireland to bring down this barrier and Trinity is proud to be a member. We've established Asylum Seeker Access Provision Scholarships and look forward to welcoming four scholarship students from direct provision in autumn this year. We will hear shortly from Professor Clodagh Brook, Associate Vice-Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion on how Trinity proposes to further develop sanctuary.

As a University of Sanctuary, we commit to embedding asylum and migration issues in our curricula. We have done this through, for instance, the Trinity Elective for undergraduates on 'Displacement: Exploring the Human Experience of Forced Migration'. And we commit to providing a supportive, welcoming, inclusive place for our students of sanctuary. We do this by celebrating different cultures, religions and festivities on campus and giving students the opportunity to join or start clubs and societies catering to their specific cultural, social, religious and political interests.

The Trinity Education helps students to think independently, communicate effectively, act responsibly, and develop continuously. These are the 'four graduate attributes' which will equip students for successful careers and active citizenship. Embracing equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole student experience - curricular and extracurricular - is essential to the development of these attributes.

This makes our students of sanctuary particularly important. To rephrase John F. Kennedy – it's not what we do for them, but what



they do for us. By joining our community, they help us better understand the challenges facing displaced persons.

According to the UNHCR Global Report, 79.5 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide. That's a huge number of people – sixteen times the population of Ireland! As a matter of common humanity, we need to better understand what it is to be displaced. And as a national priority, we should provide opportunity to those within the Asylum process on this island. That process can be slow and interminable and the idea of young people preparing for the Leaving Cert, in the knowledge that they may not be able to progress to college with their peers, should outrage us all.

In conclusion, let me thank all involved in helping Trinity become a University of Sanctuary:

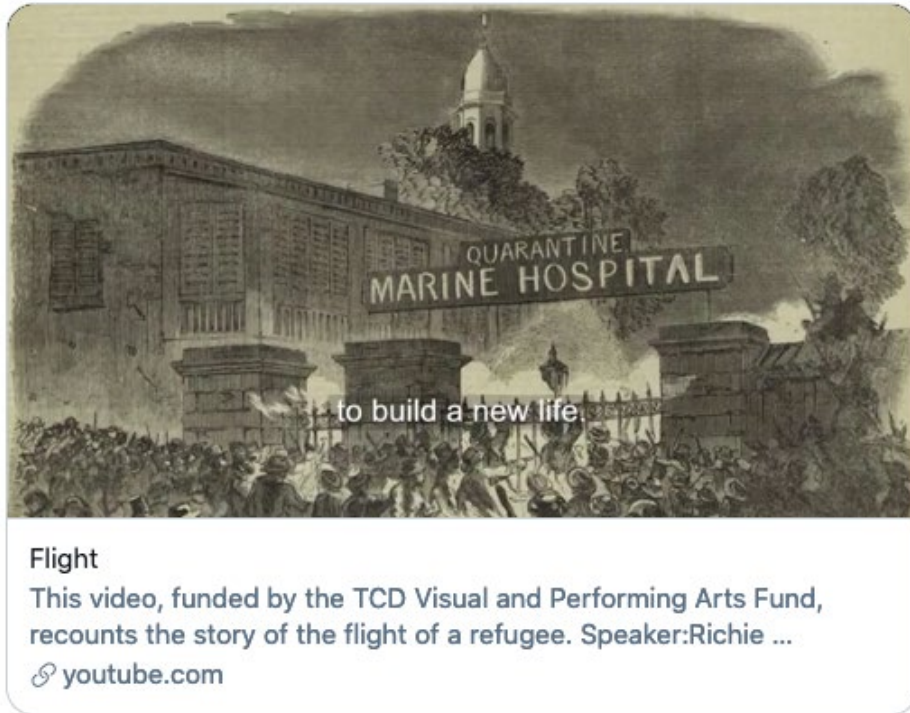
- The Sanctuary Advisory Group, the co-chairs Professors Fintan Sheerin and Gillian Wylie;
- Professor Paula Murphy who as Registrar championed Trinity's University of Sanctuary application;
- The chair of the University of Sanctuary Ireland, Dr Veronica Crosbie and the network.

Let me end with words from Malala Yousafzai who has spoken so movingly, and is herself such an exemplar, of the power of education for displaced persons and discriminated groups. She said 'Let us pick up our books and our pens; they are the most powerful weapons.' And she said 'I raise up my voice, not so I can shout, but so those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.'

Thank you.

\* \* \*

Michelle Darcy of @TCDPoliticalSci played this at launch:



5 22

Still from a video played at the launch of the University of Sanctuary



Gillian Wylie, Provost Patrick Prendergast, Andy Pollak – Top Row. Michelle D’Arcy, Clodagh Brook (AVPEDI), Catherine McCabe (Dean of Students) – Middle Row. Fintan Sheerin – Botton Row

22 February 2021

## **Address at the Launch of Trinity Green Week**

*Zoom from the Andrews Room*

Thank you, Michele\*, and good afternoon, everyone.

This is my tenth Green Week as Provost, and my last – in July, my term of office will end.

I've been thinking of all the challenges that face us, and all the initiatives I'd like to prioritise in my last few months leading this great university.

As always, there's so much to do, from the immediately essential, to the long-term and visionary. But one issue stands out above all others, one challenge that is 'over-shadowing and over-whelming'.<sup>†</sup> That is, of course, the climate and biodiversity emergency.

Facing up to what is happening to planet earth cannot wait. Let's quote Greta Thunberg:

*"I want you to act as if the house is on fire - because it is."*

The reason why we're calling this Green Week '*2030: Time for a Game Change*' is because the UN's intergovernmental panel on climate change has warned that we have 9 years left to prevent irreversible climate change. 9 years – that's less than one provostal term! And the World Wildlife Fund recently documented that, since 1970, 60 percent of animals have been wiped out by human activity. Which means that today, 97% of animals on our planet are domestic or farm animals; just 3 percent are wild!

How do we get our heads around these figures?

\* \* \*

"Humankind cannot bear very much reality" wrote T.S. Eliot in *The Four Quartets* and, unfortunately, we're all living that truth: we continue to go about our daily business as if we had 900 years to address this emergency, not 9.

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\* Michele Hallahan, Sustainability Advisor, Provost's Office

† Alan Rusbridger's last editorial in *The Guardian*

I was born in 1966 - four yours earlier Rachel Carson had published her classic, *Silent Spring*. We've had more than enough time to face the reality of accelerating loss of biodiversity. What is it with us, as a species, that we refuse to face the consequences of our behaviour? We see ourselves as a species apart, endowed with the power of imagination, but when it comes to the future, we're experts at not imagining it.

\* \* \*

How much can one university do? And is it even the job of universities?

Some people would answer not much, and no. We answer a lot, and yes, it's our job. Let me say why:

Firstly, this is our responsibility because universities decide what is taught to young people, and universities determine what is researched. This means that universities determine what ideas end up in the heads of people who form governments, corporations and international organisations, particularly the rich countries, which consume most of the resources. So, if the words 'crisis' and 'emergency' aren't getting through, then let's take responsibility for it.

Secondly, universities are centres of research and scholarship, centres of thinking, and where there's thinking and ideas, there is hope. It's scientific research that has brought us renewable energy, carbon capture, biodegradable materials and enzymes that eat plastic. It's scholarship in humanities that answers questions of why we act like we do, and asks what constitutes the ethical life. It's the creative arts that find the words, sounds and images that give us the tools to re-imagine a new future, and the courage to face the challenges of creating it.

Universities help people to think and face reality. That's what we do.

Thirdly, universities are where young people congregate and grow their ideas, and it is young people who are driving the green agenda. Here in Trinity, it is students who have led the divestment from fossil fuels and the banning of single use plastics on campus and have pioneered measures to combat food waste. It is students who come up with innovation solutions to sustainability challenges, every year in LaunchBox. Where young people are engaged, there is hope.

It's the privilege of universities to be the platform where the energy of young people is harnessed. We must prioritise this issue that they have identified as the greatest concern of their generation.

The great task that confronts, or should confront, all universities today is to help people face the reality of this planetary crisis and combat it – that's an enormous task, but we shouldn't shrink before its enormity.

\* \* \*

We've heard today, from my colleagues, some of what Trinity is doing to face up to this enormous task. We're constantly building on our initiatives. This is the college's 19<sup>th</sup> Green Week and prior to that, we had the Recycling Committee. Trinity staff and students have been banging this drum for a long, long time and we should be proud that we just keep getting louder.

I won't reiterate the initiatives that my colleagues have already talked about but let me mention two which are particularly important, and I think haven't been mentioned yet:

- First, E3, the new Engineering, Environment, and Emerging Technologies Institute. This is being developed in two phases and we're well advanced on the first phase, building the E3 Learning Foundry. Here we will educate engineers, computer scientists/statisticians, and natural scientists, together with a direct focus on finding global solutions to overcome the climate and biodiversity crisis. 'Balanced solutions for a better world' is E3's mantra.

Already, this year, the new undergraduate course in Environmental Science and Engineering has 261 CAO applicants for just 20 places – and a new Masters on Climate Science starts in September. And just a fortnight ago we announced the Kinsella Challenge-based E3 Multidisciplinary Project Awards – these award invite PIs from across Trinity to team up with other disciplines to set a challenge and recruit PhDs to work on it\*.

- Second, Trinity is a member of the European University CHARM-EU, together with the universities of Barcelona, Montpellier, Utrecht and ELTE in Budapest. Trinity was central to CHARM-EU taking the decision to address the mission of 'Reconciling Humanity with the Planet'. From this,

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\* <https://www.tcd.ie/e3/education/phd/>

has come the new Masters course 'Global Challenges for Sustainability' – a joint award of the five universities - the very first pan-European Masters course under the European Universities Initiative of the European Commission. Trinity's leadership on climate action is being felt at a European level. \*

Through E3 and CHARM-EU – and through other initiatives which Michele and Áine have mentioned including Uni-Eco<sup>†</sup> and Green Labs<sup>‡</sup> – Trinity is embedding sustainability and ecology into our research and education programmes and into our day-to-day running of the college. We have to continue to accelerate this approach. I'm delighted that for instance one of our new Trinity Electives is 'Toolkit for a Smart and Sustainable World'<sup>§</sup> run by the Nature+ centre.

But is all this enough? No, it isn't, we have to do more and urgently. This Green Week is about signalling urgency. We cannot signal it often enough. We cannot act soon enough. So I want to close by making two announcements:

- First, I will be launching a new research initiative about environment and ethics, and environmental humanities. I have some philanthropy to support this and it's a priority for me. It's vital that the work of E3 and CHARM-EU be complemented by interdisciplinary thinking in ethics and the social sciences. As I've said, only through an integrated, multidisciplinary approach across the sciences and humanities can we address and change our human behaviour that is damaging the planet.
- Second, it's my pleasure to announce that in response to bottom-up representations from students and academics, on Earth Day, 22<sup>nd</sup> April, teaching across the university will focus on the climate and biodiversity crisis. Every School and Department will contribute their own unique take. I believe that hearing from natural scientists, engineers, historians, theologians, health scientists, political scientists, musicians, creative artists, psychologists, all of us, will be incredibly compelling, and will help get across, collectively, the stark reality that we are facing.

And, if you think it farfetched that every school and department should have a contribution here, I can tell you that the Trinity

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\* <https://www.charm-eu.eu/node/1>

† <https://www.elte.hu/en/internationalization/development-project/UNI-ECO>

‡ <https://www.tcd.ie/provost/sustainability/initiatives/greenlabs/>

§ <https://www.tcd.ie/trinity-electives/electives/smart-sustainable/>

Centre for Literary and Cultural Translation is currently carrying out pioneering research into Eco-Translation. These researchers define translation as “a relationship across difference – not just across different languages but across different ways of being.”\*

That is such a compelling idea: that the failure of our human relationship to the planet is a failure of translation, of communication.

Let me end with some wonderful lines of Gerard Manley Hopkins, which he wrote almost a hundred and fifty years ago, but he seems to be addressing us, across time:

What would the world be, once bereft  
Of wet and wildness? Let them be left,  
O let them be left, wildness and wet;  
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

As we re-wild our campus, let’s say it with Hopkins:

“Long live the weeds and the wilderness, yet.”

Thank you.

\* \* \*



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\*[https://www.tcd.ie/provost/review/2018/12.4.TCD\\_PI\\_Professor\\_Michael\\_Cronin.pdf](https://www.tcd.ie/provost/review/2018/12.4.TCD_PI_Professor_Michael_Cronin.pdf)





22 & 23 February 2021

## **The Science | Business Annual Network Conference – R&I in recovery: What can Horizon Europe deliver?**

*Online - a snippet for a video*

Horizon Europe, the World's largest research and innovation programme, is even more global in scope than previous new framework programmes. As president of a leading European research university, and as a framework graduate myself I'm delighted about this.

We can only tackle global challenges through global networks. We must come together, all of us on the planet, to deal with climate change whilst completing the transition to digital. Horizon Europe seeks to establish genuine connectivity between Horizon and other EU programmes, and to coordinate between Europe's research and innovation instruments and individual member states' own programmes. Global, cohesive and ambitious in scale, Horizon Europe will also promote a just and equitable society.

\* \* \*





24 February 2021

## **Address at the SFI CONNECT Centre Review**

*Online pre-record*

Good afternoon and welcome to Trinity College for the site review of Science Foundation Ireland's CONNECT Research Centre for Future Networks and Communications.

For those whom I haven't met, my name is Patrick Prendergast and I'm the Provost and President of Trinity College, the host institution of CONNECT.

Even though we're meeting online, we should try to imagine, for these next few days, that we're at the CONNECT Centre at Dunlop Oriel House here in Trinity. I'm sorry that you won't be experiencing Trinity College hospitality in its fullest sense.

We appreciate your efforts and cooperation in holding this review online during these challenging times.

\* \* \*

It's a pleasure to welcome the programme review team from Science Foundation Ireland, and the Scientific Programme Manager for CONNECT, Thérèse Holton.

Also the Chairman of the Governance Board of CONNECT, John Travers.

I also welcome colleagues from the other Irish higher education institutions, our partners in CONNECT. Let me extend a special welcome, to those joining us from our newest university in Ireland, Munster Technological University, MTU.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to two former Directors of CONNECT:

- Firstly, Professor Linda Doyle, who founded CONNECT, and who also directed its predecessor CTVR. Professor Doyle led CONNECT with distinction, until she assumed the post of Dean of Research in Trinity College some three years ago. And secondly
- Professor Luiz DaSilva, who succeeded Linda as Director of CONNECT, until he took up an appointment, last year, as

executive director of the Commonwealth Cyber Initiative at Virginia Tech.

I'd also like to thank Dr Brendan Jennings of the Waterford Institute of Technology, who has served until very recently as Interim Director of CONNECT, during these challenging times, and is present today as a co-PI.

The new Director of CONNECT is Professor Dan Kilper, formerly of the University of Arizona. Professor Kilper has taken up his appointment as Professor in the School of Engineering, and has recently been confirmed by SFI in his formal appointment as Director of CONNECT. I'm delighted to welcome Dan here today and I look forward to working with him.

Finally, we welcome, of course, the panel of eight reviewers coming from universities in the EU, the US and the UK.

\* \* \*

CONNECT was launched six years ago and, since then, has enjoyed really significant success. Let me go through some of its key achievements:

- CONNECT attracts top talent from all over the world, and is an accelerator of growth in this country: a majority of its PhD graduates and postdocs, who go on to join industry, do so in Ireland.
- CONNECT influences public policy and has helped drive the discussion and development of 5G at both national and EU level.
- 44 industry partners, ranging from SMEs to multinationals, have already engaged in collaborative projects with CONNECT researchers. CONNECT has, to date, brought over €5 million in cash contributions from industry, and has a further €1 million under contract.
- Five spinout companies have emerged from CONNECT, currently employing over 40 people, and some 38 Licence Agreements have been concluded with industry to date.
- CONNECT has brought €25 million to Ireland in Horizon 2020 funding, and that includes the highest funded European project that Trinity College has ever had - the EDGE project, a Marie Curie programme for attracting and training postdocs.
- Trinity research from CONNECT is embedded in the local community in the Dublin docklands, through our strong relationship with Dublin City Council and our ENABLE spoke in the Smart Dublin initiative, and

- CONNECT's team of investigators has included 6 IEEE Fellows, 3 members of the Royal Irish Academy including a former President of the RIA, 3 IEEE Distinguished Lecturers, and 1 Oscar winner.

As you will see in the presentations over the next few days, CONNECT provides an important framework for collaboration and thematic alignment between partner institutions. It also allows researchers to form inter-institutional research teams. Frequently, the Centre is what makes the difference in bringing a critical mass of research effort to bear on a research theme. That is especially true of emerging themes.

Today you will receive a detailed report of the breakthroughs and impacts of the first phase of CONNECT. And you will hear about the new research themes, as well as the potential emerging and cross-cutting themes, which will form the basis of research over the coming six years of CONNECT.

Minister Simon Harris has recently announced a major new SFI award for CONNECT, worth €39 million over the next six years. This, and other awards announced the same day, stand as a testament to the commitment of the Government to fund research, innovation and science in our universities and institutes of technology. This continued commitment is greatly appreciated in the present economic climate.

In hosting an SFI centre, Trinity College makes a serious commitment to providing institutional support, both in terms of office and lab space, and in terms of support from the many services of the college administration. Our Associate Dean of Research, Prof Andrew Bowie, will speak to you in a moment about our institutional support for CONNECT.

I wish your proceedings great success over the coming days.

Thank you and good afternoon.

\* \* \*



01 March 2021

## **Address at the Launch of Virtual Trinity Library**

*Zoom from the Andrews Room, Provost's House*

Good afternoon,

And welcome, everyone, to the launch of Virtual Trinity Library. It's wonderful to see so many here - a tribute to the strength of Trinity's global community, and to the uniqueness and prestige of the Old Library with its magnificent Long Room and precious collections. Helen's virtual tour has just given us a marvellous perspective.

On a recent visit to the College, An Taoiseach Micheál Martin referred to the Old Library and the Book of Kells as "a jewel in the national crown". Certainly, we who work and study in Trinity, see the Old Library as the very heart of the university, and we are conscious also of being custodians of the national heritage.

As Helen has said, Virtual Trinity Library is a strategic flagship project for the university. It's complementary to the Old Library Redevelopment Project which addresses the physical redevelopment of the Old Library building and is a key project of our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*.

In May 2019 we formally launched *Inspiring Generations*, the first comprehensive philanthropic campaign in the history of the university and the largest ever to be launched on the island of Ireland.

Other key flagship projects of *Inspiring Generations* include the Trinity St James's Cancer Institute that will transform cancer patient care and the new E3 Institute in Engineering, Environment and Emerging Technologies that will find balanced solutions for a better world.

The response to *Inspiring Generations* from our global community has been extraordinary, and we're well on target to meet our ambitious aims in fundraising and volunteering.

An important achievement of recent months is that Dublin City Council granted planning permission for the Old Library Redevelopment, and gave it without any reservations. It will include a new research collections study centre. This follows the historic unveiling of the new Book of Kells Treasury and Display, funded

with philanthropic support from Carol and Murray Grigor, which forms the first component of our redevelopment plans.

\* \* \*

Virtual Trinity Library, the corollary of the physical redevelopment, is our contribution to the creation of a Virtual World Library for Cultural Heritage. As such, it's part of an international landscape of institutions that are enabling access to patrimony and cultural heritage. We're joining many other famous institutions worldwide in this endeavour, all facilitating international links between collections and people.

Through Virtual Trinity Library we're opening up the collections of the largest library in Ireland, catalysing research, and safeguarding the iconic treasures of the Old Library for generations to come. This initiative will conserve, curate, digitise and research these unique national heritage collections, making them accessible to a global audience, from schoolchildren to scholars

The impact of Virtual Trinity Library for teaching, learning and research has become even more significant in light of the current pandemic, which has accelerated the digital transformation of the University and the Library.

Virtual Trinity Library is about preserving our cultural heritage for generations to come. We're honoured to have join us today, as our special guest, the President of Carnegie Corporation of New York, Vartan Gregorian, whose organisation is generously supporting the conservation, research and digitisation of some of our more important medieval manuscripts.

We welcome also His Excellency Adriaan Palm, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Ireland. The Dutch Government is generously supporting the conservation and digital cataloguing of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Fagel collection, in collaboration with the Koninklijke Bibliotheek (KB), the National Library of the Netherlands.

I thank also all those corporations, foundations and individuals who are providing philanthropic support in this continuing journey. And I thank and congratulate our Librarian and College Archivist, Helen Shenton and her team for their work in undertaking this project of significant scale and societal impact, preserving our cultural heritage for generations to come.

Thank you



\* \* \*



Provost Patrick Prendergast in the Andrews Room, with Vartan Gregorian, President of the Carnegie Foundation, on the screen



03 March 2021

**Provost's Salon with Ronan Lyons and Deirdre  
McAdams on 'New Generations'**

*Zoom from the Andrews' Room, Provost's House*

Good evening,

Welcome, everyone, to the 'Provost's Salon'.

It's great to see you all. We've been holding these virtual Salon events since the summer and they've proved a really great way to stay in touch, and to hear from our distinguished academics and graduates talking about their vital fields of expertise. Luke O'Neill on Covid and immunology, and Roy Foster on Seamus Heaney, have been two recent speakers.

At the annual meeting of the Provost's Council in September, many of you asked for updates around the campaign flagship projects. So we decided to hold Salons focussed specifically on the priority projects. This is the fourth in our series, following salons on the Old Library Redevelopment Project, the Trinity St. James' Cancer Institute, and E3.

As with all our Salon events, numbers are limited, because we like to keep these events small. Before we proceed, could I ask everyone to briefly say hello and introduce themselves to the group. Kate, we might start with you...

*Alan Dargan, Anke Heydenreich, David McConnell, David Went, Fergal Naughton, Leo Crawford, Mike Peirce, Paul Drechsler, Ambassador Paul Johnston, Richie Boucher, Terry Neill, William Sargent, Fiona Thomas, Finlay & Kathryn Ross, Gilliane Quinn, John Macken, Patrick O'Sullivan, Declan Sheehan [plus Eileen Punch and Deirdre Tracey from TDA].*

Thank you and I look forward to hearing more from you all shortly. During the conversation with our guest speakers, please keep your microphones off, but of course turn them on if you want to ask a question. If you've a question or anything to add, please either put up the hand just turn on your mic.

\* \* \*

Let me talk briefly about New Generations before I introduce our guests. It's an initiative very close to my heart and it couldn't be more important - it's about bringing the best talent to Trinity, and it underpins all the flagship projects of *Inspiring Generations*.

The campaign's landmark capital development projects like E3 and the Trinity-St James's Cancer Institute, provide the cutting-edge spaces and facilities necessary for ground-breaking research and education, and *New Generations* secures the talent that enlivens these spaces.

People are the lifeblood of a university. The success of any academic institution is dependent on its ability to attract, retain and progress talent at all levels. Across the world, highly ranked universities have in common their investment in talent, which results in a low student to staff ratio, and a high percentage of postgraduate students.

New Generations supports academic talent at two levels: professorial chairs and assistant professors.

And it supports student talent through a suite of scholarships, bursaries and programmes.

We've achieved significant success to date, raising over €108 million for New Generations. This support has enabled us:

- to create new posts in emerging areas,
- award new scholarships
- and increase opportunities for students from under-represented backgrounds.

As examples of what we're doing, we have already hired the first three Assistant Professor posts in E3, funded entirely by philanthropy – and another five are being hired on a phased basis. We also have funding in place for two Professorial Chairs – one in Greek and one in Pharmaceutical Biology. The priority now is to secure funding for several Professorial Chairs in critical new disciplines, such as Climate Science and Cancer Immunology, and a range of Assistant Professors aligned with E3, Cancer and the Library collections.

In terms of postgraduate students, our ambition is high. Ireland's future society and economy will depend on the country's ability to develop the talent required to meet the challenges ahead of us. This is of course a priority post-Covid. Furthermore, the number of graduating PhD students per annum is a key metric in the global university rankings and it is one of the few metrics which we have

some control over. That is why I have set the ambition to double the number of PhDs studentships we award this year.

In terms of support for students coming from under-represented backgrounds, the Trinity Access Programme, which is being used as a model for similar programmes in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, continues to be a world leader. The Programme currently costs €2.5 million a year to deliver. With additional support we can provide a bursary to every eligible TAP student and increase the value of the bursary from €1,000 to €3,000, per year.

I'd also like to mention the recent award of University of Sanctuary to Trinity. We're very proud of this and we've established Asylum Seeker Access Provision Scholarships - we look forward to welcoming four scholarship students from direct provision in autumn this year.

\* \* \*

That then, is a brief snapshot of what New Generations is helping to achieve across the university, bringing in talent at all levels. I'd now like to introduce you to two members of our College community who embody superb academic and student talent – and for whom philanthropy has played an important role. They will tell you their first-hand experience of the impact philanthropy can have.

Ronan Lyons is Assistant Professor of Economics and Director of Trinity Research in Social Sciences (TRISS). He was awarded a Provost's PhD Award in 2018, for research into historical house prices in North America. He is currently supervising Elisa Tirindelli, a Grattan Scholar who is researching the Economics of City Regrowth. In addition to his Trinity role, Ronan is a consultant to the IMF on residential property prices, a frequent contributor to national and international media on Irish housing and the broader economy, and the author of the quarterly Daft.ie reports on the Irish housing market.

I will hand over now to Ronan, to tell us more about his career and receiving a Provost's PhD Award.

*[Ronan speaks]*

Thank you, Ronan.

And now it's my pleasure to introduce Deirdre McAdams. Deirdre is a PhD student in Medicinal Chemistry with strong interests in chemical research, drug manufacturing and healthcare development. She is also a Biology Tutor for the Trinity Access

Programme (TAP). Deirdre joined Trinity through TAP herself and, as an undergraduate, was awarded a Foundation Scholarship, the Lucy Gwynn prize and the DUGWA award for distinction in her studies and commitment to College life.

I will hand over now to Deirdre to share her experience of entering Trinity through TAP and progressing, with distinction, to her doctoral studies.

Thank you, Deirdre. And now let me open this discussion to the floor if anyone has questions for Ronan, or Deirdre, or myself, or If anyone would like to share their thoughts on New Generations.

*[At the end (18.55) wrap up and thank everyone for attending]*

\* \* \*

05 March 2021

## **Address at the ADAPT Centre Site Review**

*Online video message*

Good afternoon,

On behalf of Trinity College, ADAPT's host institution, I'm delighted to take this opportunity to welcome the Panel, and to thank you for your work on this vital review of Phase 1 of ADAPT.

It's now six years since ADAPT was launched, in January 2015, as a model centre of its kind. It's exemplary in its academic industry partnerships, its interdisciplinarity, and its combination of fundamental and applied research which leads to dynamic innovation. It's also unique internationally in looking at the full life-cycle of digital content.

For Trinity and the other partner institutions, ADAPT has deepened our expertise in key areas related to digital content including AI, personalisation, natural language processing, data analytics, intelligent machine translation, and human-computer interaction.

Science Foundation Ireland showed great foresight and commitment in establishing ADAPT, and its foresight has been rewarded. ADAPT has been a game changer for Dublin, Ireland and its partner universities and it continues to go from strength-to-strength.

The Government recently backed it with an award of €42 million, which shows how much confidence there is, nationally, in the ADAPT vision.

Across a wide number of metrics, ADAPT has proven a remarkable success. Let me mention five of them:

*\*\* [1 the EU] \*\**

Since 2015, ADAPT has won 41 EU projects, across all three Horizon 2020 pillars, to a total value of €18.58 million - ADAPT has led on twelve of these projects. It has enjoyed particular success in H2020 Excellent Science Pillar and in the very competitive Marie Curie Actions. The ground-breaking fellowship programme 'Human +' places the human at the centre of technology innovation to serve the long-term and collective needs of society.

*\* \* [2 INTERDISCIPLINARITY] \* \**

‘Human +’ was made possible by ADAPT’s interdisciplinarity across the arts and sciences. ADAPT is pioneering research in digital technology while also investigating its impact on the individual and society. This has led to interdisciplinary research in eHealth, Digital Humanities, eBusiness, and Ethics and the Digital Society.

*\* \* [3 TRAINING & NETWORKING] \* \**

When it comes to training, ADAPT is providing students in Ireland with the education they need to take up opportunities in the future. This centre is core to training programmes such as EDGE, Trinity’s largest H2020 award, and ‘Elite S’, both of which are attracting world class talent to Ireland.

ADAPT has secured several high-profile international conferences to be hosted in Dublin over the next 2 years including EUSIPCO 2021, HyperText 2021, ACL 2022, ECIR 2023 and InterSpeech 2023.

*\* \* [4 INDUSTRY] \* \**

ADAPT’s research remit and its strong collaboration with industry are helping to ensure that the jobs of the future are created here in Ireland and are driven by our innovations, for example, through its AI driven research programme. This is giving Ireland a first-mover advantage on the world stage. To date, ADAPT has received more than €16 million from industry sources.

*\* \* [5 LEADERSHIP] \* \**

ADAPT’s leadership in innovation has been spearheaded by its Director Professor Vinny Wade, who is a co-founder, as well as the Director, of ADAPT. I was delighted to award him the prestigious Provost’s Innovation Award in 2018. Vinny’s leadership has helped drive ADAPT’s breakthroughs in intelligent systems, adaptive systems and personalisation. His leadership is felt across the whole university, and in the wider research system of the country.

*\* \* \**

This past year has highlighted how important digital engagement is in terms of how we live, work and communicate, and how we can face significant social and economic challenges.

In the middle of a global pandemic, we can see the value of ADAPT’s research in AI driven digital content technologies - across language, speech, image, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality.



As I come to the end of my term as Provost it has been such a pleasure to watch ADAPT go from strength-to-strength. I'm excited that Trinity's flagship new Engineering, Environment and Emerging Technologies Institute - E3 – will enable ADAPT to work seamlessly across the Schools of Computer Science and Statistics, Engineering, and Natural Sciences to solve the world's challenges through designing technology-enabled solutions which are balanced with the ecology mandates of the planet.

I congratulate Professor Vinny Wade and all the researchers across the partner universities for making SFI's vision a reality through their projects and innovations.

I thank the Review Panel for their time and commitment, and I wish all of you a most useful, informative and enjoyable few days. I look forward to following with interest how ADAPT research will continue to deliver for Dublin, for Ireland and for Europe.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



12 March 2021

## **Email Message from the Provost to Trinity College Community during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Dear students and colleagues,

This day last year I emailed the college community to say we would have to close many activities and move teaching online in a bid to play our part in curbing the spread of COVID-19. With some small reprieves we have been in a continuous state of lockdown since then, something few of us could have foreseen at the time.

The last 12 months will stay with us all, for the rest of our lives. We will remember loved ones who suffered and some who died. We will remember how we were impacted ourselves and hopefully we will remember how resilient we were in the face of this unprecedented challenge.

I think we can be proud of how our University has weathered this storm, and continues to do so. Students have shown great fortitude and understanding of the restraints imposed by the pandemic, both on learning opportunities and on social engagement. I'm grateful to colleagues in all faculties who have continued necessary face-to-face teaching, and maintained research and scholarship, and those in Estates and Facilities who have kept the college open, our lab technicians who have enabled essential teaching, the catering staff who have fed us, the College Health Centre staff who have treated countless students and conducted countless tests, the wardens who have kept students safe, staff in the Library and Student Counselling, and colleagues in so many roles, some working on campus almost every day since the pandemic. I'm equally grateful to colleagues who have stayed at home and taught or researched or administered services from the kitchen table, sitting room or home office, often balanced with simultaneously home schooling their children. Everybody has had a role to play to keep Trinity moving. On behalf of all, I express our gratitude to the students and staff who have worked tirelessly in hospitals and other health settings to help keep the health services operational in this crisis. Well done to all of you.

We have all learned that a remarkable amount can be done online. It is also fair to say that we have also learned that online has its limitations. I'm sorry for those who have had to graduate virtually; I know you have missed a valuable event in your lives. I salute those

who have joined the college as a student or member of staff but have yet to set foot on the campus. I look forward to meeting you in Front Square and elsewhere in the months ahead.

The good news is that there is, finally, an end in sight. There are plenty of reasons to believe that next semester will be closer to normal. How close remains to be seen but I think we can allow ourselves more reason to hope than at any time since this day last year.

There have been many lessons from this pandemic. For me, the biggest lesson has been the concrete reminder that Trinity is a living community in the strongest and simplest sense of that word – we rely on each other, we support each other and we care for each other. I hope you will take a minute today to think back on your personal journey over the past 12 months and reflect that, despite everything that has happened, we are as strong as we have ever been.

Thank you for your resilience, flexibility and understanding throughout the year.

Kind regards,

Patrick Prendergast  
PROVOST

\* \* \*

07 April 2021

## **Inspiring Ideas @Trinity. Ten Years as Provost: A Retrospective with Provost Patrick Prendergast**

*Transcript of Provost Patrick Prendergast Interview*

Facilitator: Michael Mullooly (MM)

MC & Host: Jennifer Taaffe (JT)

Guest Speaker: Patrick Prendergast (PP)

**MM:** Good afternoon everyone, you're all very welcome to this week's Inspiring Ideas @Trinity Webinar. My name is Michael Mullooly, Alumni Relations Executive here in Trinity Development and Alumni. This afternoon we are honoured to have with us the Provost, Provost Patrick Prendergast who will be speaking about his time as Provost of Trinity College Dublin. Our talk today will last around 50 minutes including questions and answers from the audience throughout and we are aiming to finish up about 2pm Irish time. We encourage you to submit questions you have for the Provost throughout the webinar by using the Q&A button at the bottom of the screen if you are watching on Zoom. If you are watching on YouTube Live you can submit questions in the comment box there and they will be passed over. This webinar is being recorded for later viewing, if you are watching on Zoom you will get a link to the recording after the webinar. The video will also be available to view on the TCD Alumni YouTube channel. Now I would like to introduce and hand you over to today's host and MC Jennifer Taaffe, Director of Alumni and Supporter Relations here in Trinity Development and Alumni. A communications and university advancement expert Jennifer has had a highly distinguished career here at Trinity, she assumed her current role of Director of Alumni and Supporter Relations in 2019 and is responsible for engagements with our wonderful Alumni community around the world including everyone listening in today. Jennifer thank you so much for being here with us.

**JT:** Thank you Michael, good afternoon everyone and welcome. I am sure that today's guest doesn't need that much of an introduction but I am going to introduce him anyway. I am delighted to be joined today by Provost Dr Patrick Prendergast who was elected by academics, staff and student representatives as the 44<sup>th</sup> Provost of Trinity College Dublin in 2011 and whose tenure ends in July. The Provost is the Chief Officer of the University, responsible to the Board and ultimately to the State for the performance of the University. Dr Prendergast hails from County Wexford and he came

to Trinity as an undergraduate in 1983 where he also completed his PhD. After postdoctoral positions in Italy and the Netherlands he was appointed to the Engineering Faculty in Trinity in 1995. As Professor of Bioengineering, he introduced the teaching of biomechanics into the curriculum. During this period he was a Science Foundation Ireland Principal Investigator and held many industry funded and EU funded research grants. Dr Prendergast is a member of the Royal Irish Academy, a Fellow of the Irish Academy of Engineering and an International Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering in the UK. Leadership positions in the college prior to taking up the Provostship included Dean of Graduate Studies and Vice-Provost. So Provost you are very welcome here today to speak to our Alumni and friends tuning in.

**PP:** Thank you Jennifer.

**JT:** We have been inviting questions over the last few weeks so there is quite a lot to ask you about. Let's start by taking you back a little bit Provost. You entered Trinity College at 17 years of age, what inspired you about the College then and what continues to inspire you about it now?

**PP:** Yes, 1983 I done the Leaving Cert and I decided of course to go to university and to do engineering. And I had a few options I could have went many places in the country and I can't really tell you why I put Trinity College Dublin Engineering down first and not UCD or Cork or somewhere like that but I think it was the right decision. I wanted to come to a great university, a university with a reputation and so on, other universities in Ireland have that too of course but Trinity has it in spades and I put down Trinity and really never looked back after that.

**JT:** And do you think College is a very different place now to how it was then?

**PP:** Well of course, you have the internet now, there are many things that are different of course in comparison to back then in 1983. So it's different for sure but recognisable all the same, I mean you walk into Front Square and you see the same buildings, you walk into New Square and Botany Bay you see the same buildings. You walk through in to College Park and there's the Rugby Ground so there are many things that are very familiar, at the same time many things have changed and changed for the good. I think the values and the thing that motivates staff and students is much the same. A kind of desire to do great research certainly motivates the staff, and very importantly of course teaching and engaging with undergraduates and postgraduates, increasing number of postgraduates of course, is what motivates the College. So many

things are much the same, we still have much the same clubs as when we had when I was a student for example, and they are still beavering away. The College literary magazine 'Icarus' was just issued last week, you can just pick it up around College like you could do in 1983 and like you could do in 1973. So many things are the same and I think the College is recognisable to Alumni who come back but many things are different too because life has changed.

**JT:** True. So you took up position of Provost in the midst of the economic crash or maybe when we were just starting to recover and now you are leaving during covid so you really haven't had an easy time of it have you?

**PP:** Well I have had a great time of it, I have had an enjoyable time of it. That's more important than having an easy time. Sure, 2011 and the crash and the recession that followed 2008 were very challenging times for all universities for around the world but particularly think back to the situation Ireland was in - Ireland and a few other European countries - you know, I mean it was terrible. It was even called the pigs if you can remember that. These countries had a terrible time because of overhanging public debt and organisations like universities that have significant public funding were affected by that. Thinking back to then I had to implement salary cuts on all employees in the University and when I tell that to people around the world they realise how bad it was in Ireland at the last recession but these are times of opportunity as well, and we certainly here in Trinity identified that there were ways that we could take control of our own destiny by what happened in the recession. A greater attention paid to financial matters by leadership around the college, increasing revenues in various different ways including importantly of course through philanthropy but by no means solely that. Commercial revenues of all kinds. I remember saying to a person when I had just come back from Boston, actually I had come back from Boston seeing how well they were doing there some of the universities in merchandising and walking up Grafton Street I would see people wearing Harvard hoodies and Harvard t-shirts and I said "What's going on here? Why can't we be doing some of that?"- and we started to do a lot more commercial activities of course and be much more globally engaged in recruiting students from around the world, more postgraduate students, and we really turned around our financial fortunes and started to use the revenue generated to improve academic activities, more scholarships, more lectureships, maintenance programmes on buildings, developing and putting up new buildings. So it was a difficult time but we climbed out of it and are now we are going potentially into another recession with the consequences of the

pandemic although it's not possible to fully predict the economic future yet as a consequence of the pandemic. Maybe it won't be as bad as we think or maybe it will be much worse but whatever way it is Trinity is ready for it. We know we can deal with difficult financial situations and emerge stronger and better.

