



**President's  
Annual Report**  
*2024/2025*



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# 1. President's Foreword

**I am very pleased to share the 2024/25 President's Annual Report with you and to reflect on this year's many achievements. This report covers the period 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2025, providing an overview of some of the remarkable initiatives that took place across UCC aligned with the goals of our *Strategic Plan 2023-2028: Securing Our Future*.**

Through our collective commitment to excellence across our strategic goals, we make a real impact on society. Our north star is to connect and empower people to create knowledge that shapes a sustainable and inclusive world. I would like to thank the many staff, students, alumni, supporters, partners and friends for their unwavering commitment and passion for UCC, which make this possible.

UCC continues to drive research progress through the *UCC Futures* framework and to transform research and expertise into real-world impact. We achieved significant milestones this year including record research funding success. Just four years into the Horizon Europe programme we surpassed €132 million in research awards, exceeding our organisational target for the full seven years of the programme.

Our cutting-edge research informs our teaching through our *Connected Curriculum* and this year more than 26,000 students from all counties of Ireland and from 140 countries around the world chose to study here. We are committed to preparing all UCC students for success in their lives and careers, and this year more than 7,600 graduates joined our global alumni community of more than 225,000 members. We achieved a graduate employment rate - those in employment of further study within nine months of graduation - of 95%. UCC's learning ecosystem includes lifelong learning pathways that connect our research with real-world applications and support learners at all stages to upskill in response to rapid technological change and shifting job markets. This year we launched a dedicated Sustainability Academy to provide training for our workforce and society to support the transition to sustainability.

Our *Global Engagement Plan 2024 - 2028*, launched in April 2025, sets out our commitment to being a globally engaged institution across four pillars. These will support us to enhance excellence through improved marketing, student recruitment strategies and international programme support; to address the world's grand challenges through our research, alumni engagement and thought leadership; to maximise our networks for global benefit, aligned with national strategies and priorities; and to promote global citizenship through education, research and engagement, fostering intercultural understanding and strengthening our position as a University of Sanctuary.

UCC was founded 180 years ago on the principle of broadening access to higher education, and our commitment to these values remains a defining strength of our university. This year we witnessed many important developments reflecting our determination to foster equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging for all members of our

180

Years of teaching,  
learning and research  
excellence



community. We launched our inaugural *Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Framework and Action Plan, Belonging at UCC 2025 - 2028*, secured our first Institutional Silver Athena Swan Award from Advance HE and joined Accenture's Women on Walls campaign, selecting artists to paint new portraits of trail blazing Munster women.

**An tOllamh John O'Halloran MRIA**  
An tUachtarán, Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

These achievements and our commitment to excellence are recognised in our rise in the QS World University Rankings to within the top 250 universities in the world. These rankings measure universities on their academic excellence, research impact, employability and commitment to sustainability, and this success is testament to the commitment of our entire community.

An ongoing commitment to sustainability is a key part of our strategy, and this year we placed 4th in the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings which benchmark universities' sustainability performance in Higher Education. This recognition aligns with our commitment to delivering the UN Sustainable Development Goals and reflects our progress in energy, waste and education.

This year was not without its challenges, and we continued to navigate financial pressures. Disciplined planning underpinned our commitment to long-term financial sustainability, enabling us to recommence a limited capital programme focused on refurbishment projects while we finalise long-term plans for our broader Capital Programme.

Next year we will celebrate 180 years of excellence and will move into second half of the implementation of our current Strategic Plan. As we work to make a lasting difference in the world and build a more sustainable future, we remain committed to our core values of upholding excellence, valuing people and creating a positive impact that extends beyond our campus. In the year ahead, we will work to be a globally recognised, connected university, distinguished by research excellence in niche areas, digitally enhanced education and by our position as a leading destination for postgraduate study.

**An tOllamh John O'Halloran MRIA**  
An tUachtarán, Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

# 2. About University College Cork

**University College Cork (UCC) is a comprehensive research-based globally oriented university with over 26,000 students, 3,700 staff and over 225,000 alumni worldwide. UCC is a vibrant hub of teaching, research and engagement, and is Ireland's most sustainable university campus.**



From  
**115**  
Students in 1849...  
...to  
**26,067**  
Students in 2025



Established in 1845, University College Cork was then called Queen's College Cork as it was one of three colleges established by the Queen's Colleges (Ireland) Act 1845. University College Cork was founded with the bold vision (at the time) of providing high-quality education, rooted in the principles of excellence, inquiry and equality.

These principles remain as relevant today as they were 180 years ago. When this university first opened its doors to students in 1849, it had just 23 staff and 115 students, all of whom were men. In 1886 we were among the first universities in Europe to admit female students, and this progressive spirit continues today. UCC's students and staff come from a broad range of backgrounds and join us from more than 140 different countries, making ours a diverse and enriching environment.

From those early days, our university has blossomed into an institution of international repute, known for its student-centric approach, academic rigour, groundbreaking research and unwavering commitment to the betterment of society.

UCC proudly contributes to industry, culture and the

economy and a 2024 study of our impact highlighted UCC's important role in economic vitality, cultural enrichment, sustainable development and societal wellbeing. UCC generates €1.18 billion annual economic impact, delivering €6 to the Irish economy for every €1 of state investment.

Our daily contribution of €3.2 million supports over 21,000 jobs - 1 in every 13 in Cork city and county. Annually producing over 7,500 graduates, UCC contributes to a highly skilled workforce with 95% of graduates in further education or full-time employment within nine months of graduation, and a sector-leading first-year student retention rate over 92%. UCC's societal contributions include sustainability initiatives, transformative community engagement, and a steadfast commitment to inclusion and cultural enrichment.

Nowhere is the impact of this university more evident than in our continued advancement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, where we excel in advancing food security, sustainable cities, responsible consumption, ocean health and peace through collaborative action.

**UCC's diverse educational and research programmes are delivered across 27 Schools within four Colleges as follows:**

### **College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences**

- School of Applied Psychology
- School of Applied Social Studies
- School of Education
- School of English & Digital Humanities
- School of History
- School of the Human Environment: Geography, Archaeology & Classics
- School of Languages, Literature & Cultures
- School of Irish Learning
- School of Film, Music & Theatre
- School of Society, Politics & Ethics

### **College of Business & Law**

- Cork University Business School
- School of Law

### **College of Medicine & Health**

- School of Public Health
- School of Clinical Therapies
- School of Pharmacy
- School of Medicine
- Dental School & Hospital
- School of Nursing & Midwifery

### **College of Science, Engineering & Food Science**

- School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences
- School of Biochemistry & Cell Biology
- School of Chemistry
- School of Computer Science & Information Technology
- School of Engineering & Architecture
- School of Food & Nutritional Sciences
- School of Mathematical Sciences
- School of Microbiology
- School of Physics



4

Colleges



27

Schools





Above image taken from the installation of the Cork Fossil Expo in the Glucksman as part of Science Week 2024. Photo by Clare Keogh.

## Rankings

This year, UCC moved up 27 places to 246 in the QS World University Rankings, its highest placing in ten years, while consolidating its leading status internationally with an increase of two places to 4th in the world in the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings.

UCC is in the 101-150 band in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings.

In the QS World University Rankings by Subject, UCC featured more often and higher up than ever before. Nursing is now ranked 27th in the world, with Agricultural Sciences

and Law placed 84th and 94th respectively.

Dentistry & Oral Sciences and Food Science & Technology are both in the Top 50 in the world in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), also known as the Shanghai Rankings.

Microbiology is ranked 63rd in the world by US News on the Best Global Universities.



## UCC Subjects/Disciplines making the Top 100 in Global Subject Rankings

QS World University Rankings by Subject	
Subject/Discipline	Global Rank
Nursing	27
Agricultural Sciences	84
Law	94
Performing Arts	51-100

Shanghai Global Ranking of Academic Subjects	
Subject/Discipline	Global Rank
Dentistry & Oral Sciences	36
Food Science & Technology	46

US News Subject Rankings	
Subject/Discipline	Global Rank
Microbiology	63
Agricultural Sciences	87

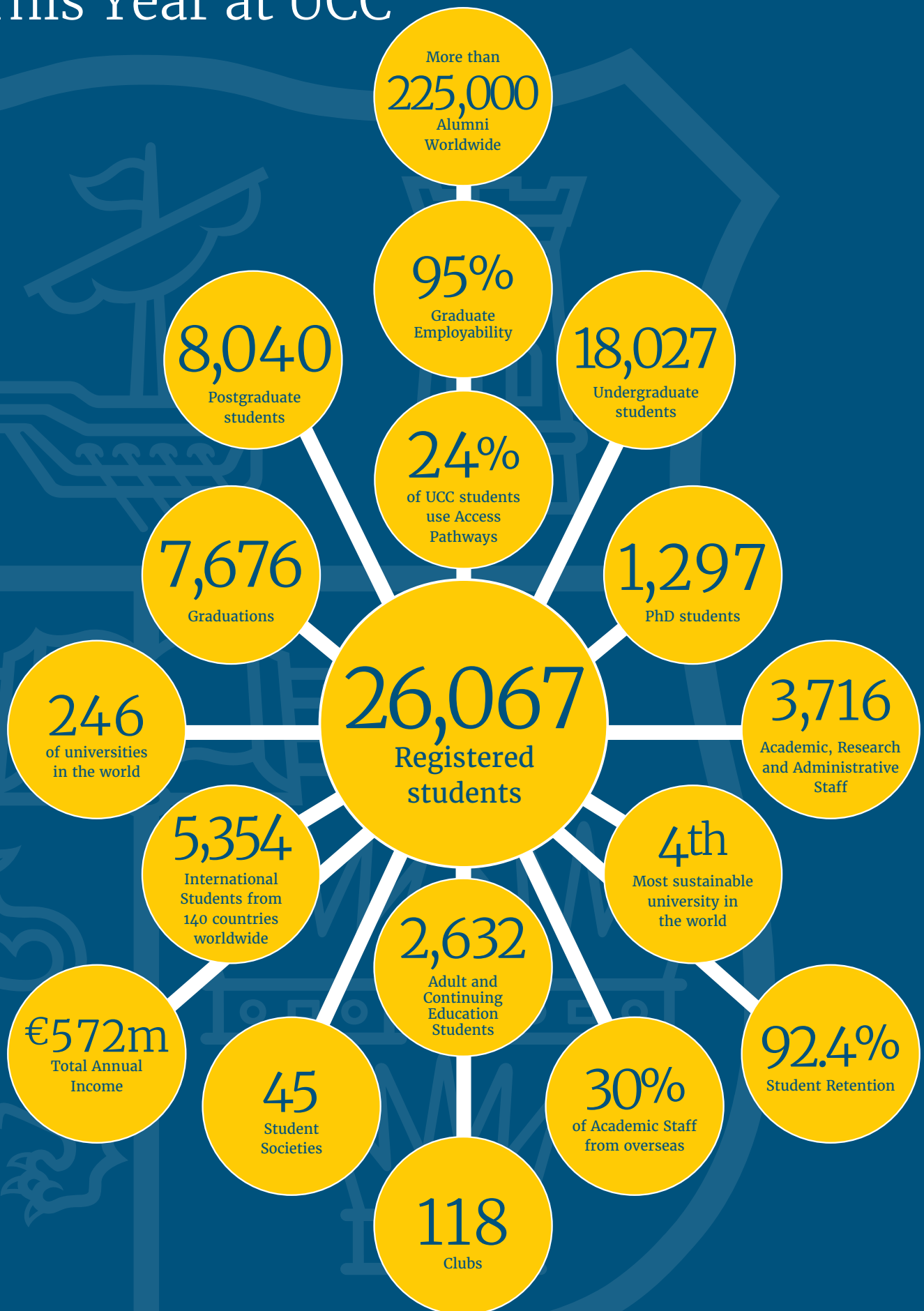
246  
In the QS World University Rankings,



101-150  
In the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings



# This Year at UCC



# 3. Strategic Plan 2023–2028: Securing Our Future

## Our Vision

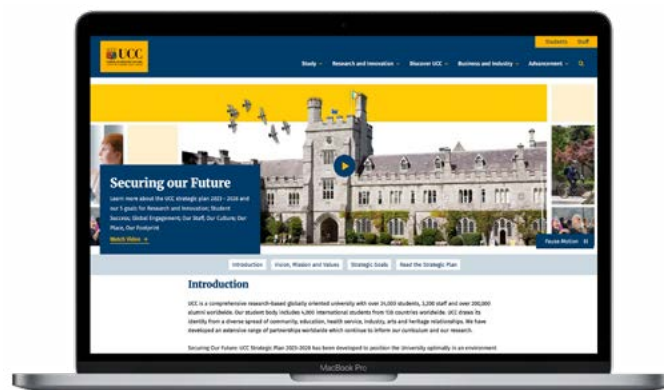
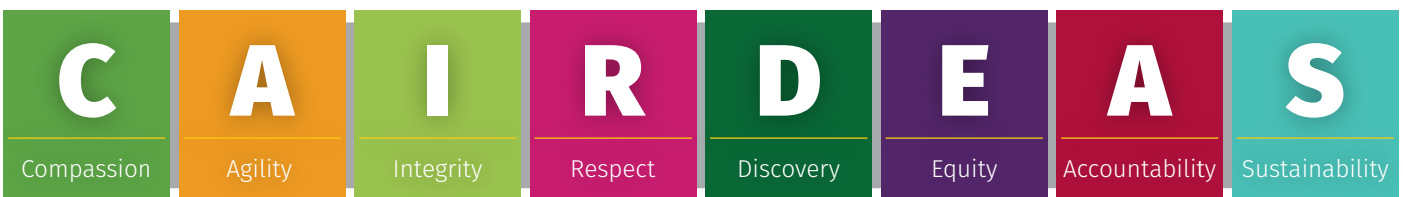
UCC connects and empowers people to create knowledge that shapes a sustainable and inclusive world.

## Our Mission

UCC's mission is to create and sustain an inclusive environment and culture to enable transformative research and learning for the enrichment of society and stewardship of our planet.

## Our Values

"Cairdeas" (the Irish word for "friendship") represents the core values that underpin our actions and our processes:



Read more about UCC's [Strategic Plan 2023–2028: Securing Our Future](#)



## Strategic Goals

 <p><b>GOAL 1</b> Research &amp; Innovation</p> <p>Deliver impactful research and innovation.</p>	 <p><b>GOAL 2</b> Student Success</p> <p>Provide a student-centered, inclusive and digitally enhanced student experience.</p>	 <p><b>GOAL 3</b> Global Engagement</p> <p>Grow UCC's international reach to amplify our global reach.</p>	 <p><b>GOAL 4</b> Our Staff, Our Culture</p> <p>Implement a progressive and inclusive People and Culture Plan.</p>	 <p><b>GOAL 5</b> Our Place, Our Footprint</p> <p>Reform our practices to meet our sustainability and climate action goals.</p>
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### UCC's Strategic Plan to 2028 aims for UCC to be:

- Globally recognised for its distinctive research in niche areas of excellence
- A university with a digitally enhanced learning environment delivering a research-based curriculum
- The university of choice for postgraduate study in signature areas of excellence
- An internationally connected university, amplifying global impact, ranked in the top 250 universities globally
- A place of have embedded fairness, equality and inclusivity
- A connected university that is effectively engaged with all stakeholders



## What We Have Done This Year



### GOAL 1 Research & Innovation

Deliver impactful research and innovation.

**Goal 1** aims to deliver impactful research and innovation resulting in a distinctive research reputation. Notable accomplishments this year include three new European Research Council grants, reaching 179 Horizon Europe awards valued at €132million, and launching three spin-out companies (Vivid Photonics, Juvant and PulpoSemi).



### GOAL 2 Student Success

Provide a student-centered, inclusive and digitally enhanced student experience.

**Goal 2** aims to provide a student-centred, inclusive and digitally enhanced learning environment, a *Connected Curriculum* and an outstanding student experience, with UCC as the university of choice for postgraduate education. Significant progress this year includes the reduction in student-staff ratio of one point to 20.5:1. Ninety five per cent of primary degree graduates are in employment or further study within nine months of graduation.

This year we achieved 24% of UCC's undergraduate intake from under-represented groups. This year also saw the first intake on the tertiary degree BSc Occupational Therapy in collaboration with Cork ETB and Kerry ETB.



### GOAL 3 Global Engagement

Grow UCC's international reach to amplify our global reach.

**Goal 3** aims to grow UCC's international reach to amplify global impact. This year we launched the *Global Engagement Plan 2024-2028* and completed a project to refresh the brand of the university across marketing, communications, website and social media.

We also saw an increase in the proportion of students from overseas to a historical high of over 20%.

3

European Research Council Awards

3

Spin-Out Companies

20.5:1

Student Staff Ratio



UCC improved in the QS World University Rankings to 246, up 27 places on last year. This year we achieved philanthropic income of €8.2 million plus €5.4 million cash received from previous commitments and launched a new alumni engagement platform and online giving platform.

 **GOAL 4**  
Our Staff,  
Our Culture

Implement a progressive and inclusive People and Culture Plan.

**Goal 4** aims to implement a progressive and inclusive *People & Culture Plan* to attract, develop and retain talent. This year saw the ongoing development of the *People & Culture Plan 2025-2028* and the launch of a new *Culture Evolution Project*.

We were awarded our first Athena Swan Silver Institutional Award, along with our first School-level Silver award, which was achieved by the School of Food & Nutritional Sciences. Two further bronze departmental awards were also secured. UCC also secured the third renewal of its European Commission HR Excellence in Research Award.

 **GOAL 5**  
Our Place,  
Our Footprint

Reform our practices to meet our sustainability and climate action goals.

**Goal 5** aims to radically reform practices and use of space and technology to meet our climate action goals. This year, UCC was ranked 4th in the world for sustainability in the UI GreenMetric University Rankings.

UCC's Sustainability Academy was launched to provide training and upskilling for sustainability action in our workforce and society. A 4.5% reduction in Scope 1 & 2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions from 2016/18 baseline levels was achieved.



24%

Access Intake



21%

International Students



3

New Athena  
Swan Awards



4.5%

Greenhouse  
Gas reduction





# 4. Student Success

## 4.1 Academic Affairs

### Student Community

In 2024/25, there were 26,067 registered students at UCC (+9.7% from last year). 20,713 (79%) were domestic students, 1,768 (7%) were from other EU countries and 3,585 (14%) were from outside of the EU. A total of 5,353 international students represented 140 countries and nationalities, with the largest numbers coming from China, USA and India.

A total of 18,027 students (69%) were registered on undergraduate courses, and 8,040 students (31%) were registered on postgraduate courses, including 1,267 doctoral students. Student retention was high, with 88% of students progressing to the second year of their original course. Three per cent of students repeated the first year of their original course, with 2% repeating the first year of a different course giving an overall student retention rate of 92.4%.

### Undergraduate Admissions

The total intake of first-year undergraduates to UCC via the CAO (Central Applications Office) was 3,831, the same number as last year. UCC experienced an overall growth in demand for both overall applications (+3%) and first preferences (+4%) compared with 2023. UCC continued to hold 13% of the overall demand for Level 8 applications, and cut-off points for many programmes remained high in 2024. There was significant growth in international admissions (+8%), and over 4,800 applications submitted by EU (non-Leaving Certificate) applicants, representing a 9.6% surge in demand.

### Postgraduate Admissions

There were 194 programmes on offer in the UCC postgraduate taught programme portfolio this year. Figures for new domestic and EU postgraduate taught students (2,629) were similar to last year (-1%), while international numbers (920) have decreased by 12%. There was a total of 396 new postgraduate research students: 263 domestic/EU (+16%) and 133 from outside of the EU (+5%). There were 233 visiting PhD students registered this year (domestic and international). Overall, there were 1,458 research students across all years of study, slightly up on the previous year.