**JT:** So I think you would absolutely have expected to be dealing with a lot of financial issue and financial hardships during the ten years when you took on the role. Is there anything else that has dominated the last ten years that you might not have expected or couldn't have foreseen? We will leave covid out of that for a second.

**PP:** I think one area that is dominating and that perhaps we weren't as ready for as we could have been is online education and the whole technologicalization of interactions between student and teacher. Now the pandemic has accelerated that for sure but this has always been going on in the background over the last decades. Trinity prides itself of course on human connections and relationships through clubs and societies and indeed the individual relationship between teacher and student and we want to keep that. We are a residential university, thousands of students live here on the campus and in Trinity Hall. We want to keep that, we see the value of that. But the challenge of how to do that simultaneously but recognising that the world is changing with regard to technology and information technology in particular, I think that's a challenge I didn't foresee perhaps as much as I should have. We engaged and we are still engaging and I think many universities like ours that have our kind of traditions are going to have to think harder about how they use IT better and technology better in general while still maintaining the core of what's important in how students and staff interact. So there's one, I could talk about more challenges.

**JT:** Well that's one and probably going to get to it later with covid but just may as well take it now but that could have a big impact on the student experience and maybe on collegiality and all the people joining us today, our Alumni, who would have had a very particular experience on campus and now students who are there today may not be having the same experience although I am sure they are having a good experience in their own way but do you think it is set to change the student experience?

**PP:** I do yes, I think the young people's experience of life in general is changing and how they experience education is changing with it, and how we are experiencing the workplace is changing with it. Just yesterday I was talking with our Director of IT Services, we were talking about the physical campus which we are all so proud of and it is a beautiful campus for sure and that's kind of a Trinity experience and we were discussing what the digital experience is



like for students who have never been to the campus. Now of course this is an exception because of the pandemic, this won't always be the case, but we have students who haven't been to the campus. What's there experience of Trinity? Well at the moment it is entirely mediated through digital and we have to think about how that works and in some ways it works well as you'll know from your own alumni relations activities. There are ways indeed, this webinar being an example, where we can connect with Alumni and reinforce and develop the community spirit quite well using digital technologies. We should do more of it but it's not a replacement or in any way a substitute for some of the physical activities I do miss, it's a terrible pity that we couldn't have run the Scholars dinner last year and we won't be able to do it again this year. Two Scholars' dinners, one year after another, that we can't run where the new Scholars have their first big outing in their black tie and so on and Alumni Scholars from previous generations and decades all come back and meet each other. It's a great occasion and that can't easily, I know say it can't ever, be reproduced online. So that's an example of something we miss. We all miss it, I miss going on Commons, I miss even going over to the East Dining Hall at lunch time. I miss going for a cup of coffee in the Common Room. I miss going around to the Lincoln once in a while for a pint. These are things we will get back when the pandemic is over but we will continue doing say webinars like this as well. So the world will change and we'll change with it.

**JT:** Thank you. I am going to take a few questions from some people who have sent them in advance Provost. We have a question from Gilliane Quinn who as you know is the Chairperson of TDA Association and Trust.

**PP:** Hello Gilliane

**JT:** It's around the current debate on university governance, so the question is, "The independence and unique position in governance of Trinity College is highly treasured, do you think that the College could survive without Government aid and what impact could this have on the future shape of Trinity College?"

**PP:** Well, there are a few questions there. I do think indeed Trinity College could survive if government pulled the plug and there was no government money. 40% of our revenues come from the State and that includes revenue that comes in for education, the teaching of Irish students and for research. If we didn't have it we would have to change a lot of things but we would indeed survive but I don't know that we would flourish. Trinity College is a public university, I think that's an honourable thing to be, the vast

majority of universities in Europe are public universities and it's an honourable position to be in to be a public university and in receipt of government funding. What we should aim for is a respectful relationship with the State on both sides, us respecting them and their respecting us and our independence. And not just because Trinity has a particular legal structure but rather respecting Trinity's independence because of the value it brings to the country and to the world. That independence that Trinity has allows us to set our curriculum, allows us to decide research priorities, allows us to work and engage publicly in debate in a way that we wouldn't be able to do if we were just another State controlled institution. So independence and autonomy of universities has a value in a democratic society, that's why we want to keep it and that's why I believe the government will also want to keep it and the governance reforms as they would call them do offer some opportunities to improve our governance in Trinity and we will be ready to take those and we are in continuous dialogue with the Minister and his key officials to see how the reforms that are being proposed can take account of Trinity's traditions and equally importantly its unique legal structure as being a corporation of the Provost, Fellows and Scholars.

**JT:** And what's the timeframe on that, when will we know?

**PP:** Meetings are happening weekly literally, I would say, well the Minister says he plans his Heads of Bill in April and this is a very quick timeline. It's before cabinet this month or next and after that it goes to the Oireachtas and various Oireachtas Committees for debate and discussion where it could be modified, at the very earliest it could be done is the end of this calendar year. And that is his timeline, though I suspect it might run into the following calendar year.

**JT:** Thank you. We have had a few questions in around diversity and inclusion for example one from Tim "I read in the last Alumni E-zine about how College is going to conduct an investigation into its links with slavery and colonialism. Is Berkeley about to be cancelled?"

**PP:** George Berkeley... this is a good thing to do for a start, it's a good piece of history, I am happy that there are historians that do work in this. You know colonialism and slavery abounded in the years 1500s, 1600s, 1700s and Trinity's connection with them, if any, is worth deliberating and finding out more about, and that's what some College historians are going to do and I support them very much in doing that. Colonialism and Trinity, there was a time when something like over 1% of land area of Ireland was owned by Trinity College and Trinity got revenues from that and people would

see that as a link to colonialism in itself but apart from what might have happened in the days of the British Empire let's look into it and see. As regards George Berkeley he's an interesting character of course, a brilliant philosopher, and did his great work when he was a student and Fellow of Trinity College, work that I understand philosophers today regard very highly. He did go to of course the United States and buy slaves and that's a matter of historical record and those slaves that he bought he renamed with Christian names and baptised them and so on. I didn't know that until recently. And then when he left the United States the slaves were sold on, donated on, we think to Yale University. Now not every Irish person that went to the United States in those days, I am talking the early- to mid- 1700s bought slaves so what he did was not the normal thing at least, and its worthwhile looking into it more. Perhaps it's also worth looking into why in 1960, so this is moving a few centuries forward, we did name, I think it was 1966, the Berkeley Library was named after George Berkeley and this was presumably known but it didn't cause anyone any concerns then, maybe it shouldn't cause any concerns now, let's have a debate and discussion about it. One things for sure, when the students bring these things up, and it's the students that have brought it up with me, it would be wrong for me to say you know, get out of my office I am not going to discuss this and I am not going to let anyone else discuss this either, it's not a subject for debate. Let's have a debate. First of all let's establish what the true situation is with the historical project, and then let's have a debate and a discussion about George Berkeley. I suspect that it will conclude that he was indeed a brilliant philosopher and that there's every good reason to continue with the name of the Berkeley for the Berkeley Library but let's not pre-judge things.

**JT:** OK, and then we have a question from Aoife who asks "Why did it take so long to have female sculptures in the Long Room? And I suppose I would add on to that, was that an issue students pressed on or was that something that you..."

**PP:** Well, why did it take so long? First, well in a way it's a good question but not one that I can answer because I wasn't here. The library was opened in 1750, or whenever it was, so lots of hundreds of years passed and you will be as well to ask the Provost of those times. Why not?, I suspect it didn't even occur to them. But it occurred to me and that's why we have initiated this project and got the funding for it to have sculptural busts of women in the Old Library. I think it is going to look great, the commission is about to be decided and hopefully within the next year we will have these unveiled in the Old Library. The Librarian is very much up for it, Helen Shenton, we have a small committee looking into seeing how this could be done, you know, where the busts should be put in the

Old Library and so on, how they will fit in. So yes I think it is important because the Old Library is one of the most visited spaces in the whole country and we have 40 busts, 20 on this side and 20 on the that side of all men. I think there probably was a time, Jennifer, when we didn't even notice, but now we will notice and I notice and our students notice and staff notice. So let's do something about it. Now that we can.

**JT:** And can you share the names with us again?

**PP:** Yes, Lady Gregory, Mary Wollstonecraft are two of the names. Ada Lovelace and Rosalind Franklin.

**JT:** Well we look forward to that.

**PP:** I bet you don't know who Ada Lovelace is though?

**JT:** A scientist?

**PP:** Yes, I shouldn't be asking you the questions I know you are supposed to be asking me. Yes, but Ada Lovelace, the first computer program ever written was written by a woman, Ada Lovelace. So I had a petition, I must have had 200 emails from students saying one of the sculptural busts in the Old Library should be Ada Lovelace. So I am delighted that went through in the end as one of the four.

**JT:** Pity you didn't ask me about Mary Wollstonecraft instead, anyway the question in from John. "When I was in college we heard very little about the rankings even though we were in the top 50 (doesn't say what year he was here), now we hear a lot about the rankings but the college's position is a lot worse. To what extent should I advise my children to pay attention to rankings when choosing a university?"

**PP:** I would say, not much frankly, but I know that many nonetheless do. Rankings is really proportional to the money the university has so I don't think they are of any measure really of the quality of teaching that a university offers. The quality of teaching that a university offers should be the primary concern to a parent and Trinity College offers excellent teaching, at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. That should be the thing that influences most. Rankings unfortunately can't be avoided, there is much probably to be criticised about rankings. The basket of KPIs that they use is not really reflective all the time of quality but there is some nonetheless correlation and I wouldn't steer my lights by rankings, I think that if you know a university well, your family has a tradition of attending that university, if you know about the values that university has

and you like them, then I would let rankings make my decision for me.

**JT:** And there is another question coming in that might be good to take now as well, “How do you see the relationship between university research and teaching over the coming decades?” This is from Edward who did Engineering in ’86.

**PP:** Edward Sweeney maybe?

**JT:** Yes. You know all the graduates personally so there you go.

**PP:** Well we went to the same school St Peter’s College in Wexford but this is a really good question, and it wasn’t a plant, because there is a great correlation between research and teaching. They go together hand in glove. You have to think that everything that is taught in university is really the product of research. Research in this university or another and maybe even in many cases in advanced courses the product of the research of the individual teacher. So research is really central to teaching in particular that students in university should get the idea that knowledge is not concreted in and the same forever, that it is changing and that new knowledge is always coming out. New knowledge is always the production of research. And even indeed in their own discipline as they advance in the sophister years and postgraduate they too have a responsibility in generating new knowledge in their discipline. The two of them are so combined that I always mention them if I can in the same breath. Education and research go together, our common mission, the common mission of a university. You can’t really in my world do one without the other.

**JT:** Well I hope that answers your question there and no that definitely wasn’t a plant even though it may have sounded like it. OK Provost, moving on a little bit to philanthropy now. I can see some questions coming in and I will go to them once I ask the establishment question on this “Trinity is in the midst of a major philanthropic campaign ‘Inspiring Generations’ to raise 400 million in private donations. What are the main projects that are going to be funded by this and in what way are they set to be transformational?”

**PP:** Three main capital projects and one that runs across them all. The three main capital projects are first the Old Library Redevelopment Project, this is a key thing I want to get done in the four months remaining in my Provostship. We are going to redevelop the Old Library, we are going to take the shop out of the Old Library and put it underneath the Berkeley Podium and the whole ground

floor of the Old Library is going to be transformed - one part into a Research Collections Study Centre and another part into a place for the display of the Book of Kells and the treasures of the Old Library. And then the environmental controls needed for fire safety and to preserve the collections of the Old Library are going to be put in. This is an expensive project, it is going to cost 93 million Euro, we are very hopeful that the State will join us and I hope to be able to make an announcement about that in supporting the Old Library redevelopment. I think all graduates will be proud when they see the plans for this which we already have planning permission for. And to really safeguard the Old Library and its contents for future generations. Second, E3, close to my own heart of course I am an engineer and you know that's important to me. E3 stands for Engineering, Environment and Emerging Technologies. And we are going to expand the provision of engineering, computer science, and environmental science and natural science education through the E3 project. Building the E3 Learning Foundry building here on the main campus and on our Trinity East campus down at Grand Canal Dock which is our new campus the E3 Research Institute. This will very much expand Educational opportunities in the area of Engineering, Computer Science and Natural Sciences and massively increase Trinity's research into key areas of engineering and computer science. And then the third capital project is the Trinity St James' Cancer Institute. Most people, most alumni will know, St James' Hospital is the biggest hospital in the State and it is a Trinity teaching hospital based in Dublin 8 and together we have created the Trinity St James' Cancer Institute to provide for Ireland its first ever comprehensive cancer care centre. Comprehensive cancer care centres are the vanguard of providing excellent cancer care for a population and can introduce the latest new drugs and so on into cancer care through clinical trials. At the moment Trinity and St James' patients, there are less than, maybe 1-2 percent of patients are on clinical trials. Modern comprehensive cancer care centres would have up to 10 percent and sometimes 20 percent of their patients on cancer trial drugs and we want to have this capability to do advanced comprehensive cancer care in Ireland and the best bet for that in Ireland is a combination between Trinity College and St James' Hospital. So those are the three projects and across them all are scholarships, access and new lectureships and professorships across all three of those disciplines and indeed others. That's how I would summarise 'Inspiring Generations'.

**JT:** Well there is a lot in it and with the first you mentioned there, the Library, you mentioned philanthropic support and government support. Is that the same for the other, for E3 and for the Trinity St James Cancer Institute too, are they a mix of both sources?

**PP:** They are. The model that I try to run in my own mind is a mixture of philanthropy and borrowing. We can borrow at very good rates from the European Investment Bank but philanthropy and borrowing is the Trinity bunch of money, call it X, and get that matched or more than matched by the State makes these projects possible. So really what gets the ball rolling is the philanthropy and we can borrow to match that and the State leverages it up to funding sufficiently to carry through the capital project. And I am pleased to say that worked for the E3 Learning Foundry, we are close to having it ready also for the E3 Research Institute on our new campus at Grand Canal Dock, and as I say I hope before I finish to be able to have that in place also for the Old Library redevelopment. The Trinity St James' Cancer Institute is a longer process and won't be done by the end of my tenure in July, but we will be well on the way to having formally launched our collaboration with St James' that's already in the planning although informally we have the collaboration working very well for a number of years. We decided to take it to the next level, and have a legal agreement between us and that will allow a new governance structure to come in for the Trinity St James' Cancer Institute that will allow us to further progress the capital project.

**JT:** And we have two questions in here about Trinity's relationship with industry and the first actually is a bit more to do with Trinity East that you mentioned there. "What is the timetable?" This is from David. "What is the timetable on the new Innovation Centre being fully functional and what support are the global tech companies with basis in Ireland providing for research at Trinity and the Innovation Centre in particular?"

**PP:** The Board at its meeting in March made a decision that we would take a Trinity-led approach to the development of our campus at Grand Canal Dock, called Trinity East. What that really means is we won't work with the developer to finance most of the project, we will take it slower and do it over time. So the truth is it is probably going to take decades, several Provostships, to fully complete our campus at Trinity East. We have already begun though, the first project is an early activation centre using various buildings we have on the Trinity East Campus to provide a hub for spin-out and start-up companies and also landing ground for research activities of multi-nationals. That's already beginning and we have the money for that already. It's an 8 million Euro project and it's in progress. If you come to Dublin and look at that site in a couple of months' time you will see the building works beginning. The next big project there is the E3 Research Institute and it's going to take some years before that project is breaking ground, so to speak. We are still in the process of getting that project financed. It

will need Government funding, public funding, significant public funding to get it off the ground. If we succeed in getting public funding we also have excellent philanthropy that we are about to announce for the E3 Research Institute at Trinity East. So the answer to your question Jennifer is there are several parts of the Project in progress but the long-term the Board has decided to take a long-term view in developing that site as a campus, as a university campus. Not a set of office blocks, it's not a property play it's going to be an extension of development of the main Campus done carefully and lots of deliberation over time.

**JT:** That's a good comprehensive answer to a few questions that were coming in on the same theme so thank you. I am going to move now to a comment / question / invitation from Henry O in Hong Kong. "Hi Paddy..."

PP: Hi Henry, another engineering graduate.

**JT:** "... thank you for all your effort and contribution to Trinity especially for alumni over here in Asia. I am sure I will meet you again when I am back. I still want to ask, will you come visit us in Hong Kong after covid?" And here's the questions now "Will there be any further strategy to extend the academic relationship building and the rest of the world?"

**PP:** I look forward very much to visiting again Henry in Hong Kong, I look forward to it very much. I remember a very nice dinner we had the last time I was there in your club I think it was. Now, of course we are in the hands of a new Provost here and the three candidates who are debating - I think this webinar clashes with their debate - but one think they all agree on is Global Trinity, continuously engaging with the rest of the world. Trinity is not only an Irish university, it is that for sure, it's not just a Dublin university, it is a university for the world. A university that really is on the world stage and over the last ten years of my Provostship I am pleased that we have been able to further develop that with engagement with institutions around the world, including in Hong Kong where we have joint programs, joint research programs and with alumni around the world of course who are in, what is it Jennifer?, 140 countries around the world. So this is going to continue at pace, everyone agrees that this is great for Trinity, great for all students on the campus that we have a college that draws students from around the world and great for our academics that they have engagements with other universities and industries around the world. That's after all what a proper global university is and everyone benefits from it. So yes absolutely and I look forward very much, I should like to do, maybe I could do a trip around the world



when covid is over visiting everyone. I would love to do that. Maybe Jennifer and alumni relations can persuade me to do that.

**JT:** Well remember when you came into the role we brought you on a tour of the chapters and speaking of which you have met loads of alumni over the past ten years and I know you have always been clear to define the college community as staff, students and alumni. So alumni are still part of the community, they are not a separate community. From your point of view and as a graduate yourself what are the benefits of alumni engagement, what have the benefits been to the College recently and what are the benefits to the graduate?

**PP:** Well I think the benefits to the College are massive from engaging with alumni, you know we talk about being a university for the world or a global university but our footprint in the world is our alumni. So Trinity's presence in the world and its place in the world it's really determined by alumni. I wrote a foreword to a book some years ago on the Provosts of Trinity College, so I'm the 44<sup>th</sup> Provost and this book had all the earlier Provosts and I reflected in it none of the Provosts are very famous, maybe Mahaffy I suppose is a little bit famous, so Trinity College is not made famous by its Provosts or even indeed its academic staff or its professional staff. It's the alumni, it's the graduates out there in the world that are really the essence of what Trinity College is about. So it's like, Jennifer ask me what about alumni, is like asking me what about my arms? It is part of the body of the university and it's good that the statutes have changed to add that the Trinity College community is students, staff and alumni. I would have thought it was obvious but it is good to have it written in there. The College benefits greatly from these relationships, actually one of the most tangible ways is when a student, for example when Erasmus students, when our undergraduate students go on placements abroad often times they're helped settle in wherever they go by alumni in that city. They may only meet them once or twice but it's good that they know that there's a community for them there to fall back on if they should ever need it. And those kind of things are probably the most important for an alumni network, it provides a kind of encouragement in a way for us who are working back here in the College on a day to day basis. To know that we have out there in the wider world the support of our alumni. I hope that's not too philosophical.

**JT:** No and we definitely do have their support and we recently reached 150,000 volunteer hours from alumni so they would be alumni who sit on advisory boards or act as mentors etc. so it is great that they are giving in that way. I am going to ask you Provost

just to move away from Trinity for one second and think more broadly about the third level sector in Ireland and indeed the fourth level sector. You have spent the majority of your career, all of your career in education and so if you were to think about the sector now in this year, how optimistic would you feel about it? And what do you think are the main challenges for the sector?

**PP:** It won't surprise you to know I am optimistic about it, I am an optimist by nature. So I think what universities offer, what higher education offers is something in great demand. You don't see any slack off of it. A couple of years ago there was talk of it, people would say what's the good of a university degree? Is my earning power really improved by doing a bachelors or a masters? Maybe I would be just as well to go directly into the workforce? Some companies kind of support this, some of the very big companies will say don't bother getting a degree, we don't care what your degree is, come to us and we will teach you. Despite all of that people will want to come to universities. This year Trinity College had a 40 percent increase in the number of CAO applicants. We have never had an increase like it ever, sometimes it increments up a couple of percent but this year a 40 percent increase in the number of applicants. Now we are oversubscribed anyway so an increase in the number of applicants won't make much difference to us as we fill all our places in any case but it goes to show how much young people and their parents want to go to university, or young people want to go to university and their parents want to support them in that. So higher education if you use demand as your only metric is in good shape however perhaps that's not the only metric and there are other things that should cause us to reflect about higher education. Perhaps too the relationship between higher education and other aspects of the further education system need to be better developed. What do I mean by that? Well, after the Leaving Cert, or after High School, Secondary School students can do a variety of things. It's not very good if every student in Ireland wants to come to Trinity to do Law or Medicine and the points should jump and we have all these unhappy students that didn't get the course that they wanted. Many of whom may not have been suited to Doctor or Lawyer but are kind of doing it for prestige reasons. I think that is a worry, it would be a worry for me that the higher education system worldwide is not thinking more about what is good for young people but rather putting them under pressure to go to a small number of high prestige universities and therefore many young people end up feeling like they are failures when really they are far from it, and their talents could be much better used in another way than going to university. So that is something to think about and maybe another side to that is some university Presidents in Ireland, I know one anyway, when the points come out every year for the courses and he looks at the points and he says Oh some of my courses the

points have gone up and if in a year where the majority of points have gone up in the course, in his courses, he's happy he thinks this is a measure of quality. I don't even look at the points, that's not what it's about. It's about universities offering opportunities for young people that they can genuinely take advantage, it helps them to develop their lives as well as their careers and ultimately gets them to into situations where they can be happy in life. And I think if perhaps there is a downside to the optimism I expressed earlier I think that there is too much prestige attaching to a small number of institutions and that seems to be only getting worse. Young people and those advising them should see the broader opportunities that life offers, and higher education institutions and universities like ours should try to play our part in bringing that about.

**JT:** It is an interesting issue and it's one that when you see the supplements that fall out of the newspapers for the secondary schools saying who went to which college and who went on to third level you know it's almost a little bit like the rankings it's reducing something to one very small aspect of what it really should be about. Provost, moving into another phase of this interview now there are lots and lots of questions coming in asking the highlights of the last ten years, the challenges of the last ten years. There's a few asking that in the same way and what you might have done differently if you had known then what you know now. So we might just take them in turn and it can be brief if you want. So the highlights of the last ten years.

**PP:** There are so many and I find it hard to put my finger on one thing to say this is a stand out highlight of everything but one event that did shape my Provostship was in this very room here, I am in the Library of the Provost's House, and I was here with one of our great supporters Martin Naughton and I always wanted to do this important project for Engineering, Computer Science and Natural Sciences called E3, I mentioned it earlier. I really think that it is important for a university, so many students want to study the subject, so many employers want to employ people who have done Engineering, Computer Science and Natural Sciences and the universities are in the middle. It is only by increasing capacity of the universities can we meet the ambitions of the students and the employers and wider society. And I asked Martin for an amount of money. I won't mention it here, it's widely known anyway. It was almost three times larger than any other philanthropic donation given by an individual and I was so nervous asking for this amount of money and I had a piece of paper and I had to read out what was written on it. Martin, I would like to ask your support for ....., I read out the amount of money and I thought God what's he going to say. And he was quiet for a while and I thought oh that was too much I

shouldn't have done that and then he just turned around and said "I will do it" and shook my hand. I remember that. And it's not just about the money, it's about the opportunity it brings for Trinity and for the University overall. It couldn't have happened without a lead philanthropic donation and afterwards the State came in to match Martin's money and now we have a great project that is only getting going because it's going to continue. I am very proud too of the Trinity Education Project which had a fundamental renewal of the undergraduate curriculum. It brought us back to something we used to have in the past but with more coherence to the undergraduate curriculum that all students in the university, we take in about 2,000 undergraduates every year. After the Trinity Education Project they all share something in common because they can all choose from the same pool of collectives. Trinity really got ahead of the game when it came to undergraduate education through the Trinity Education Project. You want a downside from me as well, to be honest, I should give one negative and I will. Some things I am unhappy about or I came to too late to fix is the students access to parts of the campus. You go around to some of the research labs now and they have got combination locks on the door, so of course the students can't go in, and also many buildings are locked and students can't go in. When I was an undergraduate, you could wander around anywhere, you could have gigs in the BATTERY, you could go into the Museum Building and climb up on to the roof. Now that's dangerous and we shouldn't have been doing that but there was a certain freedom in the university that for one reason or another has been lost. A student said to me that when she goes into the Arts Block and buys a cup of coffee, and she says it's far too expensive, it's my daughter, one of them and she sits down beside somebody and it's invariably not somebody who is a student. And I can remember going into the Arts Block to the Coffee Dock there and buy your terrible coffee there and you would sit down beside someone and it would invariably be another student from another course so the University has lost something of the intimacy that comes with that and I think we have to work hard to get it back.

**JT:** That's actually an interesting one because we did have a question but we are getting out of time there about the number of tourists in Front Square. Someone who said they felt like the Campus was theirs when they were there and I know exactly what you mean. I remember wandering around the JCR in House 1 and just the freedom there but they say, I am just reading it here, they say they love to go back on Campus whenever they are back in Dublin but sometimes they feel there is more tourists than students.

**PP:** Now, they should come in now during covid because of course the only people in here now are students and staff. In fact I was sitting out on a deck chair, there are deck chairs now in Front Square and Library Square and I was sitting out with a friend of mine on deck chairs and there were students on deck chairs, one of them came over to us and said “Provost, I am doing the crossword and I am not able to get nine down”. And we did the crossword together. And that can’t happen when Front Square is full of tourists because invariably we wouldn’t see each other or I wouldn’t know that they were students. So yes, whoever that is, they should drop me an email and they can come in. We will get them a little pass to get in and they can wander around the College and feel very much like it was when the only people going around were those in residence.

**JT:** Well, I am afraid we are going to have to wrap it up so I am just going to ask one more question but I will say there are loads more we could have asked. There’s also a huge number of invitations coming in to go all over the place. Invitation to Dubai, invitation to ...

**PP:** I love Dubai.

**JT:** So your next few years are taken care of. So just the final question Provost. So this Saturday the 10<sup>th</sup> April we will know who the 45<sup>th</sup> Provost of Trinity will be. What advice would you give them?

**PP:** Well, what advice? It kind of depends who the person is as I know all three candidates very well and they have all worked in my administration in the College over the last three years running very good campaigns. Whichever one of them it will be, will be excellent. We have got three really experienced, brilliant candidates for Provostship. I hope whoever gets it I wish them well. I won’t be quick to say “do this, do that”, or to give advice but one thing I will say is and I don’t think they need to hear it from me because they will know it anyway is get out on the road and talk to alumni around the world, they are among the most informed people because they know the College because they were here but also because they have had careers and lives outside the University, can look in and give very good advice. At the beginning of my Provostship we held something called the Trinity Global Graduate Forum if you remember, I think at the end of the first year, and that Trinity Global Graduate Forum really gave me the ideas that fuelled me forward for the next ten years of the Provostship. Maybe if I was to give a piece of advice I would say hold another Global Graduate Forum, reach out to the alumni, that’s where the great ideas are

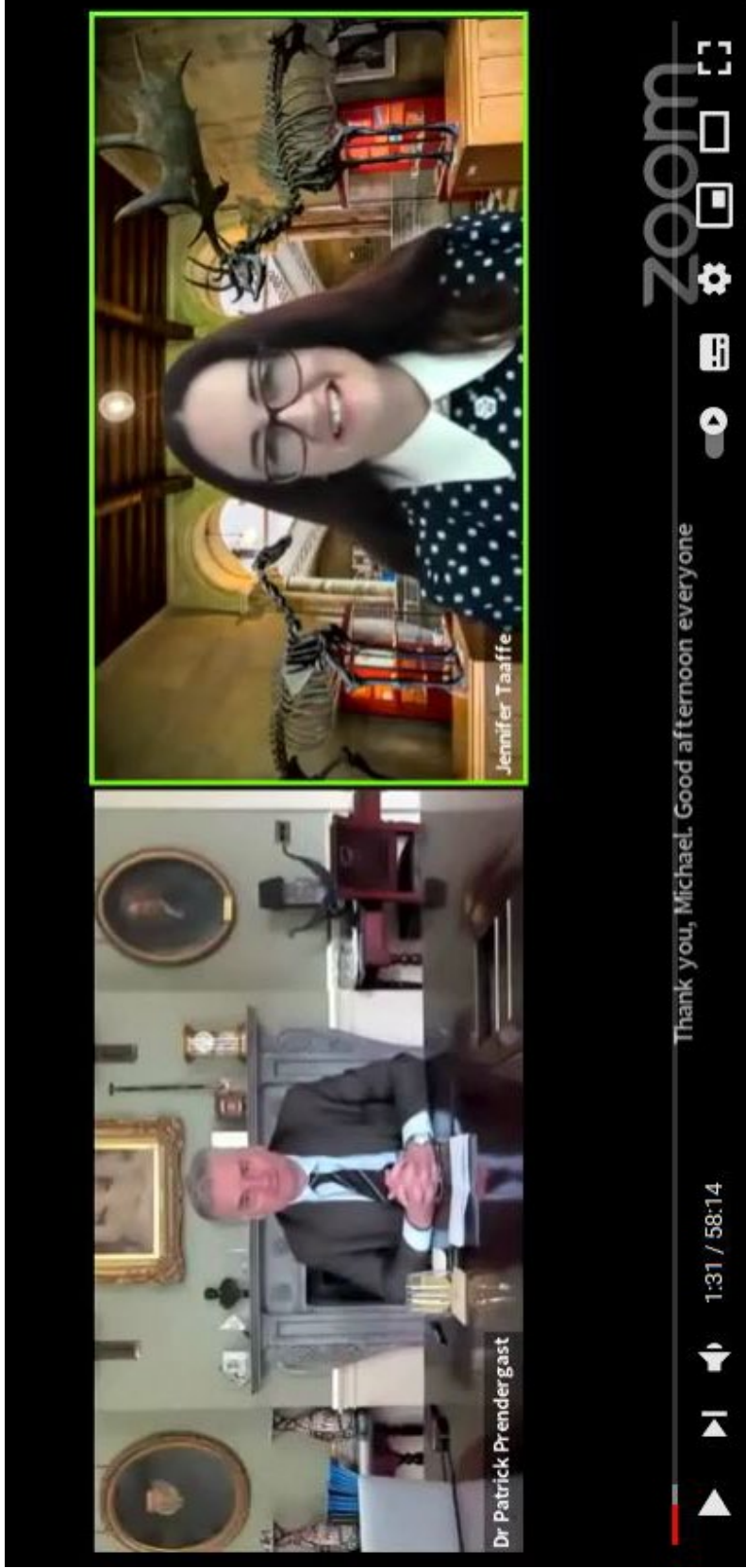
and think about how the next phase of Trinity's development can succeed and be supported through advice of alumni.

**JT:** Thank you very much Provost and that wasn't planted either even though it sounds like it. Provost, that's all we have time for today and I would like to thank you so much on behalf of all of us here at Trinity Development and Alumni, and on behalf of the alumni community. Thank You for sharing your thoughts about your achievements over the last ten years and about your legacy, we really appreciate it. So now I am going to hand back over to Michael for some closing remarks.

**MM:** Thank you Jennifer and thank you again Provost that was an absolutely fantastic discussion, really insightful. I know the quote I will be taking away from it is that our footprint in the world is our alumni, I think that rings true for everyone working in the alumni office. Before we go I would just like to once again thank the Provost, our amazing MC and host Jennifer as well as my colleagues Siobhan Brady and Aoife Brady who have been working behind the scenes making today possible. I would also like to thank each and every one of you who listened and tuned in today, for all your engaging and insightful comments, thank yous, invitations and questions. It has been really great to have you all here. Before I go I would like to share two upcoming webinars with everyone but before that if you have any questions or comments about this webinar or the webinar series or anything else in general we can help you with in the alumni office please email us at [alumni@tcd.ie](mailto:alumni@tcd.ie) We are always delighted to hear from you.

END

\* \* \*



### Ten Years as Provost: A Retrospective with Provost Patrick Prendergast

Provost Patrick Prendergast in the Provost's Library, with Jennifer Taaffe zooming in from her home with a Museum Building background





07 April 2021

## **Address at the Laidlaw Programme Celebration for 2019 Scholar cohort**

*Online*

Thank you, Joel, and welcome everyone - Laidlaw Scholars, academic supervisors and guests.

This is a significant day: the graduation, so to speak, of our second cohort of Laidlaw scholars.

The Laidlaw Undergraduate Research and Leadership programme was established in 2014, thanks to Lord Laidlaw of Rothiemay's commitment to the development of young people. The programme aims to develop a new generation of leaders who are skilled researchers and empirical decision makers and who believe it is a moral imperative to lead with integrity.

Trinity is honoured to be one of just twelve universities worldwide included in the programme. Other participants include Columbia University in New York, the University of Toronto, and Hong Kong University, as well as leading UK universities.

The programme invests in highly talented and motivated undergraduates, giving them the knowledge, skills and experience to become active global citizens and future leaders. It also aims to create an international network of diverse, passionate and ethical young leaders who will reinvest their skills, knowledge and experience to help others succeed.

The Scholarship funds both a research project and leadership development. The 2019 scholars were involved in an independent research project, supervised by a Trinity academic and carried out over two summers, and an 18 month leadership development programme.

In their first year of the programme, 2019, this cohort of scholars got opportunities to travel and attend leadership weekends and international conferences, notably the Laidlaw Scholars Conference in UCL in October 2019.

In response to Covid-19, the Programme moved largely online as of March last year. The scholars successfully worked with their supervisors to transition to online research and fully engaged with

the online leadership development sessions. They have made videos showcasing their research and have presented posters and given talks at national and international conferences, firmly establishing themselves as part the Trinity research community.

Tonight's event recognises the work and commitment of both students and academic staff to making the Laidlaw programme at Trinity such a success.

These 22 Laidlaw scholars have learnt much from the programme, and they have given much back. They have set a very high standard for Laidlaw Scholars at Trinity, and they leave a lasting impression on all who have worked with them during their time in the Programme.

Trinity is proud of these scholars and we're delighted to be part of the Laidlaw programme, which aligns so strongly with our own goals and philosophy of education.

The Trinity Education is aimed at encouraging students

- to think independently,
- to communicate effectively,
- to develop continuously, and
- to act responsibly.

These are the four graduate attributes. Our undergraduate curriculum focuses on original research, global mobility, employability, co-curricular activities and interdisciplinarity. These are the skills and approaches which we believe will best prepare our graduates for successful careers and responsible citizenship in a fast-changing world.

Lord Laidlaw believes, as do we here in Trinity, that at university, students should develop a positive, proactive mindset that enables them to meet different situations throughout life, with resilience, creativity and adaptiveness.

Only a small number of students every year can be Laidlaw Scholars. But I believe that the programme is beneficial beyond the successful participants. It helps drive ambition and aspiration across the college. Every student who applies thinks more deeply about the nature of research and leadership.

\* \* \*

This evening we also celebrate the extension of the Laidlaw programme. Funding was initially received for three scholar cohorts

(intake 2018, 2019 and 2020). Last year funding was successfully renewed for a further three cohorts (intake 2021, 2022 and 2023). I'm absolutely delighted that the Laidlaw programme will continue to be part of the University and that more students can avail of the great opportunity. On behalf of the whole university, my thanks to Lord Laidlaw and the Laidlaw Foundation for his vision and belief in our students.

The new Laidlaw Programme, introduced for the current 2020 Scholars, now includes a 6-week practical "leadership in action" project. The Scholars will undertake this in the Summer and we'll be very interested to hear from them on this new aspect of the programme.

\* \* \*

There are many people to thank for the running and administration of the Laidlaw programme in Trinity:

- Joel McKeever,
- Trinity Development and Alumni, in particular Gerard McHugh;
- the Academic Secretary, Patricia Callaghan,
- the Director of Trinity Careers Service, Orla Bannon;
- all involved in the Laidlaw Selection Panels;
- And the Laidlaw Academic Supervisors.

Finally, of course, my heartfelt congratulations to today's scholars. You are due to graduate from Trinity this year. I know these have not been the final two years you dreamed of having. You have risen admirably to the challenge of online learning, as have your professors, and you have proved that education – together with the leadership and research projects in this Programme – can be done very effectively. But I know how much you'll have missed the social interaction and in-person encounters, for which there is simply no substitution.

I hope nevertheless that you have all got to know each other well over the course of this programme. You will now be joining the Laidlaw at Trinity alumni group which keeps our Laidlaw Scholars from across all the cohorts linked in with each other, with the university, and with the international Laidlaw community across the participating universities in three continents.