### Access Admissions

In 2024, Access admissions accounted for 24% of all undergraduate entrants, representing a 3% increase on the previous year. More than 4,500 students are now registered with Disability Support Services. These students are admitted via HEAR and DARE pathways, mature students and QQI/FE entry routes. The Access UCC team engaged

Photo opposite:  
2024 Medical and  
Health Sciences  
Graduation

31%  
Postgraduate  
students

21%  
international  
students

92.4%  
Retention of  
first year students

extensively with approximately 7,000 prospective students and parents across the Munster region via university taster days, school engagement initiatives, homework clubs, assistive technology and academic supports.

To support UCC's Access agenda, Inclusive UCC rolled out the Universal Design Beyond the Classroom digital badge, extending inclusive practice via digital teaching and learning environments. Technical, research and professional services staff engaged in developing accessible, student-centred approaches across all areas of university life.

The range of supports for Access students also continued to evolve. This year saw the expansion of Occupational Therapy led workshops for students registered with Disability Support Services, focusing on key skills including executive functioning, time management and sensory integration for learners. In response to rising costs, Access UCC increased the value of HEAR bursary awards and introduced targeted accommodation bursaries. Enhanced placement and hardship bursaries further supported students, with more than €2.7 million provided in direct financial aid to enable continued participation in higher education.

24%

Of students use alternative access pathways

€2.7m

Financial support dispersed to students

>4,500

Students registered with Disability Support Services

## Tertiary Education Pathway

A new tertiary degree pathway in Occupational Therapy was launched in September 2025. It offers a new route to obtaining an undergraduate degree in Occupational Therapy outside the CAO system, making it more accessible for a wider range of students and is co-delivered by UCC and Cork and Kerry Further Education Colleges.

This new pathway was developed in line with government policy on Progressing A Unified Tertiary System for Learning, Skills and Knowledge. Diversification of student cohorts is an important strategic objective for UCC and the BSc in Occupational Therapy offers new opportunities that expand our existing entry routes.

## MicroCreds

Funded under this Irish Government Human Capital Initiative Pillar 3, the Irish Universities Association-led MicroCreds project has had significant impact in UCC and beyond. From a pilot of three micro-credentials, UCC now has a portfolio of over 200 micro-credentials across all four Colleges, with learner numbers expected to reach 4,500 by the end of the project in March 2026, forming an integral part of the UCC curriculum. MicroCreds has supported internal projects including ID+, Inclusive UCC and the Sustainability Academy, as well as external projects with EUCEN, Cork Prison, the Firkin Crane and QQI, and further expanding to national and European projects. Erasmus funding was secured to share learnings, and a national portal for micro-credentials was launched in collaboration with UNIC (European University of Cities in Post-Industrial Transition).

## Apprenticeships

In 2025, intake on the Social Work Apprentice programme increased to 80, adding to the 47 apprentices who began in 2024. The Social Work Apprenticeship has been commended nationally for its innovation and contribution to the profession, giving UCC a strong exemplar for future apprenticeships. Such a strong foundation

supports our commitment to the long-term future of apprenticeships in higher education.

Submissions have been made to the National Apprenticeship Office to approve apprenticeships in Paramedicine and Social Care. Both professions have appeared in national plans as a critical need, which is reflected in both public and private employer pledges to provide apprentice roles. To further support widening access in line with the *HEA National Access Plan 2022-2028*, inclusive entry requirements have also been established for all apprenticeships.

## Scholarships

UCC's portfolio of Scholarships and Prizes continues to grow and more than 1,000 scholarships and bursaries were awarded across the University this year. UCC awarded 86 Sports Scholarships to students across 15 different sports for the 2024/25 Academic Year.

The ongoing generosity of donors transforms the lives of many students, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds (who are often underrepresented in Higher Education), supporting them to excel both academically and in their extracurricular pursuits.

The Quercus Talented Students' Programme continues to play a significant role in the recruitment and support of a diverse range of talented students across academia, sport, creative and performing arts, active citizenship and entrepreneurship.

The Programme admitted 17 new students in September 2024 bringing the total number of Quercus Scholars to 50. We were immensely proud when Quercus Scholar, European Silver medallist and double Olympian, Mags Cremen (PE, Sports Studies & Arts) won a World Championship Gold medal along with UCC Alumnus Fintan McCarthy in the first ever mixed double sculls event, guaranteeing them a place in the rowing history books.

Quercus Talented Students' Programme Awards Night, November 2024.

>1,000

Scholarships and bursaries awarded

86

Sports scholarships awarded

17

Quercus scholarships awarded





118

Societies with

21,000+

Members



240

Peer Support Leaders,  
connecting with

4,000+

Students



45

Clubs with

6,000+

Members



## Student Administration Systems Digital Transformation

In October 2024, UCC completed its largest-ever investment in digital transformation, an eight-year project to modernize and enhance core student engagement and student academic administration services. This project introduced digital-first solutions tailored to meet the expectations of students, significantly reduced paper usage, and implemented initiatives such as streamlined systems for curriculum and research management, student administration from application to placement, and a digital Student Hub.

This successful project underscores UCC's commitment to sustainability, operational efficiency, and a people-focused approach, delivering a seamless, accessible and future-ready student experience.

## 4.2 Student Experience

### Student Activities

It was a busy year for UCC Clubs, Societies, Peer Support and Students' Union, ensuring a vibrant on-campus experience for new and returning students. There were 45 active clubs with over 6,000 members and 118 societies with over 21,000 members, providing students with a myriad of opportunities to engage in activities, develop new and existing skills and make new friends.

Societies held over 2,000 events during the year, raising €315k for charities and winning four awards at the National Society Awards, in addition to the many awards won by individual societies across the year. UCC Sport continued to showcase its strength with athletes and teams participating at global, national, regional and local levels.

### Peer Support

There were 240 Peer Support Leaders (PSLs) this year, with over 8,200 volunteer hours worked, contributing directly to the retention of first year students and enabling a sense of belonging to the university. PSLs connected with over 4,300 students, including first years and international students.

### Student Health

In response to the Students' Union referendum in March 2024, UCC Student Health increased the capacity of the Mental Health Team to deliver expanded Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) services to students. An ADHD Assessment pathway was designed and implemented from February 2025, streamlining the diagnosis and treatment options for students who are neurodiverse.

As of September 2025, more than 100 students were engaging with the ADHD pathway at varying stages, from assessment and diagnosis, right through to medication initiation and optimisation, with specialist Psychiatrist and Psychological and Occupational Therapy therapies available also.

## Jumpstart Your Success: Everyday Matters

As part of a three-year Wellbeing and the Curriculum project (supported by HEA Mental Health funding) and in line with UCC's commitment to the holistic development of students, incoming first year students on selected modules have an opportunity to 'learn to be well' so they can 'be well to learn'. Twenty-five module leaders across UCC facilitated 2,300 students to take 'Jumpstart Your Success: Everyday Matters'.

In this unit, students explore what being a successful student means to them, learn about mental wellbeing and how the brain develops in the late adolescent years, analyse their time use and how to build healthy habits that stick, and strengthen their resilience by considering their support network. Students can also earn a micro-credential for completing the full Everyday Matters: Healthy Habits for University Life® digital badge. This pioneering project is progressing national policies on promoting mental health across the population and Higher Education Authority policies on student success and student mental health.

## Chaplaincy Le Chéile Programme

Le Chéile is a personal development programme that ran for five weeks in both Semester 1 and Semester 2, bringing together expert internal UCC and external presenters. Training was scenario-based and tailored to the Bystander Intervention Model, with a focus on what to look for and how to intervene in various situations. Seventy-five students received a Digital Badge for completion of the programme.

## Classroom Upgrades

Access UCC provided funding for an upgrade project across 44 classrooms during Summer 2025, with technical expertise and implementation delivered by IT Services and in collaboration with Buildings & Estates and the Centre for Digital Education. The project forms part of UCC's ongoing commitment to creating an inclusive and accessible learning and teaching environment, both for students and for the wider UCC community. This suite of major enhancements installed high quality microphones, speakers and new tracking cameras amongst other upgrades, ensuring that every student has the tools and supports necessary to enable them to flourish at UCC.

## Barr na gCnoc

Barr na gCnoc, a HEA funded Irish language community project of Ionad na Gaeilge Labhartha, expanded its Gaeilge Stretch programme to two further DEIS primary schools and now reaches 123 children per week. In March 2025, the project celebrated Seachtain na Gaeilge on campus, hosting pop-up Gaeltachts in the Aula Maxima for 100 primary and secondary school students.

The Gaeltacht Residency Programme supported 77 students from three schools to visit the Gaeltacht Corca Dhuibhne and Gaeltacht na nDéise. Barr na gCnoc also provided Irish language support to children from The Kabin Studio, Knocknaheeny, who collaborated with their peers in Edinburgh to write and record Meas Mór, a viral rap that explores the relationship between Irish and Scots Gaelic.

44

Classroom  
digital upgrades

16

UCC Sports Star  
Awards

Daryl Cuff, basketball; Aoibhinn Donnelly, Women's soccer; Beau Poydence, archery; Margaret Cremen, rowing; Shane Roche, Olympic weightlifting; and Peter Hyland, rugby, winners at the UCC Sports Stars Awards 2024/25. Photo by Eddie O'Hare.

## UCC Sports Star Awards

The 40th UCC Sports Star Awards took place in April 2025 at The River Lee Hotel, celebrating the remarkable achievements of UCC athletes and teams. Sponsored by The River Lee Hotel in association with the Bank of Ireland, the gala dinner honoured 16 outstanding athletes and coaches, representing one of the most competitive fields in recent years.



## 4.3 Learning and Teaching

The Office of the Vice-President for Learning & Teaching (OVPLT) comprises the main office; the Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching & Learning (CIRTL); the Centre for Digital Education (CDE); the Centre for Adult Continuing Education (ACE); the Library (incorporating Cork University Press); the Skills Centre; and Exams Appeals administration.

Career Services moved under the umbrella of the OVPLT on 01 October 2024. Lifelong Learning UCC is in development to provide flexible education, upskilling, micro-credentials and community learning. This will ensure that learners at all stages, from all backgrounds, can access the knowledge and skills they need to shape their own futures.

## Global and Community Engagement

The 2025 European University Association Learning & Teaching Forum took place in February 2025. Co-hosted by OVPLT and CIRTL, UCC was the first Irish host for this international Learning & Teaching summit. Career Services and UNIC (the European University of Cities in Post-Industrial Transition) hosted an Erasmus Staff Training Week on Work Integrated Learning.

CIRTL led a Masterclass on staff development in teaching and learning transitions and transformations in staff development for learning and teaching, attracting 20 European leaders and a week-long staff development event for more than 30 representatives from five Ukrainian universities, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Federation of Employers as well as colleagues from Estonia, Portugal and Poland.

European University Association Learning & Teaching Forum organisers Mary O'Rourke, Laura Lee, Sarah Armstrong and Patricia Murphy OVPLT.



UCC Library ran events which were open to the public, including the launch of the 100th Centenary of Cork University Press, the launch of Glór ón Sceilg and the Mícheál Ua Ciarmhaic (Michael Kirby) Archival Collection on World Book Day, the exhibition Unissued Diplomas, honouring 40 Ukrainian students, and a summer series of concerts that are linking in to other cultural activities happening in the wider Cork City area.

100 Years of Cork University Press.



## Scholarship of Learning and Teaching

CIRTL, in partnership with UNIC, launched the second round of the Virtual and International Educational Projects (VIP) Fund, fostering intercultural collaboration and global learning innovation between UCC students and peers in UNIC partner institutions. In April 2025, the SATLE 2025 Teaching & Learning Enhancement funding call was issued through CIRTL. This initiative, part of the Higher Education Authority's

1 in 5

Students directly engaged with Career Services

1,100+

Students secured work placements across Business, Finance, Engineering & Sciences

95%

Graduate employment within nine months of graduation

National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning, strategically aligns funding to advance pedagogical innovation across Irish higher education.

UCC Library continues to lead nationally in open research and data stewardship, playing a central role in the Sonraí Irish Data Stewardship Network. A €100k award from the 2025 Open Research Fund - secured in collaboration with HEAnet and RCSI - supports the creation of a micro-credential in data stewardship and a national Data Champions programme.

Furthering UCC's commitment to heritage research, Cork University Press received a €50k tender from Dublin City Council to publish the scholarly works of Dr John Montague. The Library also secured a multi-annual €15k partnership with the Heritage Council for a conservation internship, and €30k to enhance long-term preservation of photographic archives.

ACE obtained €51k through the Erasmus+ SAMUELE project this year, enhancing transparency and innovation in university lifelong learning. Additionally, UCC was awarded for the MESHE project, promoting micro-credentials across Europe. Through the chANGE project, ACE has launched climate-focused micro-credentials for Health and Social Care professionals, focussed on the integration of sustainability into care delivery.

## Student Success

Almost one in five students directly engaged with Career Services this year. We supported 1,739 one-to-one consultations and hosted 476 career events generating 9,750 student interactions and facilitated nearly 20,000 logins from 5,243 students to our Careers Connect platform. Student work placement outcomes were strong this year across Business, Finance, Engineering and the Sciences, with more than 1,100 students securing placements.

We offered 32 placement programmes and modules through InPlace. Outside of course specific work placements, 2,947 graduate job vacancies were promoted across 293 companies. The HEA Graduate Outcomes Survey revealed that 95% of graduates from the Class of 2024 were in employment or further study nine months after graduation.

Career Services earned the AGCAS Award for Excellence in Work-Based Learning in 2025, a testament to its innovative employability initiatives. Two Alumni and Development Fund awards (€4k total) supported the "Dress for Success" campaign and the expansion of EmployAgility awards through new video resources.

Career Services held its Volunteering Fair in November 2024. Twenty-four volunteer organisations, charities, not for profit, and civic and community organisations engaged with more than 400 students and staff. The Career Services Recruitment Festival connected 3,200 students with more than 130 employers across diverse sectors, directly advancing UCC's strategic goals in graduate employability and industry engagement.

The Career Services new *Employability Framework* was approved in February 2025. The UCC EmployAgility Awards Ceremony took place in April 2025, recognising 185 students. This is a professional skills development programme that provides students with formal recognition for their development of graduate attributes, values and employability skills through voluntary contributions to initiatives both on and off campus.



EmployAgility Awards ceremony April 2025.

The Office of the Vice President for Learning & Teaching (OVPLT) was delighted to welcome our new University Librarian, Liz Jolly FRSA FCLIP PFHEA in July 2025. A newly equipped preservation laboratory dedicated to caring for UCC Library's Special Collections and Archives has been completed, supported by Heritage Council funding. This will expand our preservation programme, enhancing access to resources for teaching, learning and research.

Through the Cork University Foundation Alumni fund, UCC Library acquired three silent study pods which accommodate a variety of study needs, focusing on inclusivity for all students. The Library launched the Digital and Information Literacy Framework for developing students' digital and information literacy skills enabling them to successfully live, learn and work in a rapidly changing digital society.

The Skills Centre had another successful year, with the total student engagement count for 2024/25 standing at more than 15,000. During this period, the Skills Centre introduced a digital catalogue, a pop-up space in Brookfield, sensory friendly drop-in times, a 12-week postgrad UNIC virtual exchange programme with Koc University and new dissertation drop-in sessions. The GenAI Learning Hub was made available on Open Canvas in June 2025.

This year, Adult Continuing Education (ACE) had 2,632 registered students on more than 65 credit bearing programmes. These students came from 26 countries around the world and 23 counties in

15,000+

Student engagements  
with the Skills Centre

2,632

Students on

>65

Credit bearing  
programmes in ACE

47

Digital education  
training workshops  
with

882

Participants

1,488

Digital Badges issued

115

Students on  
postgraduate courses in  
Learning & Teaching in  
Higher Education



Career Services  
Recruitment Festival.

Ireland. A total of 342 students were registered on bespoke industry programmes and 355 students were supported through exchequer funded Springboard+ and HCI micro-credential funding, achieving a 92% retention rate. In the 2025 Springboard+ call, ACE secured funding for 275 places across nine programmes and two micro-credentials for the next three years, expanding opportunities in areas of identified skills needs in the Irish economy.

The Centre for Digital Education (CDE) continues to deliver on UCC's Digital Education Plan, with over 85% of actions now fully implemented, ensuring inclusive, digitally enabled learning.

Key milestones this year included the launch of UCC's first Learning Platforms Report, procurement and re-branding of Panopto, and the rollout of accessibility-enhancing initiatives like Respondus and upgraded classroom technologies. 100 Canvas course accessibility improvements were made. 47 training workshops were held with 882 participants and 1,488 Digital badges were issued.

The Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching & Learning (CIRTL) this year had 80 students registered on the Postgraduate Certificate, 21 students registered on the Postgraduate Diploma and 14 students registered on the Masters in Learning & Teaching in Higher Education, including registrations from within and outside of UCC. Across UCC, 54% of academic staff are qualified in Teaching & Learning.

A thematic review of the doctoral learning experience at UCC and the Tyndall National Institute was undertaken this year. The review found that staff at all levels are deeply committed to providing quality doctoral education at UCC and the vast majority of students attested to their positive experience praising staff for their dedication, competence, mentorship and pastoral care. The report included a strong endorsement for the development of a Doctoral College structure which has become commonplace globally in universities with a strong research and innovation focus, to provide a research hub for postgraduate researchers, streamline governance and ensure an equitable learning experience.

## President's Awards for Excellence in Teaching

The President's Awards for Excellence in Teaching took place in December 2024. These awards recognise staff who have made an outstanding contribution in the pursuit of teaching excellence, and who demonstrate innovative and creative forms of teaching, learning and assessment that enhances student learning and student outcomes.

Award Category	Winner
Lifetime Contribution	Dr Denis Ring, <i>Department of Process and Chemical Engineering</i>
Professional Services	Dr Loretta Goff, <i>Skills Centre</i>
Professional Services	Dr Niamh O'Mahoney, <i>School of Chemistry</i>
PostGrad Tutor	James Harte, <i>School of Biochemistry &amp; Cell Biology</i>
Early Teaching Career	Dr William Durkan, <i>Department of Geography</i>
Early Teaching Career	Dr Katy Dineen, <i>Centre for the integration of Research, Teaching &amp; Learning and Department of Philosophy</i>
Early Teaching Career	Dr Andrea Visentin, <i>Department of Computer Science</i>
Established Teaching Career	Dr Mohammed Abdulla, <i>Department of Anatomy &amp; Neuroscience</i>
Established Teaching Career	Dr Nicola Bessell, <i>Department of Speech &amp; Hearing Science</i>
Established Teaching Career	Michael Murphy, <i>Department of Marketing &amp; Management</i>
Established Teaching Career	Claire O'Reilly, <i>Department of German</i>



2024 President's Awards  
for Excellence in Teaching.

# 5. College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences



Quercus College  
Scholarships Awards  
Ceremony February 2025.

In September 2025, the College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences (CACSSS) welcomed new Head of College, Professor Stephen Graham. Professor Graham joined us from Goldsmiths, University of London, where he held the position of Executive Dean of the Creative Arts and Media Faculty for four years.

This year, 7,723 students were registered in the College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences (CACSSS). Over 27% of these were international students, 357 were PhDs, and 357 undergraduates were admitted through Access pathways. Over 93% of our graduates were in employment or further study nine months after graduation. Student numbers reflect healthy activity, with steady enrolments across most undergraduate programmes, decreases in first-year intake on B Arts (CK101) notwithstanding.

There were notable increases in postgraduate registrations, where numbers grew from 1,747 to 1,921, including 357 PhD students. First-year retention improved to 87.3% (up from 85.3%), and access intake remained steady at 23.2%. International student numbers rose across both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. With 94.7% employability, the data point to a positive trajectory in student numbers, inclusion and retention, aligned with the College's commitment to broadening access and improving graduate outcomes.