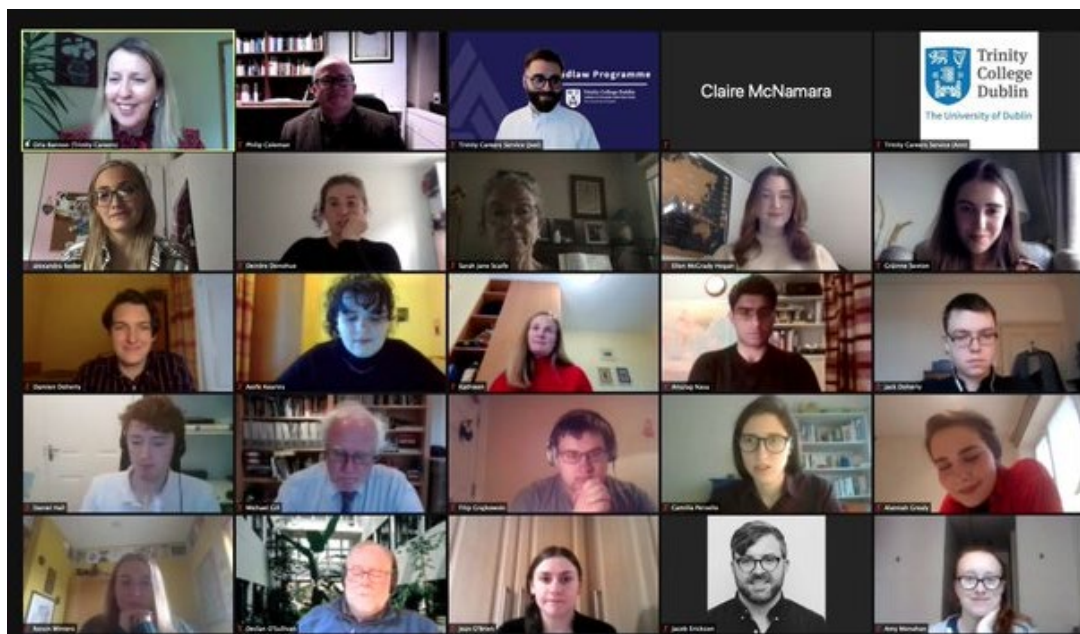
Your achievement in being selected for, and completing, this programme is something that will stand to you. In the early years of your career, it is a mark of distinction, an international brand of

excellence. And as you develop and fulfil your potential as leaders and thinkers, what you learnt on the programme, and who you met and connected to, will continue to root you and to drive you.

I wish you all the best.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



Screenshot on zoom of some of the attendees at the celebration event for 2019 Laidlaw Scholars

15 April 2021

## **Address at the Announcement of the Brendan Kennelly Archive at Trinity College Dublin**

*Zoom from the Provost's Library*

Thank you, Philip\*, and welcome everyone to this momentous occasion for Irish writing: the announcement of the Brendan Kennelly archive at Trinity College Dublin.

Trinity was lucky enough to receive Brendan's archive a number of years ago – as the Librarian and College Archivist Helen Shenton will tell you shortly.

This remarkable archive is particularly large – I believe almost 200 cartons – and particularly comprehensive. We did not want to announce it until we were in a position to appoint an archivist to oversee the cataloguing. Happily, now, we are in that position.

This is a big deal: the Brendan Kennelly Archive will become a launching point for many scholarly careers for generations to come. So we are celebrating with this event, held in the week of Brendan's 85<sup>th</sup> birthday.

We're very grateful for the participation today of the poets, whom you'll hear shortly reading Brendan's poems; I know they are participating because of their love and admiration for Brendan and his work.

Like many of you here, I was lucky enough to study and work in the same college as Brendan for many years. We were not, of course, in the same School, or the same Faculty even, but Brendan enthused and engaged the whole college. I was always aware of how fortunate we are to have Brendan as a friend and colleague. By his mere presence he makes Trinity a better and more humane place. To his students, I know he was an incredible mentor and inspiration. For all of us, he was a creative force and someone who unfailingly raised your spirits when you met him on campus.

As Provost, I like to quote poems in speeches, whenever I can. A poem can sometimes be both hammer and nail in making a point.

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\* Professor Philip Coleman, MC of the announcement event and Professor in Trinity's School of English.

I've got pleasure from quoting Auden and Philip Larkin and Michael Hartnett and Emily Dickinson and Eavan Boland, but most of all I got pleasure from using Brendan's lines to get across our mission in the strategic plan:

'Though we live in a world that dreams of ending  
That always seems about to give in  
Something that will not acknowledge conclusion  
Insists that we forever begin.'

Why those lines? Because they celebrate that instinct towards regeneration which I like to think of as central to education and research. For four centuries and counting, this university 'forever begins'.

In 2019, the Library held an exhibition celebrating Brendan's life in poetry called 'Forever Begins\*'. It had wonderful photos, copies of his early books, his writings and original drafts of poems with corrections on them. It's extraordinary to see a poem coming together through crossed out words on the page.

One item I particularly remember was Brendan's jottings on a boarding pass. I jot on boarding passes myself, like many of us. This is one of the 'scrawlings' on Brendan's boarding pass:

'Nothing but the walking dead  
Suddenly, near my head  
The flash of a pigeon's wing  
How little I know of anything.'

On a boarding pass! Imagine having a mind that can find words like that in an airport!

The exhibition – which is still online – gives us a flavour of what's in the archive.

The Librarian will tell us more about Brendan's papers. Let me just say that, thanks to this extraordinarily significant archive, Trinity Library is expanding its 20<sup>th</sup> century literary collections. Collections enhance each other – so, for instance, it's extremely helpful to scholars that we also have substantial material relating to Patrick Kavanagh, whom Brendan knew and admired. I hope that the Brendan Kennelly Archive will be an encouragement to others with important literary and historic archives to donate them to Trinity Library.

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\* <https://www.tcd.ie/library/exhibitions/kennelly/>

This is an exciting time for the Library. We are currently embarked on a largescale Library renewal project which will enable us to conserve, digitise, and open up our remarkable collections. We've now got planning permission to renovate the Old Library, including the creation of a new Research Collections Study Centre in the colonnades. I'm delighted that the cataloguing of Brendan's archive is part of this great bibliothecal drive.

\* \* \*

It's now my pleasure to read a message from An t-Uachtarán,  
Michael D. Higgins:



UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN  
PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

**Message from President Michael D. Higgins  
at the online Announcement of the Archiving of Brendan Kennelly Literary Archive  
in the Library of Trinity College Dublin**

May I say what a pleasure it is to send my best wishes to Brendan Kennelly on this important occasion. How appropriate too it is that we mark the work of Brendan in a special way during a time when so many have turned to poetry for reassurance and hope at a time of great uncertainty and challenge.

Across a long and greatly distinguished career, Brendan's contribution to Irish literature has been immeasurable. The making available of his work in this new and expanded way, work as poet, scholar, playwright, editor and teacher is such a significant and welcome moment in the literary life of our nation and one for which we can be truly grateful.

Brendan's great body of work, offered in texts, but also in performance to audiences at venues all over Ireland stretches back over seventy years beautifully capturing the many shades and moods of an ever changing Ireland. He challenges and questions, confronts new truths, vindicates the necessary freedom of a space of expression and dialogue that includes the inner life of the guilty. Brendan's work brings his readers into places of new possibilities not yet realised.

Brendan is a poet of insight, compassion and profound empathy, speaking for citizens in all their complexities and vulnerabilities, bringing us deep into the spirit and soul of the 'other' and guiding us through the dark spaces they so often inhabit. Like all great writers, Brendan's imbues his work with a great honesty that is full of risk and real courage. As a sincere and authentic poet he has never been afraid to delve deep within the darkness of his own emotions, to offer the flaws that he sees within himself.



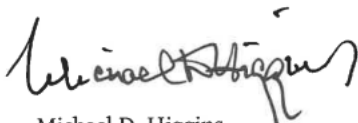
It is those qualities which have made Brendan one of our greatest living poets with work not confined to the page but resonating from a life lived in a spirit of wonder, care, understanding, humour and tolerance. He has given as generously of his time and companionship as he does of his great genius and talent. It is impossible to separate Brendan the man from Brendan the writer as those who have crossed the cobblestones to meet him know so well.

He is one of our greatest living poets, whose legacy is an extraordinary one. I am so delighted that his remarkable life's work will soon be made accessible to the scholars, writers and educators of the future. That is a wonderful gift to future creativity and scholarship, from a remarkable talented writer and an inspirational teacher and mentor.

I have had the good fortune to call Brendan a friend across many years. Like so many who have had the gift of Brendan's friendship, it has greatly enriched and enhanced my life. Five years ago I had the honour of attending his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration in the Abbey Theatre. The great affection in which Brendan is held by former colleagues and pupils, and by so many of his contemporaries within the literary world was palpable that day.

So may I join all of them again today in thanking Brendan for his unique collection of work that will now be archived in the library of Trinity College.

Beir Beannacht



Michael D. Higgins  
Uachtarán na hÉireann  
President of Ireland

Ps. I attach my poem dedicated to Brendan *'When the Muse Visits'* written after he had been so helpful in encouraging my first collection *'Betrayal'* in 1990.

## When the Muse Visits

*for Brendan Kennelly*

Poet, do not complain when the Muse visits.  
Welcome her in your warm abrazo.\*  
Or are you too tired for her subversive  
touch?  
A viejo\* who puts sleep before the touch of  
flesh?

If she is not made welcome,  
She will not leave, but sigh,  
And stay with you for a while.  
As all love dies,  
It will not be sudden.  
It will simply wither.

Poet, hold the Muse in your embrace.  
Exhaust yourself and celebrate.  
Fashion into words  
That which most may feel  
But never utter.

What you are allowed  
In the foreplay of the soul, is sacred.  
You have been chosen, poet,  
Hold the Muse *con respeto*\*  
In your embrace.

- \* *abrazo* embrace
- \* *viejo* old man
- \* *con respeto* with respect

\* \* \*



Brendan Kennelly reading at the end of the announcement regarding his archive, and giving us a wink at the end. He was in his nursing home in Kerry.



20 April 2021

**Address at The John Pollard Foundation (JPF)  
International Poetry Prize 2021**

*Zoom from the Yeats Room, Provost's House*

Good evening everyone,

And welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual John Pollard Foundation International Poetry Prize for an outstanding debut poetry collection in the English language.

Three years ago, this significant prize was inaugurated. It is as generously endowed as the renowned Forward Prize for Poetry. It encourages poets at the start of their careers by awarding debut collections. And it is truly international in that it is open to all debut poetry collections in English, no matter where in the world they are published.

I'm proud and honoured that the Trinity Oscar Wilde Centre has been trusted with the administration of such an important Prize.

The Prize is named by its benefactor, Stephen Vernon, for his grandfather. Stephen is here with us tonight, together with friends and family, and he will say a few words shortly.

I think there are about 30 of us on this Zoom event – colleagues from Trinity School of English, guests of Stephen Vernon's, guests of the prize-winner and, of course, the members of the Prize Selection Committee. You are all very welcome and thank you for being with us this evening.

\* \* \*

I'm sure I am not the only one who has found myself returning more and more to poetry this past challenging year. 2020 was the year of Covid. It was also the year we lost two very great Irish poets, who also happened to be Trinity graduates: Eavan Boland and Derek Mahon, towering figures. I was moved when Eavan Boland died, to find that my two daughters, who are undergraduates but not literature students, not only knew her poetry well but had their favourite 'Eavan Boland' poem.

And I salute the genius of whichever RTE producer it was who decided on 28<sup>th</sup> March last year, when the country went into severe

lockdown, to end the main evening news on RTE with Derek Mahon reading his transcendent poem ‘Everything is going to be alright’\*.

Those were words we needed to hear. I think many of us murmured the last beautiful lines of that poem to ourselves right through lockdown:

*I lie here in a riot of sunlight  
watching the day break and the clouds flying.  
Everything is going to be all right.*

Particularly at times like this, we need to hear that ‘everything is going to be alright’ and we need to hear it said directly, with toughness, without cliché or false hope. That is the power of poetry. I thank all poets for what they give us, for their literally life-saving words. And I thank the publishers and benefactors of poetry for their essential part in the vital transfusion.

\* \* \*

We’re delighted that this International Prize is being run from Ireland, which speaks, of course, to this country’s remarkable poetic tradition. And as I’ve said, it’s a huge honour for the Trinity Oscar Wilde Centre to be entrusted with administering the Prize.

Since 2006 the Trinity Oscar Wilde Centre has also administered the Rooney Prize for emerging Irish literary talent, one of the longest-established of any literary prize anywhere, and one that has proved particularly good at spotting emerging talent.

The International John Pollard Foundation Poetry Prize complements the Rooney Prize, and brings to the Oscar Wilde Centre a new global audience of publishers and poets writing in the English language.

A prize is only as good as its judges. The Selection Committee for this has been carefully chosen.

- The chairperson is Eoin McNamee, author and Director of the Oscar Wilde Centre. He is joined by:
- Vona Groarke, poet, whose *Selected Poems* won the 2017 Pigott Prize;
- Philip Coleman, Professor in English; and

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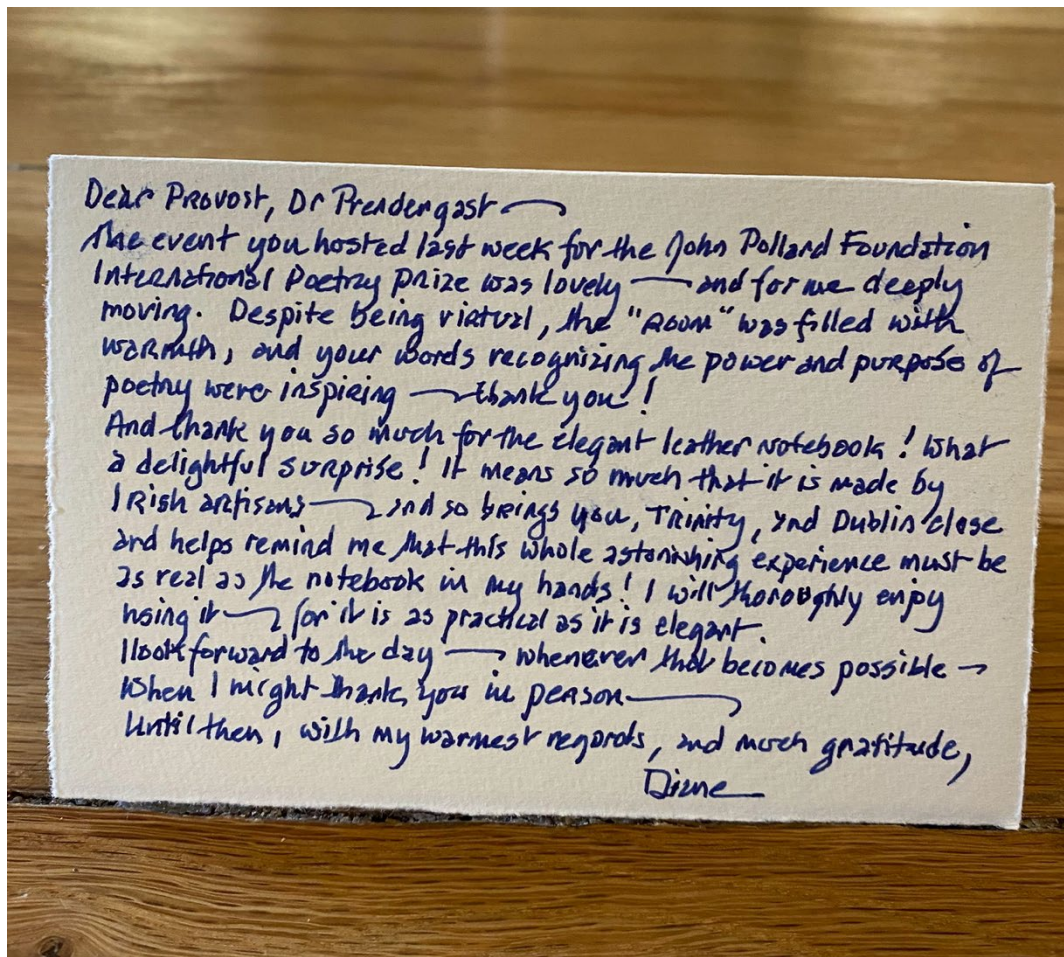
\* <https://lovin.ie/news/everything-is-going-to-be-alright-last-nights-rte-news-ended-with-a-message-of-hope>

- Alice Lyons, poet and recipient of the Patrick Kavanagh Award whose first novel, *Oona*, was published last year.

On behalf of the university, and indeed of poetry lovers everywhere, I thank the Committee for the work they have put into this Prize. I know that many books were entered from around the world and I have no doubt the quality was very high and the short-listing a difficult call. I thank the Committee, and of course Stephen Vernon, for drawing our attention to outstanding international poets. I look forward to getting an opportunity to read their work.

And now I know how impatient you all must be to find out who is the winner of the John Pollard International Poetry Prize. May I invite Eoin McNamee to announce the 2021 winner.

\* \* \*



Note from the winner Diane Louie to Provost Patrick Prendergast after the zoom ceremony





22 April 2021

## **Email message from the Provost to the Trinity College Community–Update on Trinity Week 2021**

Dear students and colleagues,

As you know next week is Trinity Week. While the majority of the events planned for the week have been cancelled or postponed, I am very pleased to confirm that some key events will be proceeding on Trinity Monday, albeit remotely.

A meeting of the Board of the College will be convened at 9.30am, with Board members joining remotely. The business to be considered is election to Fellowship and Scholarship.

After Board, the Mace Bearer and I will proceed to the steps of the Public Theatre where I will announce the names of the newly elected Fellows and Scholars at 10am. This announcement will be accessible for everyone to view as the live stream will be available on the following webpage:

<https://www.tcd.ie/Secretary/FellowsScholars/livestream>. Viewing by livestream is the preferred method for staff and student participation as it may not be possible to maintain social distancing if there are many people in Front Square. If you do come to Front Square please take full account of the need to maintain social distancing.

Immediately after the announcement you are invited to view the Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving at 10.30am which was pre-recorded in the College Chapel. I thank the Chaplains for making arrangements for this. The address will be given by Archbishop Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin. This event may be accessed [here](#).

At 11.30 am, the Trinity Monday Memorial Discourse will be streamed live from the Graduates Memorial Building. This year the discourse commemorates Noël Browne and will be given by Trinity graduate and Tánaiste Leo Varadkar T.D. This event may be accessed [here](#).

I hope that many of you will have the opportunity to join with me in these Trinity Monday events. I look forward to celebrating the achievements of the new Fellows and Scholars of Trinity Monday 2021 when we are all able to come together in College again when

this crisis is over, and I take this opportunity to wish you and your families well in these difficult and challenging times for us all.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Prendergast  
PROVOST  
\* \* \*

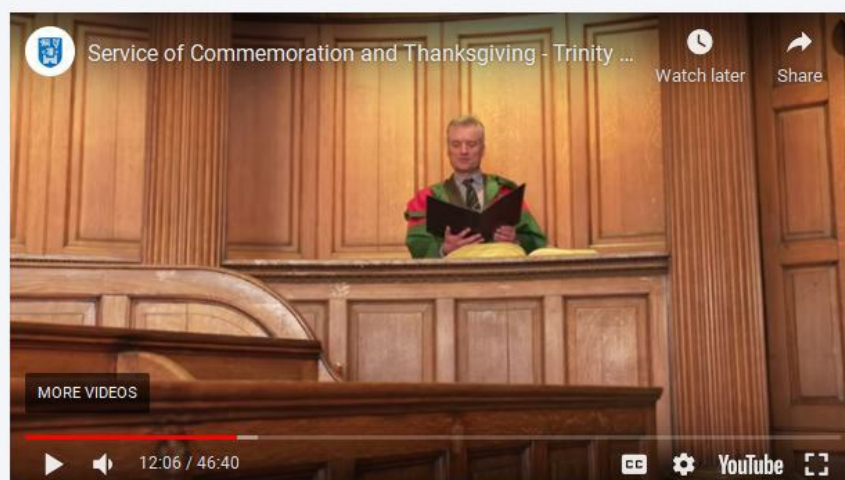
### 10:00am Announcement of elections to Fellowship and Scholarship



Provost Patrick Prendergast making the traditional Trinity Monday announcement of new Fellows and Scholars from the steps of the Public Theatre, flanked by the Mace Bearer Mr Joe Mockler, and the sign language interpreter

### 10:30am Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving

The address will be given by Archbishop Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin.



Still from the pre-recorded video of the Trinity Monday Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving with Provost Patrick Prendergast reading from the Provost's pew in the college chapel

26 April 2021

**Introduction of Tanaiste Leo Varadkar, TD, on his  
delivery of the Trinity Monday Memorial  
Discourse on Noël Christopher Browne**

*Graduates Memorial Building (and live-streamed), Trinity College*

Good morning,

And welcome to the GMB for the Trinity Monday Discourse.

This is our second Trinity Monday to be delivered virtually, rather than to the usual crowds. Earlier this morning, I read out the names of the new Fellows and Scholars. My congratulations to them.

We can't have the traditional Scholars Dinner tonight but every decade, the Scholars of the Decade are invited back for the Dinner – which means that in 2031 these 2021 scholars will be back in college to celebrate their achievement, together with the 2011, 2001 and 1991 scholars and so on back down the decades.

Trinity Monday is perhaps the most quintessential of all our College festive days. It is a day steeped in Trinity heritage, a day when we renew our tradition through our new scholars and fellows, and a day when we reflect on our tradition through the Trinity Monday Discourse, in which a distinguished graduate is asked to speak on another distinguished graduate.

The Discourse has been a highlight of my time as Provost. I recall many brilliant lectures. This, my last Discourse as Provost, is a particularly special one.

The Tánaiste, Leo Varadkar, is giving the Discourse on Noel Browne.

What makes this special is that a pre-eminent politician and Trinity medical graduate is giving the Discourse on another pre-eminent politician and Trinity medical graduate, and he is doing so during a pandemic.

As Minister for Health in the late 1940s, Noel Browne brought in mass screening for tuberculosis and launched a large-scale construction programme to build new hospitals and sanatoria. I'm

sure I am not the first to wonder what he would have made of the current health crisis.

We're most grateful to the Tánaiste for accepting our invitation and bringing his unique perspective to the life and achievement of Dr Browne.

In Trinity, we're very proud of Leo Varadkar, the first of our graduates to become Taoiseach. He graduated with a Medical Degree from Trinity in 2003 and has been a continually engaged alumnus, giving so much support to our college activities.

I recall him as Minister for Health in 2014, coming to campus to take the Ice Bucket Challenge, getting thoroughly drenched and frozen in order to raise money to support research into Motor Neurone Disease.

It's characteristic of his generosity that he is taking the time to deliver this lecture today. We're sorry it's not to a large in-person audience, but I believe it is to the largest global online audience of any Trinity Monday Discourse yet.

The Tánaiste was an active member of the Hist as a student here, and his speeches, as a politician, are noted for their wide-ranging exploration of history, culture, literature and science. Noel Browne, who had himself such a wide-ranging career and interests, is a wonderful subject for the Tánaiste.

Trinity is fortunate enough to hold the Noel Browne archive, presented to us by his wife, Mrs Phyllis Browne. There are I think 40 boxes in the archive and as well as the expected material on, for instance, the Mother and Child Scheme, there are boxes on the Anti-Apartheid movement, Gay Rights, Prisoners Rights, El Salvador, the Gaeltacht...

Which is to say: a discourse on Noel Browne could go in so many different directions.

Without further adue, may I invite An Tánaiste, the TD for Dublin West: Leo Varadkar to deliver the 2021 Trinity Monday Discourse.

\* \* \*



Tánaiste Leo Varadkar, T.D., delivering the Trinity Monday Memorial Discourse in the G.M.B.



04 May 2021

## Address at an evening with Garry Lyons

*Zoom*

Thank you, Kevin\*, and good evening everyone.

It's a real pleasure to be here with so many engineering colleagues and alumni, celebrating Garry and reflecting on 60 years of engineering education in Trinity.

Next year 2022 will be the 180<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the School of Engineering. This evening we're reflecting on 60 years of this 180 – a third of the entire period of the School's existence – because that's how long Garry has been contributing to the School. This is his Diamond Jubilee.

The question, of course, is how can anyone be associated with a university for six decades? Well, Garry notched up that length of service because he began working for Trinity, aged 15, as a Trainee Technician, and over the next 27 years he advanced to Technician, Senior Technician, Chief Technician before he completed his MSc in 1986 and began lecturing in Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering. He was then promoted to Senior Lecturer. That's when I encountered him when I was an undergraduate here in the mid-80s. Afterwards, when I joined the department, he was a colleague.

He is now a semi-retired member of staff of Trinity, holding the position of Adjunct Associate Professor in Mechanical, Manufacturing & Biomedical Engineering. In the course of his long career, Garry has received many honours and distinctions, including Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce and Member of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland. He has written extensively on the properties of liquids, engineering design, bioengineering and the history of technology. He was honoured with a *Festschrift* by his colleagues in 2008.†

Anyone who knows Garry, or was taught by him, values hugely his intelligence, his enthusiasm and his wit, as well as his wide range of interests. It wasn't a surprise to me when in 2015, he published his brilliantly titled book, *Steaming to Kingstown and Sucking up to*

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\* Kevin Kelly, Associate Professor in Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering

† *Perspectives on Design and Bioengineering, Essays in Honour of C.G. Lyons* (C.K. Simms, P.J. Prendergast, Eds.), TCBE, 2008

*Dalkey*, which describes the early days of rail in South County Dublin that doesn't shy away from the technical aspects but is yet accessible to the 'lay' reader.

And now he is publishing another book which extends his scope: *Ireland's 19th Century Exhibitions of Industry & Arts: A Tale of Two Cities* deals with the Irish exhibitions in industry and arts in Dublin and Cork between 1852 and 1907. It's a work of social and industrial history, full of wonderful research on manufacturing and artisanship. In his introduction Garry acknowledges that the 19<sup>th</sup> century – the century of the Act of Union, the Famine and mass emigration – was a terrible century in so many ways for Ireland, but he would like, he writes, 'to show us "at-our-best", and display our ability to do great things to help improve economic and social conditions' – this is why he focusses on the Exhibitions.

It's typical of Garry that he has looked for, and found, what is progressive, affirmative and forward-thinking. As we know, Ireland did emerge from the horrors of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and it was the artisans, manufacturers and engineers whom Garry showcases that helped the country to do this.

Before I hand back to Kevin to engage in conversation with Garry, I'd like, in the spirit of his progressiveness, to fill you in briefly on what's going on in engineering in the University. We are in a period of really eventful expansion.

As I hope you've heard, the construction of the E3 Learning Foundry is now underway and this will open for the academic year 2023/24.

The Learning Foundry or E3LF is changing the way we educate engineers, natural scientists and computer scientists. In response:

- CAO applications for our new courses are up 44% (Engineering) and 56% (Computer Science);
- E3-based researchers have won two new ERC Advanced grants;
- Kinsella Challenge-based E3 Multi-disciplinary Project Awards of €500k each will be awarded later this month
- The Ryanair Sustainable Aviation Research Centre has been launched last week with a €1.5m philanthropic donation
- And plans for Trinity East are progressing with an innovation hub, recently named The Portal due to open in early 2022, and the E3 Research Institute under development as the first project on the new campus.

And, of course, two weeks ago the college elected its second engineer and first woman as Provost, Professor Linda Doyle.



It's not an exaggeration to say that E3 constitutes perhaps the most significant expansion of the School of Engineering since its foundation. And it's not just a strategic expansion for Engineering, it's a strategic expansion for the whole university.

E3 has been enabled through philanthropy and it's right to single out Martin Naughton and Eric Kinsella for their outstanding benefactions. But so many other alumni and friends have supported E3 and are supporting the next generation of engineers through volunteering, mentoring, hosting work placements, and supporting scholarships and student services. We hope to be able to make some additional announcements regarding this in the coming weeks.

The School of Engineering counts on exceptionally supportive alumni and this makes a huge difference to our students. During the pandemic and lockdown, the support for the Student Hardship Fund, was outstanding.

Garry is offering a part of the royalties from his upcoming book to the Student Hardship Fund, and that says so much about his priorities and his generosity. This isn't the official launch of the book but may I take this opportunity to urge you all to buy it as soon as it's released. Anyone with an interest in history, manufacturing, artisanship, or the world fairs and exhibitions, will want to read it.

And now I will hand back to Kevin. Let me just say, on a final note, as I'm in my last few months as Provost. Garry, on behalf of the School of Engineering and the whole university, our great thanks for your contribution to Trinity. Your trajectory from trainee technician to professor and author, via generations of grateful students, is inspirational.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



05 May 2021

**Address to South East Region of Engineers  
Ireland: Dr Patrick Prendergasat - My time as an  
engineer and Provost of Trinity College**

*Zoom from the Andrews Room, Provost's House*

Thank you Colm\*, and good afternoon everyone,

It's great to be here. Thank you for inviting me.

In my address today, I'd like to talk a bit about my time as Provost of Trinity College Dublin. That time is now drawing to a close – I have less than 100 days left in office – so it's a good moment to be reflecting on, and evaluating, the last ten years. I'll focus particularly on what it's like to be an engineer in this role – and what key skills and approaches I think engineering brings to the provostship.

I'll also talk about a ground-breaking initiative for this university, which we're delivering in two stages - E3, the Engineering, Environment and Emerging Technologies Institute. You'll be hearing a lot more about E3 in the coming years so I think it's useful to give you my perspective on how it has come about and what it will mean for Trinity, Ireland and global research and education.

I'll talk for about half an hour and then open up for discussion - as I'll be explaining, we are offering a new kind of engineering education with E3 and I'm very interested to get your take on this.

\* \* \*

When I took office as the 44<sup>th</sup> Provost of Trinity College Dublin back in autumn 2011, I was the first engineer to be elected Provost in the history of the university. Of course, in its first two hundred and fifty years, Trinity had no School of Engineering, so that's not such a surprising statistic. But my election was a big moment for engineers in the university. And as you may have heard, the 45<sup>th</sup> Provost, who was elected just a few weeks ago, is Professor of Engineering and the Arts – Linda Doyle. Linda has an electrical engineering degree

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\* Engineers Ireland South East Chairman, Mr Colm Callery, BA, BAI

from UCC and a Masters and PhD from Trinity in the area of telecommunications.

What specific skills does an engineer bring to leading a university?

Thinking about this, my best answer is that we bring a problem-solving and solutions-oriented approach.

Trinity is a venerable institution, more than 400 years old. By tradition, the Fellows – which is say the senior academic staff who have published widely in their fields – have a greater role in governance than in other Irish, or indeed global, universities. Governance is through the College Board and its committee system.

This model of governance works well for us in Trinity, and I think it's great that the Provost, the Faculty Deans, and the Heads of Schools and Disciplines are elected and that there is significant staff and student representation on the Board, and on Committees. This ensures that the college community feels ownership of the institution, leading to a commitment to seeing it succeed, and that is so important. Some might say that this leads to vested interests, which must be guarded against certainly. But as it has evolved, over 400 years, from a small college of theologians to a large, multidisciplinary research university, Trinity has always protected its tradition of fellowship and community. That is a strength.

However, it's also true that the committee structure can be unwieldy, lengthy and inimical to rapid decision-making. Each member of the Committee has his or her specific priorities and red lines, and while Trinity Committees are good at being representative, they are less geared towards swift decision-making and firm action plans. None of this came as a surprise to me when I took up my role as Provost. I had been Vice-Provost for three years, and Dean of Graduate Studies for three years prior to that. I knew all about how the university operated and where there was potential for delays and bottlenecks, and innumerable blocking actions, one of which is to make a committee so big that it cannot come to any conclusion, and this is usually done under the guise of making it representative, something it is hard to argue against.

So when I became Provost I did what, I think, any engineer would have done: I did a lessons-learned on some key projects which came to the obvious conclusion that a Project Management Office, or PMO, was needed. The PMO was funded by a levy of 2% on all projects.

When the PMO came into existence we replaced many committees with project teams, which chairs, project sponsors who were senior

staff with authority, and – and these were also an innovation – project managers.

This PMO, has been a game-changer. I have no doubt that it is the reason we have been able to deliver highly significant projects over the past decade, despite that we have been operating in an almost continuously stressful and under-resourced environment.

I came in as Provost of Trinity during the Great Recession, when all public spending was slashed, and I'm going out during the Great Pandemic! 'May you live in interesting times', indeed! It has been a rollercoaster. I think there was about two years, 2015 to '18, when we had stabilised the college finances, the country was back in growth, there was room for cautious optimism – and then Brexit hit and uncertainty returned.

And yet despite all the stress and shocks, it has been a decade of delivery:

On the capital development front: the Trinity Business School, opened on the main campus 2019 and the Trinity Centre of Cultural and Literary Translation opened in Fenian Street 2017. And soon construction will finish on the first new square to open in the college for many a year – Printing House Square, with 250 student rooms and other student services facilities; the E3 Learning Foundry is in progress; and we hope soon to finish the fundraising to start the Old Library Redevelopment, which includes a new research collections study centre, by the end of this academic year.

On the curricular front: the Trinity Education project delivered the most comprehensive renewal of the undergraduate curriculum in a century.

In terms of Global Relations: pioneering new partnerships on joint/dual degrees with universities in India, Singapore, China, the United States, Europe; plus membership of LERU, the prestigious League of European Research Universities; and the extension of the Science Gallery network to seven global cities: London, Melbourne, Bengaluru, Venice, Rotterdam, Detroit and Atlanta.

On the Access front, the piloting of the Trinity Access Programme Foundation Year in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, leading to recognition of Trinity's best practise in improving access for socio-economically disadvantaged students.

I could go on. I put a lot of the delivery down to improved methods of project governance and management, with a culture of project delivery across the university, which we might call an engineering

culture. ‘Give me a problem and I’ll give you a solution’, as the old engineering adage goes.

In short, insofar as I have been able to deliver specific goals and targets for Trinity, I think my engineering background has been hugely helpful and I’m delighted that the new provost will be drawing on a similar background. I’m confident of another great decade ahead for Trinity College.

And now, I want to look at how Trinity is proposing to renew engineering education, and research and innovation strategy, through E3.

\* \* \*

E3 stands for Engineering, Environment and Emerging Technologies. When I took over as Provost, the idea of E3 was on the books, so to speak, but it was very much an idea. There had been a lot of thinking around what would happen in a new building but no definite plans or financing raised – there was nothing approaching an action plan. At that stage the second ‘E’ stood for Energy – the Engineering, Energy and Environment.

Nevertheless, already at that stage, E3 was outlining a mission which, as an engineer, I found fascinating. You will all recall perhaps the 19<sup>th</sup> century definition of engineering, which prevailed well in the 20<sup>th</sup> century: “engineering is about the art of directing the great sources of power in Nature for the use and convenience of man”\*.

When you hear it today, there is so much wrong with that definition! But in fact, looked at objectively, I think that’s an accurate description of engineering in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. We did exploit nature – land, water, forests, mineral resources, materials, biodiversity including human genetic diversity – without much consideration of their finite nature, or of the value inherent in the ‘services’ that the natural world provides for free to humanity, and the phrase ‘...the benefit and convenience of man’ always jars because it belies the gendered nature of our automatic thinking – which we are still struggling to emerge from.

Thankfully much of this has changed, or is changing rapidly, out of principle and out of necessity. Now we are looking to turn the definition on its head. Instead of exploiting nature, can we work with it? Can we engineer the system so that we replenish the natural world rather than exploit it.

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\* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institution\\_of\\_Civil\\_Engineers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institution_of_Civil_Engineers)

That's the germ of the philosophy behind E3. I recall a talk I gave to Columbia University in New York, in 2014 when E3 was still just a twinkle in the eye of the School of Engineering. I said then that:

*“It should concern us all, as engineers, that the accelerating pace of human development continues to impact communities, locally and globally. Our planet is increasingly being shaped by technology, and it is critical that we humans make technological interventions that increase the sustainability of the planet. We should go further than just seeking to mitigate emerging challenges such as energy security and climate change. We should use engineering to strengthening the resilience of our natural capital.*

*“Technologies can and should be created in symbiosis with the natural world, so that technology becomes an ‘evolutionary force’ directed for the good of life on earth.”*

That was seven years ago and we've refined E3 a lot since, but interestingly, what I said then still stands. Our philosophy is to work with nature. I'm drawn to that idea of technology as an 'evolutionary force' – that seems to me to capture the engineering mindset.

It's a mindset that can lead to us being accused of being 'techno optimists' which isn't meant as a compliment, in case you're wondering! I don't think we're techno optimists, in the sense that's implied. We're not at the outer fringes of AI looking to cryofreeze our bodies in the expectation that we can be melted back into being, some time in the future. I, for one, have no interest in that.

But I do have an interest in the future beyond my own lifetime. And yes, I'm optimistic that technology can help us make that future better. As an engineer, I don't believe the future involves less technology, it involves better technology and engineering that is better designed for sustainability in terms of material design and energy use. Some believe the solution is to do less human activity – flying or driving for example – and while I agree that less can be more, it's neither practicable or desirable to return to a pre-technology time, to stop using planes and cars, or dishwashers and dryers, or computers and smartphones.

You can't put the genie back in the bottle, the toothpaste back in the tube. Humankind just isn't wired that way. We are, above all, an inventive species, and we have created the profession of engineering to systematise design and problem-solving skills for the creation of technology. And we're wired to rise to challenges: to find renewable

energies, instead of using up finite fossil fuel resources; to design for recycling and reuse, instead of creating waste; to grow food while maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, without damaging insects and pollinators and their natural habitats. These are challenges that our knowledge and technologies can rise to.

That's why our catchphrase for E3 in its current iteration is 'balanced solutions for a better world' which is, I think, a very engineering adage.

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How will E3 deliver 'balanced solutions for a better world'? And how did we advance the initiative to the point we are at now?

One of the key things I did as Provost, was to progress E3 from being an expansion strategy for the School of Engineering to being an expansion strategy for the whole university. We did this, first of all, by expanding and mingling the disciplines which will be involved in the initiative. We have now determined that E3 will co-educate and co-locate engineers, chemists, computer scientists, natural scientists, physicists, and statisticians, and crucially we will educate them across disciplines. We want them to leave their traditional silos, to be challenge-driven, rather than discipline-driven.

And, secondly, we have placed E3 at the heart of the university's philanthropic goals. And because our philanthropic goals are deeply connected to our research and education – that means at the heart of the university's mission.

Philanthropy goes back a long way in Trinity – the university owes its very foundation to philanthropic donations. But during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Trinity like other Irish universities became state financed, philanthropy receded greatly. Over time we've put renewed focus on philanthropy.

Our whole approach to donors and benefaction was given fresh impetus by the success of the funding of the Trinity Business School, TBS. Donors gifted €20 million towards the building of TBS and with this, we were able to leverage an EIB loan. That has become our model for exciting capital development projects: significant philanthropy which enables further loans.