A strategic review of B Arts (CK101) is underway to address the decline in intake and enhance retention. Led by Dr David Fitzgerald, Vice-Head for Teaching & Learning, the Working Group, has been developing recommendations to improve the curriculum structure and to enhance visibility and student engagement. Additionally, the College launched the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Tertiary Route in partnership with Cork Education and Training Board, offering more inclusive pathways into social work. This initiative complements a broader portfolio of new and revised programmes aimed at expanding access to social care and social work education.



Driven by the inter and transdisciplinary agendas of the *UCC Futures* area anchored in the College, Collective Social Futures & Future Humanities, CACSSS has continued to achieve considerable research success in terms of funding and impact.

This year, CACSSS generated over €7.6 million across a range of highly competitive schemes. Notably, the College continues to secure prestigious ERC awards with Professor Tom Birkett's NorseMap ERC Consolidator Grant (circa €2.5 million) and Dr Gillian Murphy's FRAME project (circa €1.5 million, not included in current total) and Professor Griff Rollefson's ERC Proof of Concept award, a first for CACSSS. Grant successes in other funding schemes include Marie Curie (One Doctoral Network and two Postdoc Fellowships) and Research Ireland (Five Post-Docs, seven Post-Graduate, one Frontiers, four COALESCE and three PATHWAY awards).

Impactful and engaged research successes celebrated at CACSSS Research Showcase Day included Dr Aoife Neary's *Belonging to Primary* (in partnership with *Belong to LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland*) and Professor Vittorio Bufacchi's landmark monograph "*Why Cicero matters*".

This year, the College celebrated two significant milestones. The first marked ten years of UCC's Professional Master of Education (PME), which prepares secondary school teachers to enter the profession. The second celebrated 60 years of Applied Psychology with a conference that highlighted the field's enduring contributions to society.

This year brought notable achievements across the College including an Athena SWAN Bronze Award for the School of Applied Social Studies. Dr Barbara Siller will lead the new MultiLiLiTrans COST

Bachelor of Social Work (Hons) students with Professor John O'Halloran MRIA, President, UCC; Denis Leamy, Chief Executive, Cork ETB; and representatives from UCC and Cork ETB at tree planting ceremony to mark launch of the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Tertiary Route.  
Photo by Jim Coughlan.



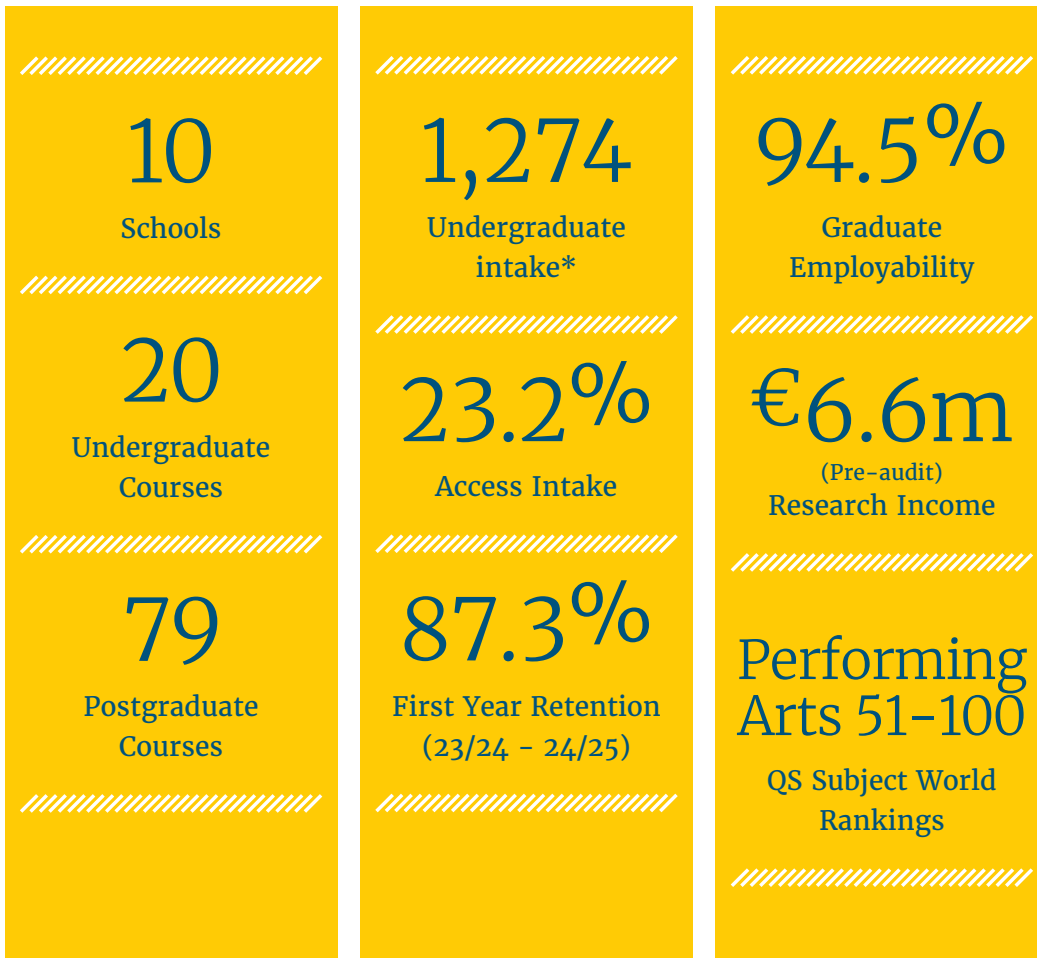
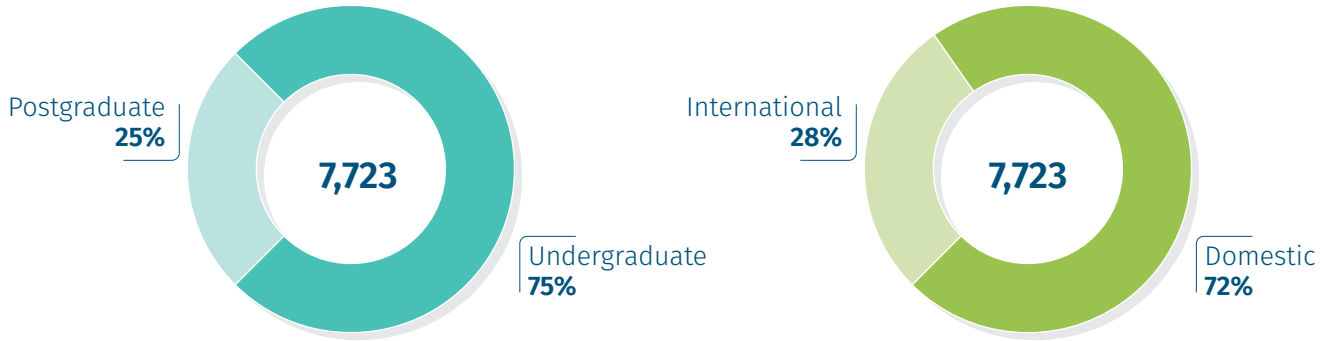
Professor John O'Halloran MRIA, UCC President; New Irish Artist in Residence UCC/COH, Tatiana dos Santos; Eibhlin Gleeson, CEO, Cork Opera House; and Yvon Bonenfant, Head of Department of Theatre, UCC.

Action, a European network advancing multilingualism. Dr Aaron Lim, Department of Geography, was named as Early Career Researcher of the Year in the 2024 Researcher of the Year (IRC legacy) awards.

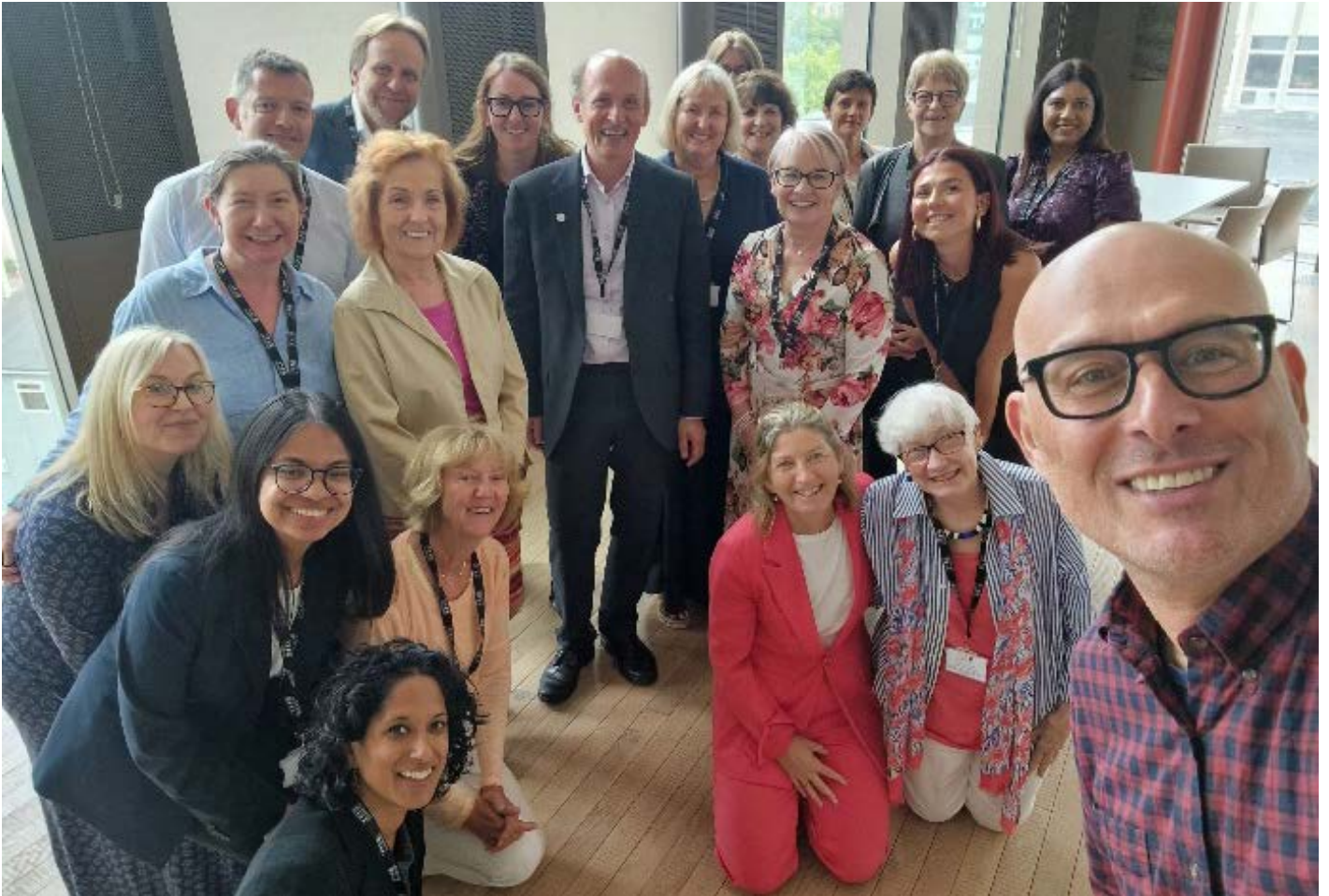
Our students also achieved remarkable success. UCC MPlan student Róisín Murphy received the Irish Planning Institute Student Researcher of the Year Award. History and English graduate, Alísha Heffernan, was awarded the inaugural Chris Williams Prize in History at the School of History's Annual Prize-giving Ceremony. Established in memory of the late Professor Chris Williams, a distinguished Professor of History and former Head of the College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences, the award acknowledges excellence in historical research.

Tom Hall, Eithne Ní Chatháin and Ellen Dillon were the recipients of the 2025 Artist in Residence Awards across Literature, Film and Traditional Arts. In collaboration with Cork Opera House, UCC also welcome Tatiana dos Santos as New Irish Theatre Artist in Residence for 2025. In October a 'Future Leaders of Screen: Screen Careers for Transition-Year Students' programme, led by Oscar-winning producer Lord David Puttnam - the first of its kind in Ireland, was launched.

## College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences at a glance



# 6. College of Business and Law



Centre for Children's Rights and Family Law hosting 6th Colloquium on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Implementation Project.

The College of Business & Law (CoBL) had a very positive year with sustained but controlled growth in total student numbers over the previous year, with 5,236 students registered in the College. Sixteen percent of these were international students, 135 were PhDs, and 177 undergraduates were admitted through Access pathways. Over 97% of our graduates were in employment or further study nine months after graduation. The revamped MBA programme commenced in September 2024, and the reformatted DBA commenced in China early in 2025.

In November 2024, Cork University Business School (CUBS) introduced the "Planet Module", a university-wide e-learning module, open to all students. The School of Law proudly retained its top 100 QS ranking by subject for the fifth year in a row, ranked the 94th Law School in the world (QS World University Rankings by Subject, 2025). In June 2025, CUBS was awarded the Pieta Amber Flag in recognition of its commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in the CUBS community.



A number of international conferences were hosted this year, including the Centre for Children’s Rights and Family Law’s 6th Colloquium on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Implementation Project (CRC-IP) in July 2025. Also in July, CUBS welcomed marketing leaders, academics and researchers from around the world for the Academy of Marketing Conference. The event generated significant economic benefits for the region, estimated at €600k in local impact.

CUBS is awarded the Pieta Amber Flag for mental health and wellbeing initiatives.

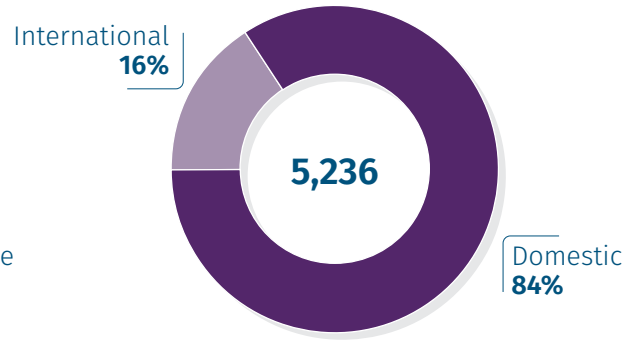
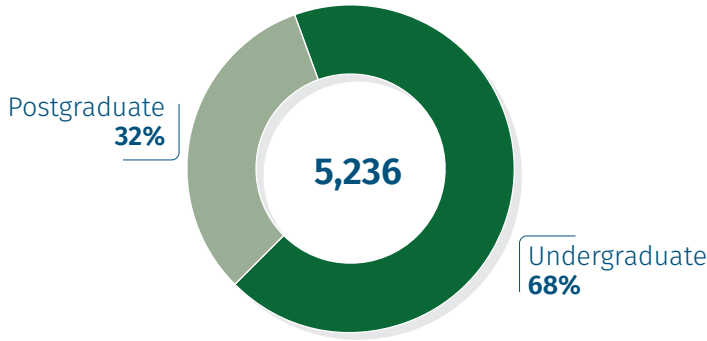
The School of Law hosted the 17th European China Law Studies Association (ECLS) Annual Conference in September 2025, which was dedicated to advancing comparative and interdisciplinary research in Chinese law. Nationally, in May 2025 the 4th Annual Food and Beverage Finance Conference was hosted by Professor Thia Hennessy sponsored by AIB, A&L Goodbody, Goodbody and KPMG with the theme “Building Global Food and Beverage Companies”. The Minister for Finance, Jack Chambers TD, appointed CUBS Staff member, Mr Seamus Coffey, as Chair of the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council.

Our students also excelled this year, with some remarkable achievements across the College. In November 2024 Cara Griffin (BComm International) was awarded UCC Graduate of the Year 2023/24, while the two runners up, Orla Leahy, BCL (Law and Irish) Dearbhla Richardson, BSc International Development, also from this College, received Peel Memorial Prizes. Internationally, Oisín Ó Síocháin (BCL Law & Irish) and Alex Sheehan (BCL Law & French) were selected for a two-month placement at the Washington Ireland Programme - Class of 2024. This programme engages support from a wide range of communities who are committed to building a future of peace and prosperity for Northern Ireland and Ireland.

Washington Ireland Programme recipients Oisín Ó Síocháin and Alex Sheehan.



## College of Business & Law at a glance





# 7. College of Medicine and Health

This year, 5,596 students were registered in the College of Medicine & Health (CoMH). Seventeen percent of these were international students, 254 were PhDs, and 206 undergraduates were admitted through Access pathways. Over 97% of our graduates were in employment or further study nine months after graduation.

The College of Medicine & Health (CoMH) maintained the highest CAO demand ratio in the university at 2.7. Dentistry (9.0), Paramedicine (5.5) and Occupational Therapy (3.8) were the most in-demand programmes. Accreditation renewals were secured for Pharmacy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Diagnostic Radiography and Radiation Therapy, ensuring continued alignment with professional standards. A Suicide Prevention Pilot Training Module was launched for undergraduate health and social care students. Developed by the School of Public Health, HSE and National Suicide Research Foundation, the module enhances mental health competencies among future professionals.

AIPEC Winning team Riona Bowen, Paramedicine; Catherine Hegarty, Social Work; Margaret Quigley, Physiotherapy; Niamh Robertson, Medicine; and Rachael O'Sullivan, Pharmacy.

A team from CoMH won the All-Ireland Interprofessional Healthcare Challenge (AIPEC) for students in March 2025. The team's presentation on managing a patient with heart failure was commended for its patient-centred approach and strong interprofessional collaboration.



In response to a government call in April 2025, the College proposed an expansion of healthcare training capacity. Approval in June 2025 resulted in 52 additional student places being offered. The Graduate Studies Committee awarded 12 postgraduate travel bursaries, three employment-based PhDs, and two employment-based MDs, supporting academic progression and clinical research.

Nine APC Microbiome Ireland researchers were included in Clarivate's 2024 Highly Cited Researchers list, with over 45 of the College's researchers featured in the global Top 2% Scientist rankings.