I well remember the day back in September 2015 when I met Martin Naughton to ask him to support E3. By that time, we had refined our concept of E3 and set out our key aims. We wanted:



- A learning foundry to educate at scale, so that we could bring many more students to study STEM disciplines in Trinity;
- And where we could harness novel methods of learning and research at the frontiers of disciplines to educate new kinds of engineers and scientists prepared for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace and 21<sup>st</sup> century life.
- And a research institute to partner with industry and NGOs to help meet emerging opportunities in energy and engineering design, while sustaining our natural capital.

I had a figure in my head to ask of Martin – an enormous figure, the biggest private philanthropic donation by any individual in the history of the state, saving of course Chuck Feeney’s Atlantic Philanthropies.

Well, I took my courage in my hands. I explained what we wanted to do with E3. I explained the high concept – promoting a sustainable future – and the nuts and bolts of it – how we would establish, first, the E3 Learning Foundry on campus, and then the E3 Research Institute at our new tech campus at Grand Canal Dock. Martin, of course, is an engineer and an entrepreneur – the perfect person to explain E3 to. And then I took a deep breath and asked him for €25 million euro.

And he said yes. And that was certainly one of the great high points of my provostship.

Philanthropy begets philanthropy. Inspired by Martin’s extraordinary generosity, we set the targets for our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*, which has E3 as one of its flagship projects.

We are now well into Phase 1 of E3 which means:

- The Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry (E3LF) is scheduled to open on the site of the old Biochemistry building on campus near the Lincoln Gate, in the 2023-2024 academic year. It will be a state-of-the-art 7,288m<sup>2</sup> facility that will deliver teaching facilities for both undergraduate and postgraduate students and will transform how Trinity educates engineers and scientists; provide teaching for both existing and new courses and facilitate 1,600 additional students to study a wide variety of STEM disciplines in Trinity.

Here is an image of what E3LF will look like:

## The Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry



- Course curricula are being redesigned to train students to work collaboratively on developing innovative technology with a sustainable focus. This is a new way of teaching, with new facilities

## E3LF as a place to connect



It is a space designed to invite collaboration and co-education, multi- trans- and interdisciplinary teaching.

A place for interaction, creativity and disruptive thinking.

Trinity College Dublin  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

**E3LF a site for something new**

**New educational offerings**

**New Undergraduate Degree courses created**


- Environmental Science and Engineering, first intake Sept 2021 (261 first preference applicants in CAO)
- Computer Science and Geography, first intake Sept 2021

**New Postgraduate offerings**

- MSc : Smart and Sustainable Cities – proposed intake 2021,
- Zero-carbon Technologies 2022, Spatial Data and Analysis 2022,
- Expansion of existing programmes: MSc in Electronic and Information Engineering
- PG diplomas: Engineering for Climate Action, Environmental Entrepreneurship

**International partners: Columbia Dual Degree Science Programme**

- Geosciences and Biosciences, first intake 2020 expanding to Engineering and Mathematics in 2021.

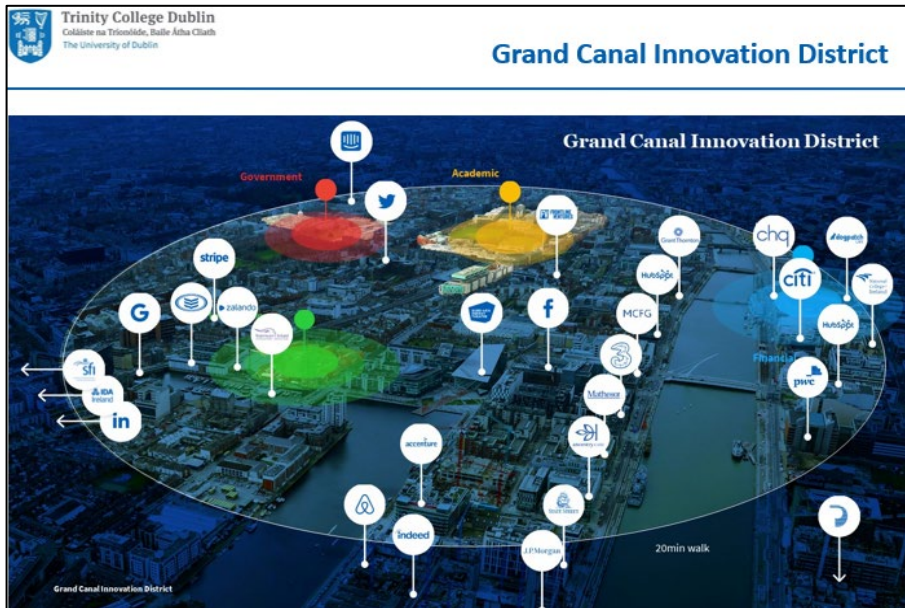

- We will be hiring 72 additional academic posts in a range of emerging disciplines including AI, Climate Science, Intelligent Systems and Smart Cities.

In Phase 2:

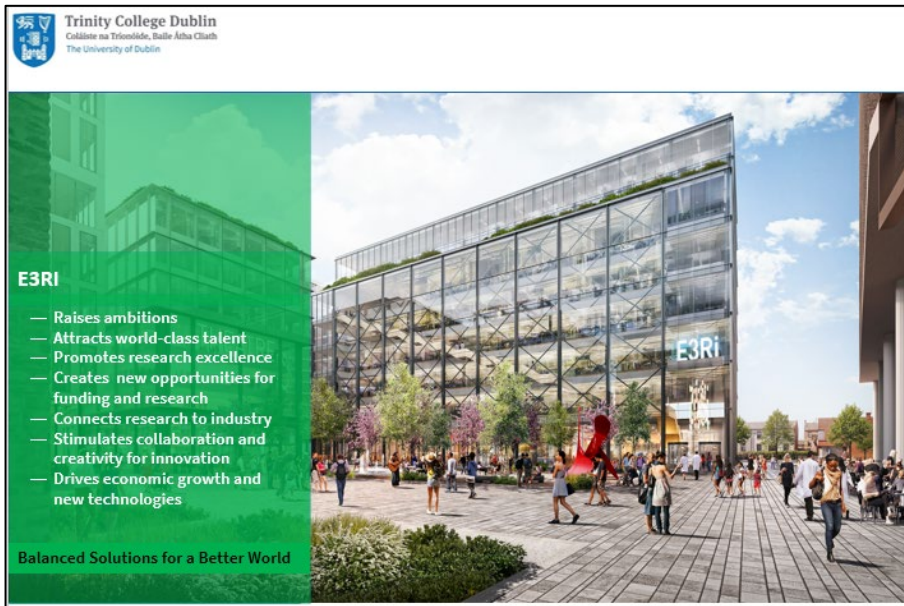
- The 20,000m<sup>2</sup> custom-designed E3 Research Institute (E3RI) is scheduled to open in 2026, as the anchor tenant of the new Trinity East campus at the Grand Canal Dock.







- E3RI will co-locate over 500 researchers and support a highly open, collaborative way of working with industry, government and the community.
- An evolving set of research challenges will be critically assessed against six core 'perspectives': Environment, Production, Resources, Data, Well-being and Communities.
- E3RI will act as a magnet for talent, investment, industry and research, creating long-term benefit for Ireland and for global research and innovation.



- E3RI will enable Trinity to maximise advantages for Ireland through the EU Green Deal.

\* \* \*

I'm delighted that as I leave office, work has begun on the E3 Learning Foundry and in a few short years, we will be welcoming the first generation of students to the new E3 Learning Foundry.

I'm glad that back in 2012, 2013, 2014 – crisis austerity years for Ireland and Trinity when it was all we could do to find money to pay our staff – I'm glad that we raised, not lowered, our ambition for E3.

I'm proud that we realised that the university needed an ambitious strategic initiative of this scale – that to reduce ambition would be to fail, our students and Dublin and Ireland and global research.

I'm so thankful that our faith in our friends and donors has been rewarded.

I'm proud that with E3, we have managed to be – not ahead of the curve, I don't claim that, but at least, with the curve, when it comes to sustainability.

In Trinity, as in the world, the past decade has seen the debate move from 'climate change' to 'climate emergency'. In college, the debate has been driven by staff and students. It is students who pushed us to divest from fossil fuels and to ban single use plastic on campus. It is staff – particularly in the School of Natural Sciences – who are driving the move to 're-wild the campus' and make it a haven for pollinators in the city centre. Thanks to such activism, Trinity is now a member of the ISCN International Sustainable Campus network – which brings with it rigorous responsibilities.

It was notable at the hustings this year for the provostal election that sustainability featured strongly – much more strongly than ten years ago when I was running. Staff wanted to know how the candidates proposed to advance the sustainable development goals and their answers were a factor in the support they got.

Given this over-riding focus on sustainability, I'm very glad that E3 will soon be operational. As a member of the ISCN, we have committed to placing our research at the service of sustainability. E3, which as an idea long predates our membership of ISCN, enables us to do just this: to place Trinity research at the heart of solutions for a liveable planet, to embed sustainability and a challenge-driven approach into how we educate.

As I've said, E3 is an expansion strategy for the whole university which, ideally, will help us focus increasingly on sustainability. I believe this is happening – for instance, Trinity is now a member, with four other universities in France, Spain, the Netherlands and Hungary, of a new European University Alliance, called CHARM-E.U.

CHARM EU stands for **C**hallenge-driven, **A**ccessible, **R**esearch-based, **M**obile, **E**uropean **U**niversity and the challenge that it sets students is very close to E3's mission – it is 'to reconcile humanity and the planet'.

CHARM-EU is offering a new kind of Masters programme which empowers students to co-construct their own curriculum. We are asking students to identify authentic challenges around sustainable development goals and then determine which modules and courses

across the five universities and associate partners will be most helpful in meeting these goals.

It's much too soon to measure CHARM-EU's success – this is a very new initiative - but we know that students are enthusiastic.

'Challenge-driven' is a new frontier for education. It involves not just students, but educators, getting out of their disciplinary comfort zones. It means changing our mindset so that, faced with a challenge, we ask what we might *need* to know, rather than applying what we *already* know.

Is challenge-driven the future of education and can engineers be leaders in piloting this new approach? As I come to the end of my term as Provost, I'm glad to be asking these questions. Education is a progressive force. It cannot and should not stand still. I believe the education landscape in a generation is going to be transformed and I want Trinity and Ireland and engineering to be in the vanguard of this transformation.

Thank you for your attention. And please do let me know your thoughts on all this!

\* \* \*





20 May 2021

**Address at the Announcement of €25m  
Government Funding for Old Library  
Redevelopment Project**

*Long Room of the Old Library, Trinity College*

Ministers\*†, Provost-Elect, Colleagues, Friends of Trinity Library,

This is a great day, and I'm delighted to be here in the Long Room of the Old Library with the Minister, the Minister of State, and the Librarian. This venue is all the rationale one needs to explain the vital importance of the Old Library Redevelopment Project.

Here we are in the most beautiful room in the country, and one of the most exceptionally beautiful Libraries in the world. We're in the presence of priceless manuscripts like the Book of Kells, treasures like the Brian Boru harp and the 1916 Proclamation. And what we see around us is the tip of the iceberg – the visible manifestation of the hundreds of thousands of early printed books, manuscripts and archives which the Library has collected over hundreds of years.

The Book of Kells was recognised as a UNESCO Memory of the World in 2011. I'd argue that the whole of the Old Library is a 'Memory of the World' – the Book of Armagh, the Book of Leinster, the 1641 Depositions, the Annals of the Old Masters, the Fagel Collection, the Proclamation – I could go on. We hold the sole copy of some of these historic documents. And the word 'hold' is instructive – they don't 'belong' to us. They belong to all of humanity. It is our responsibility to safely preserve them for future generations. Just as it's our responsibility to safeguard this historic building which dates from 1732.

That's why the Old Library Redevelopment project is vital. Why it's urgent. And why we convene here today in gratitude to the government for their transformative donation of 25 million euro.

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On behalf of the Trinity community, I thank the Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, who has taken a close personal interest in the project and

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\* Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien, T.D.

† Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, T.D.

who visited the library in person last December. I thank the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, and the Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan TD, for coming here personally to make this historic announcement.

We know money is not easy find, but we got a sympathetic hearing when we 'made the case' for the national importance of this project. The national significance was understood from the start, including the specific issues we confront in preserving and safeguarding this building.

The government understand that this is a once-in-a-century – indeed once in many centuries – preservation, renovation, and redevelopment of a unique national icon with its priceless holdings. Thanks to their understanding and generosity, the project is now advancing.

The Old Library Redevelopment is one of the central priority projects of our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*. With this campaign, we're asking support for key capital development initiatives and for funding professorships and studentships to bring new talent to Trinity.

\* \* \*

The Old Library Redevelopment Project resonated deeply with alumni, friends and cultural organisations, as well as with the government. This is a measure of what this space and its treasures mean to Ireland and the world.

I'm delighted to have this opportunity to acknowledge the support of Fáilte Ireland, and donors Carol and Murray Grigor, and our other philanthropic supporters who have contributed to the Project.

Dublin City Council granted planning permission to redevelop the Old Library last autumn and the project is being undertaken by *award-winning architects, Heneghan Peng, who so successfully revitalised the National Gallery.*

Some of the development will be 'invisible', such as the conservation and safeguarding against fire and natural disaster. Digitisation, on the other hand, will be visible throughout the world, and the Research Collections Study Centre and new exhibition is going to remake the whole experience of visiting the Old Library. Already, in autumn of last year, we saw the first component of the renovation: the new Book of Kells Treasury and display.

As the country and the college opens cautiously up, after one of the most challenging years that any of us can remember, it's wonderful to be here celebrating the protection and renovation of this national treasure. I thank the Government and Minister O'Brien and Minister Noonan; I thank them on our behalf, and on behalf of the people of Ireland.

This Library has stood for hundreds of years, a proud marker of the cultural heights this nation can achieve.

Its precious manuscripts and treasures have existed, some of them, for more than a thousand years.

Through your generosity, they will be protected for a thousand more – They will continue to inspire us, and inspire the generations yet to come.

Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf us all, to the Irish Government and Ministers O'Brien and Noonan, Thank you.

\* \* \*



(L to R) Minister Malcolm Noonan, TD; Helen Shenton, Librarian; Provost Patrick Prendergast; Minister Darragh O'Brien, TD; Provost-elect Linda Doyle



27 May 2021

## **Major Gift to Trinity. Email Message to the Trinity College Community.**

Dear students and colleagues,

We are delighted to write to you with truly momentous news this morning.

A transformational gift of €30 million has been made to college by Eric and Barbara Kinsella. The funds will support the E3 Research Institute and help launch the development of a new Trinity East campus in the Docklands.

Mr Kinsella, who is executive chairman of Jones Engineering and a Trinity graduate, is a long-term benefactor to Trinity. He and his wife have made their gift as part of the college's Inspiring Generations philanthropic campaign. This is the largest philanthropic donation from individuals to an Irish university in the history of the State.

The E3 Research Institute will be among the first centres internationally to integrate engineering, technology and scientific expertise at scale in addressing some of the biggest challenges facing Ireland and the world – challenges such as climate change, renewable energy, personalised data, water, connectivity, and sustainable manufacturing.

The Institute will considerably broaden Trinity's capacity in emerging areas of research and innovation, and lead to strong economic and societal benefits for the country. It will be the lynchpin of our new campus at Trinity East, located in the heart of the Grand Canal Innovation District.

Eric and Barbara Kinsella will also support a design competition that will invite architects from across the world to compete for the opportunity to set out a blueprint for Trinity East.

This project is one of national ambition but it cannot happen without philanthropy and Government support. We hope, in due course, to hear from Government about possible investment from the State as well as private individuals and the University itself. We

will keep you updated as the project progresses.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Prendergast,  
Provost & President  
Propast & Uachtarán

\* \* \*

31 May 2021

## **Provost's Salon on 'The Yeats Legacy in Trinity'**

*Zoom*

Good evening,

And welcome, everyone, to this very special Provost's Salon.

Some of you have been with us for previous Salons. We've been holding these virtual events since the summer of 2020 and, in times of social distancing, they have proved a really great way to stay in touch as a community, and to invite distinguished academics and graduates to talk about their fields of expertise.

Our Salons have ranged across humanities, science and health sciences. Covid-19 and Trinity immunology and the poetry of Seamus Heaney have been just two of the recent Salons.

This evening we turn to the Yeats legacy in Trinity. This year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Jack Yeats, perhaps the most significant figure in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Irish painting. This Salon will look at the enduring visual and literary legacy of the whole Yeats family, in Trinity and the wider world.

I'm hosting this Salon from what we now call 'the Yeats room' in the Provost's House. This small, exquisite room holds a collection of beautiful Yeats paintings, kindly given on loan by a family with long-standing connections to Trinity. In two month's time, as some of you know, I will step down as Provost, my ten-year term having ended. I will miss many things about being Provost, not least the privilege of daily communication with the Yeats paintings.

We are also delighted to hold an important collection of Cuala press prints in the library of Trinity, and I'm pleased to welcome Mr Vin Ryan who kindly donated his personal collection of Cuala prints to the Library and is supporting a conservation and digitisation project to make the collection accessible to the world.

The Cuala collection is housed in the Old Library, home to many priceless and unique collections and manuscripts. In case you missed the announcement last week in the national press, I'm very pleased to tell you that the Government recently announced 25 million euro in funding for our historic project, now underway, to safeguard the magnificent Old Library building, and its priceless treasures.

Before we start the Salon, may I first ask everyone to briefly introduce themselves. We like these Salons to be small and intimate, so we limit the invitation to special friends and alumni who have a particular interest in the chosen theme.

I think there are about 20 of us in total, zooming in. You're all very welcome. Eileen [Punch] we might start with you ... Thanks, and now if I might ask the rest of you to introduce yourselves to the group...

1. Brendan and Kenane McDonagh
2. Finlay and Kathryn Ross
3. Martin & Carmel Naughton
4. Sean and Sarah Reynolds
5. Vin Ryan & Carla Meyer
6. Conor Killeen
7. Eric Kinsella
8. Norah Daly
9. Brendan O' Mara
10. Dr. Albert McQuaid, Kerry Group
11. Houghton Fry
12. John Climax
13. Mani Ramaswami
14. Anne Robinson
15. Jane Robinson
16. Lucy Robinson
17. Kate Bond
18. Sonya Perkins

Thanks everyone, that's great. During the discussion, may I ask you to keep your microphones off, but of course turn them on again afterwards for the Q&A – or before if you have a question during the discussion.

We have some remarkable scholars and Yeatsians here with us this evening. To moderate the discussion, I'm delighted now to hand over to Professor Chris Morash. Chris is known to many of you, he was appointed the inaugural Seamus Heaney Professor of Irish Writing in 2014. A highly distinguished scholar in Irish studies, he also served as the university's vice-provost between 2016 and 2019. His most recent book, to be published later this year, is on W.B. Yeats, appropriately enough, and he has also recently completed a work on Dublin as a city of literature.

Chris, over to you.

\* \* \*



(Published) 01 June 2021

## **Coimbra Newsletter Editorial** **Patrick Prendergast**

*Trinity College Dublin, Ireland*

This summer my 10 years in office as President/Provost of Trinity College Dublin ends. It has been a remarkable time. When change comes suddenly, we are forced to reflect, and I see a national and European higher education landscape that is very different compared to 2011. What are some of the key changes? Three things stand out:

First, internationalism and globalisation. For Trinity this has accelerated and deepened and now goes well beyond international student recruitment - it means partnerships across the range of education, research, innovation and public engagement. Examples include our joint degree with Columbia University in New York and our joint awards with four other EU universities in the European University Alliance, CHARM-EU, which admits its first students this September. And in public engagement, we are now welcoming our 9<sup>th</sup> member, TU Berlin, to the international Science Gallery Network which goes across four continents ([www.sciencegallery.org](http://www.sciencegallery.org)).

Second: innovation and entrepreneurship. Increasingly, European students are being trained to be innovative and entrepreneurial, and are getting the opportunity to test out their business ideas. Among universities I'm familiar with, many are involved with the EIT's knowledge innovation communities (KICs). Universities are now recognised as powerhouses for innovation districts; international in reputation they are also working hand-in-hand with their local city industrial systems promoting research and talent. In Trinity, this is manifested by our student accelerator, LaunchBox, established in 2013, as a competitive forum enabling student teams to raise venture capital and market their business ideas. And we have launched a new campus, Trinity East, to catalyse the Grand Canal Innovation District of Dublin (<https://www.tcd.ie/innovation-district/>).

Third, for us, is philanthropy. In Ireland, as in other countries, funding to third level is diversifying – public funding remains essential but, in Ireland at least, it is reducing as a proportion of total revenues. In Trinity we have focussed on growing our philanthropic relationships. Launched publicly in May 2019, our first ever comprehensive philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring*

*Generations*, has now reached its target of €400 million in donations and 150,000 hours of volunteering from alumni and friends. This enables us to deliver on key priority projects and, even more importantly, it has embedded philanthropy into the DNA of the university.

What are the drivers of change? Changing political priorities with regard to funding third level is an obvious driver. And much is happening organically, driven by students, who are well ahead of university leaderships in understanding that the world is changing and the old fixtures are on the wane. It is students who are pushing the exciting progression from traditional disciplinary-based approaches to challenge-based research and education. CHARM-EU showcases this new approach: students identify specific goals around the theme ‘reconciling humanity with the planet’ and they then construct their own curriculum by determining which modules and courses across the five partner universities will be most helpful in meeting their learning goals.

The transformation in the higher education landscape is spearheaded by universities, which is to say staff and students. Public policy at national and EU level needs to clear the way for rapid change. In this context, I really welcome the Higher Education Transformation Agenda, which is an important step towards an EU-wide strategy for higher education. We badly need such a strategy – the changes I’m talking about need to be facilitated and connected across Europe; if we remain too institution- and country-bound, we will not release the innovative, entrepreneurial and challenge-driven potential of our young people. However, any such strategy needs to be properly funded - ambition without funding only leads to frustration.

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03 June 2021

**Signing of the agreement to formalize the  
governance of the Trinity St James's Cancer  
Institute (TSJCI)**

*St James Hospital, Dublin 8*

Taoiseach\*, Pro-Chancellor†, Colleagues, Distinguished Guests,

On this hugely significant day, I'm delighted to be here in St James' Hospital, welcoming some of you in-person, with many more connecting in from around the world.

Trinity and St James's have worked tirelessly to get this vital initiative to this point: the signing of the agreement to formalise the governance of the Trinity St James' Cancer Institute - or TSJCI; and the formal announcement of the appointment of two new directors:

- Academic Director, Maeve Lowery, Professor of Translational Cancer Medicine, Consultant Medical Oncologist at St James' Hospital, and chairperson of the Cancer Molecular Diagnostics Advisory Group of the National Cancer Control Program; and,
- as Medical Director, John Kennedy, Consultant Medical Oncologist at St James' Hospital and Clinical Professor of Oncology at Trinity.

This follows on from the announcement last November that TSJCI is the first cancer institute in Ireland to receive accreditation from the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes, which is a guarantor of excellence in clinical care, research, clinical trials and education, and enables deep cooperation with peer institutions and hospitals across Europe.

It's now almost six years since Trinity College and St James's Hospital announced our intention to jointly establish a new cancer institute. Already at that time, we were long-established partners.

In setting our ambition, we understood the vital importance for Ireland's cancer care and for global cancer research and we knew that, together, we had the unique capabilities to achieve this ambition:

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\* Micheál Martin, T.D., Taoiseach

† Dr Stanley Quek, Pro-Chancellor of the University of Dublin

In medicine and biological sciences, Trinity is ranked in the top 1% of research institutions globally and the Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute (TBSI) is Ireland's largest biomedical research facility, home to the country's greatest critical mass of scientists and immunologists.

St James's Hospital is Ireland's largest public cancer hospital, with an excellent record in patient care and clinical trials. Hospital and University have worked together through the Trinity Centre for Health Sciences and the Trinity Translational Medicine Institute, both located here on the St. James's campus.

Four years ago, the government rolled out the National Cancer Strategy which sets the fundamental aims of:

- raising Ireland's cancer survival rates to the top quartile in the European Union;
- establishing seamless patient pathways;
- and developing a robust environment for research.

The Trinity St James Cancer Institute is central to the delivery of the National Cancer Strategy. We welcome the Taoiseach here today.

From our initial commitment, TSJCI has progressed strongly and that's thanks to the project leaders in Trinity and St. James's:

- the Trinity Bursar, Veronica Campbell;
- the deputy CEO of St James's, Ann Dalton;
- the chair of the TSJCI development group, Declan Sheehan;
- and the inaugural director of TSJCI, Paul Browne.

My thanks to all of you and your teams.

Trinity's deep commitment to TSJCI, and our confidence in it, is demonstrated by our placing it at the heart of our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*, launched in its public phase two years ago. Through *Inspiring Generations*, we are asking graduates and friends of Trinity to donate to advance excellence in education and research.

The response has been phenomenal and our donors' benefaction is enabling TSJCI to establish leadership posts, accelerate research and clinical trials, develop the next generation of cancer clinicians and scientists, and deliver improved care and outcomes. I'm very pleased that we will hear today from Dr Stanley Quek, a key donor to the Institute, and I'm delighted to have this opportunity to thank him. Stanley is also a Pro-Chancellor of the University of Dublin – his commitment to Trinity and indeed to Ireland is outstanding.

With the Memorandum of Understanding and the two Directors now in place, TSJCI can move to its next phase of development: scaling activity across the three key areas of patient care, research and education. Examples of such activity include:

- building on Trinity's world leading expertise in immunology to advance cancer immunotherapies;
- discovering targets to enhance radiotherapy treatment in prostate cancer patients;
- new exercise interventions to improve patient wellbeing after oesophageal and thoracic cancer surgery;
- Leadership in cancer clinical trials, for example the Neo-AEGIS clinical trial in oesophageal cancer involving Trinity researchers and SJH clinicians;
- Establishing a pioneering world-class postgraduate programme;
- Developing flexible cancer training modules for multidisciplinary healthcare professionals around Ireland.

The next phase of the Trinity St James's Cancer Institute will be a dedicated building here in St. James's Hospital, integrating the best of research and clinical practice, and delivering highly specialised, integrated care in the best possible environment for the patient.

We look forward to the launch of that building. I believe that, with the excellent leadership in Trinity and St James', and the support of the government and the generosity of our donors, this will happen in a timely fashion. In the meantime, TSJCI is, of course, already happening – trials, research and interventions are delivering for cancer patients in Ireland and for global cancer research.

As we welcome the two new directors today, we wish you and your teams the very best and we look forward to the continued progression of TSJCI, confident that it will take its place as one of the great cancer centres of Europe and the world.

Thank you.

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(L to R) Taoiseach Michael Martin; Mary Day, CEO of St James's Hospital; Provost Patrick Prendergast; Dr John Kennedy, Medical Director of TSJCI, and Prof Meave Lowrey, Academic Director, TSJCI

14 June 2021

## **Kinsella Challenge-based E3 Multi-Disciplinary Project Awards Reception**

*Provost's Garden*

Good morning,

Welcome to the very first Kinsella Challenge-based Awards. This is an exciting day and it's a wonderful to be here with you all in person. One of my hopes this past year was that I would get a chance to welcome people back to campus as Provost. In January and February this looked unlikely, but thanks to a huge effort by the whole country, and the vaccine roll-out, here we are.

It means a lot to be able to celebrate this event in person because the Kinsella Awards really are a game-changer for Trinity, and for the way we fund research internally.

People are the lifeblood of any university. We need to attract and recruit outstanding students, researchers and professors, if we are to deliver our mission of excellence in education and research. But research is expensive, and in a strapped financial climate, such as the one that Irish universities have operated in for the past decade, pursuit of investigator-led multi-disciplinary research can be difficult.

In Trinity, we've met this challenge with the Kinsella awards. We believe that if ambition is matched with meticulous and rigorous planning and execution, then it will find support – and so it's proved.

About five years ago we announced our ambition for E3 – our Engineering, Environment and Emerging Technologies initiative to develop sustainable solutions for a liveable planet. We conceived of E3 in two phases:

- the *E3 Learning Foundry* to co-educate and co-locate engineers, computer scientists, statisticians, and natural scientists, to collaborate across the old divide of the natural and the engineered worlds.
- And the *E3 Research Institute* to be the anchor tenant of our planned new Trinity East campus at the Grand Canal Dock, co-locating more than 500 researchers to work collaboratively with industry, government and the local community.

We are now well advanced with E3 thanks to the notable generosity of benefactors who believe in our mission and are supporting us. The Awards we celebrate today have been enabled by Eric and Barbara Kinsella whose generosity and support for Trinity is, by this stage, legendary.

Eric is an engineering alumnus of Trinity. As Executive Chairman of Jones Engineering Group, he understands the central importance of recruiting talent and sustaining that talent through creating opportunities to excel. And he understands that research must continually progress if it is to be meaningful. With these Awards, Eric and Barbara are investing in new talent to foster challenge-based and cross-disciplinary research that will address the most significant global issues of our time.

The Awards are linked to E3's research themes, and are directed at recruiting PhD researchers. Current senior academic staff, working on E3 challenges, were invited to put in research proposals. Each winning proposal receives 500 thousand euro to create a research team of PIs and PhD students to help address the challenge.

The response has been very high. The response indicates just how necessary this initiative is. We received 21 proposals.

To ensure a rigorous review process, an assessment panel was convened by Professor Sylvia Draper, Dean of the STEM Faculty. The panel represented a balanced portfolio of internal and external expertise and included two Faculty Deans, the two Associate Deans of Research, the Associate Director of European Engagement, the Dean of Graduate Studies and an external panel member, Professor Donal Leech, the Dean of Graduate Studies at NUIG.

The initial plan was to give three awards. Due to the high calibre of the proposals and the powerful way that these awards have stimulated multi-disciplinary collaborations across the College, a further €500,000 has been made available to fund a fourth award.

My congratulations to the four successful PIs. The Dean of STEM, Sylvia Draper, will introduce them shortly and invite them to tell you about their projects.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Sylvia, Patrick Lansley and Sinead Lucey for managing the awards process. And to thank all the reviewers on the panel. And I'm delighted that Kieran Butler, who is Contract Control Manager at Jones Engineering, is here with us this morning. Kieran is a graduate of Trinity himself, and a member of the Trinity Business Alumni and he has been an active mentor of



our students since 2017. He embodies the ethos and culture of Jones Engineering - creative, forward-looking, nurturing of talent and philanthropic.

The success of these awards has demonstrated the impact that funding can have to galvanize multi-disciplinary research across the College. We hope to build on this success and make these awards an annual event.

On behalf of the university, I thank Eric and Barbara for their transformative support. Speaking personally, as I come to the end of my term of office, it's wonderful to know that E3 is going ahead as we planned and wished it, and that these four ground-breaking projects – on sustainable transportation, biodiversity quantification, afforestation, and water quality – are properly resourced, and will soon deliver outputs and applications to improve our way of living in the world, as well as helping to catapult the careers of new PhDs.

May I now invite Professor Sylvia Draper, Dean of the STEM Faculty, and chair of the Awards Review Panel, to announce the winners and open the panel discussion with them.

Thank you.

\* \* \*

List of Award Winners:

**1) SUMMIT – Sustainable Mobility Models for a Just Transition**

Lead PI: Professor Vinny Cahill, Computer Science and Statistics

Co-PIs: Mélanie Bouroche (Computer Science and Statistics); Sarah Browne (Business); Brian Caulfield (Engineering); Siobhán Clarke (Computer Science and Statistics); Owen Conlan (Computer Science and Statistics); Sam Cromie (Psychology); Anna Davies (Natural Sciences); Ivana Dusparic (Computer Science and Statistics); Ronan Lyons (Economics); Cian O'Callaghan (Natural Sciences); Martin Sokol (Natural Sciences)

**2) Digitising biodiversity: Landscape-Animal-Digital-Human Translations**

Lead PI: Professor Ian Donohue, Natural Sciences

Co-PIs: Anil Kokoram (Engineering); Michael Cronin (Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies); Caroline Brophy (Computer Science and Statistics); Yvonne Buckley (Natural Sciences); Nicola Marchetti (Engineering); Jane Stout (Natural Sciences)

**3) FOREST – Reimagining relations with nature**

Lead PI: Professor Jane Stout, Natural Sciences.

Co-PIs: Susan Murphy (Natural Sciences); Eleanor Denny (Economics); Caroline Brophy (Computer Science and Statistics); Martha O’Hagan-Luff (Business); Sarah McCormack (Engineering)

**4) Diffuse Water Pollution: NUtrient capture REcovery and reCycling systems (NuReCycle)**

Lead PI: Professor David O’Connell, Engineering.

Co-PIs: Katja Bruisch (Environmental History); Laurence Gill (Engineering); Marta Martins (Microbiology); Carla Harper (Natural Sciences); Daniel Trimble (Engineering)



(L to R) Prof Vinny Cahill; Prof Sylvia Draper, Dean of STEM; Dr Ian Donohue; Provost Patrick Prendergast; Prof Jane Stout; Dr David O’Connell

17 June 2021

## **Trinity Loyola Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding**

*Provost's Garden*

Good morning and welcome, everyone, to the Provost's Garden. A particular welcome to Fr Leonard Moloney, Provincial of the Irish Jesuit Province and to our other Jesuit guests. After more than a year of online launches and signings, it's a pleasure to be here with you in-person, and in the college.

Today is a special day: the signing of the agreement which provides the formal framework under which the Loyola Institute will operate as part of Trinity's recently restructured School of Religion.

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And for me, personally, today resonates because it was in my first year as Provost, back in 2012, that we launched the Loyola Institute in Trinity. That was a historic day: the expansion of our School of Religion to include education and research in the Catholic tradition. We were conscious of the confidence that the Loyola Institute was placing in us.

And now, in just six weeks, my term of office will end. I'm glad to be closing the circle, so to speak, formalising the Loyola Institute's place in Trinity.

Religion is, together with Philosophy, the oldest School in Trinity, dating back to the foundation in 1592. Originally called Divinity, it was initially only concerned with the education and training of clergy of the Church of Ireland.

In the past half century, the study of religion in Trinity has been greatly extended. This is reflected in the nomenclature: Divinity became Biblical Studies, and then, after 1978, the non-denominational 'School of Hebrew, Biblical and Theological Studies'. Later the Department of Religion and Theology joined together with the Irish School of Ecumenics, and in 2012, they were joined by the Loyola Institute. This is now our current School of Religion, which provides teaching in the third monotheistic religion, Islam, and offers modules in world religions, as well as teaching theoretical

approaches to the study of religion and embracing Ecumenics, and International Peace and Reconciliation Studies.

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The mission of the Loyola Institute is to reflect academically on Christian faith, social justice and contemporary culture, in the context of the Catholic tradition. In our increasingly diverse and complex society, a key priority of the Institute is to foster religious understanding through ecumenical dialogue and through dialogue between faith and culture.

We're honoured that the Loyola Institute chose Trinity's School of Religion as the place to further this mission. For almost a decade now, the Institute has contributed to the dynamism and vibrancy of the School, and it is essential to the School's mission to be a global centre of excellence in religion and theology.

On a societal level, the importance of fostering religious understanding through dialogue between faiths, and between faiths and cultures, cannot be overstated in Ireland and around the world.

Trinity has particular strengths in interdisciplinarity and this is instrumental to furthering the mission of the School of Religion and the Loyola Institute – across the university, significant research is being carried out which is highly relevant to theology, ecumenics, peace studies and religion. And that's not only research in Arts and Humanities – it's also in the sciences, including notably environmental science and medicine.

Religion is a fundamental part of people's lives – it influences so many aspects of social behaviour and of intellectual thought. In Europe, the purpose of the first universities was to study religion and religion remains essential to the academic activities of the university. Yesterday indeed was Bloomsday – a key way to understand Joyce is through his Jesuit formation. It is vital that dialogue remains ongoing – between disciplines as between faiths.

Today we celebrate the Memorandum of Understanding and we celebrate the achievements of the School of Religion together with the Loyola Institute. There are many people to thank:

- Professor Brendan Tangney, Current Registrar;
- Professor Paula Murphy, Former Registrar;
- John Coman, Secretary to the College;
- Professor Siobhán Garrigan, Head of the School of Religion and Loyola Professor;

- Fr Leonard Moloney, SJ, Provincial of the Irish Jesuit Province, and
- Fr Thomas Layden, SJ, chair of the trust of the Loyola Institute

On behalf of the whole university, my thanks to all of you and to your teams. I'm proud of the growth and dynamism in the School of Religion, its range and its reach. I'm proud that it has proved a home to the Loyola Institute and that today we formalise and further strengthen the relationship. As we seek to rebuild society and the university in a post-pandemic world, I know that the research and teaching from this School and Institute will be instrumental.

Thank you.

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(L to R) Fr. Thomas Layden SJ (Chair of the Loyola Institute Trust), Sr Rionach Donlon (Loyola Institute Trust), Provost Patrick Prendergast



(L to R) Fr. Leonard Moloney SJ, the Provincial of the Irish Jesuits & Provost Patrick Prendergast



18 June 2021

## **Executive Officers Group (EOG) Garden Social**

*Provost's Garden*

Thank you, Jürgen,

It's a pleasure to be here, with you all, in the Garden, in this beautiful mild Summer evening.

I'm glad to have such optimum conditions to thank you, personally, each and every one of you, for your service on the Executive Officer Group.

The EOG might be described as the Provost's cabinet. Or perhaps, Trinity's best kept secret, since Board and Council garner all the attention. However one chooses to describe it, I wouldn't have been without it. The EOG is the first port of call for issues to get aired and argued. It's where ideas get strangled at birth, and where they get the green light to proceed along the chain to Committees, Board and Council.

I can't imagine leading without the EOG. Everything about the EOG is geared towards decision-making. Every EOG member is appointed because they've a defined area of responsibility within the university. Every member speaks for their area but also for wider college interests.

And crucially the EOG is where academic and professional staff come together in decision-making. My ten years as Provost has re-informed, for me, how vital this is. For centuries Trinity described itself as 'a self-governing college of Provost and Fellows' to get across our autonomy. But as anyone who spends any time in Trinity quickly comes to understand we've long since moved on from the idea of only governing with the academics – leading the college with the Fellows only would bring me out in a cold sweat!

This is no slur on academics but this is a large university, very active on many fronts: financial, commercial, philanthropic, administrative, in partnership with industry and employers, liaising with the media and government. All of this has to be done professionally – which means through experienced experts. We're extremely fortunate in Trinity in the calibre of our professional staff and that academic staff are willing to step up, so that, here on the

EOG, we have the dream team – that’s what you are – the dream team.

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The EOG can realistically claim credit for every achievement of the past decade – and that includes not just what we brought through, but what we prevented. It’s harder to tally ‘avoided crises’ than it is to count concrete achievements, but they are real all the same.

The EOG is a team, so this is a collective thanks. But each of you had a specific role, so I’d like to name each individually.

I’ll start with the College Secretary, **John Coman**. John is a constant presence on the EOG and a font of sound advice, and seasoned management experience, and he has, I don’t mind saying, saved me from tripping up on more than one occasion.

And the chief officers:

**Jürgen** is the Vice-Provost & Chief Academic Officer, and a brilliant one too who has achieved a massive amount in just two years’, not least the successful bid for the Human Capital Initiative and getting it up and running, as well as the junior progressions, promoting several hundred colleagues, and CHARM-EU.

**Peter** is the CFO. This is the real power, make no mistake. Nothing happens without his input. Peter has been central to all key decisions and capital projects. It’s been a pleasure to work with Peter since he joined Trinity doing many vital things in his cool and effective way.

**Orla Cunningham** is ‘the new COO’ and already fitting in well and will be key to Trinity achieving its mission in years to come.

**Diarmuid** joined the EOG in 2016 and he has really spearheaded Trinity East. This is going to be an absolutely transformative development for Trinity and it is very much Diarmuid’s achievement.

Now to the three Faculty Deans who oversee the functions of Trinity’s overall mission.

**Gail, Orla, and Sylvia** are something of a triumvirate – if there was one WhatsApp group to eavesdrop on, it would be theirs. Gail’s leadership of a large sprawling faculty, Orla’s of a multi-site ‘big school’ faculty, and Sylvia’s of the Faculty she renamed, has been



truly exceptional. Their contribution to the EOG has been strong and effective, and changed the direction of many decisions.

**Michael Gill**, who wasn't able to join us this evening, is Head of the School of Medicine and has driven that School forward with a steady hand over the years.

**Veronica** is Bursar and has brought through a list of projects too long to enumerate. She has an ability second to none in being able to bring people into dialogue to resolve problems – it's a real skill - her superpower, as they say.

**Juliette**, Vice-President for Global Relations for 7 years, has made a tremendous contribution to Trinity. With your strong leadership abilities Juliette you have motivated the Global Relations team to put Trinity at the very top of the rankings when it comes to student recruitment and partnerships.

The Associate Dean of Research, **Andrew Bowie**, joined EOG to replace Linda and I thank him for that and for his role in the strong promotion of research and keeping Trinity alert to SFI's doings.

The Director of HR, **Antoinette Quinn**, has brought great leadership to this most difficult of roles, added a new dimension to it – a strategic dimension – that was missing until now, and I compliment her on her successes and on bringing, sometimes dragging, the college forward in this complex area.

The Director of PAC, **Tom Molloy** has brought great professionalism to Trinity Communications and is the port of call for all senior colleagues when they need help in dealing with the media, or indeed strategic communications advice.

The newest post to join the Executive Officers is the Associate Vice-Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, **Clodagh Brook**, who joined EOG only 18 months ago and has had a tremendous positive impact in Athena Swan, and on the issue of consent.

Finally, the Chief of Staff, **Leona Coady** is not an Executive Officer at all, but has shown how senior administrative and relationship skills can expertly support the Provost in helping the university achieve its objectives.

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This is the EOG – the Provost's inner circle. In the ranks it's thought to have extraordinary power...and it does. Every major

decision taken by the university comes through it. My heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you, for your individual expertise and your collective teamwork.

I also thank your partners, whom I'm delighted to welcome here this evening as well. We ask a lot of those who support us and sometimes, when we get home or get off Zoom, it's they who will hear 'you won't believe what so-and-so said' - to which Sheena usually says 'actually I would believe it'.

I couldn't have done any of this without Sheena, who wanted to give a speech here this evening but I said there wouldn't be time!

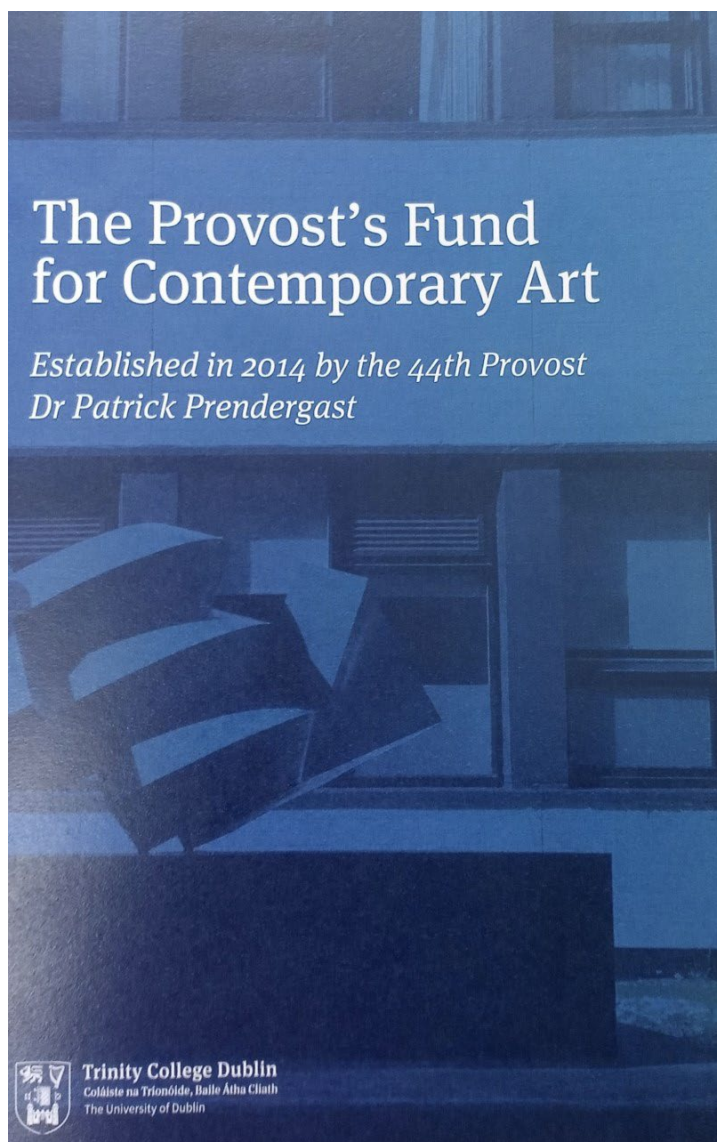
I won't miss all aspects of the provostship! But I will miss working with you all because you're proactive, pragmatic, good-tempered, decisive, team-spirited and you care about what you do – which is to say we shared a vision for the university and its place in driving Irish society, and we did our collective best to make that vision happen.

Thank you.

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Three paintings by Gavin O'Curry as a gift from EOG members to the Provost at the end of his term of office.



A booklet of the art purchased by a special fund during the term of Provost Patrick Prendergast, presented to him at the EOG dinner



22 June 2021

## **Celebration of Provost Patrick Prendergast's Tenure**

*Zoom from the Dining Room of the Provost's House*

### **Vice-Provost/CAO - Prof Jürgen Barkhoff**

Good afternoon, everybody. Dear Provost, dear Staff and Students: The 10 years of the Provostship of Patrick Prendergast are drawing to a close. These have been 10 truly momentous years, packed to the brim with ambitions, with projects, with challenges and with many achievements, during which the College under your leadership, Provost, grew and flourished. Under normal circumstances, we would get together for a big party to mark the occasion, to celebrate the many successes of this Provostship and to thank the Provost. Even though the Pandemic situation is improving, and the outlook is hopeful, this is still not possible. We have therefore chosen it different by a now all too familiar online format. In the next hour, some members of the College community and a few special guests will pay tribute to the Provost, speak about the many achievements of his tenure, and thank him for all he has done over those ten years. This celebration is a surprise to the Provost; the College community, staff and students have been invited – you're all very welcome. So, without further ado, let the round of tributes commence. Provost, sit back, relax and enjoy.

### **MC, Tom Molloy**

Thank you, Vice-Provost. Our first speaker is former President of Ireland and the current Chancellor of this university, Dr Mary McAleese.

### **Chancellor, Dr Mary McAleese**

Colleagues and guests; Provost (Paddy):

Paddy, you started your career as Provost 10 years ago during a recession and you're ending it now during a Pandemic. These are two very unenviable bookends. But you turned them into opportunities for personal and institutional triumphs. To take on the leadership of the doyenne of Irish universities during a period of economic austerity which saw the third level sector in perpetual crisis – that called for a level of belief and creativity and determination and focus which the electors of Trinity College saw and knew. And we can say without fear of contradiction that you have vindicated their trust many, many times over. From your undergraduate, your postgraduate days, through your stellar career as an academic abroad and then back in Trinity, you formed not just a loyalty to Trinity but just such a formidable faith in its

potential as a vital leaven at the heart of Irish life. I remember the pride I felt hearing you speak for the first time after your election on radio back then and hearing in your words that synthesis that we've come to associate with you – that unique sense of service for the education of the individual student, to developing Ireland's fortunes and to advancing scholarship for the benefit of all humanity. That was a tough time to be planning for growth and innovation at home, and outreach to the world, keeping Trinity's name aloft among the world's most outstanding and confident centres of intellectual excellence. You can remember as I do how miserable the people were during those times, robbed of hope and opportunity. But with the entrepreneurialism that you have in your DNA, you took on the task of being the hope and of inspiring a generation which saw the transformations in Trinity's physical infrastructure. They became the outward signs of that inward strength that lifted academic hearts, enticed new cohorts of students, attracted unheard of levels of funding and philanthropic partners and mustered a great spirit of scholarly endeavour and progress. We see it all around us today. Nobody could have predicted that your last years in office could have been afflicted by such a disruptive phenomenon as the covid Pandemic. But again, with reassuring calm and resourcefulness, you motivated the Trinity community to levels of ingenuity and acclimatization to the new covid rules and realities. And you've brought us very safely through thus far. Over this past decade, you insisted always on an egalitarian campus and one that nurtured and rewarded all talent and would pave the way for a sparkling, contemporary culture which saw the university's first female Provost elected in its century's long history.

I think you're entitled to leave office as a very contented, fulfilled and happy man. No one could have done more. No one could have done better. In another era, the boys of Wexford fought with heart and hand; you fought with heart and head to make Trinity and Ireland the best they could be. And today we gather to thank you, to wish you well with everything that lies ahead of you and the next phase of your remarkable life.

Go raibh mile maith agat.

**MC, Tom Molloy**

Thank you, Chancellor. Our next speaker is the Chairman of the Provost's Council, Fergal Naughton.

**Chairman of the Provost's Council, Fergal Naughton**

My name is Fergal Naughton. I am the CEO of our family business Glen Dimplex. I am very proud to be a Trinity graduate and in recent years, I have been the Chairman of the Provost's Council at Trinity and also of the Campaign Cabinet which has helped oversee

the *Inspiring Generations* campaign. Several years ago, the Provost came to see me. And it was at a time in my life where I was far too committed to other things and that I had made a personal pledge to say no to anything new. But the Provost asked me to join him in assisting to set up the campaign and the Council. And I immediately said yes, for two reasons. Number 1: this was Trinity and I have a great fondness and a great debt to Trinity. I spent my formative years there. But secondly, the Provost had a very clear vision and a very clear determination for what needed to be done. And what has been done is a great success. The finances that have been raised, the new ground breaking projects that are going to have such an impact on the future of Trinity and Ireland. But also a new setting the bar for how we go about philanthropy in Trinity. So I would like I suppose to thank Paddy for having given me the opportunity to contribute in some small way to having been part of this. I would like to congratulate him on what has been an excellent Provostship over the last 10 years. And I'd like to wish him the very best of success in the future.

**MC, Tom Molloy**

We will now hear from Dr Beate Schuler who is a member of the Trinity Campaign Cabinet and a supporter of many projects in College, including the Long Room Hub, and the E3 Learning Foundry.

**Member of the Trinity Campaign Cabinet, Dr Beate Schuler**

Provost, and hello to everyone:

Ten years of an extraordinary Provostship are coming to an end for you and for Trinity. I've had the privilege to have been on board for the visionary and ambitious Provostship right from the start. And with great pleasure, I would like to pay tribute to all your achievements. Let me start with one of my late father's sayings "Many, many people have ideas but however brilliant your idea may be, what counts in the end is to bring your idea to fruition." You started your Provostship with a vision to build a new and modern engineering school, where engineers would receive a comprehensive education adapted to today's energy demands and environmental challenges, where young engineers would get hands on experience. However, you realised that your dream could only become true if you secured substantial financing to complement Government's funding. And hence the idea of a campaign, of a philanthropic campaign, was born. Other projects were submitted to benefit from the philanthropic donations. There was for example the Cancer Institute. Thanks to your commitment, the Trinity and the St. James's Boards pulled together and during your term accreditation was granted. A huge achievement necessary to carry out clinical trials in Ireland. Provost, the list of projects is long, the campaign is

soon coming to a successful end and all your projects are underway. In the 10 years of your term you brought all your ideas to fruition. And I believe that at this point in time, I should not only say thank you for what you have done but to say a few words as to why in my opinion you are so successful. You approach tasks with an analytical and a strategic mind, you are target orientated; you pursue your ideas with perseverance. But over and above it is your ability to take your team on board. You perform leadership that builds on cooperation. You create an infectious atmosphere in which everyone wants to contribute and do their best. And with your sincerity, your passion, and your integrity you inspire people as you've inspired every donor and every member of the Council. You can truly look back on 10 extraordinary years. It has been a pleasure and my honour to be part of your team and I only regret not to be with you today. Thank you, Paddy.

### **MC, Tom Molloy**

It was the role of the next speaker to give the Provost a hard time from time to time, after she was elected leader of the Students' Union in 2015. These days she's better known as Senator Lynn Ruane.

### **Senator Lynn Ruane**

Thank you, Tom. So I know everybody else is opening by calling you Provost, but after I was elected to the Seanad, and every Student Union President that came to me for advice on how to deal with the Provost, I told them that you absolutely love being called Padzer which is a complete lie but I hope a few of them called you Padzer over the years because I got a bit of a giggle out of it. I suppose I want to thank you and wish you luck going forward. I think my year as President of the Students' Union was a positive one. I think the first thing I was excited about was how much you looked like José Mourinho and this was possibly the closest that I would ever get to him. But also I think what stands out to me is the TCD Fossil Free campaign. I suppose for a President of a Union only having a year to do something, yourself and the Board were so open to moving that campaign forward. So your openness and the Board's openness and your willingness to make that happen in the quick way, and working in such collaboration with the students at the time to make that happen – it either made me look like a really effective one-year term President or made you look like a really cool Provost. Either way, I think we both won on that one. But I think the biggest thing for me was when I first attended Board it would have been quite daunting for me wondering if I'm able to engage at that level, be part of something and the first part of that was for me not putting on a cloak to sit in a meeting. Logically it didn't make sense in my head and thankfully yourself or nobody else made a big deal of it because it was important for me to sit there as me in my own clothes, be



heard and speak in my own language and you met that all the time and I want to thank you for that and best of luck in the future. Thank you.

**MC, Tom Molloy**

The next speaker worked on the Provost's campaign, went into politics himself and is a Professor of History: Dr Patrick Geoghegan.

**Dr Patrick Geoghegan**

Well, thank you very much and it's a pleasure to be taking part in this edition of 'This is Your Life' or rather 'This Was Your Life over the Past Ten Years'. Now, I've been asked to talk about your contribution to arts, humanities and social sciences and I think for me you saw these areas as being more than a strategic priority. You saw them as fundamental to what we are as a university – fundamental for interpreting and interrogating who we are, what kind of society we live in and where we're going in the world. And I think to get a real sense of your commitment to these areas and indeed your priorities as a Provost, I think go online, for people to go to YouTube and watch one of the very first events you did as Provost back in September 2011. Because I went with you to Electric Picnic and you had travelled around Trinity with your kids, you had taken photographs of interesting things and then you spoke about these photographs at Electric Picnic. And Lynn mentioned the José Mourinho comparison but my God when you look at the video now you'd think it wasn't taken 10 years ago. You'd think it might have been taken 20, 25 years ago with I'm afraid how much the job has aged so many. But anyway we'll forget about that but it's fascinating watching back at that Electric Picnic video talking about what motivated you as Provost, how you wanted to be remembered over the next 10 years. And one of the big things for you, one of your final images, was of a doorbell to House 1 and you wanted to be the person who made sure that that door was always being answered, that the door was always open to those who had potential and ability. That you wanted to answer for Trinity's greatness in Ireland and on the world stage. And I think you did so much in all of those areas. Like one of the most interesting and enjoyable things that I worked with you on was the admissions work to try and ensure that the Leaving Cert wasn't the only thing that was taken into account when students were admitted to third level. And there was some opposition externally and perhaps it has taken the world shutting down and a Pandemic for people to recognize that perhaps putting all the emphasis on a single set of exams at the end isn't the best way of doing things and I think you were certainly far ahead of your time with that leadership. But I think when talking about arts, humanities and social sciences more broadly you see your impact in the new buildings, in the *Inspiring Generations* campaigns for the

Business School, for the Law School, for the work that's being done with the Old Library campaign, the Trinity Long Room Hub, with the air of self-confidence that you see around the Faculty. Because it's never been seen as the Faculty that had to fight to justify itself, its significance and its importance was always understood right there from the beginning. You also see your commitment, your passion for poetry, for history and the work you've done on commemorations, in the sculptures and portraits you've commissioned, many of them of women, many of them by women, and I think they really speak to this changing face of Trinity, the way you have helped to open that door to all these different approaches and ways of doing things. And I think one of the sculptures that really speaks to me is that brilliant one by Eilish O'Connell *Atoms and Atoms* and I think that fusion of science and arts is something that you've always believed so strongly in. And I think it's been in evidence throughout your Provostship and I think perhaps we're going to see quite a bit more in terms of that contribution to opening up Trinity, to making Trinity, make that wider contribution for Trinity's greatness, for global Trinity and I think we've seen all of those examples in your Provostship.

**MC, Tom Molloy**

Thank you Professor Geoghegan. Our next speaker is Professor Áine Kelly. Professor Kelly recently chaired the Resumption of Teaching Working Group and she's Professor of Physiology in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

**Professor Áine Kelly**

Good afternoon everyone, good afternoon Provost, I am delighted to be taking part in this celebration of your 10 years of achievement. My name is Áine Kelly, I'm an academic in the Physiology Department and I have worked with the Provost on several projects over the past few years. As a member of the School of Medicine I would like to pay special tribute to your support of health sciences research in college. As a Professor of Bioengineering yourself of course you know the importance of multidisciplinary research in making discoveries in health sciences. That's clear from major initiatives already mentioned, like the Trinity St James's Cancer Institute which will be a lasting legacy of your vision and your ambition for College and for the Country. I was recently involved in the Trinity Education Project, a hugely ambitious revision of our entire undergraduate curriculum that by the Provost's design involved every aspect of the College; from timetabling to assessment, from the Careers Office to the Global Office. The project was the brainchild of the Provost but its success is due in large part to the talent and hard work of everyone he put on the team together and especially the Project Manager Sheena Brown. One aspect of the project we are most proud of is the Trinity Electives, a program

of over 40 modules covering the full range of research expertise. The modules are available to students across the College exposing them to scholarship outside their own discipline. This breadth of academic opportunity I think typifies the Trinity education. Most of the ideas for the modules came from our academics but last summer in the context of the Black Lives Matter movement our students started a petition to add Black Studies as an elective. This all moved very fast. One Friday evening as I was scrolling through Twitter as I sometimes do, I saw that the petition had been uploaded that day and the student newspapers had written articles in support of it. So, I thought well I'll raise this at the next Trinity Electives Committee meeting and we can discuss it then. However, the next morning, Saturday morning about 10am, my phone rang and it was the Provost. So immediately I thought, what's happened? What have I done? Why is the Provost phoning me on Saturday morning? So I answered the phone with a bit of trepidation and he got straight down to business and say "Well have you seen the article in the Trinity News, it's a brilliant idea; we need to make this happen for the students. I will set up meetings for next week and get working on this." So he did and the module is now available as an option for our students. I think this small anecdote illustrates a few things. First, everybody including the Provost, possibly especially the Provost, reads the student newspapers. Second, the Provost is never off duty and if you're working on a project that's important to him you're probably never off duty either. And third and most important, is that the student experience and the student voice is really important to him. He responded immediately and was proactive in delivering on his promises to the students. That concern for students and making the education experience in Trinity the best that it could be is a hallmark I think of his ethos, his energy and his vision. So thank you Provost for allowing me to play a small part in some of your achievements of the last 10 years and congratulations on a hugely successful decade.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you very much Professor Kelly. Our next speaker will be known to pretty much everybody. She is Professor Linda Doyle, Provost-Elect.

**Professor Linda Doyle**

Hello everybody, hello Provost. I am absolutely delighted to be here on this very special occasion and to say a few words. I have actually known Paddy quite a long time, we both actually started lecturing here at the same time and met on our induction course and there were a number of things that stood out from Paddy when I met him. And, first and foremost is his actual love for Trinity. It was really clear to me back then that he had gotten his dream job and he just

loved being part of everything that Trinity is. And secondly what stood out was Paddy's ambition and drive, you have heard lots of people mention this already and you can really see it in everything that he does. Paddy's field of research was in bioengineering and when Paddy started his research this field wasn't the field that it is today and from my perspective he very much laid the ground work on what it has become. And he definitely has some kind of magic ability to supervise PhDs as so many of his PhDs have gone on to get prestigious ERCs. So it came as no surprise to me that when he was still in his thirties Paddy became a full professor here in Trinity. Paddy's love of Trinity, and his ambition and drive, are evident in his role as Dean of Graduate Studies, as VPCAO and of course as Provost. He really brought and in depth knowledge of Trinity to the table when he took up the role and as the Chancellor said already he steered the University through a tough and exciting decade. Through good times and through challenging times. He took over at a time when the country was in a big mess and he was completely undaunted by this. And he was undaunted again by the challenges of the pandemic thrown at him at the end of the decade. And along the way he has led Trinity through many exciting projects and there are some many to choose from here, whether it's the Business School or becoming part of LERU or the initiatives that are very close to his heart such as E3. The engineer that is in me made me do some calculations, and Paddy I reckon you have done over 300 hours of Board meetings; 600 hours of Executive Officers group; I did a guess and I'm guessing you did maybe 1,000 dinners for Trinity; 2,000 receptions for staff, students and visitors; and I also calculated that you probably answered about a million emails; and the number that tops all that is you raised nearly 4 million in philanthropy. So there is much to celebrate and much to acknowledge. On a personal note I would like to say thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to be Dean of Research here, I learned an absolutely huge amount from that and I know I wouldn't be sitting here today with this opportunity before me had I not been Dean of Research. And if I am half as hard working in the job as you have been I think I will do ok. So to end I just want to end by saying we all know you were an exceptionally young Provost so for me this is not an end, it's a new beginning and I have no doubt there will be many more exciting times ahead and I wish you the very best on the next part of your adventure.

### **MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you Provost-Elect. Our last speaker before a short musical interlude, former President of Ireland and former Chancellor of this University; and Climate Justice Campaigner Dr Mary Robinson.

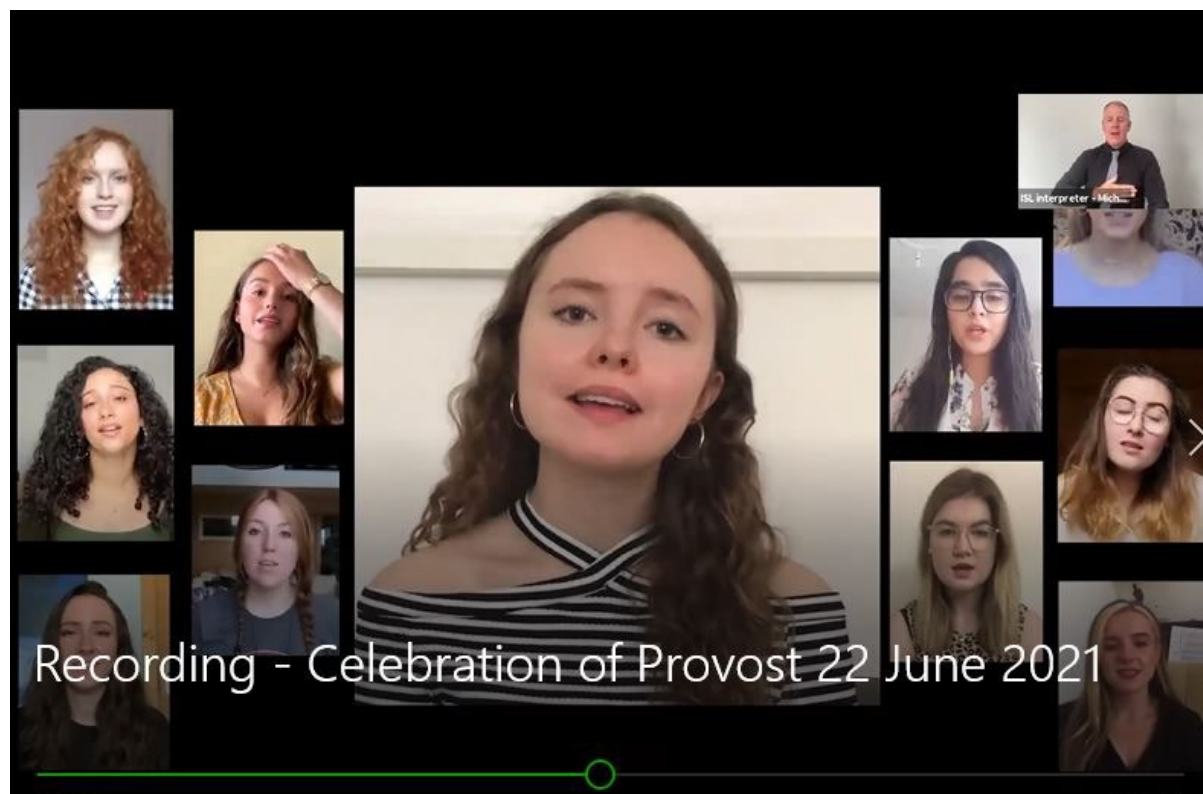
### **Dr Mary Robinson**

Hello everyone, I'm delighted to join in with you all in this surprise tribute to Provost Paddy Prendergast. Paddy I hope you are enjoying this and I hope it doesn't go to your head, you know, filter out too much praise and know that there is a lot of warmth in the contributions so far; and I join in that warmth. I had the honour to serve for quite a long time as Chancellor so I had an all three Provosts; the first Tom Mitchell invited me to put my name forward for Chancellor and he was with me from 1998 to 2001 and we got on very well I must say, and then I enjoyed working with John Hegarty when he became Provost in August 2001. Then in early in 2011 I had to wait and see the outcome for this 3<sup>rd</sup> election for Provost during my time and I was very happy because I actually knew you Paddy, you served with me on the Honours Committee and I had met you several times in various ways in College so I was happy about the appointment and as I looked at you I thought to myself but he is too young, he is just a boy. Now, everybody is very young to me I have to confess but you looked so young taking on this challenge but what has already been repeated over and over what struck me too was your enthusiasm for the job, your commitment to Trinity, your determination to do the very best and make Trinity the greatest university it ever could be etc. You know that's very engaging, it's very compelling when you have a Provost who really likes the job, who comes in every day wanting to walk tall for Trinity as Provost and do your very best. So I agree with the tributes already paid and I would like to commend you but also all of the Trinity staff at every level, at every level, for the way you have coped with covid19. I have been in to College a couple of times for various things, I couldn't be more impressed with just how the messaging has been helpful and supportive and I really do want to commend you all for the challenge, the complete challenge that covid has posed and continues to pose to the college at every level and to the morale at every level and it has not been easy but it has been great to see the leadership from you Paddy but also the way everyone has played their part. I was very encouraged of course because of my interest in climate justice of your open response and it was a very open response to the student campaign and it has already been referenced. I remember it wasn't easy for you to cope with the demand of students that Trinity would become fossil free, that it would divest from fossil fuel. You know you came to see me and I offered you some advice and you took that advice in particular to meet with Ellen Wallis of the Wallis Foundation and get her advice, and of course you took her advice; and she has talked up your role and talked up Trinity since then as being a leader and a leading university in the approach to the whole challenge of the environment and you want that challenge to be also met by the E3 building and all that it encompasses. I too welcome the way in which you engaged philanthropist, engaged the business

community, to help you so that Trinity would have the capacity for both the advance research and the buildings to cope with that during time and they are part of your legacy. You realised the importance of engaging with a whole range of people and it really has been a tribute to you that Trinity has managed to, how would I say, lived through difficult years for third level institutions because of the support from philanthropy and from the business community. And finally I would like to thank you for insisting, because it was really your insistence, that I would sit for a portrait that would then be placed in that wonderful position over the mantel piece right in the middle of the Dining Hall, it meant that a King had to be sent away a late King and that there would be a woman present in the Dining Hall for the future. I think that was part of your understanding of where you wanted to position Trinity, it's therefore no surprise perhaps that you are followed by a woman, inevitably by a woman because there were three good woman candidates. The speaker just before me, the incoming Provost Linda Doyle, is an excellent example of how you have brought the College forward in every way so I would like to thank you for the time we worked together when I was Chancellor and for all you have done for Trinity and to wish you all the best for the future.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you very much Dr Robinson. We will now hear from the Trinity Belles who have pre-recorded a short acapella medley of songs in a socially distanced way for 2 or 3 minutes.



Screenshot of pre-recorded performance from the Trinity Belles

**MC Tom Molloy**

Our next speaker is Professor Daniel Kelly who has collaborated with Provost on research projects including the snappily named 'Mechanico regulation of stem cells differentiated in tissue regeneration in osteochondral defects.'

**Professor Daniel Kelly**

Thank you. Good afternoon all. So, I first met Paddy back in 1998 as an undergraduate student when I called in to his office to enquire about the final year research project he was offering to supervise for engineering students like me. At the time Paddy was one of a handful of academics in Ireland undertaking research in the emerging discipline of bioengineering. Looking to apply engineering principles to the study of human physiology and the development of new medical devices to treat human diseases. Paddy's passion for bioengineering was clear from that first meeting, a passion that he transferred to me and to many others who worked in his research group at that time. In 2002 Paddy established what was then called the Trinity Centre for Bioengineering laying the foundations for a thriving new discipline here at Trinity College. Shortly after I left his research group Paddy took on the role of Dean of Graduate Studies, which I guess was the beginning of a new stage of his career and eventually led to him being elected Provost. At the time I was honestly a little surprised of Paddy's move into College management. How could somebody with such a grá for bioengineering want to do anything else? Where others have already eluded to if there was anything Paddy was more passionate about other than bioengineering it was Trinity College Dublin. Over the last 10 years I have watched Paddy put the same energy, enthusiasm and passion in to leading our University as he did years ago when building the discipline of bioengineering. As we have been hearing today Paddy will leave many legacies from his time as Provost, one of the smaller ones, one I know he is very proud of is that biomedical engineering has gone from strength to strength over the past 10 years. In terms of student interest it has gone from a discipline that was not available to our students at Trinity 10 years ago to now being one of the larger disciplines in the School of Engineering based on undergraduate and postgraduate numbers. This has been enabled by the recruitment of many able and talented academic staff who together have been awarded 9 prestigious European Research Council grants in recent years. So on behalf of everyone in your original academic home in biomedical engineering in Trinity, I would like to both thank and congratulate Paddy on the last 10 years. In so many ways it has been a transformative time for our University. I would like to finish by wishing him all the best for the next stage of his career and to let him know that he is always

welcome back to give a few lectures on biomechanics next semester. All the best Paddy.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you very much Professor Kelly. Our next speaker is Shaz Oye who served as the Head of the Graduate Students Union from 2019 to 2020.

**Shaz Oye**

Hi Paddy, Happy Pride everyone. I am Shaz, I am a postgrad student studying in the Department of Education and formerly a President of Students Graduate Union. I have served with you Paddy on Board, Finance and worked with you on the Board Review process and there are 4 words that characterise your incredible energy, drive, determination, vision and ambition for College; and it's this 'if not now when?' And this was epitomised for me when I came to you with my vision to reboot the redevelopment of the 1937 Reading Room. You rolled up your sleeves, you came over to the 37 and I remember we walked through the tunnels, we crawled through the bowels of that building and you got it! You got it, you backed it and you effectively green lit the project and thank you for that because that will be a great legacy for postgraduate students into the future when that work is completed. And having worked with you on numerous committees I witnessed a deep commitment to student partnership and to creating the conditions wherein we can all thrive, all be brilliant and strive to be our best selves. Whether that be the Trinity Education Project or the creation of 40 fully funded Provost PhD Project Awards. And people should know that your commitment to postgrads extends to getting out the Lycra. I am thinking of you know when you got on your bicycle and cycled to fundraise for the student hardship fund on Neville's Trinity on the Move Project. I came to College in 2017 and I had come to education later in life and as a black working class lesbian coming to education in later life I felt respected by you, you were always respectful of me, you affirmed me and I felt valued by you and I really appreciated that. You know I really enjoyed our time together and I enjoyed sparring with you on Board. I wish you the very best for the future and for whatever you do next and especially I want to thank you again for all that you have done yesterday, for what you are doing now and for the legacy that you are going to leave for us that will benefit us all into tomorrow. Thank you very much and Slán go Fóill.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you Shaz. The next speaker will be known to the many visitors to House 1, it is Caroline Foley who has managed the House with great aplomb over the years.



**Mrs Caroline Foley**

Hi everybody, hi Provost, surprise! I would like to start by thanking you for giving me the opportunity to be your steward. It's been a privilege and an honour, and I have learned so much from my time in this house. I suppose I differ to everybody else in that I see the more personal side of you as a family man with your children and your relatives that come to stay. I saw the first time when you took the kids here how excited they were, jumping all over the furniture that we had just polished and generally wrecking the place but that's what kids do. I particularly remember in the first winter you were here and invited an elderly aunt for tea; and asked me to make a fuss of her so, your mother Mary will remember this, so I sat them up in the Drawing Room and put out the fancy cups and the fancy pots and because it was winter I flicked the switch on the gas fire. So she came in and was so impressed, how beautiful everything was and how lucky you were to live here and she said to me "did you light that fire yourself?" and I hadn't the heart to tell her it was gas because I think she had visions of me coming up the back stairs with a coal scuttle. Little things like that stay with me, happy memories. And just to say I wish you the very very best for the future and your family, and Sheena. And I hope you will be very happy in whatever you do. Best of luck.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you Mrs Foley. Next up is Professor David Taylor who is Professor in Mechanical, Manufacturing and Biomedical Engineering. Professor Taylor also had the pleasure I am sure of supervising a young Patrick Prendergast's PhD.

**Professor David Taylor**

Yes Paddy, I was your PhD Supervisor and look I am still alive. Both of us were quite a bit younger in those days in fact I was just a junior lecturer starting out and you were my first ever PhD student, at least the first one that I had money to pay for. So I guess you kind of spoiled me for that really because I thought that all PhD students were going to be just like you, you know energetic and enthusiastic, full of ideas and self-motivating of course since then I have learned that that's not always the case. I think what I probably remember most about that time was all the many conversations, discussions and arguments that we would have and in my memory now we always seem to be walking around the streets of some foreign city because we were there for a conference or research meeting or something like that and usually end up in a bar of course. And you were very good at arguing your point and this was a bit of a problem because you would often beat me in the arguments and sometimes I would remember that you would realise that you were on your way to winning the argument so you would

change sides and win the argument on the other side as well because these were your debating skills which I am sure have stood you in good stead in all those Board meetings. I guess one always remembers one's own time as a PhD student and of course in a university PhD students are crucial, they are an interface of teaching and research, most of us, many of us anyway need PhD students to do our research. So they are kind of a resource but at the same time it is a teaching role and a teaching role at the very highest level and it's clear that you have appreciated that, the importance of PhD students and the difficulties they face from time to time. And I have seen that in your work first as the Dean of Graduate Studies and subsequently as Provost that you have taken up the call to improve conditions for PhD students in this University for which we are all extremely grateful. So thank you, thank you for getting me going as a PhD supervisor. Thank you for all those interesting conversations. And I wish you the very best for the future.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you very much Professor Taylor. Joining us now is Dr David McGrath who runs the College Health Service and has also played a key role in keeping the College safe during the pandemic.