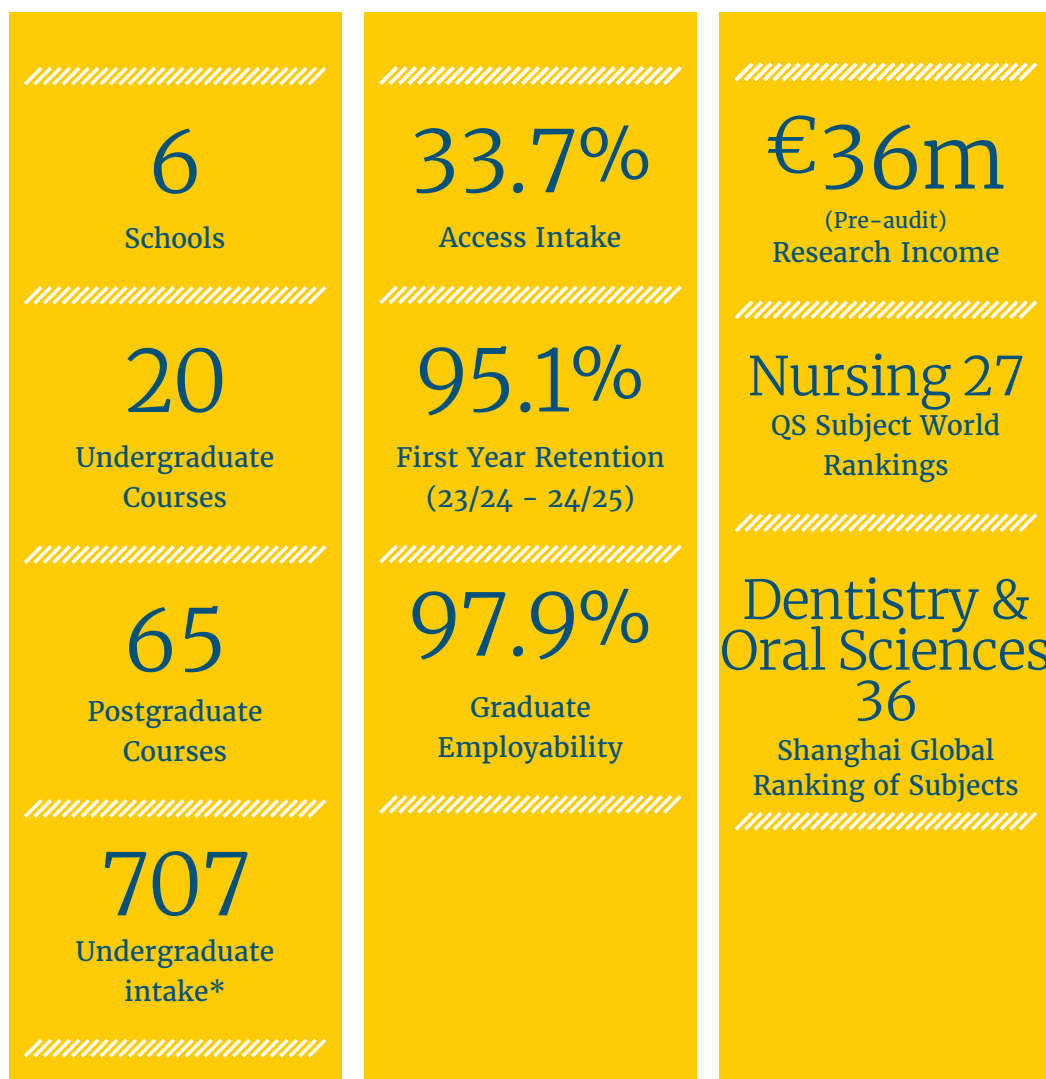
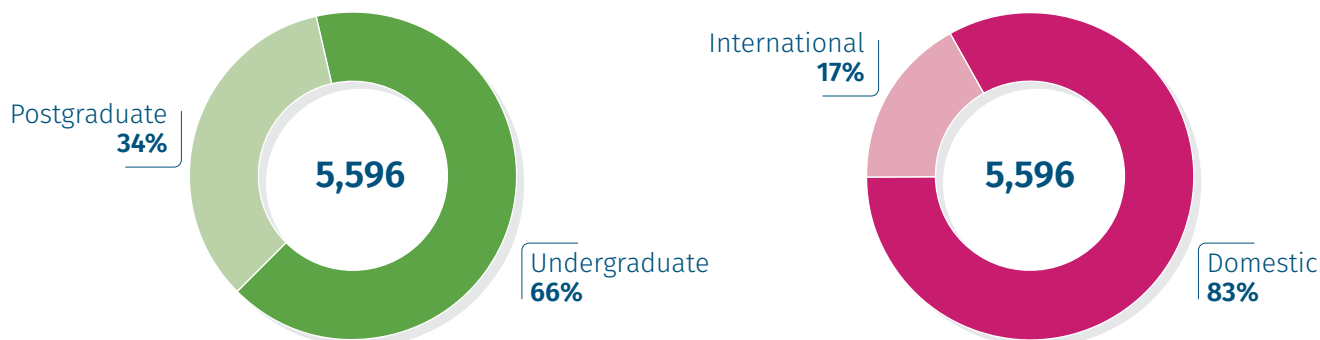
Public Health and INFANT secured €5 million in Horizon Europe funding for the LINDA-FAMILIA project on digital health systems for maternal and child infectious diseases across East Africa. Dr Mohamad Saab, coordinating 15 international partners, secured €6 million in Horizon Europe funding for TRANSCEND-XR, a project using extended reality to support young testicular cancer survivors. INFANT spin-out CergenX received FDA Breakthrough Device Designation for its Wave device, designed to identify newborns at risk of brain injury. It was accepted into the FDA's Total Product Lifecycle Advisory Program. ProVasTec spin-out, led by Professors Noel Caplice and Subrata Ghosh, secured €2.5 million in DTIF funding with Arrotek Medical.

INFANT also partnered in the €10.7 million CanVas consortium advancing cell therapies for early brain injury. A Memorandum of Agreement was signed to establish a co-located Academic Health Sciences System R&D office, streamlining supports for collaborative research between UCC and the HSE. The UCC/CUH Cancer Centre achieved designation as an Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) Cancer Centre, recognising excellence in care, research, and education. Athena Swan Bronze Awards were renewed for the Schools of Nursing & Midwifery, Public Health and the University Dental School & Hospital.

Dr Ian Pitt, School of Computer Science & Information Technology; Dr Aileen Murphy, Cork University Business School; Professor Ali Khashan, School of Public Health & INFANT Research Centre; Julie Arnott, School of Public Health; Dr Simon Woodworth, Cork University Business School & INFANT Research Centre. Photo by Gerard McCarthy.



## College of Medicine and Health at a glance





FARFARA

Athena  
SWAN  
Bronze Award

# 8. College of Science, Engineering and Food Science

This year, 5,495 students were registered in the College of Science, Engineering & Food Science (SEFS). Twenty three percent of these were international students, 551 were PhDs, and 182 undergraduates were admitted through Access pathways. Ninety four percent of our graduates were in employment or further study nine months after graduation.

Eleven academics from the School of Food & Nutritional Sciences were among the top 2% most cited in the Elsevier/Stanford University World Rankings. Food & Nutritional Sciences rose to 46th in the Shanghai Rankings. Five SEFS researchers were included in Clarivate's 2024 Highly Cited Researchers list. In the QS World University Rankings by Subject, Agriculture & Forestry is 84th globally, with Materials Science entering these rankings for the first time.

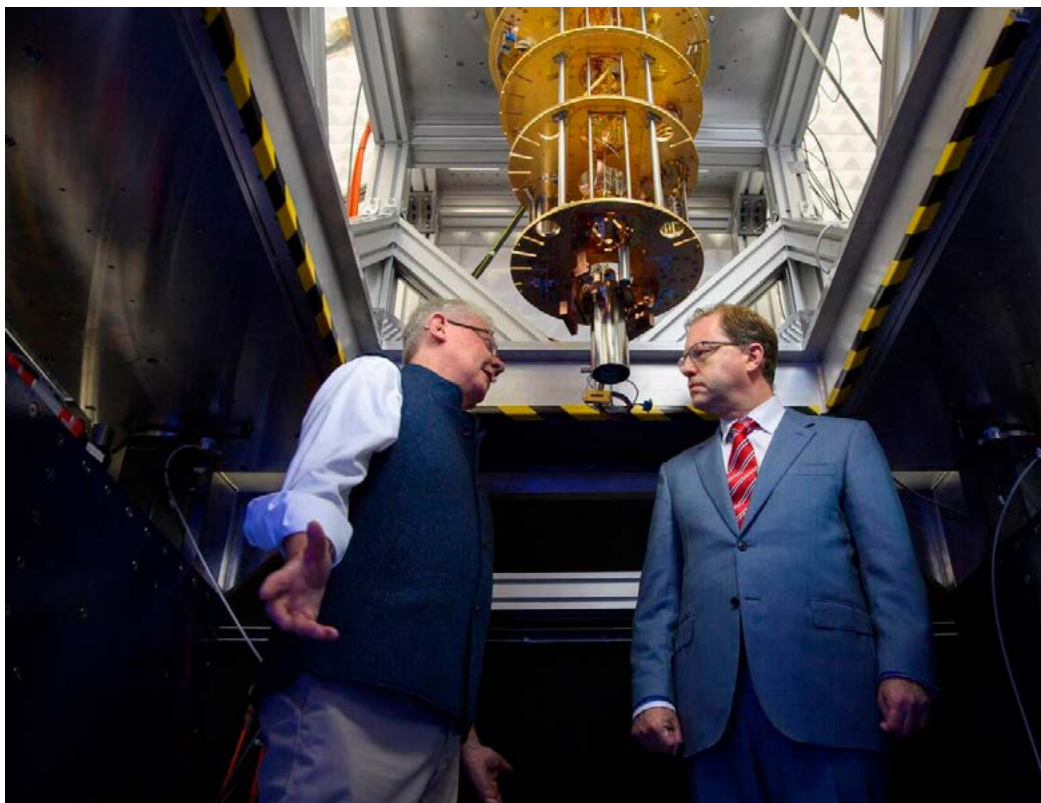
Research Grant Awards of €39 million were secured for 186 projects, bringing the total research income to €125 million over the last three years. The College produces more than 950 publications annually, and had 35,471 citations for papers published between 2022 and 2024. 71.5% of the Colleges publications are now Open Access. The College had 164 new PhD enrolments (45% of UCC total), an increase on last year's enrolment of 115. Innovation activity is growing, and there is strong collaboration with Tyndall National Institute (TNI) with a total of 48 Invention Disclosures, 13 Patents filed, 36 Licences & Assignments to Industry and three spin-outs this year for SEFS and TNI.

Led by Professors Venkatramanan Silva Subrahmanian and Barry O'Sullivan, the Northwestern Security & Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, the Research Ireland INSIGHT Centre for Data Analytics and UCC Futures AI & Data Analytics have entered a partnership to support collaboration in geopolitics, AI and national security.

UCC and Pfizer are partnering on UCC Future Pharmaceuticals, led by Professors Anita Maguire, Melissa Hanna-Brown and Abina Crean, to advance drug discovery and manufacturing. Professor Maria McNamara, Dr Valentina Rossi and Dr Tiffany Slater, School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences, collaborated with an international team on the identification of *Mirasaura grauvogeli*, a Triassic reptile with plume-like crests resembling feathers which

was published in the prestigious journal *Nature*. Joe Carroll and Kuanysh Zhussupbekov, Quantum & Photonics, Physics, developed a groundbreaking tool to identify materials suitable for fault-tolerant quantum computing which was published in *Science*.

The 2025 Annual Meeting of the European Astronomical Society was hosted by the School of Physics and was the largest conference ever held in Cork with over 1,500 delegates. UCC played a prominent role when Cork hosted the prestigious annual European Maritime Day in May 2025 focussed on maritime affairs and sustainable blue growth.