**Dr David McGrath**

Thank you Tom and thank you colleagues, and good afternoon Provost. I suppose I first met Paddy shortly after I took up my post as Medical Director of College Health in 2006 having come from the same role in the University of Edinburgh. And my interactions with Paddy at that time were typical of those, once he took over as Provost, were typical of those of any Provost with the Medical Director. And he was very supportive of College Health but he left us to get on with our job of seeing our patients who were the students and the staff of the College. Of course there were intermittent often crisis-related discussions between us but I can certainly say that all of that relationship changed dramatically in early 2020. In January of 2020, it seems like 10 years ago, never mind the length of the Provostship, in January 2020 I approached John Coman, John is the College Secretary, to advise him of an outbreak of a new virus in Wuhan. This wasn't unusual in itself, over the previous 15 years or so John and I had set up various working groups related to other viral illnesses like swine flu and avian flu. Or as well as other communicable diseases like the mumps that might affect students and have working groups on these. But following this discussion John and I spoke with Paddy, he came into John's office and the three of us just set around the table for about 10 minutes and we alerted him that we were setting up a working group to keep the College abreast of this new virus and manage any issues that might arise for our students and staff. So what a complete

underestimation this turned out to be. Even a couple of weeks later when I spoke at a Science Gallery open meeting along with Professors Carina Butler and Nigel Stevenson, and Cillian de Gascun we really had no absolutely no idea what was coming down the tracks. But by early March John and I were briefing Paddy regularly and from very early on, really from March before any cases occurred in Ireland Paddy put a completely hands on approach to the management of the crisis. He brought all the relevant specialists on board across the College. We were all on tender hooks for the first case to appear in Dublin, we knew a case was inevitable and knowing that it was only a matter of time. And when that first case appeared in Dublin it was actually in one of our own students. So after two months of planning for this Paddy rang me at 8 o'clock in the evening on the 9<sup>th</sup> March telling me he had been contacted by the Department of Health and with impeccable timing I had to tell him that I was coming out of the only general anaesthetic of my life that afternoon and had a hip replacement that day. However the team at College Health were well prepared and they swung into action. The Provost put the College on as near to a war footing as could be envisaged. From that day 15, 16 months ago until now after 3 maybe 4 waves of the virus through college closures and online learning he has maintained this hands on approach. Throughout the time and this is really the thing that has really stood out for me through the whole process he has put the students front and centre in every decision that was made. We adhere to every recommendation of NPHE and Paddy always wanted to view each guideline through the eyes of the student. He encouraged us to go way beyond the approaches of the other universities in Ireland. He supported my collaboration with Dr Colm Henry, the Chief Clinical Officer with the HSE, to set up an onsite Covid19 testing centre at College Health which would be staffed by the College Health staff but function as part of the national testing program. He supported our screening service, Triniscreen, with Professor Orla Sheils. This allowed us to screen asymptomatic students in residence and also essential staff on campus. And then in the third part of our covid jigsaw he gave unequivocal support to enable Trinity to be the only university in the country to administer on campus vaccinations to our most vulnerable students and staff. Those in group 4 and group 7 of the national vaccination rollout plan. These are almost a 1,000 people, very high risk students and staff and they have been vaccinated through this programme. In addition to that Paddy encouraged us to focus on the mental wellbeing of our students, asking me and my colleagues; the Director of Student Counselling Trish Murphy and the College Psychiatrist Niamh Farrelly. To present strategies to schools, to groups across the College to assist them in helping students with the mental health problems that were and are so prevalent with

covid. He approved funding for additional resources in this area which has proven to be of great benefit to the students. What has really stood out for me however is his constant support for students who have had to study from home who have missed the experience of being in college, the support for those students in campus accommodation and also for our international students many of them who have been so affected by the fallout from covid in their own countries. I am sure over the last 15-16 months we have met 3-4 times a week in various forum. Throughout those forums in all the questions that came up, that come up he continually referred back to how he would do things if he was a student at the moment. How he would view this recommendation, how he would view this restriction, and that really brought the position of the student front and centre in all our minds. And finally I am very happy to report that the Provost's commitment to College Health and Disability Service as well as Trinity Sport will have a physical manifestation when we open Printing House Square in the autumn. A long awaited opening, almost 2-3 years behind schedule mainly related to covid issues. So I hope you really enjoy the next phase of your life Paddy. Thank you.

### **MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you very much Dr McGrath. One of our last speakers in Aaron Koay who is a Laidlaw Scholar researching for a PhD in population health.

### **Aaron Koay**

Hello my name is Aaron Koay, I am a pharmacist graduated from Trinity in 2020 and had to work on the frontline of the pandemic. And currently I am a first year Trinity Provost PhD student in Pharmacy and also an inaugural alumnus of the Laidlaw Leadership and Research Programme. Firstly I would like to thank Joel McKeever, the Student Employability Officer and Co-ordinator of the Laidlaw Programme for inviting me to say a few words today particularly around how these two programmes which are funded by the Provost's Office have supported me in my personal and professional development. So back in 2018 it was really a huge privilege to be selected as one of the 18 inaugural Trinity Laidlaw Scholars. The programme consists of 3 distinct yet connected components namely research, leadership and networking and I found the unique planning of the programme really equipped me with not just skills but also the confidence to be visionary in developing my career projectory. And through the programme I was able to conduct a research project not just in house under a Trinity academic but also with the funding I was able to visit 2 research groups in the Netherlands to advance the research and also to do international collaborations. And the funding also funded us to present our project at conferences in Texas and Florida in the

United States. And you know I was able to make friends with really brilliant Scholars across Trinity and also scholars from other universities who I would never have met otherwise. You know I have met really good friends and some of them are lifelong friends from the programme with whom I am still very much in contact with. And you know reflecting on the experience, how incredible it was, to have the support and to achieve so much as an undergraduate student. It was really moulded me into a different person and really enhanced my employability. And as an alumnus of the Programme I am now also involved in the Laidlaw Programme in a very different capacity as I am now guiding and mentoring a current Laidlaw Scholar in his project as a PhD student. And you know it is a fantastic opportunity to give back to the community. And as I mentioned I am funded by a Trinity Provost PhD award to conduct my study here in Trinity. So I suppose at both undergrad and postgrad levels my career has tremendously benefitted from the Provost's Office through these programmes so I would like to thank Provost Patrick Prendergast and the Provost's Office for your support and I want you to know that these 2 programmes have really been life changing for me. So thank you very much.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you very much Aaron. Our next speaker comes live from Oulart, Provost's hometown. It is Mrs Mary Prendergast.

**Mrs Mary Prendergast**

Good evening, I am Mary Prendergast, mother of the Provost and I would like to say how proud I and his family are of Padraic and his academic achievement. I would also like to send a heartfelt thank you to the people who spoke before me for the nice things they said about him. My only regret is that his dad did not live to see how successful he became as an academic and Provost of Trinity College. Some of his academic success can be attributed to his teachers in Oulart National School, and it is only a village, and St Peter's College Wexford; particularly Mrs Bríd Flood, Michael Bracken and in St Peter's College, Philip Quirke. The teachers who took the time to give him inspiration academically at a young age. He enjoyed his time at St Peter's and could always be found in the study hall. I remember being told that they had to lock the study hall door to get him to go out on to the hurling pitch. He was also put in to detention one time for bringing a girl in to the college to play tennis. It was an all-boys school after all so girls were not allowed. His sister Anna and his brothers Damian, John, Brendan and Peter are also as equally proud of him as I am. He has achieved a great tenure as Provost at a very young age and I think as his mother he has a lot more to offer higher education. And on a very personal

note I would like to wish him a happy birthday tomorrow but I will see him this evening. Bye, thank you.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you very much indeed Mrs Prendergast. Our final contribution this evening is from Professor Gerald Dawe who will read a poem he wrote about Trinity.

**Professor Gerald Dawe**

Hello, my name is Gerald Dawe, I am a former Professor of English at Trinity College, fellow emeritus and I am delighted to say a few words on this special occasion. I have written a short little speech and I will conclude with an equally short little poem. A couple of years ago in remapping Trinity, and exciting project created by colleagues I was asked to contribute a poem which in some way connect the living concourse of life with a building or setting within college grounds or without. Coincidentally I had just been told a story some time earlier of the Henry Moore statue 'two seated figures' which had once graced the plinth outside the entrance to the Berkeley Library. Many the day I had walked by that plinth without giving it a second thought. Students sat there talking, visitors stood there photographing. Conversations were held fleetingly. Often I would notice someone simply standing there taking the scene in, in very much the same way that Paddy's short walk takes in the grandeur of Trinity's physical and intellectual, and cultural spaces. The self-same traditions that Paddy has maintained and upheld, and renovated in probably one of the most difficult times since World War 1. This is the brief poem that attempts to capture all those glimpses and conversations, and thoughts that I imagine buzzing around that plinth. I offer it to Paddy with all my good wishes to him and his family, and with heart-held facts for everything. This is the poem.

***'Plinth, Berkeley Library, Trinity College'***

*Imagine two seated figures in a loving embrace of all they see,  
Pomodoro's, sphere within sphere,  
the classical Printing House, the river inflected sky,  
and then recall the chatter, and everlasting laughter.*

Thanks, bye.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Thank you very much Professor Dawe. The Provost actually got in touch to say that he would actually like to say a few words. Now we are kind of tempting fate with technology but hopefully we will be able to connect him now, just waiting to see what will happen. This was of course a surprise event so we were expecting to end it but I

think we have the Provost coming, do we? Yes. Here he is, with Sheena.

**Provost Patrick Prendergast and Sheena Brown**

Hello everyone, well first I have really enjoyed listening to the reflections. I am very touched to hear your reflections and warm memories of our time together. I hadn't known this was going to happen. This has been kept a secret from me by herself her and all the Provost's Office, and colleagues. So I really am delighted to hear your reflections and it's really, I am getting a bit emotional. I promise I won't cry. I decided to say a few words really just to thank you all for the effort you put in and it's really great to hear your sentiments and I suppose we don't hear from people so much in the times of the pandemic as we might have otherwise. It means a lot to me as my Provostship draws to a close to hear those kind words that you have all spoken. True, we all work in a great institution, Trinity College. We more than work in it, we live it, we contribute to it, we take forward its histories and traditions by continuing to work well for it and to be a community for each other that lives and works here. So thank you all very much, it's really been, dare I say, one of the highlights of my Provostship to hear those lovely things you all said about our time together when I have been Provost. So, thank you very much.

**MC Tom Molloy**

Well that concludes today's reflections. Thank you very much indeed for coming. Goodbye.

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Mrs Mary Prendergast delivering her contribution from her home in Raheenaskagh, Oulart, Co Wexford.



24 June 2021

**Provost's Salon with the Minister for Finance,  
Paschal Donohue**

*Zoom from the Yeats Room*

Good evening,

And welcome, everyone, to this very special Provost's Salon.

We've been holding these virtual Salons a year now. In times of social distancing, they've proved a really great way to stay keep in contact, and to invite distinguished academics and graduates to talk about their vital fields of expertise.

Tonight is a very special and unique Salon. It's unique in its audience: you are all members of the Provost's Council, which, as I have explained to the Minister is a unique group of leading alumni and friends of Trinity, a council that has been so transformative for my Provostship, and for the university.

And it's unique in its guest. We are honoured that Paschal Donohue joins us this evening to talk on a range of issues. Paschal is TD for Dublin Central. He needs no introduction but, since this is a Trinity event, I will just emphasize our claim on him. He is a Trinity graduate in politics and economics. He arrived here on a scholarship and left with a first-class honours in 1996, having served as secretary to The Phil.

He has held senior Ministerial positions as Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport; Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform; and since 2017, as Minister for Finance. In 2010 he was elected by his colleague European Finance ministers as President of the Eurogroup.

It's characteristic of his generosity and goodwill towards Trinity that he is taking the time from his terrifyingly busy schedule to be with us this evening.

To start off the event, the Minister will address us for about 15 minutes and we will then have a Q&A session. While the Minister speaks, I'd ask you all to turn off your microphones, and then of course turn them on for the Q&A.

If you want to ask a question yourselves during the Q&A, please use the 'yellow hand' icon, and I'll act as convenor.

As with all our Salon events, Chatham rules apply so, please everyone, feel comfortable to speak freely and frankly.

It's now my pleasure to hand over to the Minister for Finance, Paschal Donohoe.

*[Paschal speaks for c. 15 minutes]*

Thank you Paschal. That was wonderful. If nobody minds, I will kick off with the first question, but please all put up your hands, and I will get round to you for subsequent questions.

*[Q and A begins]*

25 June 2021

## **Address to the Provost's Council Meeting, 2021**

*Zoom from the Dining Room of the Provost's House*

Thank you, Fergal, and good afternoon everyone,

This is a wonderful day, a true celebration, and I'm only sorry we're not all together in-person.

In just five weeks I leave office. The past year will go down in history as The Covid Year. It's been incredibly challenging, for everyone. And yet I feel like I'm leaving on a high note.

This Provost's Council is only five years old. I was surprised when I checked the dates. I feel as if I've had the benefit of this Council for most of my provostship when, in fact, it has only been for half of it. Memory plays tricks on us, as we know; I guess I feel like it has been longer because, from the get-go, this Council has been so important for me in thinking through strategy and raising ambition. The Council provides a firm bedrock from which to launch initiatives and take risks.

And of course, before we formally set up the Provost's Council, we held the Trinity Global Graduate Forum in 2013, at which many of you were present, and we strategized on how to finance the Business School with key business alumni including, again, some of you.

The annual Provost's Council meeting has been a key calendar date for us to meet, take stock, reflect on how the university is doing, and plan for the future. And our dialogue was by no means confined to an annual meet-up but continued throughout the year. I could contact any of you, as needed. And on my trips abroad, I could count on meeting you and on your support, which was wonderful. On many occasions, you organised events and hosted me and my team.

I've really missed travel these past 18 months and when I think of these events, I get very nostalgic. Many meetings were pivotal:

- I remember John Daly hosting a dinner in New York that was really important for advancing the Old Library Redevelopment;

- And Beate hosting our visit to Germany to visit Cancer centres – the best ones in Europe,
- And Stanley in Singapore and Australia on many occasions - his really remarkable support for recruiting medical students,
- And a crucial dinner Alan Dargan hosted in London helping us prepare for the launch of *Inspiring Generations*;
- And Pradeep Kar in Bangalore opening his network to Trinity's Indian ambitions. And a lunch he hosted with the best mangos and ice-cream I've ever had! Mangos flown in from Kashmir.

There were many more occasions. Thank you, all of you.

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When I look back over my provostship, I've an over-riding sense of a deep connection with alumni and friends, and of having been particularly well advised by people who understand how to make change; how to get things financed, how to get them done.

At so many junctures, your advice has been absolutely critical to success. For instance:

- I well recall Paul Dreschler saying to me decisively to stop the scope creep on the Business School, because, he said, the project will run away from you. I took that advice! And we delivered it on time and to budget.
- And the early conversations with Paul Johnson when he insisted that we needed E3 to have faith in technology to solve problems – which of course is now absolutely central to E3's philosophy.
- And Declan Sheehan's applying his organising mind for the Trinity St James Cancer Institute pitching for OEIC accreditation – which we got, the first cancer centre in Ireland to get this status.
- And when we wanted to make real our commitment to the Centre for Literary Translation, Gilliane Quinn, chairing the Association and Trust, was clear-sighted in her conviction to refurb the beautiful house at Fenian Street – and we got it done; it's now a flourishing centre enhancing the Arts & Humanities.

There are many more such concrete instances of Provost Council members giving the kind of advice which only comes from years of experience and leadership. You've all influenced my outlook; you've changed the direction of Trinity for the better.

I remember a switch going off in my academic brain when you collectively persuaded me that if an idea is good enough, the money can be found. Articulate the idea, you said, make the case for it, and if the case is strong enough, the financing will come. Believe me, that is not the way things have traditionally worked in the university. The traditional approach was to start with the cost, and then say it was impossible... For you guys a good idea is never impossible, and your ability to impart this to me and to Trinity has been transformative.

I well recall discussing our new Trinity East campus at Grand Canal Dock with Eric Kinsella. It would cost, I said, 1.4 billion euro. Eric didn't baulk. He was straight into working out how to make it happen. That conversation, as much as Eric and Barbara's outstanding donation, changed our thinking on the new campus at Trinity East, and what our approach to development would be.

And, again collectively, you've advised and demonstrated the importance of building connections and relationships beyond the university. It was Terry Neill who first emphasized this to me. I wasn't many months in the job and I was very focussed, as are all Provosts, on the internal politics of the place. Terry pointed out that a Provost's role is really about external relationships, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when universities are global. And all of you, at different times, in different ways, made this point – that whatever the sphere you move in, success comes from building relationships and connections. This has been a key learning. It's not the kind of learning you get from an academic career. It is one that I think only a Provost's Council could give.

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Recently, I was glancing through my election manifesto written in spring 2011, when I was running for the provostship. I was fascinated to find, buried in the section on 'Financial Stability', this line: 'My strategy to face the funding crisis with confidence is based on a **realistic** understanding of philanthropy and what it can achieve.'

I don't recall writing that! I don't recall, in fact, making philanthropy one of my campaign promises. I'm pleased that the genesis of the

ambition was there from the start, but I do wonder, now, what I meant by that catch-all adjective: ‘realistic’.

I can tell you what I certainly didn't mean. I didn't mean €400 million euro. If I'd campaigned on the promise of raising that sum through philanthropy, no-one would have thought it ‘realistic’ – they would have thought I was for the birds. I probably wouldn't have got elected!

But look at where we are now! Next month, in my last week as Provost, Martin Naughton and I will turn the sod of the E3 Learning Foundry – which is not just a new building, but a whole new way of educating. We have made philanthropy ‘realistic’.

People tend to over-use the word ‘transformative’ – I probably over-use it myself. The word should be saved for when it is truly meaningful.

*Inspiring Generations* is transformative. It goes beyond the great new buildings. It goes beyond even new scholarships and professorships. It is transformative because we've now realised the power and possibility of philanthropy. Trinity has become a philanthropic university. Previously we thought about donors supporting specific initiatives, it was project-oriented, but now we think in terms of philanthropy transforming the whole university. As we say in mechanical engineering, that's a fundamental ‘Change of State’.

*Inspiring Generations* is a record-breaker on so many fronts: it's the first comprehensive philanthropic campaign in the history of the university. It's the largest philanthropic campaign ever held on the island of Ireland. It's benefitted from the largest ever donation from a foundation, and two of the largest individual donations in Ireland's history. It has delivered its highly ambitious targets in funding and volunteering ahead of schedule – all this despite Covid.

This Campaign has not only raised money, it has raised our spirits. I believe can raise the spirits not just of us in Trinity but of the whole city and country. Generosity is always inspiring. The idea that people, like you, choose to place your trust in us, speaks volumes. In the simplest sense, it sets an example. It sets an example now, and to future generations.

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Trinity's great alumnus, Edmund Burke, gave a wonderful definition of what he thinks society is, and his words could have been written expressly for the Provost's Council and for *Inspiring Generations* and

for our sense of the Trinity community through the ages. Burke said:

“Society is indeed a contract.  
It is a partnership in all science;  
a partnership in all art;  
a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection.  
As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born.”

It's tremendous to have been part of this partnership, and to have a sense that we are handing something so vital on to the next provost, and to future generations. What an extraordinary legacy! Just saying 'Thanks' seems insufficient. How fortunate we were, if that's the word, with the particular conjunction of talent, expertise and generosity that came together – all of you on the Council, Kate Bond and her team in TDA, and many other college staff. And of course, our outstanding alumni, the bedrock of the campaign who proved themselves in the darkest hours of lockdown, when they rallied to the Student Fund and tech4student. Our alumni who prove themselves continually by their deep enthusiasm for the university, their passion and determination to stay connected and to give back.

As an alumna myself, I feel that passion and determination. I'm leaving office but I'm not leaving Trinity. I look forward to going on to a research professorship within the university. That's my plan for the short term anyway. Whatever happens, I will remain deeply connected to Trinity. Like all of you, I'm excited by what the next decade holds.

I wish the new provost, Linda Doyle, the very best. She has been an outstanding Dean of Research and she brings vast experience to her new role. This Provost's Council may well be the best and most instrumental thing I will hand on to her. I'm so delighted that the Provost's Council will continue to exist. The Campaign is delivered, but our work isn't done. How powerful a message is that? What an example to set!

As Brendan Kennelly, our Trinity poet laureate says: *Something which will not acknowledge conclusion, insists that we forever begin.*

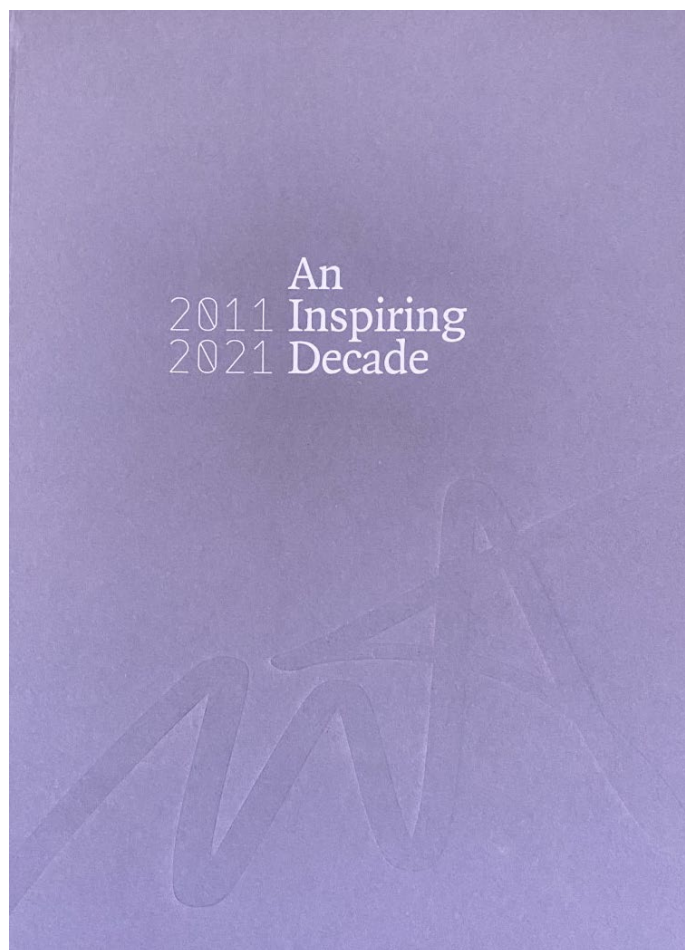
And so it goes: begin again, begin better.

Thank you

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Mr Fergal Naughton (Chairman of the Provost's Council) making a presentation of the commemorative volume "2011-2021, An Inspiring Decade" to Provost Patrick Prendergast in the Yeats Room, Provost's House.



Commemorative Volume form the Provost's Council



28 June 2021

## **Provost PhD Awards – speech to PIs**

*Marquee in the Provost's House Garden*

Good afternoon, and welcome, all

This afternoon we celebrate the fourth round of the Provost's PhD Awards and we congratulate the winners, who have come through a competitive process to secure project funding.

We founded the Provost PhD Awards in 2017 to build research excellence in Trinity. The aim is to enable our academics at Assistant and Associate Professor level, to build capacity, expand their international networks and be better placed to secure competitive funding from national, EU and international agencies.

Each year since 2017, we have funded 40 PhD Awards, with funding coming from two main sources:

- Alumni donations, and
- Profits derived from the Commercial Revenue Unit, the CRU.

I thank both Trinity Development and Alumni and the CRU, and of course I thank our magnificent alumni for helping to make these Awards possible.

This year, 2020/21, exceptionally, we managed to find funding for an additional 10 Awards, bringing this year's number to 50, and the total to date to 170.

The Provost's PhD Awards are now embedded in Trinity. They are open to all disciplines and are awarded on merit alone to individual PIs. The application process is extremely competitive. I thank the review panel for the time, expertise and enthusiasm that they have put into this. I particularly thank the chair of the panel, the Dean of Graduate Studies, Professor Martine Smith, and the External Reviewer for Phase 2, Professor Barbara Dooley, Dean of Graduate Studies in UCD.

The applications are judged by a number of criteria including notably the quality of the project and the extent to which the award would represent a 'game-changer' for the Assistant or Associate Professor who receives it.

The benefits of the Awards are many:

- the PhD student recruited by the PI benefits hugely from the opportunity to undertake doctorate work with a research leader. As part of this programme, they have access to a variety of taught modules, both discipline specific and generic skills, to enhance and support their own research and career development, and they gain essential experience in teaching, conference organisation, editorial assistance and workshop management.
- the Award helps galvanise the research trajectory of the Principal Investigators and demonstrates that they can obtain competitive research funding. We hope it gives them a boost to build their track-records in a way that makes them more competitive for external funding.
- And of course, the results of the research project itself adds to new knowledge in an important field,

The Awards send out the important message that Trinity is a place where research is valued and where significant career goals can be achieved. PhD students coming to Trinity as a result of these awards are conscious of joining significant research projects which are receiving support and investment and which link to the university's research themes.

The projects funded through these Awards are proving a wonderful showcase of the breadth of Trinity's research. Last year, for instance, the Awards supported research into multiple projects ranging from Minoan snake goddesses through to tackling multidrug resistance in TB.

And now, we celebrate supporting 50 new projects across the university, all of them ambitious, important and life-enhancing. I'm sorry I don't have time to speak about each project individually because they really are hugely diverse, and collectively they greatly enhance the university.

I congratulate each of you on your successful applications to the Provost's PhD Project Awards. You are being recognised for exceptional talent and dedication. I'm delighted we have been able to support your research activities, and I wish you the very best of luck with the projects and with putting together brilliant PhD teams. I look forward to hearing more about the projects as they progress and to celebrating your academic achievements.

It's my pleasure now to invite the Dean of Graduate Studies to say a few words.

Thank you

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Provost Patrick Prendergast (Centre) with Principal Investigators who won Provost's PhD Project Awards and (rightmost) the Dean of Graduate Studies, Professor Martine Smith



28 June 2021

## **Garden Party for Senior Academic and Administrative Officers**

*Marquee in the Provost's House Garden*

Thank you Veronica\* for your kind words. I'm delighted to hear that a tree will be planted at the E3 Learning Foundry in honour of my term of office as Provost, a Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris*.

I won't keep you long because I know that, for many of you, this may be the first time you've met face to face for a long time, so you'll have lots to say to each other, and I don't want to interrupt that.

I just want to welcome you all here to the Provost's Garden. We put up the marquee to enable key events like this and we've been lucky in the weather – it feels like something that should become a feature of summers in the College.

Of course, that won't be for me to say as I'm now into my last month of my Provostship. It has been a wonderful ten years – a rollercoaster certainly and some of it a bumpy ride, but in sum, it's been wonderful. That has much to do with all of you and your support, your decision-making, your hard work and your leadership, so I wanted to bring you all here to say 'thank you', on my own behalf and on behalf of the university which you have served so well.

In Trinity, when we speak of senior staff we mean professional, admin, support and academic staff, and the university works best when we all work together with a common mission and purpose. I've certainly appreciated the way that you have all stepped up to the obligations of management and leadership. Academics have put themselves forward as heads of school and other key roles and worked closely with professional staff in a way that is crucial to the well running of the university.

I'm not going to run through all we've done together. There are simply too many challenges we have met, not least the funding crisis at the beginning of my provostship and the pandemic at the end, and I'd delay you from getting back to your conversations and it isn't necessary. We know what they are – and if we want reminding, the *Provost's Review* is, I believe, coming out shortly,

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\* Professor Veronica Campbell, Bursar

and it's a kind of retrospective on the past decade. I will send you all a copy.

Because of your leadership and hard work – and I do know how hard it is - Trinity is in relatively good shape in facing the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead of us, and of higher education institutions worldwide. Despite some really considerable challenges - most of them like the Recession and Covid, external, but a few internal as well – we've come through. We can be proud of what's been achieved. And that's down to everyone here. You stepped up.

I can sincerely say I've enjoyed working with all of you, and I thank you all.

I thank you personally for making my term of office enjoyable and effective, and I thank you for all you've done for Trinity.

And now back to in-person conversations!

\* \* \*



Artist's impression of the Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris* to be planted beside the Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry in honour of Patrick Prendergast's term of office

29 June 2021

## **Provost's Trinity Excellence in Teaching Awards**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Good morning, everyone,

And welcome to the Provost's Garden.

It feels like a long time since we've celebrated these great Awards. It didn't happen last year because of lockdown, and in the meantime the Awards have been re-named as the Provost's Trinity Excellence in Teaching Awards. I think it's right to broaden out the name – these college-wide awards are truly a mark of excellence and distinction.

Today's event is significant, and not only for the hiatus in our celebrations and the renaming. We're celebrating 20 years of the Awards, which were introduced in 2001. In the two decades since, they've put focus on excellence in teaching, and winners have frequently gone on to significant achievement in education and research, or to hold high office within the college.

The implementation of the Trinity Education Project, the most far-reaching renewal of the undergraduate curriculum in a century, has brought great strength and cohesion to education and research across the university, and has helped embed and align these awards to our mission. These Awards:

- Provide recognition for outstanding teaching;
- Share best practice across College and encourage teaching staff to consider different approaches to course design, delivery and assessment;
- Reaffirm that curriculum development, teaching, learning, assessment and evaluation, are important activities in College, requiring high level expertise;
- Encourage teaching staff to reflect critically on their teaching practice, and encourage students to pay attention to their part in the process, which is a reciprocal one.

And this Award is particularly special because in the past year teaching and learning have been tested as never before. The pivot to online was immediate. From one day to the next, staff had to manage new technology and work out how to deliver classes remotely, how to assess without conventional exams, and how to continue engaging with students, many of whom were struggling emotionally and academically.

The heartfelt citations from students speak to their appreciation for the efforts of the particular professors, nominated and shortlisted in these Awards. But it goes beyond exceptional individuals. It was a group effort by academics and support staff, particularly staff in IT Services. At the hour of need, Trinity's Excellence in Teaching was demonstrated. On behalf of the whole university, my thanks to all.

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Now let me turn to the Awards and the specific individuals we honour today.

Selection and short-listing for these Awards is a long process. It starts with nomination by students and peers. A Review Panel then examines each candidate's teaching philosophy and their practice and scholarship, as well as assessing supporting evidence. This panel is broad and representative.

Membership of the panel is a serious commitment of time and expertise. I'd like to thank our Review Panel this year:

- The chair, the Senior Lecturer, Kevin Mitchell
- Dean of Graduate Studies, Martine Smith
- Head of Academic Practice, Ciara O'Farrell
- Anita O'Donovan of the School of Medicine
- Richie Porter, School of Biochemistry & Immunology
- Nicholas Johnson, School of Creative Arts
- The SU Education Officer, Megan O'Connor
- The Vice-President, Graduate Students Union, Abhisweta Bhattacharjee
- And our external reviewer Professor Kathleen Armour, Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Birmingham

I also thank

- the Centre for Academic Practice for contributing to the interpretation, contextualisation and implementation of this award process, and for enabling academic staff in Trinity to promote effective, high quality teaching and student learning;



- and the Education Support Officer, Jade Concannon, who is administrator of these Awards.

Because there are so few winners to these Awards, there is widespread recognition that to be shortlisted, and nominated, is in itself a significant achievement.

Over the past two years, a total of 87 staff members were nominated by students, staff and alumni. Their enthusiasm and dedication to teaching and learning excellence is acknowledged and appreciated by their students and colleagues. The review panel have commented on the very high standard of applications received. Congratulations to all.

To be shortlisted in such a competitive field is a great honour. I'd like now to call on our short-listed candidates to receive a certificate of commendation:

Seven candidates were **shortlisted in 2020**, five of them are present this morning. I'm delighted to present them with a certificate of commendation:

1. Prof Peter Harrison, School of Dental Science
2. Prof Ronan Lyons, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy
3. Prof Graeme Murdock, School of Histories & Humanities
4. Prof Cian O'Callaghan, School of Natural Sciences
5. Prof Daniela Tropea, School of Medicine

And two in absentia:

1. Prof Paul Claffey, School of Medicine
2. Prof Joseph Roche, School of Education

Five candidates were **shortlisted in 2021**, two of them are present this morning and I'd like to present them with a certificate of commendation:

1. Prof Liz Heffernan, School of Law
2. Dr Bahman Honari, School of Computer Science & Statistics

Three in absentia:

1. Prof Andrea Guariso, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy
2. Prof Caroline Jago, School of Linguistic, Speech & Language Sciences
3. Prof Giuseppe Mazziotti, School of Law

Congratulations, all. Your contribution to the Trinity's high reputation for its teaching quality are greatly appreciated by our academic community.

\* \* \*

It now gives me great pleasure to announce the five recipients of The Trinity Excellence in Teaching **Awards for 2020:**

**Dr Ayesah Émon, [School of Social Work & Social Policy]**

Dr Émon is a Teaching Fellow in the School of Social Work and Social Policy, where she applies diverse, creative and interactive methods of teaching and learning. She is fully committed to her students and their progress, not only through their studies but into lifelong learners. She fosters an appetite for life-long learning, helping her students become empowered, confident communicators of ideas. A Student Nominator says:

*“Dr Émon stands out in my opinion due to, not only to her intelligence, perception and ability to impart wisdom and understanding but also her unending perseverance and belief in her students.”*

**Prof Duana Quigley [School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences]**

Duana Quigley is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in Clinical Speech and Language Studies, where she has revolutionised the supports provided to practice educators, who consistently comment on the clarity of the supports she provides as well as the open lines of communication offered. Her work has driven continuing improvements in clinical education and placement experiences, with new emphasis on clinical assessments and methods to help students build on feedback to develop their clinical practice skills to the fullest.

*A staff nominator says Professor Quigley's keen focus on student well-being within the educational environment is particularly commendable, organising workshops and lectures to enable students to self-manage stress and anxiety in clinical contexts as well as maintaining an 'open door' policy to support students around clinical education issues.*

**Prof Julie Regan [School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences]**

Julie Regan is Assistant Professor in Speech and Language Pathology in the Department of Clinical Speech and Language Studies. She uses blended learning technologies and workshops

and has introduced clinical assessment techniques and interprofessional learning to ensure that students understand the practical applications of what has been addressed in theory. Her passion for her subject translates to energy, enthusiasm and motivation, and students are empowered to learn in a safe, confident and proactive environment. A student nominator says:

*Julie has transformed our course. She links academics with practice amazingly... which encourages us to not only study the topic in its entirety but also develop practical skills we can apply to placements as well as the workplace when we graduate next year.*

**And two professors** In absentia

1. Prof Martha O'Hagan-Luff, School of Business
2. Prof Alejandra Ramos, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy

**Congratulations to our 2020 winners! May I now invite Ayesha, Duana and Julie to come forward and collect their awards.**

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And now it gives me great pleasure to announce the six recipients of The Trinity Excellence in Teaching **Awards for 2021:**

**Prof Stephen Barrett, School of Computer Science & Statistics**

Stephen Barrett is an Assistant Professor in the School of Computer Science and Statistics, where he teaches Software Engineering. He draws on his experience of real software engineering projects to encourage students to develop software engineering solutions to address real-world problems. He uses technologies such as a “green screen”, a document camera and live video mixing and production software to produce high-quality live and recorded sessions.

Testimonials from his students illustrate the lengths to which he has gone to deliver an outstanding teaching experience online, as well as the genuine care and compassion he has shown for students struggling through the pandemic. A Student Nominator says simply:

*Dr Barrett has been a major source of relief in a very difficult year.*

**Prof Annemarie Bennett, [School of Medicine]**

Annemarie Bennett is an Assistant Professor in Dietetics, who has pioneered the development of e-learning approaches, using flipped classroom approaches, breakout rooms, online surveys and interactive elements. She has integrated case-based learning to ensure that basic and

clinical science and clinical practice are blended throughout the programme.

A student nominator says:

*“Annemarie shows us what it means to be an effective and compassionate healthcare professional, because she places her students at the centre of everything that she does for the programme.”*

**Prof Eric Downer, [School of Medicine]**

Eric Downer is an Assistant Professor in the department of Physiology, and programme coordinator of the degree course “Human Health and Disease”. He has worked tirelessly to develop the core content of this programme. He uses a variety of teaching and assessment approaches aimed at active engagement of students, and has developed an innovative animation tool to teach embryology lectures, which has transformed students’ understanding of embryological development. He builds and maintains strong, trusting relationships with students on the programme, including opening avenues for alumni to offer advice and guidance to current students.

A student nominator says:

*Dr Downer's dedication to teaching and the course is unquestionable. He is at ease building trusting relationships with students, and delivers immediate, clear feedback on presentations & assignments.*

**Prof Órla Gilheaney, [School of Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences]**

Órla Gilheaney is an Assistant Professor in Clinical Speech and Language Studies. A gifted educator, she continually keeps abreast of evidence-based educational practice. By first providing foundational knowledge and then providing opportunities for students to reflect actively in class, she enables students to develop advanced critical analysis skills.

A student nominator says:

*Órla has been an incredibly kind and understanding lecturer during this difficult year. She is always reaching out to make sure we are doing ok and to remind us of resources we can use if we are struggling.*

**Prof Justin King, School of Engineering**

Justin King is an Assistant Professor in Electronic and Electrical Engineering. His response to the challenges and opportunities of the online pivot was to supply “maker kits” to all 250 engineers in 2nd year to give them practical hands-on experience during lockdown. He designed the instruction materials, including the video that leads the students through the exercises, and built assessments based on measurements on the live

circuits that those students built at home. This has proved so successful in engaging students and stimulating their interest in the subject that it will be retained by the School, even after lockdown, and extended to other years.

A student nominator gives this powerful endorsement:

*Prior to taking this module I did not have great expectations for electrical engineering as I found last year hard to comprehend. However, as a result of this module I am seriously considering specialising in electronic engineering next year and hopefully will get an opportunity to do a masters!*

**Prof Cormac McGuinness, School of Physics**

Cormac McGuinness is an Assistant Professor of Physics and Director of the Physics undergraduate stream. Years before Covid, he had already pioneered recording of lectures and in response to lockdown, he built and developed a “light-board” set-up whereby a lecturer writes onto a pane of glass, which is being filmed and image-reversed. These and other technological initiatives have proven invaluable for the very successful move to online teaching in the whole School.

Many testify to his openness, generosity and willingness to spend extra time with students, whether in tutorials, discussing lab assessments, or advising on career choices.

An alumni nominator says:

*In his efforts to prepare students for exams, Cormac has gone far beyond what most of us have come to expect. The fact that he has delivered all of this with kindness and warmth is a testament to his talents as a lecturer.*

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May I now invite Stephen, Annemarie, Eric, Orla, Justin and Cormac, to come forward to receive their awards.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



From LtoR: Prof Orla Gilheaney (2021 Awardee), Prof Eric Downer (2021 Awardee), Dr Ayeshah Emon (2020 Awardee), Prof Cormac McGuinness (2021 Awardee), Prof Duana Quigley (2020 Awardee), Provost Dr Patrick Prendergast, Prof Justin King (2021 Awardee), Prof Julie Regan (2020 Awardee), Prof Stephen Barrett (2021 Awardee), Prof Annemarie Bennett (2021 Awardee)

29 June 2021

## **Gardan Party to mark the retirement of Professor John Parnell as Senior Dean**

*Marquee in the Provost's Garden*

Good afternoon, and welcome everyone to the Provost's Garden.

We've been using the Garden and Marquee to comply with pandemic restrictions on in-door gatherings, but, as it happens, no better venue could be imagined as a send-off for the Senior Dean, Professor of Systematic Botany and Chair of the Grounds and Gardens Committee. For all of us in Trinity, when we think of John, it's always in an outdoor setting, in the college grounds and gardens. This is where he belongs.

As Provost, I've had the pleasure of taking regular walks with John around the grounds. We would meet every few months, to stroll and talk, and discuss plans for replacing trees and wilding the campus. It goes without saying that these walks were a particular pleasure, an oasis in my provostship, away from tumult of board meetings and management.

Trinity is the largest green space in the city centre, as well as a university, and there has been planting here since its inception, so our campus is home to venerable trees and plantlife. Just as we are custodians of our historic buildings, and our young people's education, we are custodians of our greenery. In truth, it's impossible to imagine Trinity without its green spaces, and the university is very lucky to have had John to look after them for so long.

But I'm getting ahead of myself – distracted by the garden. John has many roles and I should start with his most senior: in 2017 he was appointed Senior Dean and has served in this capacity for four years.

The Senior Dean is one of the oldest offices in College, established in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and given responsibility for discipline among staff. The College Statutes of 1749 lists the range of potential offences the early Deans had to consider - including: "Perjury, notorious Theft, wilful Manslaughter, Fornication, Adultery, Incest or violently striking a Fellow or Scholar, by which they are severely wounded, or shall even slightly strike the Provost, Vice-Provost, Dean, Chief Lecturer, a Doctor or Bachelor in Divinity, or shall on purpose spoil the Locks of the Gates, or by Stealth open the Gates

of the College, or shall promote Conspiracies or Snares against the College”... punishments for these offences could be, and were, meted out by the Senior Dean and ranged from fines to whipping.\*

Things have changed a bit since then! John doesn't issue whippings and nobody would even 'slightly' strike the Provost! Today the duties of the Senior Dean include:

- Chairing the academic Appeals Committees for progressions and promotions;
- Chairing the Capitation Committee;
- Assigning office space to Fellows Emeriti and assigning on-campus; living accommodation to members of staff;
- Disciplinary matters; and
- Research ethics and research integrity.

That list sounds a lot less incendiary than the 1749 list; but in truth the Senior Dean's role remains pretty daunting. 'Assigning accommodation' may sound straightforward; it really isn't! Promotions is a minefield! And to deal with any disciplinary matter, you need to be both authoritative and diplomatic, open to mediation. It's a particular skill-set. I feel very fortunate to have had John in this role. He is deeply respected, by virtue of his academic excellence, his seniority, and his deep knowledge of the university. And I think what we might call his Scots rectitude confers huge respect, especially, coupled with his conviviality – which is also Scots, now that I recall Burns Night, which he has made part of the College calendar.

As Senior Dean, John has dealt efficiently, pragmatically, decisively and compassionately with the issues as they have arisen. I don't know what all these issues are, because he has mostly kept them away from me. I know some of them must have been thorny – to use an apt plant metaphor! – thank you, John, for not involving me more than I needed to be!

John brought to the demanding and crucial role of Senior Dean his vast experience of the university. He became Dean of Graduate Studies in 1997, soon after I joined the academic staff myself, and he was Head of School of Natural Sciences from 2008 to 2011, which is of course an elected role. These are two key roles within the university, which he held with distinction. They are demanding and time-consuming but John was also able to build a significant academic reputation. He was made Fellow in 1993 and appointed to a personal chair in Systematic Botany in 2010.

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\* <https://www.tcd.ie/seniordean/about/history/>



I always like to point to John as a great example. If you're Provost you need people to step up and take on leadership roles. Some are wary about this because they think holding office will hinder their academic careers. So it's great to have had John as an example – you can be Dean and get a chair. It's not either/or. John might say that holding office actually enhanced his mission in research and education.

Certainly, I think we can all see the mutual reciprocation between a Professor in Botany and the many roles that John took on to protect and grow our green spaces. Not only Chair of the Grounds and Gardens Committee, which he has held for nearly a decade, but curator of the Herbarium for twenty years and Director of the Botanic Garden for nine.

John's leadership in these roles has coincided with a massively increased focus on sustainability, in Trinity, Ireland and the world. Well, I say 'coincided', that's not quite right – John has led on this. He has spearheaded a movement which was local before it became global. Today 'sustainability' is more than a buzzword; it's a key policy. At this year's Provostal elections, it was notable that each candidate had to have a well thought out sustainable agenda, and each was challenged on it.

Because of this global focus, John's role has grown significantly over the decade. Among the most visible, proactive and positive actions Trinity has taken in the past five years is the wilding of the campus – the introduction of bee hotels and pollinator plants, the replacement of our perfect lawns with wild meadows. This has received near universal approval from students, staff, alumni and the people of Dublin, and it's very much down to John, with of course his colleague in Botany, Jane Stout playing a key role in improving pollination.

Similarly, when the Trinity Business School went up, it was the green wall and the green roof that got huge attention. When we talk about 'Grounds and Gardens', well the gardens are now moving out of the grounds and up the walls. This is hugely expansive and exciting.

And, the other great headline – it made national news – was the toppling of our Oregon maple. John was absolutely decisive throughout this period – clear that we had to take down the other maple, and instrumental in choosing the Ginkgos as replacement. He wrote a lovely piece on the felling of the maples for the *Provost's Review* in 2018, and in this year's *Review*, out in the next few weeks, he has another lovely piece on our 'flora and fauna' in which

he points out that “the pond in the Chief Steward’s garden recently recorded 20 species of aquatic invertebrates, including dragon and damselflies as well as common frogs – the only frogs in Dublin city centre”. And, he writes, “this would not have been possible only for the efforts of the grounds and garden staff who have embraced the new nature friendly approach to managing these areas.”

It’s right to recall that in these years of growth for flora and fauna, John has had the benefit of a wonderful team, who have helped him realise his vision and helped the college deliver on sustainable goals.

A number of college roles have grown over the past decade – Global Relations is one, and TDA and philanthropy is another, and Grounds and Gardens is another. I’m sure it has been wonderful for John to lead in such a growing, expansive area. Certainly, it has been wonderful for the university, and on behalf of all of us – students, staff and alumni, on behalf indeed of the people of Dublin - my heartfelt thanks.

John, you have been exceptional in education and research – a world expert on Thai orchids – and exceptional in your many college roles. I’m sorry I’ve not had time to talk about your achievements as Head of School and in Graduate Studies. In truth, you have done too much to pack into a short speech.

We are both about to step down – myself as Provost and you as Senior Dean and Chair of Grounds and Gardens. If we meet back in college, it won’t be in any official capacities – it will no longer be up to us to take decisions on what to plant where – but I hope we will still take a walk through the grounds and admire the growth of the Ginkgos and the new green walls, green porches, green roofs, bee hive roofs and I don’t know what else that will have sprung up, continuing the great wilding of the campus which you initiated.

Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, please join me in toasting John Parnell.

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Provost Patrick Prendergast (speaking) with John Parnell (leftmost, foreground) and guests



01 July 2021

**Garden Party to mark the end of Juliette Hussey's  
term as Vice-President for Global Relations  
(VPGR)**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Good afternoon, everyone,

Welcome to the Provost's Garden. I'm delighted you could all join me in this celebration of Juliette Hussey and her team in Global Relations.

As Provost, I am, of course, dedicated to every School and Unit in this university, and over the years I've been in every nook and cranny, but I will confess here that I have a special grá for Global Relations, shared by everyone here at this special celebration. There are a few reasons, I guess:

- because we're dedicated to the idea of Trinity as a global university. In my inaugural speech ten years ago I quoted Erasmus: 'I long to be a citizen of the world' – we all, like him, long for that best of citizenships and we want to make it real and tangible for our students;
- And because of the Global Relations Office. We've been on a journey together with the creation of this office under the first VPGR, the indomitable Jane Ohlmeyer. The creation of this office has been a real source of pride and joy for the whole university, and seeing it go from strength to strength has meant for us all that 'Trinity is back on the international stage'. The steady growth in international student numbers, the pioneering expansion of transnational partnerships – this has been one of the great, unmitigated successes of recent times.

And of course, that has so much to do with Juliette, and with all of you, her brilliant team since she took over from Jane 7 years ago.

Thinking about Juliette's role in Global Relations, I realised that it began well before she was appointed VPGR. The origin story of Global Relations – the moment Trinity became a player in transnational education – was when we applied for, and won, the tender from the Singapore Ministry of Education to deliver one-year programmes to diploma graduates in physiotherapy and occupational therapy, which led in 2016 to the joint degree

programme in physiotherapy with the Singapore Institute of Technology.

That was Juliette's doing. She was then Head of the discipline of Physiotherapy and she really led on the initiative. That meant that when she came in as VPGR she brought with her a wealth of experience and a completely global outlook. I venture that there is no one in this university more global than Juliette. Her vision is truly worldwide; she establishes connections everywhere she goes.

One of the great pleasures of my provostship – until March 2020 – has been the extent of travel it has involved. I've travelled with Juliette, and with many of you, to six continents: North America, South America, Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe – and if there was a university on Antarctica, we'd have gone there as well! On each continent we've visited many countries, and in each country, many universities and institutes and ministers' offices.

Make no mistake, Juliette thinks big. She has a vision for the depth and possibility of education partnerships, unlike no one I have ever met. Of the many stand-out initiatives she has helped bring about, I think of:

- The Articulation programme with Thapar University in India
- The International Foundation Programme with Marino
- The Dual Degree Programme with Columbia University
- The Articulation Programme with USTB in Beijing
- And relationships with LASALLE in Singapore, with Sydney, with Manipal, and with a few that didn't work out in the end, all of which she pursued relentlessly, and there are more in progress such as in Melbourne or Abu Dhabi.

As I recall saying – perhaps a little triumphantly at a Coimbra meeting one year – these go well beyond traditional student exchange agreements. Erasmus was a pioneer programme but I don't think it's coincidence that Trinity became part of a successful European Universities Alliance, CHARM-EU. Because we returned to Europe, as it were, having spearheaded really significant partnerships globally.

And Juliette achieved all this, without raising her voice! Well, maybe someone will prove me wrong. But I don't believe so. Juliette exemplifies a style of leadership which is respectful, collaborative, understated, and collegial. She works exceptionally well with colleagues, Within Global Relations, she and Fedelma McNamara make a great team. And that was really notable this past year during the pandemic and lockdown. They – and all the team in

Global Relations – did so much to support international students at a very difficult time.

And while running one of the university's busiest and most rapidly expanding offices, Juliette kept on top of her research. She is I think the first person promoted to professor in physiotherapy in Trinity, and as VPGR, she continued to win research grants, including from the HRB, which are notoriously competitive. I think we're all in awe of that. I certainly am. She proves that you can hold high office and stay research competitive. She is not only one of the pioneers of global relations in Trinity, but one of the pioneers of the discipline of physiotherapy, not just in the university, but in the international sphere.

Juliette, you have been an absolutely brilliant colleague and VPGR. Thank you for taking on the role and thank you for growing the office and giving it your focus for seven years. Global Relations has been essential to the university – essential for raising non-exchequer revenues and for encouraging the ethos of diversity and inclusion which is front and centre of the Trinity Education.

I'm delighted also for this opportunity to thank the whole team in Global Relations. You are amazing and, speaking personally, you've supported me in so many cities around the world. I hoped to get in a 'last voyage' as Provost. It was not to be, but I'm very glad indeed that I can at least thank you in person.

I believe that Trinity is still at the start, really, of our global adventure and we all await to see, with interest, what the future will hold. I know you'll all join me in wishing Emma Stokes the very best as she takes on this crucial role. She will certainly have the support of an exceptional team.

Juliette, I also await, with interest, to see what you'll do next! Whatever sphere you turn your attention to, you will enhance it. Whatever you do, we'll always have Paris. And Boston. And Hong Kong. And Nairobi. And Tokyo. And Sydney.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in raising a glass to Juliette Hussey.

\* \* \*



Fedelma McNamara (Director of Internationalization), Professor Juliette Hussey, Provost Patrick Prendergast, and Niamh Burke (Associate Director, Partnerships)



02 July 2021

## **Reception E3 Learning Foundry**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Good afternoon, and welcome, all, to the Provost's Garden.

It's great to see you all here. I believe this is the first time in 18 months that the full E3 team has met in person. We put up this marquee to enable outdoor events like these, and, happily, the weather has worked out.

Today's event is to celebrate the progress with the E3 Learning Foundry and to thank all of you. I know that throughout lockdown, and of course before it, you all worked tirelessly to bring us to this point, when the contractor has been appointed and construction is about to begin.

On 29<sup>th</sup> July, two days before I leave office, Martin Naughton and I will turn the sod on the E3 Learning Foundry, and that will be an emotional moment. I'm dedicated to all Trinity's initiatives but there's no doubt that E3 has been very special and personal to me, as an engineering project, and also as one of the key projects that has helped us "embed philanthropy into the DNA of the university", to use our now popular phrase.

It's a mistake to think that donors and benefactors will come forward to support any project that we think needs doing. They won't. They come forward to support projects that inspire them. E3 is pioneering. It directly confronts the great challenge of the age, sustainability, and it prepares to educate students in a new, 21<sup>st</sup> century challenge-driven way. It's this that has inspired the Naughtons and Eric and Barbara Kinsella to make the largest individual donations in the history of the state.

Like all great initiatives, E3 has a number of parents and they all deserve credit, but absolutely central in terms of progressing it, is the project sponsor, Veronica Campbell, and the chair of the Steering Committee Mike Pierce. The project sponsor is also the college Bursar, which means Veronica has had a double role. She has been vitally instrumental.

Later today we're holding a reception here to honour the Bursar, so I will save my praise for her extraordinary achievements for that event. For now, on behalf of the whole university, let me thank her for her work as E3 Project Sponsor. And let me thank all of you. You've all been instrumental and I hope that when the great E3

Learning Foundry is unveiled in 2023, that you will all feel very proud.

And now it's my pleasure to invite the project sponsor and bursar, Veronica Campbell, to address us.

\* \* \*



E3 Learning Foundry team including, in the front row L to R, Leo Harman (Independent Monitor), Deirdre O'Shea (Project Manager in Estates & Facilities), Prof Veronica Campbell (Bursar), & Provost Patrick Prendergast



Artist's impression of the Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry



02 July 2021

## **Reception to thank the Bursar Professor Veronica Campbell at the end of her term of office**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Good evening, and welcome to the Provost's Garden,

And welcome back, some of you. We were here earlier celebrating the E3 Learning Foundry. Now we celebrate the woman who has really driven that project and indeed many other major capital development projects which have recently been, or will be shortly, achieved in Trinity.

The Bursar is one of the oldest college offices, going back to the foundation in 1592. Originally the Bursar minded the college's money – literally physically minded it, in a big coffer. Now of course, things have evolved, but the Bursar remains an absolutely key role. It's the Bursar's job to mediate between the academic community and the big capital development projects. The Bursar chairs the Capital Review Group – CRG – which aims to keep projects on track and take action if there is any slippage. The Bursar has to explain to the community if projects cause inconvenience, which inevitably they do. Most of all, the Bursar is on the Board and is called on often to explain, alongside the appropriate professional staff, if projects go over budget, or over time, which sometimes they do.

The Bursar has to combine level-headedness, and of course a head for figures, with the art of persuasion. The role cannot exactly be likened to a diplomat, but the Bursar does have to persuade people into positions they might not naturally agree to, if left to themselves. The aim is to bring about change among a body of people sometimes averse to change.

In short, as Provost, if you don't have a good Bursar, you're screwed. You're probably not going to get your capital development projects through. It's that important.

When I was looking to appoint a new bursar in 2015, I knew I needed someone exceptional to take over from Professor Gerry Lacey who it's great to see here this evening as well. I didn't know then just how many capital development projects we be in the pipeline, but TBS was already powering forward, and we were ambitious to bring it on, and to do more, much more.

My first choice was Veronica. I knew her from back when she first came to Trinity in the late 1990s. She was a PI in the Trinity Centre of Bioengineering, which she helped set up. She was a lead PI and it was obvious to all of us there that she was brilliant at getting things done; she was highly collaborative and very open to interdisciplinarity and was truly excellent at getting people to work together. She was a natural leader whom everyone wanted to work with.

I wasn't surprised at her swift rise in the university: she was made a Fellow in 2004, served as Head of School of Physiology from 2006 to 2009 and was made Professor in Physiology in 2007. In 2010 my predecessor as Provost John Hegarty appointed her Dean of Graduate Studies. She served for three years so I had the benefit of working with her in that role. She then had, I think, just under two years to devote to her research, when I was back asking her to be Bursar in 2015.

Fortunately for me, she accepted. And it's been non-stop ever since. I believe she may have initiated more projects within a given timeframe than any other Bursar in the history of the university. We all know the big, famous projects. Let me pause for a moment to remember the other less glamorous but also vital initiatives:

- the medium voltage project – digging up and putting down wires in a campus this venerable. I can think of all the ways it could have gone horribly wrong. It didn't. It came in, on time and on budget.
- The signage and way finding – she led on that.
- The Arts Block renovation and refresh project, a 4 million euro project successfully completed, and that building is now a much nicer place to work in.

These are absolutely essential projects, as well as tricky ones, and had she only done these, she would be remembered as an excellent Bursar. But of course, she did much more. She held office at an exceptional time and she stepped up to it.

She was project sponsor for the E3 Learning Foundry, and I must thank her sincerely, as I did this afternoon, that thanks to her phenomenal lead on this, the contractor has been appointed, and Martin Naughton and I will 'turn the sod' on this on 29th July, two days before I leave office. Veronica truly has the gift of timing.

She chaired the Old Library Development Project, with Helen Shenton as project sponsor, and of course that Project is now financed following a €25m donation by the State, and Board has approved for it to go out to tender.

She chaired the property workstream on the Trinity East Pre-Development Project, which has now concluded with an agreement to purchase the freehold of the whole site. It's going to be one of the most transformational projects in Trinity's history.

To each of these initiatives, she brought her energy and persuasiveness. The workload was huge but she never appeared put-upon or stressed. She looked always, as she does now, fresh, relaxed, and glamorous. At Board, at meetings, it is always a pleasure to see Veronica. You know she will calm people down - calm me down as well. And persuade everyone that any project she is championing will go smoothly and efficiently. As indeed it will.

Her talents are noted wherever she goes. I nominated her to the Board of the Atlantic Fellows which, as you probably know, is a large global board drawing members from all the seven institutes funded by Chuck Feeney, including our own Global Brain Health Institute. Well, it wasn't long before Veronica was asked to chair the Board. Which, as soon as I heard, I knew they were in safe hands.

And as if all that was not enough, Veronica was chair of the CRU Board, and co-chair of the Trinity St James's Cancer Institute development committee that led to the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with St James's Hospital last month.

\* \* \*

Veronica, you've had the pleasure of seeing many of your projects come to fruition. Over the next few years, many more will be completed. I hope you'll feel great and deserved pride when you see these transformational buildings driving new ways of educating and researching.

I want to thank you, on behalf of the whole university, for all you have done; and on my own and the Board's behalf, for being such a great team member. It's not often, I think, that people as effective as you are also such a pleasure to work with. Whatever sphere you turn your talents to next, you will enhance.

But I hope you will take time to relax and celebrate. And I know that this will probably involve champagne... And I'm delighted that, against the odds, we're able to be here to have an in-person reception to celebrate with you... Ladies and Gentlemen, may I ask you to join me in a toast to the Bursar, Veronica Campbell.

\* \* \*





Professor Veronica Campbell (Bursar) with her husband Professor James Jones



04 July 2021

## **Tutors' Reception in the Provost's Garden**

*Provost's Garden*

Good afternoon,

And welcome to the Provost's Garden. Last year, this event was online. It's great to be back in the Garden, and I'm personally delighted at this opportunity to see you all again, before I leave office, to say thank you.

The Tutorial Service is unique. I recall when I took office as Provost there were concerns that we may not be able to preserve it, because the Tutor's payment was one of the costs that was being cut by the exchequer. Thankfully we were able to save it, and currently we have the highest number of Tutors ever in college – 280. And in the coming year we will appoint a further Postgraduate Support Officer to assist the current officer. Supporting and expanding our Tutorial Service is vitally important for our mission to provide pastoral care to students.

This past year has been another Covid Year. It has been an incredibly challenging time for students. At last year's event, I recall thanking you for dealing with all the unexpected shocks of sudden lockdown, including flight cancellations, accommodation issues, and the transition to online learning and assessment measures.

This year, there have been less sudden, unexpected emergencies but, if anything, the toll on students' mental health and on their ability to engage with learning has been worse. Nearly 4,000 student cases were submitted by tutors in the past year – a huge number.

And this was happening at a time when, of course, you yourselves were also grappling with a changing situation. No doubt many of you had personal issues and family issues, dealing with your own home lives – parents whom you couldn't visit in person, children trying to get on board with home-schooling – as well of course as keeping your own teaching and research going. The demands on you have been unprecedented. On behalf of the College, a huge thank you. In truth, I do not know how we could have coped without you.

- Aidan Seery and his team in the Senior Tutor's Office have done an exceptional job in managing and forefronting the importance of the Tutorial Service.
- Helen Richardson has managed a very heavy load of financial supports for students.
- As Executive Office, Caroline Campbell triages so many cases and is a great advisor to Tutors.

And Aidan has such vision and ambition for the Service. It's thanks to his advocacy that the maximum chamber number is now 40 and in some parts of the college it's as low as 25. That has been really decisive. I do not think, especially in these Covid times, that Tutors could cope with a higher chamber number.

And as mentioned, I'm delighted that an additional postgraduate support officer will be appointed in the coming year. This is an absolute priority – Martin McAndrew has worked tirelessly as the sole support officer.

This year we also pay tribute to two exceptional colleagues who have served the university as tutors for many many years. Both are well known to me personally – indeed David Taylor was my PhD supervisor when I was an undergraduate here. And John Parnell has served as the Senior Dean for the past four years and as Chair of the Grounds and Gardens Committee for longer. David and John exemplify the role of Tutor, as do so many of you – you take it on in addition to really significant teaching, research and leadership roles. You give of your time. In return you get what I got as a Tutor – a deep engagement with students and the issues that concern them, an engagement that keeps us rooted in the reality of students' lives. I believe that this engagement makes us better educators, researchers and leaders. And I believe it deepens our sense of community.

Our current Strategic Plan is named 'Community and Connection' and it sets, as Goal 8, 'To be One Trinity Community'. The pastoral care you offer helps us deliver on that goal. As a student, I knew that my Tutor 'had my back' if I ever needed it! As a Tutor myself, I gained insight into the raw issues that some students were dealing with and that influenced me, as Provost, to continually enhance equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as engaging alumni to mentor and support students.

As I leave office as Provost I remain committed to this ideal: To be One Trinity Community.

Thank you all.

May I now invite the Senior Tutor, Aidan Seery, to address the gathering.

\* \* \*



Reception in the Provost's Garden (photo taken from the second floor of the Provost's House)





The Senior Tutor, Dr Aidan Seery, replying to the Provost on behalf of the Tutors

08 July 2021

**Provost's Office, Trinity Communications & Office  
of the Secretary to the College**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Hello, and Welcome,

I'm not going to make a long speech because if there's any group that has heard enough of me making speeches, it's you!

But I do want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your incredible work, and to thank you for being so very good at it.

Here today are the core of people working closest with me as Provost: my immediate office and Provost House staff, the College Secretary's Office and Trinity Communications.

You're the people with whom I've worked closely on a day-to-day basis and who have been absolutely instrumental. Some of you I'm in contact with several times a day, some weekly, a few less often, but everyone is front and central to making the provostship work for Trinity.

Of course, your skills and working areas are all quite different. You operate in three distinct fields:

First, **Trinity Communications**: rebranded from PAC, this college unit launched its Strategy last November and is now in full swing. Trinity Communications goes from strength to strength. Tom is a brilliant Director of Public Affairs and Communications who has really enhanced and professionalised this unit. Before Tom arrived, our relations with government ministers and key civil servants could be described as rocky, or just plain 'bad'. He got them back on an even keel and that has been absolutely decisive.

Similarly, he has greatly smoothed and professionalised our relations with the media. He is trusted by broadcasters and journalists, and he and his team know exactly how to get the message out, and how to get attention for our great initiatives. And they've been exceptionally good at bringing us up to speed with social media. I think it's fair to say that PAC has transformed completely from when I took office in 2011.

My thanks to Tom and his great team. A special thanks to Sally-Anne for the *Provost's Review*, an award-winning, publication, which I looked forward to each year.

The Secretary and his Office are at the centre of all college activities. Every agenda for Board, Council, and Executive Officers comes through the Secretary's Office. That's a lot of agendas. I count myself very lucky in John who is calm, rigorous and makes sure I know when to be 'brave' – and not to be. He also has a deep interest in public affairs and works closely with Tom and Trinity Communications. The Assistant Secretary, Vickey Butler, is indispensable – formidably organised and experienced, and we've been through so much that we've forgotten the most of it – thankfully!

And now, to my own office, who have to deal with me daily and organise my schedule, which until lockdown, was highly active, nationally and internationally; and since lockdown, has acquired a whole new set of challenges, not least technological. The tempo can be relentless, sometimes for months on end. It's high octane work. The team has been magnificent in managing it.

Ten years is a long time, so the personnel have changed, though some of you have been here from the start, or near the start. Others joined later, and went on to other things; some are recent additions. All of you have used your considerable skills to keep things running smoothly.

Leona, you have been a wonderful chief of staff. I think we've all appreciated your calm, positive and organised presence, and the Provost's Office has fired on all cylinders since you joined last November.

Katie, Sinead, Claire, Maria, Aisling, Norah and Sheena, you are absolutely brilliant. Things have been challenging this past year and I've really relied on you to pull things together. Bridget has written some brilliant speeches, including this one – thank you.

Christina can't join us today, but she is a valued team member too. As was Des Crowther.

Jennifer, you were a powerhouse in the office. TDA is very lucky to have you, but I think they know that!

Caroline, as Steward, you've managed the House excellently. During lockdown, you could have taken the opportunity to stay home for months, but you asked to come back in – and we sorely needed you – and that says everything about your commitment. I believe you

will be staying on for the new Provost – I know Linda will appreciate you, as we all do.

To everyone: you've all worked exceptionally hard and deployed your skill and expertise. We didn't take the foot off the pedal in 10 years, although I've some great memories of racing around where we've had some big days and high profile successes, and some hard days of financial crashes and lockdowns but overall I think it has been a decade of achievement.

The College is in a good place and I hope you all take pride for your part in that. It's been a pleasure and privilege to work with you all, and I wish you the very best for the next phase, whatever you are going on to.

But right now we're going to celebrate ... ..

Thank you.

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Alexandra Zima (Housekeeping), Claire Tracey (Events Manager, Provost's Office), Orla Sweeney (Secretary's Office), Leona Coady (Chief of Staff and Director of the Provost's Office), Sheena Brown, Provost Patrick Prendergast, Caroline Foley (Steward of the Provost's House), Norah Quinton (Editor, College Calendar), Joe O'Byrne (Buildings Office), Catherine Giltrap (Curator of College Art Collections), John Coman (Secretary to the College)



09 July 2021

**TCD Association of Northern Ireland (TCDANI)  
Annual General Meeting & Gathering**

*Malone Golf Club, Belfast*

Good evening,

I'm sure I don't need to tell you how delighted I am to be here. This is my first engagement outside Dublin in 15 months. And it's my first in-person engagement outside the college. We put up a marquee in the Provost's Garden a few weeks ago, so we can hold a few events for staff and students to mark the end of my Provostship, which has been great. But it's absolutely wonderful to be beyond the college walls and amongst alumni.

What I missed most in the past 15 months of lockdown was not being able to travel, representing Trinity and meeting alumni. It was such an important and interesting part of being Provost. Looking back, I've addressed this Association about every two years of my Provostship, most recently in February 2019 – that was in the Inns of Court in Belfast. I think there is no Alumni Association I've addressed so often: the TCD Association of Northern Ireland is a particularly vibrant association and I guess I can say – since I've only three weeks left of my provostship – that one of the things I'm proudest of, in my term of office, is of facing up to the challenges relating to admissions of students coming from Northern Ireland.

My then Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Patrick Geoghegan worked with Sir Donnell Deeny to get an alternate admissions scheme up and running in 2015. Other college officers and student ambassadors then took over its management and promotion. It has been successful in turning around a downward spiral. Certainly, it has been impacted by Brexit and Covid – the 2018 application figures were down on the previous three years and that was thought to be the Brexit factor. And the 2020 figures were the lowest yet – and that was certainly Covid. But the vista would have been far bleaker without the alternate admissions system. We're extremely lucky to have had it in place before these seismic shocks happened – not a moment too soon!

There's more to be done to increase the number of applicants from Northern Ireland. I've been very impressed by the online recruitment activities this past year – in November for instance there was a

dedicated Northern Ireland section at the virtual Trinity Open Day, and we've been running monthly webinars specifically for applicants from Northern Ireland, their parents and careers teachers.

We've not yet solved the underlying issues by any means, but five years on, the alternate admissions scheme has proved two substantive points:

- first, the CAO system was indeed unfair to Northern Irish students and was keeping out students of merit. And,
- second, Northern students want to come to Trinity. Given a level playing field, they will choose it over other options. There is no rolling back on this and I'm sure improving admissions from Northern Ireland will continue to be prioritised by the college.

The impetus to improve admissions came from you, our alumni. You're the ones who kept this issue to the fore. You're the ones who continuously promote Trinity here in Belfast and across Northern Ireland. On behalf of the college, thank you. It's so important, not only for the individual students now being admitted, but for Trinity as an institution, that the connection to Northern Ireland has been reforged.

Of course, we don't know what will happen with Brexit, and turning the challenge into an opportunity is what we have to be about now. That means it's more important than ever to keep our connection live and to ensure that Trinity continues to benefit from the talents of students from Northern Ireland. Some, or many, of them will return to work here, bringing a bit of Trinity with them. That's how we stay connected.

\* \* \*

Now, I'd like to tell you a bit about what's been going on in the university. I know that some of you have stayed in touch this past year through our webinars, online talks and ezines – Trinity Development and Alumni (or TDA for short) have done a brilliant job in keeping the community together. They've just today published the latest Trinity Alumni News, a brilliant online publication\*. But I also know that when you can't visit and there are no in-person events, it can all seem a bit remote.

Well, I can reassure you that we've remained exceptionally busy across all our activities. I guess the two big stories of the past 15

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\* <https://viewer.ipaper.io/trinity-development-and-alumni/trinity-alumni-news/2021/july/?page=1>

months are online education; and the philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*.

In terms of online work and education, we've been on a steep learning curve, like probably every university in the world. Helped by our IT department, staff and students managed the transition to online education exceptionally well – lectures, seminars, tutorials and exams all moved online and some of the solutions were very creative.

All staff worked from home except for a skeleton staff maintaining the grounds, and security. Remote working also proved remarkably effective. We had numerous Board meetings on Zoom, and we got a lot done. That said, I've been delighted this past month to see colleagues face-to-face and have casual conversations. That was what was missing. One doesn't have casual conversations on Zoom – one gets straight down to business - but often it's those casual connections that produce results.

Some student activities transitioned well to online, including notably our entrepreneurship accelerator, LaunchBox. However many of the students clubs and societies suffered – for team and contact sports, debating, choral societies, there is really no substitute for in-person. Students suffered from the loss of such activities, in particular first year students who missed out on precious opportunities to meet people and make friends. The pressure on the Tutorial Service and on our student counselling services increased hugely.

The generosity of alumni helped mitigate the worst. Support for the Student Hardship Fund was exceptional – within weeks of the first lockdown alumni had donated €300,000 euro. This was badly needed – many students rely on part-time jobs, particularly in the services sector, and these were of course, gone. A further €300,000 was donated to Trinity Access' Tech2Student initiative – to bring laptops to Leaving Cert Students in disadvantaged areas. The whole Trinity community pulled together and that is what has got us through.

As the dust begins to settle, we're looking to see what should be retained from our lockdown learning. What aspects of online education and remote working should we keep? We have a number of working groups in the college gathering feedback and looking at this. What we're hearing is that staff would like a hybrid of home and college working, and students are happy to access lectures online – they don't miss the huge lecture theatres – but want

seminars and tutorials to be in person. And labs and practical sessions need to be reinstated come September.

I believe we're in a good position to embed some of the lessons learnt this past year, because when we went into lockdown we had just completed the most comprehensive renewal of the undergraduate curriculum in a century. The Trinity Education project, as we call it, has brought in significantly more flexibility and choice for students, as well as the opportunity to do a Trinity Elective – a module outside their core course of study.

Now is the time, when we're already making far-reaching changes, to further embed new learnings taken from lockdown. We must continue to refine our education to ensure that it is preparing students for 21<sup>st</sup> century careers and citizenship.

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In terms of the philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations* – well this is a huge success story. I'm delighted to tell you that a few months ago we hit our very ambitious targets of raising €400 million in funds and 150,000 hours of volunteering. As a result, the priority projects are all advancing. Let me remind you of some of them:

- Six weeks ago, we welcomed two government ministers to the Old Library at an event celebrating a state donation of 25 million Euro to support the **Old Library Redevelopment project** to protect and safeguard both the historic building and its priceless collections, and to build a new Research Collections Study Centre. *The project is being undertaken by* award-winning architects, Heneghan Peng, who successfully revitalised the National Gallery of Ireland.
- A month ago, I signed the Memorandum of Understanding with St James' Hospital to formalise the governance of the **Trinity St James Cancer Institute** and the appointment of its two directors. St James's Hospital is the largest in Dublin and well-positioned, working with Trinity, the become the first comprehensive cancer care centre in Ireland, enabling deep cooperation with peer institutions and hospitals across Europe.
- On 29<sup>th</sup> July, the last two days of my provostship, I will turn the sod of the **E3 Learning Foundry** with Martin Naughton, the major donor to the Foundry. This state-of-the-art building will enable us to co-educate engineers, natural scientists and computer scientists. This will be a new challenge-based way of educating, requiring different use of space and pedagogy. The over-riding challenge we're

- focussing on is educating for a sustainable future for the planet, “Balanced Solutions for a Better World” is the theme.
- Within the past two months, we’ve celebrated the Provost PhD Awards and the Kinsella Challenge-based multidisciplinary Awards – these are competitive awards to bring more world-class researchers and academics to the university. They are being funded by alumni generosity as part of the **New Generations** programme, which is also funding student scholarships.
  - And finally Trinity is developing a new campus at Grand Canal Dock, 10 minutes’ walk from the main campus. The **Trinity East** campus, for which we’ve received a €30 million euro donation from Eric and Barbara Kinsella, will be a catalyst for the Grand Canal Innovation District, a whole new approach to innovation to benefit the whole country.

These are all generational projects. They will transform the college and the city. In the next few years, it’s going to be tremendously exciting to see these great buildings go up.

But *Inspiring Generations* goes beyond great new buildings. It goes beyond even new scholarships and professorships and mentoring. It’s transformative because Trinity has now become a philanthropic university. We have realised the power and possibility of philanthropy. Previously we thought in terms of donors supporting specific initiatives, it was project-oriented, but now we think of philanthropy transforming the whole university. As we say in mechanical engineering, that’s a fundamental ‘Change of State’.

*Inspiring Generations* is a record-breaker on so many fronts: it’s the first comprehensive philanthropic campaign in the history of the university. It’s the largest philanthropic campaign ever held on the island of Ireland. It’s benefitted from the largest ever donation from a foundation, and two of the largest individual donations in Ireland’s history. It has delivered its highly ambitious targets in funding and volunteering ahead of schedule – and all this despite Covid.

It really is an exceptional achievement and it has everything to do with your support, the support of our alumni and their advocacy of Trinity and what it stands for. A year or so into my provostship, I began to talk about the Trinity Community which meant, I said, the community of staff, students and alumni.

There was a sense when I began using the phrase that this was such a disparate group that to call it a ‘community’ was pushing it.

But now it feels right. Thanks to the magnificent efforts of TDA and Global Relations, we are a global community. A quarter of Trinity students now come from outside the island of Ireland, and some 40% of academic staff. Our alumni are highly active, locally and online, organising events and meet-ups, fundraising, mentoring students, staying in touch, coming to events on campus when they're in Dublin, promoting Trinity in their regions.

Of course, this is great for the college and for the students. But it's also great for graduates. As a graduate myself I can feel the strength that comes from being part of such a vibrant, engaged community. And the pride which comes from seeing our university continuing to raise its game to deliver pioneering education and research.

It's been an astonishing decade to be Provost. I took office in a time of worldwide recession and I'm going out in a time of a global pandemic. On the way we've had very considerable geopolitical change. It has been a rollercoaster, but there've been many more highs than lows. I'm incredibly proud of the whole community and of what we've achieved.

In three weeks, I leave office but I'm not leaving Trinity. I look forward to going on to a Research Professorship within the university. That's my plan for the short term anyway. Whatever happens, I will remain deeply connected to Trinity. Like all of you, I'm excited by what the next decade holds.

I wish the new Provost, Linda Doyle, the very best. She has been an great Dean of Research, and she brings vast experience to her new role. She will need that experience. She too is coming into office during a challenging situation – a post-pandemic world. We don't yet know what that will mean for government funding or for international students. Trinity will have to draw on all its many strengths, remaining true to its traditional values of resourcefulness, resilience, creativity, and adaptiveness. We must continue to embrace change.

As Brendan Kennelly, our Trinity poet laureate says: *Something which will not acknowledge conclusion, insists that we forever begin.*

And so it goes: begin again, begin better.

Thank you.

\* \* \*



TEREZÍN

No room has ever been as silent as the room  
Where hundreds of violins are hung in unison.

*Michael Longley*

*Sarah Longley*

Poem copyright of Michael Longley. Image copyright of Sarah Longley.

Published by Andrew J Moorhouse

Holocaust Memorial Day 2020

81/100

Gift presented to Provost Patrick Prendegast by the TCDANI after  
his address in Belfast





12 July 2021

## **Celebration Student Journalism in College**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Hello, and Welcome,

It's great to see you all here. We put up this Marquee a few weeks ago because we knew we couldn't have indoor gatherings but we wanted to be back in touch with the college community and celebrate meeting in person.

For me, it was particularly important because, as you know, I step down as Provost in a few weeks. I would not have wished to leave office without the chance to thank colleagues and students who have made my time as Provost so memorable.

Student Journalism is front and centre of the Trinity experience. That's why we're here today. I'm extremely proud of our student papers. I'm proud that at the national Student Achievement Awards, our journals win Student Publication of the Year, time and time again, These Awards are a national benchmark. The standard is high and Trinity publications excel.

I'm not surprised: as a student and then a member of staff – and even before I took office and became a subject of some of the articles! – I've always made sure to read the *University Times*, *Trinity News* and even *Piranha*. Your publications are professional, ears to the ground so that you are often the first with news and, in general, a subtle understanding of the issues. Sure, there is a bias towards student concerns, as there should be, but there is also an understanding of the wider issues, and the political, economic and global context in which Trinity operates.

The papers serve the students extremely well – and it's no surprise to me that many of the student journalists go on to have careers in journalism. They also serve the university well. I'm a great believer in Montesquieu's checks and balances on power. Here in Trinity, we elect the Provost and other officers, and we accept the need for checks and balances. The student newspapers are absolutely vital to the well-functioning of our university.

I've frequently been held to account myself, this past decade. Some of these have been very memorable: I'm thinking of student accommodation issues during Covid and Take Back Trinity and back in the early days, Branding. The articles and editorials of

*University Times* and *Trinity News* didn't mince words on those occasions, but in general, I think you were fair... though for the record I never said 'Let them Eat Cake' ...

Mostly though you called it right. I recall for instance the *University Times* framing Take Back Trinity less as a protest against supplemental fees on exam resits but as a response to the university's commercial activities. That was shrewdly observed.

Two years ago, I contributed an article to *Trinity News* to speak on behalf of the *University Times* when it was being threatened with closure<sup>1</sup>. In that article I wrote that the university and the student body are served by having a plurality of media, acting independently. That remains my position. Just as we need an independent press in society we need it in our university. We're extremely lucky to count on you, together with a plurality of smaller journals. We don't take these for granted.

You're operating in an environment which is subject to on-going change – the way we get out our news and opinion continues to evolve with rapidity. I don't doubt that a new technology will appear in the next few years which will prove as influential as Twitter. You will have to be agile and flexible to get up to speed. We're also facing into on-going upheavals in education, culture, politics, the way we work. What will a post-pandemic world look like? We need this world to work for you and your generation. Our student publications will be at the forefront of this discussion.

For now, well done on the tenacity, rigour, and humour of the past decade.

I should cut out and save every article; they tell the story of my provostship.

*Trinity News* is approaching its 70th year; the *University Times* is 20 years on the go. Please join me in toasting these great publications and wishing them many decades more.

Thank you.

<sup>1</sup> <http://trinitynews.ie/2019/04/op-ed-the-ut-referendum-is-a-disproportionate-response-to-its-knights-story>

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Prrovoost Patrick Prendergast speaking to some student journalists and other staff.



14 July 2021

## **Celebration of the Students Union and the Graduate Students Union**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Good morning, everyone,

It's great to see you all here. We put up this Marquee a few weeks ago because we knew we couldn't have indoor gatherings but we wanted to be back in touch with the college community and celebrate being able to meet in person. For me, it's particularly important because, as you know, I step down as Provost in a few weeks time.

We've been making great use of this marquee, I admit! And some of you have been at other events here. But I really wanted to hold a specific event for the student unions, because you're such a vital and instrumental group – essential to the running of the university.

It's you who can give the student perspective at Board, and at all key committees. I like to emphasize Trinity's democratic character – we're probably the most democratic university in Ireland in terms of the number of offices that are elected positions. Representing the student voice in decision-making is fundamental to our values, and there is no doubt, that in my now very long experience – as Provost and previously as Vice Provost before that as Dean of Graduate Studies – the SU and GSU reps speak up for the students exceptionally well.

Obviously, the Student Unions are something of a baptism of fire in terms of campaigning, representation and policy-making. That's clear from just how many SU reps have gone on to hold public office. I hope you're as pleased as I am at Ivana Bacik's stunning victory in Dublin Bay South. She is of course a former president of the SU. She exemplifies the courage and the public service which I associate with Trinity Student Unions.

And I've been on the receiving end myself of that courage! 'Take Back Trinity' was a notable moment in my provostship. I've been reflecting on it recently, as one does at the end of a term. I can't support some of the methods used in that protest, which bordered on intimidation, nor the fake news circulating. And I'm sure you agree – neither the intimidation nor the fake news came from the Students Union. But in general, I admire that protest. And 'Take Back Trinity' was a great slogan. I still have the badge. 'Take Back

Trinity' meant you saw Trinity as belonging to the students, which it does. And I ended taking on board many of your arguments about commercialisation. But not all of them because we do have to have an answer to under-funding of higher education, and it can't always be to ask for more public money. We felt commercialisation was justified because we were investing back to improve education and research. But I get it that you can't justify investment in the student experience by destroying the student experience. It was a critical moment for all of us.

And, of course, your other great initiatives of the decade are stand-out: divesting from fossil fuels and banning single use plastics on campus. These campaigns were nationally and internationally prominent. In both cases you were ahead of the curve. You showed leadership, you contributed to the debate on sustainability that we all need to have globally, and you demonstrated how each of us can make a difference. The amount of single-use plastic consumed on campus was, and still is, frankly alarming. Now we're working to get it down to zero. You influenced college policy in the matter of putting in drinking taps around the campus, to avoid the use of plastic bottles.

And I recall the really brilliant video for the marriage equality referendum in 2015, described as 'equal parts touching and awkward'<sup>1</sup> which went viral and was adopted by an Australian group for their referendum a few years later.

These were stand-out initiatives. You've been involved in many, many more.

I know just how much SU officers get involved in, and how much is required of you. There is a reason why SU offices are sabbaticals – the workload is high, you sit on many committees, you intervene in many instances. The student body as a whole perhaps does not realise just how much you do, since much of it is invisible.

I think for instance, during lockdown, all that was done then, and the SU and GSU working with the Director of Student Services to repurpose the Public Theatre and the Bank in the Hamilton Building for study purposes – a really creative and useful initiative that was a rapid-fire response to emergency.

I'm particularly admiring of your capabilities because, unlike staff officers, you hold office for a brief tenure. Each year the student body votes anew. I know from experience that it can take a few years getting comfortable in a role, but you don't have those years to grow into it. You have to start at a gallop, and keep on galloping.

I've had the pleasure of working with many SU officers over the

years – some are now councillors and journalists and senators and I'm sure whatever they're doing, their year on sabbatical was something they will always remember, something that gave them the self-belief and confidence in their power to make a difference.

We're very proud of our Students Union and that goes back decades. That is the tradition that you carry on – a tradition of leadership, being ahead of the curve, social responsibility. It's carried on in different ways because each generation has its own concerns, but each of you took or takes responsibility for carrying it on.

It's impossible to imagine either the history of Trinity, or its future, without the Students Unions. It has been a great pleasure to work with you. My great thanks and I wish each and every one of you the very best.

\* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.universitytimes.ie/2018/02/tcdsu-presidents-through-the-decades>



Shane Collins (former GSU President), Oisín Vince Coulter, Martin McAndrew





Provost Patrick Prendergast, Shaz Oye (former GSU President),  
Simon Evans (Administrator, Students Union)



Molly Kenny (Former SU Education Officer), Provost Patrick  
Prendergast, Dale Whelehan (former SU Education Officer), Megan  
O'Connor (Education Officer), Eoin Hand (SU President), Philly  
Holmes (Communications and Marketing Officer)



14 July 2021

## **Garden Party to celebrate the Vice-Provostship of Professor Jürgen Barkhoff**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Good afternoon, and welcome,

Thank you all for being here and joining with me in celebrating the Vice-Provost Jürgen Barkhoff.

Jürgen has been Vice-Provost for just two years, and what an extraordinary amount he has accomplished in that short time! Vice-Provost – or vice-rector as they say in Europe, but it's not the same because they have four Vice-rectors, whereas we only have one Vice-Provost as the Chief Academic Officer. It's one of the most demanding and time-consuming of all college roles, as I know from holding it myself. So much lands on your shoulders. Jürgen has met every challenge. His phenomenal energy has never flagged.

If I began to go through all of Jürgen's achievements, we'd be here a long time. And I'm also aware that I probably don't know the half of it. I have no doubt that Jürgen has been involved in key initiatives, which have taken up huge time, of which I have only the haziest notion.

But let me talk a bit about the initiatives I do know about:

- First, the Human Capital Initiative – what an achievement! Trinity put in the biggest bid of any university in the country. And we were successful! €21 million euro for the launch of new courses across the university. That was many people's doing, of course, but Jürgen coordinated the whole submission, together with Academic Services. He made it into one coherent and effective proposal. The long-term benefit to the whole university will be immense.
- Second, CHARM-EU: again this pioneering European University Alliance is the work of key people from across the college. Our Provost-elect Linda Doyle was instrumental in the early stages of CHARM-EU, particularly in putting together the theme of 'reconciling humanity with the planet' and Juliette Hussey brought her vast and indispensable knowledge of Global Relations to the initiative. But, again, Jürgen brought it together. He is project chair within Trinity – when he became VP, I marked it 'for his urgent attention',

so to speak, and he stepped up. It's a particularly complex collaboration, involving five universities in five jurisdictions delivering a joint Masters. It took consummate diplomatic and administrative skills to deliver it.

- Third, the Associate VP for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This is a new college officership, highly consequential, imperative in the 21st century. Jürgen recommended Clodagh Brook, an excellent appointment, and he also worked out how to integrate the role into college governance – which is no easy job as most of you I know. He positioned the role in the Academic Services Division and worked to ensure it was smoothly incorporated.

These are three vital initiatives which will shape the university well into the future. They're quite distinct: one is national project, one is European, one is internal - and that gets across the breadth and range of activity Jürgen has been involved in. He is, for instance, vice-chair of the Coimbra group of European universities, which involves – or did involve – a lot of travel and coordination across Europe.

He has stewarded the institutional quality review – which is a mammoth ten-year quality review of all the university activities, and has been made more complicated, like everything, by Covid and lockdown. He chairs the junior progression committee, which involves a huge amount of work, and again has been particularly difficult during Covid, when everything has to be done on Zoom. He also chairs the postgraduate renewal project, working closely with the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Jürgen is 'collegiality in action' and that phrase sums him up for me, and it conveys why I wanted to appoint him Vice-Provost and why he has excelled.

\* \* \*

Jürgen and I go back a long way. He was Registrar when I was Vice Provost under Provost John Hegarty, and he was in situ for the Provost's election in 2011. When I was elected he and I walked out of the election venue together to face cameras.

I remember finding Jürgen great to work with back then, and of course he has significant experience, in different roles. Like all of us across the college, I admired his directorship of the Long Room Hub and the introduction of the 'Behind the Headlines' series, which have been so successful. I knew in asking him to be vice provost, I was asking a lot because – as is clear from all I've just touched on – it really is a huge role.

Jürgen not only steps up, he makes it look enjoyable! He is calm, humorous and unflappable. He is direct in the best kind of way. You always know where you are with Jürgen. He listens. He is, as I've said, highly collegial. Looking at the initiatives he's brought through, what strikes me is how good he is at working with people – these are huge initiatives which no-one could do alone. And he doesn't try to. He is a team player. He knows how to devolve responsibility and trust people, and they, in turn, reward that trust.

He is ambitious and visionary. Hence the HCI. He knew what he felt Trinity was capable of. And he made it happen.

Jürgen is also highly gregarious. He likes people. He likes social gatherings. That is not incidental to his success. So much of what we achieve comes from the relationships we build, and how better to build relationships than in relaxed, casual surroundings when we're having fun. Jürgen builds strong relationships, and when you add to that, what we enviously call in Ireland, his Teutonic efficiency – well, I guess that's how he gets things done.

I have felt bad for Jürgen these past 16 months that someone so outgoing should have to serve as vice-provost on Zoom! Denied the chance to meet people and go to dinners and drinks and lunches and everything else he so enjoys and is so good at! It is a measure of his professionalism, his focus, and his commitment to Trinity that he made the transition to online with such marked success and affability.

But I know how much he has enjoyed, as I have, being back in person – meeting together in college. We've made the most of this marquee – and, fortunately the weather has smiled on us. He has been here at many of the events, and it's wonderful to see all of you here at this event for him.

We're particularly delighted to see the Provost elect, Linda Doyle, back from her well-deserved holiday. We're all excited about what the future holds and of course we also wish Linda's choice as incoming vice-provost Orla Sheils, well. And Orla I hope I haven't scared you too much by my talk of how demanding the job is!

As someone who truly knows how to have a good time, Jürgen loves a good champagne toast and I recall him telling me his favourite champagne – so I hope I've remembered right.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I ask you to join me in raising a glass of *Veuve Cliquot* to our brilliant vice-provost, Jürgen Barkhoff.

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(L to R) Professor Jürgen Barkhoff & Provost Patrick Prendergast



(L to R) Linda Doyle (Provost-elect), Linda Hogan, Provost Patrick Prendergast, and Jane Ohlmeyer

15 July 2021

## **Celebration Trinity Access**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Good afternoon, and welcome to the Provost's Garden.

It's great to see you all here. We put up this Marquee a few weeks ago because we knew we couldn't have indoor gatherings but we wanted to be back in touch with the college community and celebrate being able to meet in person. For me, it's particularly important because, as you know, I step down as Provost in two short weeks.

We're lucky to have this beautiful Garden. And the stunning weather which makes it such a pleasure to be outside. Thank you for joining me here today.

It's a priority to celebrate TAP - or Trinity Access as we now call it, since, in truth, it has gone well beyond a programme. Indeed I think it can now be described as a movement – that has been reproduced and piloted around Ireland and around the world – in Oxford for example. Trinity Access is a global leader in showing how to open opportunities for all at third level. It is intrinsic to the university we are, and instrumental to the university we aspire to be.

Trinity Access is pioneering. From its inception in the 1990s, it has very much driven its own agenda and has benefitted from truly inspirational leaders – continuing with Cliona Hannon, Kathleen O'Toole and Brendan Tangney today. Trinity Access was never about following a set of standards, an agreed model or guidelines. It has been the creator of what would turn out to be a national and then a global model.

Indeed, the most notable thing about Trinity Access is its forward drive, its constant raising of ambition, its striving always to do more and be more. This is a college unit that never rests on its laurels. From the Foundation Year, to Bridge 21, to Pathways to Professions, to College for Every Student, the to Asylum Seeker Access Provision Scholarships – all stand-out initiatives which signal Trinity Access's constant urgent to reach as many students as possible, to make a difference.

It is characteristic that Trinity Access' response to lockdown was to launch tech2student – a hugely successful initiative which drew a

phenomenal response and has made such a concrete difference to second-level students.

From the start Trinity Access has worked closely with its particularly dedicated donors and friends and this synergy has proved transformational. Initiatives like Pathways to the Professions are exemplary – a touchstone of university-donor collaboration at its best.

I'm absolutely delighted that some of TAP's dedicated donors could join us today. It's great to see you - it will be a while before we take meeting in person for granted.

I don't claim ownership of TAP's success. I hope that I and the college Board have been supportive and enabling but, as I've stress, Trinity Access has spearheaded its own success through its inspirational leaders, phenomenal team and committed donors. I don't claim ownership, but I do feel great pride, as Provost, and it has been wonderful to have helped out when called on.

I'm indebted to Trinity Access for some of the most memorable moments of my provostship: I recall College for Every Student in Vermont, and having to explain – to other university heads, who seemed genuinely puzzled - why a high-ranking university like Trinity was engaged in the initiative, when we could have our pick of the students. I remember stressing that it wasn't just a question of equality and inclusion, it was also about self-interest: we needed the students who would benefit most from the education we offer.

And I remember the dinner in Lady Margaret Hall when I was trying to help Alan Rusbridger win over the Fellows of that College to the idea of piloting the TAP Foundation Year. I knew what he was up against. Before the dinner, he held drinks in the Principal's Garden and gave a speech in which he explained enthusiastically that this had all started over two pints that he and I had in the Long Hall. I heard one Fellow say to another 'Pity he didn't have a third pint and then he would have forget all about it'.

That's what Alan was up against, but he prevailed – thanks in great part to Cliona Hannon, whom we seconded to Lady Margaret Hall. The TAP Foundation Year has now been rolled out across Oxford and Cambridge. What a great achievement! The whole Trinity community feels such pride in this. Of all things we 'export', great research and great graduates, it perhaps doesn't get more powerful than great Access – which makes such a difference to the lives of individual students and which changes the whole ethos of an institution.

Trinity Access is one of the key strands of our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*. It is central to the New Generations programme which aims to bring more outstanding talent to the university by funding more professorships and more student scholarships.

As you know, a few months ago we were able to announce that we have met the hugely ambitious targets of *Inspiring Generations*: we have raised €400 million in donations, and garnered 150,000 hours of volunteering from our amazing alumni and friends. This is a truly remarkable achievement and we will be seeing the fruits of it for very many years, as wonderful new buildings go up to pioneer new ways of teaching and researching, and as great academics and students bring their talents to our community, including notably students coming through the Access Programmes.

As I leave office, I can be confident that Trinity Access will continue its forward drive, and not only through *Inspiring Generations*, but through great new future initiatives, which I can only begin to imagine. Trinity Access takes such a generous and expansive view of what is called ‘the student lifecycle’ – you understand that this lifecycle starts well before students enter third-level and goes on after they graduate. Together with your donors and friends, you have done so much around early intervention with second-level students and creating opportunities for graduates. This has impacted the whole university and our understanding of what outreach means and how we can best support our students to achieve their potential.

I thank you on behalf of the university for all you have done and will do. On my own behalf, I thank you for constantly reminding me of the radical importance of what we do here and the truth of Nelson Mandela’s words that ‘education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.’

Thank you.

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15 July 2021

**Garden Party for Registrars Prof Paula Murphy  
and Prof Brendan Tangney**

*Marquee, Provost's Garden*

Good afternoon, and welcome,

And thank you all for joining with me in celebrating the Registrar – or rather, Registrars since, exceptionally due to Covid, we are celebrating two registrars this afternoon: Paula Murphy and Brendan Tangney.

The Registrar is one of the key College offices. It's also one of the most opaque. I have a little book about Trinity that says "The registrar is a college officer whose exact function is somewhat imprecise".

Lack of definition can be a virtue – it can mean flexibility and freedom and, in my experience, as Provost and before that as Vice-Provost, the role of the Registrar is defined very much by who is the incumbent and who is the Provost of the day. This fluidity is a benefit.

I've had the good fortune of working with three outstanding Registrars: Shane Allwright, Paula Murphy and Brendan Tangney. For me, the Registrar has the advantage of being one of the few college officers who sits on both Board and Council. This gives them great oversight, particularly when it comes to anything to do with changing the statutes. I've relied heavily on my Registrars for this.

The Registrar also oversees the commencement ceremonies and is secretary to the advisory committee on honorary degrees – this is a defined role. It's the Registrar who liaises with the Chancellor and ensures that everything goes smoothly.

The Registrar is also involved with the appointment of chancellors and pro-chancellors. Since these are terms of long duration, a registrar might go their whole office without appointing any pro-chancellors or chancellors but the way the dice was cast, Paula has been involved in the appointment of many Pro-chancellors, and a

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\* Trinity College Dublin, History and Guide to Campus, published by Murphy Chalker Associates, 1973

Chancellor. In this, as in everything she does, she has been a pleasure to work with.

A key way in which Paula shaped the registrar-ship was as sustainability champion. Her role here has been absolutely decisive. She worked closely with the Student Unions – also notably for their sustainability agenda – and she helped coordinate and communicate the many sustainable initiatives across the university – from re-wilding the campus to ending single use plastic and many more. I credit her with helping the college to become a member of ISCN, globally recognised for sustainability. She brought to this championing the determination and the collegiality she is known for. Paula is never categorical or peremptory – she is open and receptive and people want to work with her. These proved decisive skills when it came to championing sustainability.

Paula stepped down from the role a year ago and Brendan Tangney took over. He was quickly charged with one of the most instrumental of all the registrar’s roles: chairing the steering committee to elect a new Provost. This is high-level, coordinating work which involves organising the hustings and dealing with all the complicated issues that arise in the course of an election – made more complicated again this year by lockdown and having to do everything online.

We were very fortunate to have Brendan who brought to the role his considerable experience. He is used to dealing with stressful situations, having been Junior Dean and Warden of Trinity Hall, and as Professor in Computer Science, he is unfazed by the shift to online. He, too, is notably collegial – indeed, he was here earlier today for his role in Trinity Access; he constantly goes above and beyond, and we thank him for being such an excellent registrar at a decisive time.

Both Paula and Brendan were directly impacted, as Registrars, by the pandemic. Brendan has had to spend almost his entire term online, and Paula left office in deepest darkest lockdown, when I couldn’t thank her in person, let alone in a group setting. So I’m delighted now that we have this opportunity of all coming together, in person, in the Provost’s Garden, on a perfect day, to thank the two registrars: the role may be ‘somewhat imprecise’ but the work is absolutely essential to the smooth running of the college.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I ask you in joining me to raise a toast to our registrars, Paula Murphy and Brendan Tangney.

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(L to R) Prof Brendan Tangney, Provost Patrick Prendergast, and Professor Paula Murphy.



22 July 2021

## **Provost's Farewell Video to College Community**

*Recorded in the Provost's Library, Provost's House*

Hello, everyone

I'll be stepping down as Provost in ten days' time and I wanted to say goodbye and to thank you all: staff, students, alumni and friends, - the whole Trinity community.

It's been a wonderful ten years. And I hope you share my sense of having been on a journey together – a journey of many parts, which has seen the college constantly developing and opening out, becoming ever more inclusive and interdisciplinary, more global and philanthropic, more engaged with society on the issues that matter, and more attuned to student needs. It's a journey which, in this last year, took an unprecedented turn which challenges all of us. Thank you, everyone, for pulling together and supporting each other, as individuals and as a community.

In truth, even in the challenge, I've found inspiration. It's been ten amazing years and I think we can say we've achieved a lot. And now I'm happy to move on with the next phase for me, and the next phase for the college. My immediate future involves taking up a research professorship here in Trinity. I look forward to having more time for research and exploration – that's my plan, in the short-term anyway.

To our new provost, Linda Doyle, I wish the very best. I'm sure you and your team will lead this great university in new and exciting directions.

The end of one thing is always the start of another.

As the poet Brendan Kennelly puts it, *Something that will not acknowledge conclusion insists that we forever begin.*

Or – to rework this with a famous quote by another Trinity graduate


–

Begin again, begin better.

Thank you.

\* \* \*

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Trinity College Dublin  
Collegium in Honore, Bala Ardu Cluith  
The University of Dublin

staff, students, alumni and friends, -  
the whole Trinity community.

0:12 / 2:08

Message from Provost Patrick Prendergast as he completes his term of office, July 2021

28 July 2021

## **Diarmuid O'Brien Farewell Gathering**

*Tangent, Trinity College*

Good afternoon,

It's a pleasure to be here with you in Tangent, including those joining remotely. This is one of the first indoor gatherings we've had in college in the past year and a half – although, of course, we've had many outdoor gatherings in the marquee in the Garden of the Provost's House over the past month.

I'm delighted that the lifting of restrictions enables us to meet here for our Farewell to Diarmuid O'Brien – and to do it here in *Tangent*, the house that Diarmuid built, so to speak.

It's now just over four years since we created the role of Chief Innovation and Enterprise Officer, having got permission from the Department for this new post. I'm betraying nothing, I believe, when I say that we created this role with Diarmuid in mind. He was an exceptional Director of Trinity Research and Innovation, and he was the first person to come to mind as we set ourselves the challenge to develop a new campus on the five-and-a-half acre site Trinity has owned since the 1990s, a site which used to be called TTEC and which the Board has now renamed 'Trinity East'.

I knew that we needed Diarmuid for this pivotal role. He needed some persuading and I remember meeting in Davy Byrne's pub, at the curve of the bar there, after work some day in the Summer of 2016. The idea that took root over two pints of red ale.

Diarmuid has now worked in Trinity for sixteen years, in three decisive positions, and it's not too much to say that in his time with us he has transformed Trinity. Indeed, few individuals have had such an impact on the university, barring the Provosts of course!

He is a Trinity graduate in Materials Science. After doing a PhD in Physics in Sheffield University and being involved in a number of spin-outs, he returned to Trinity as Executive Director of CRANN in 2005. He was instrumental, with CRANN's academic director John Boland, in making this into a flagship national research centre.

In 2013 he was appointed Director of Trinity Research and Innovation, with a focus on generating research funding,

commercialising patents and licenses and supporting campus company formation and industry partnerships. He was exceptional in this role. His stand-out achievements include:

- the development and implementation of an **industry engagement strategy**, working with the then Dean of Research Vinny Cahill, which **doubled** industry funding of research at Trinity with the creation of the Office of Corporate Partnerships and Knowledge Exchange.
- a **research commercialisation strategy** which has significantly increased our licensing income, including Trinity's largest ever commercialisation agreement and the establishment of the €60m University Bridge Venture Fund; and
- the **research funding diversification** strategy which has helped bring about such accelerated growth in our research funding from non-exchequer sources.

As everyone here knows, to deliver any strategy in Trinity is highly demanding. You need to have vision; you need to make that vision concrete in terms of a business plan; you need to articulate it and persuade the people who make the decisions in Committees and at Board and Council. And that's just to get the green light to go ahead – you then have to deliver and implement it. In short, you need to combine vision and an ability to talk with administrative skills and a willingness to take decisions and bring people with you.

As Vice-Provost I was well aware of Diarmuid's achievements in CRANN, and as Provost I came hugely to count on him – and not only in the obvious areas of innovation and entrepreneurship. Diarmuid is a brilliant strategist and he brings that breadth of strategic thinking to anything you talk to him about.

In creating the role of Chief Innovation and Enterprise Officer, we were adding to our three existing three chief officers. We didn't create the new role lightly – we created it because new capability and leadership was required to strengthen our standing as a European leader in innovation and entrepreneurship.

If Trinity is now seen as a leading, that is very much thanks to Diarmuid and he was the natural choice to be our first CIEO.

In this role, he has had two really significant responsibilities. The first was to develop and establish Tangent, and his success in this is all around us. Tangent brings together, under one roof, Trinity's



diverse innovation and entrepreneurship programmes and activities, including LaunchBox, Blackstone Launchpad, the Certificate in Innovation & Entrepreneurship, and the EIT KICs.

Tangent brings cohesion and coordination to all these diverse activities and programmes, and it provides strong branding and identity.

His second and greater responsibility was to be project sponsor for Trinity East, or T-Tech as we previously called it. This is a seminal initiative – a second, innovation campus for Trinity, with Portal already in train and the E3 Research Institute, E3RI, at its anchor research institute addressing great global challenges of our time – discovering balanced solutions for a better world. This promises to transform how we engage with industry, how we do research and how we educate.

It's a massive initiative, which has taken all of Diarmuid's talents and energy. In four years, he has got us to a very good place:

- Portal capital project has gone to tender;
- Vacant possession of the site is all but complete;
- Board has accepted to buy the freehold of the site;
- Diarmuid has developed the Strategic Assessment Report, the SAR, and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science has agreed to accept it.
- The donation of €30m to the Trinity East campus and because of this, we're now in a good position to leverage government funding for Trinity East.

The development of Trinity East to its current stage was informed by multiple trips to US, Canada, London, Paris to see how other innovation districts and start-up campuses operate. We know our plans for Trinity East are realistic and achievable; they are also informed by best practise, globally.

Diarmuid has driven all this. It has required his remarkable combination of vision, energy and strategic intelligence, and his determination to get things done and find solutions. These are rare gifts, especially in combination, so it surprises none of us that Diarmuid has been snapped up by Cambridge, where he will be chief executive of Cambridge Enterprise.

It's an exciting move for Diarmuid. We wish him all the best. As he takes up his new role in September, it's with the knowledge that for sixteen years he has played a pivotal role in the advancement of this

university. Many people can be credited with making Trinity a global leader in innovation and entrepreneurship, and I'm sure Diarmuid would be first to give them all their due. But no-one has done more than he himself.

On behalf of the whole Trinity community, Diarmuid, our great thanks.

On a personal note, it has been exhilarating to work with someone of your purpose and drive who is determined to make things happen. It wouldn't be true to say that you don't see obstacles – you are completely aware of them, you know exactly where they are; but you always find a way to overcome them. You don't let them impede you. Some of the best memories of my provostship have come from seeing you find a way to deliver your vision.

I think we all look forward to seeing what you will do next! And when Trinity East is up and running, with the research institute as its beating heart, I hope you will feel a great deal of pride at all you did to take this great university to the next level.

Thank you.

\* \* \*

29 July 2021

## **Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry Sod Turning Event**

*E3 Foundry Site*

Minister, Colleagues, Distinguished Guests,

I didn't actually plan for this to be my very last speech as Provost. But if I had planned it, I could not, I think, have chosen a more appropriate and seminal valediction.

Today we celebrate the vision of E3 and we celebrate the delivery of our philanthropic campaign, *Inspiring Generations*, and the generosity of the donors and benefactors who have made it possible. With E3, Trinity is pioneering 21st century challenge-driven education and research which confronts the great challenge of our age: sustainability. 'Balanced solutions for a better world' is E3's motto.

And with *Inspiring Generations*, we've embedded philanthropy in the DNA of the university.

Research, Education, Sustainability, Philanthropy – these have been defining themes of the last decade, which is why I think it's so fitting that this should be the last formal event of my provostship. Today, we continue the arc that began right back in the early days of my provostship, and even before, when some key leaders in Engineering and Natural Sciences began thinking of how to collaborate in education and research. I recall giving the Skalak Lecture in Columbia University in New York in 2014, outlining our plans for E3.

And I remember, like it was yesterday, the 22nd September 2015, when I shook hands with Martin Naughton in the Library in the Provost's House on his extraordinary donation of €25 million, the catalyst that has made E3 happen.

I recall the official public announcement, 3 years later, on 25th May 2018, when we celebrated the government donation of €15 million, the concrete commitment from the state of their belief in the vital importance of E3 to address graduate skills shortages, and to position Ireland as a leader in research in Engineering, Environment, and Emerging Technologies.

And here we are now, 3 years later: progressing with the first phase of E3. Today we ‘turn the sod’ on the Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry. Over the next two years, this state-of-the-art facility will be built and in the Michelmas Term 2023, we will welcome our first cohort of undergraduate and postgraduate students – engineers, natural scientists and computer scientists. This building will facilitate 1,600 additional STEM students and they will be taught through advanced new curricula in emerging disciplines, including AI, Climate Science, Environmental Engineering, and Smart Cities. In the next phase, we will build the E3 Research Institute in Trinity East, our campus at Grand Canal Dock. But that’s down the line. Today we celebrate the Martin Naughton E3 Learning Foundry and it’s a pleasure to be here with all of you, who have been so instrumental to making this extraordinary initiative a reality.

An initiative on this scale is always delivered by many people. We will hear shortly from some of these people: the Bursar Veronica Campbell, the Dean of STEM Sylvia Draper, Martin Naughton himself, and Minister. But let me take this opportunity to thank some of the key groups and people, on behalf of the whole university, and on my own behalf.

First, my heartfelt thanks to the donors who have supported the capital costs of E3LF: Eric Kinsella, Dr Mike Peirce, Dr Beate Schuler, Paul Johnston and, of course, the Naughton family, whose support has made this possible. And not just their financial support, but their belief. The Naughtons believe in giving excellence the opportunity to flourish. It is this belief that led them to support CRANN, to launch the Naughton STEM scholarships, and now the E3 Learning Foundry. I’m delighted to welcome the Naughton family here on this historic day for Trinity.

Second, the government and the Higher Education Authority backed this project with a significant grant of €15 million. It’s a privilege to welcome the Minister, Simon Harris TD, and I appreciate your taking the time to be here.

In terms of implementing this initiative, some of the key people involved include:

- the Project Sponsor, Veronica Campbell,
- the Design Team, led by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios,
- the Project Management Team, led by Turner and Townsend,
- the Estates Team, led by the director, Mike Clarke,
- the Head of Projects and Planning, Greg Power,
- the Built Environment project managers, Deirdre O’Shea and Tom Armstrong,
- the Independent Monitor, Leo Harmon and;
- the Chair of the Capital steering committee, Mike Peirce.

E3LF is a new kind of education facility. It is focussed on challenge-driven education, on small group teaching, and on independent learning. As such, it needs to be designed with novel specifications. Involvement from the Dean of STEM and from each of the three schools, Engineering, Natural Sciences, and Computer Science and Statistics, has been key to developing the design brief and developing the building specifications.

My thanks to the Dean of STEM, Sylvia Draper, former Dean, Vinny Cahill, and to the Heads of School, Henry Rice, Patrick Wyse Jackson and Carl Vogel.

Finally, JJ Rhatigans are the building contractors. We have huge faith in them after the amazing job they did with the Trinity Business School. We're delighted to welcome here today, the chairman and group managing director, Padraic Rhatigan, together with some of his team.

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In three days' time, I will become a Research Professor of Trinity. I look forward – as I go in and out of college – to seeing progress on this building and it will be another great day, in September 2023, when the new students and professors come through the doors. Already now, our students and professors are engaged on something new: challenge-driven education and research. With 'challenge-driven', the emphasis shifts from what the researcher knows to what the challenge requires. Challenge-driven education and research moves students beyond becoming an expert in one discipline – though that is important; it's about acquiring and applying the research and know-how to address a vital challenge. We believe challenge-driven is the future of education and research and Trinity is emerging as a global leader in the area. This, again, is very much thanks to the generosity of donors and friends. Last month, we announced the granting of four Kinsella Multidisciplinary challenge awards, and last week we announced a further two Challenge awards funded by the Provost's Council.

These grants will enable 25 PhD students to work in 6 teams to address significant global challenges. The idea is that eventually students coming through E3LF will become researchers in the E3 Research Institute in our Trinity East campus at Grand Canal Dock.

E3 comes not a moment too soon, and some may say it comes too late. We have all been appalled by the climate events around the world. Just yesterday came news of yet another report, published in

the journal *Bioscience*, that key planetary vital signs, including greenhouse gas concentrations, ocean heat content and ice mass, are setting new records, and are now at tipping point, or already beyond.<sup>1</sup>

We all really need to do what we can, and then more. With the pandemic we've proven we can act radically, when we have to. We cannot return to business as usual. The Trinity community is facing up to this on many fronts:

- Our students have driven fossil fuel divestment and the end of single use plastic.
- Our staff made sustainability a key issue in the recent provostal election. The incoming Provost is deeply committed.
- And, our alumni and friends are funding the research and education that's needed to confront global sustainability challenges.

This is a whole community effort. I'm proud of it. We need to continue to scale up our approach. As individuals, as a community, as an institution, as a country, as a planet, we have to innovate in a way that human activities work to benefit nature and not against it. Maybe it's the engineer in me, but I believe this can be done. I know I'm preaching to the converted here. But I guess there is some significance to last words, and these are what I want my last words as Provost to be.

*Waiting for Godot* isn't about the climate crisis – but it could have been since it's about the existential crisis we all face as human beings. So I'll end with Beckett's words in *Godot*: “*Let us do something, while we have the chance! It is not every day that we are needed.*”

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jul/27/global-heating-critical-measures-tipping-point-study>



(L to R) Provost Patrick Prendergast, Dr Martin Naughton, and Provost-elect Linda Doyle





30 July 2021

## **Address on the college unveiling of a portrait of Senator David Norris**

*Ante-room of the Provost's Library*

30 July 2021

*[Welcome everyone]*

In Trinity, we pride ourselves on our art collection, which is both historic and contemporary. It's important to us to ensure that our collection is continually updated with contemporary and emerging artists. And it's also important to us that we commemorate on our walls some of the great scholars of this university.

I'm delighted that during my provostship – of which this is the very last day! – We've acquired a number of really great portraits of professors and Trinity people. Some of them you see here. Others are hung elsewhere in the college – in the 1592 restaurant for instance, there's a brilliant portrait of Anne Crookshank.

Today we add a portrait of a truly great Trinity lecturer, writer, senator, and activist.

David Norris is:

- a Trinity graduate, BA 1967,
- a Trinity Foundation scholar (1965),
- a Trinity lecturer in the School of English for almost thirty years where he inspired generations of students and did so much to elucidate Joyce;
- a Trinity senator for almost 35 years, from 1987 to the present day.

In all these roles, he has been distinguished by his eloquence, his energy and his dedication for human rights. His great historic action is of course the over-turning of the criminalisation of homosexuality. This was a remarkable crusade of fourteen long years. It took him to the High Court, then to the Supreme Court and finally, triumphantly, to the European Court of Human Rights, where he succeeded. The law was repealed in Ireland in 1993. The whole country owes him a debt of gratitude.

This is his most historic and seminal achievement but he has many more, including the protection of Georgian Dublin. Indeed the

Georgian oasis that is North Great George's Street, with the James Joyce Centre, is one of his great legacies.

In Trinity he is greatly loved by staff and students and by the alumni who have voted him back to the senate every four years since 1987. We all have huge pride in him. So much so, that we are absolutely delighted to have this wonderful portrait, full of life and wit and warmth, by Jim Harkin. This portrait is immediately and distinctively David. It is David in full flow, as it were, leaning slightly forward, ready to engage – about Joyce, Yeats, architecture, politics, life, literature.

I'm delighted that David will look out from these walls at generations of future Trinity students and professors. And I'm delighted that he is in such good company. Particularly apt is his proximity to our former Chancellor, Mary Robinson, who became a Foundation Scholar in the same year as David, and was a colleague of his in the 1970s when she was also on the Trinity staff.

David, I'm delighted that you and Mary, who worked so closely and so profitably for human rights in Ireland, are now sharing the same room!

On behalf of the university, my great thanks to the Department of Foreign Affairs in helping us acquire this wonderful portrait, and it's great to see Eugene here, another graduate of whom we are very proud.

And our congratulations and thanks to Jim Harkin. We are absolutely delighted to add you to our college collection.

And finally, our thanks to David for his extraordinary service to the university, and to the people of Dublin and Ireland, and indeed the world. I'm sure his activism is an inspiration to people in Hungary and Poland today.

David, this is well and truly my final engagement as Provost. I couldn't have imagined a better note to end on.

Thank you.

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(L to R) Jim Harkin (with portrait), Senator David Norris, and Provost Patrick Prendergast



Portrait of Senator David Norris by Jim Harkin



## Note

Almost all of the speeches in these volumes were written by Bridget Hourican in the decade 2011 to 2021. The text of each speech was put on the web soon after delivery, and were compiled in these volumes by Sinéad Browne. I would like to record my appreciation to Bridget and Sinéad, and other staff in the Provost's Office, who made this possible.

Patrick Prendergast

22/9/2021