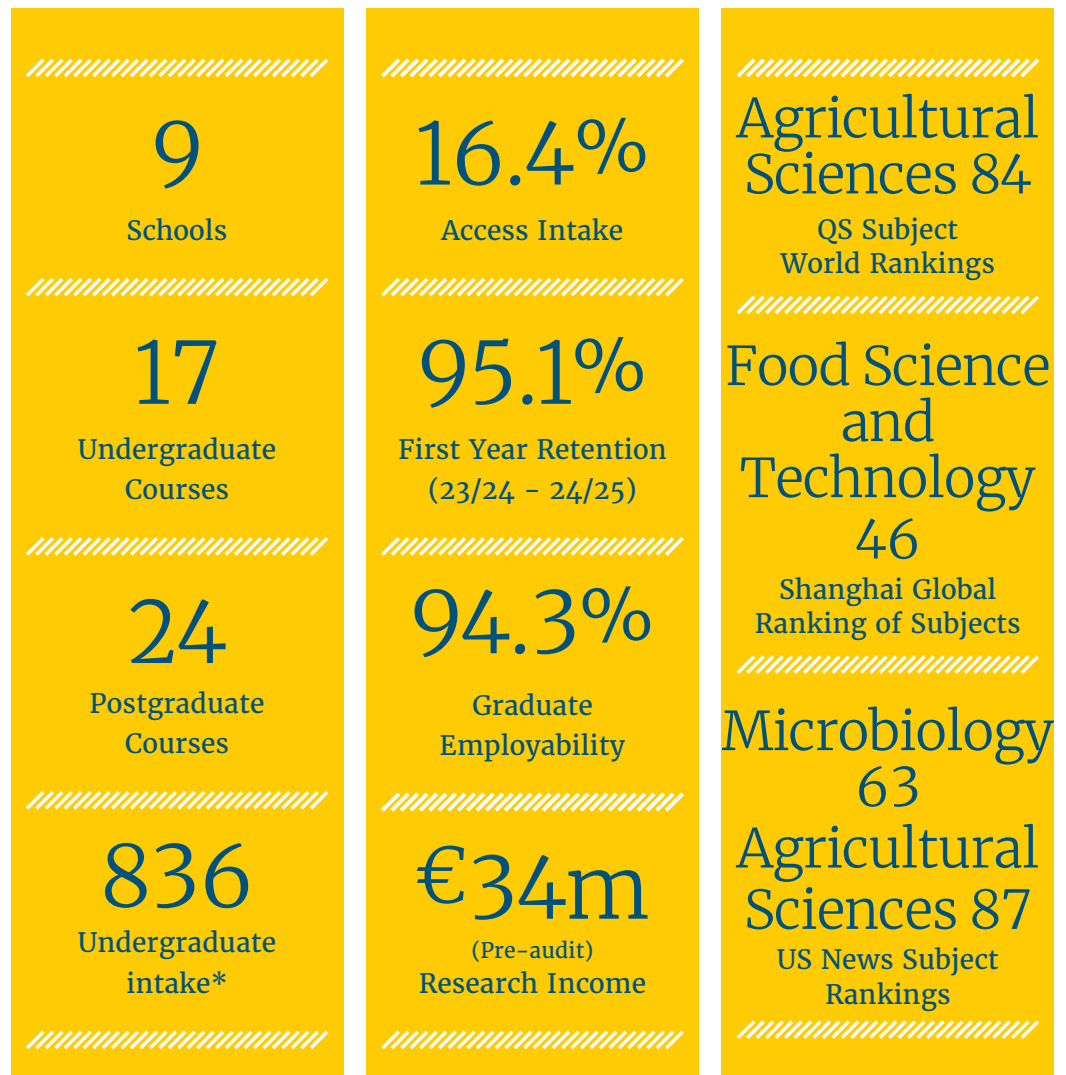
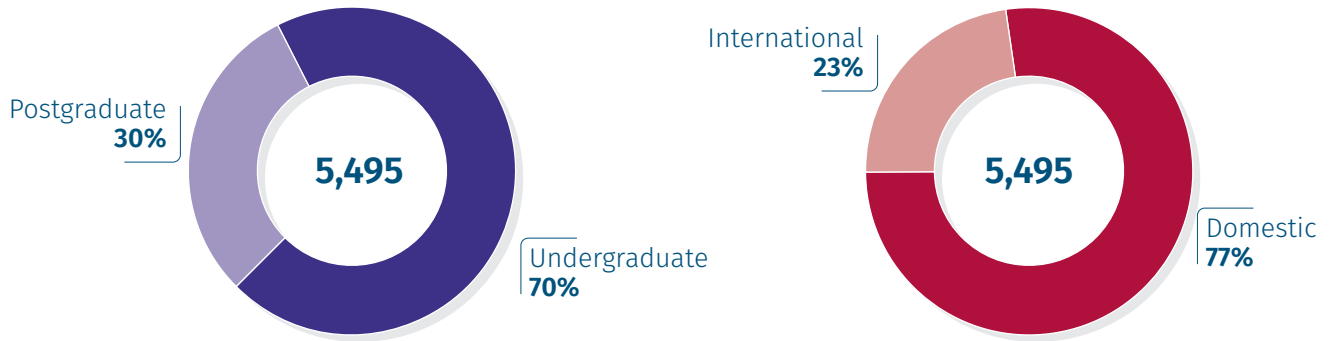
Professor Justin Holmes, Chemistry, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Latvia for his outstanding contributions to nanomaterials chemistry, advanced materials for sustainability and international scientific collaboration. UCC President, Professor John O'Halloran, Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Massachusetts Lowell in recognition of his outstanding leadership in advancing sustainability in Higher Education. Professor Anita Maguire, Chemistry, received the Royal Society of Chemistry 2025 Bader Prize for Organic Chemistry.

Professor Séamus Davis shows Minister for Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science James Lawless TD the Quantum Spin Noise Microscope during his visit to UCC to open the European Astronomical Society's Annual Meeting  
Photo Daragh McSweeney.

The School of Food & Nutritional Sciences was the first School in UCC to achieve a Silver Award from Athena Swan, setting a benchmark for excellence in gender equality and diversity in higher education.

Student successes during the year included Kieran Maye and James Pearce, Architecture, who were finalists in the EUmies Awards and Creative Europe "Young Talent in Architecture 2025" and Aideen McCabe, Biochemistry & Cell Biology, who won the 2024 Irish Universities Association (IUA) Three Minute Thesis competition, for her presentation on early detection methods for ovarian cancer.

## College of Science, Engineering & Food Science *at a glance*





# 9. Research and Innovation



Dr Louise Firth, left, senior lecturer in marine ecology at UCC, with PhD student Corryn Knapp, at the first Living Sea Wall in Ireland which has been installed in Cobh, Co Cork.

## UCC Futures

As a research-intensive university, UCC pursues truth and knowledge in both the basic and applied research domains and, in doing so, economic and societal impact is generated in the community beyond the organisation.

As set out in *UCC's Strategic Plan 2023-2028: Securing Our Future*, the institution is committed to the enhancement of key areas of research strength via the *UCC Futures Framework*, while also identifying and empowering emerging areas. In addition, excellent research performance by our researcher community is supported, rewarded and incentivised.

### UCC Futures:

- Sustainability Institute
- Collective Social Futures
- Food, Microbiome & Health
- Future Medicines
- Future Humanities
- Future Pharmaceuticals
- Future Ageing & Brain Science
- Children
- Quantum & Photonics
- Artificial Intelligence & Data Analytics

The *UCC Futures Framework* relies on securing substantial funding to enable excellent, collaborative, and impactful research across disciplines. Introduced this year, the *UCC Futures Framework Policy* aligns indirect costs with each thematic area or Future Strategic Research Centre (FSRC), enabling strategic support, transparent reporting and updated overhead allocation processes, while maintaining financial workflows.

## Research Infrastructure

The 2024/25 Higher Education Research Equipment Grant (HEREG) allocated €1.6 million to enhance UCC’s research infrastructure, prioritising value-for-money and strategic impact. Funding focused on shared core facilities and collaborative projects across six Futures Areas, Biological Services and Research IT infrastructure.

Key investments include the Living Seawalls project and the High Performance Computing (HPC) and Research Computing Infrastructure centre of excellence. The HPC facility centralises graphics and central processing units, supports advanced research from climate modelling, genomics to AI, and strengthens UCC’s collaboration with the Irish Centre for High-End Computing (ICHEC) and EuroHPC.

## Research Culture

As part of the “Research Roots” initiative, UCC launched the Research Culture Survey to advance integrity, ethics, open research and trust across the university. Led by the Office of the Vice President for Research & Innovation in collaboration with UCC Library and supported by the Horizon Europe CATALISI project, the survey gathered insights from researchers at all career stages to inform the development of a more inclusive and responsible research environment.

The UCC co-led ABOARD team released a summary report through the National Open Research Forum (NORF) on Irish researchers’ attitudes toward Open Research and Responsible Research Assessment. The survey reveals strong awareness but uneven implementation across institutions. These findings, along with input from funders and stakeholders, will guide ABOARD’s upcoming policy recommendations. Further strengthening UCC’s national leadership in the Open Research space, Director of Research Support & Policy, David O’Connell, co-leads the Ireland National Chapter of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA), a collective of almost 800 organisations committed to reforming the methods and processes by which research, researchers, and research organisations are evaluated.

## Innovation and Entrepreneurship

UCC is Ireland’s top university (2024) in several knowledge and technology transfer metrics, including industry research income (€8 million), invention and software disclosures, and licences, options and assignments as listed in Knowledge Transfer Ireland’s Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey.

This year, three new spin-out companies were launched this year (Vivid Photonics, Juvant and PulpoSemi). UCC researchers generated 69 innovation disclosures and 8 patents.

8

Patents granted

69

Invention disclosures

3

Spin-out  
companies  
launched

In October 2024, a new Business Engagement Portal was launched and in November 2024, the inaugural Business Engagement event welcomed senior business leaders to campus and showcased UCC Innovation's role in facilitating industry partnership, collaborative research, and talent development.



Professor John F. Cryan, Vice President for Research and Innovation; Rachel O'Leary, Director of Business Engagement, UCC Innovation; Professor Paul McSweeney, Vice-President for Learning & Teaching; Professor John O'Halloran MRIA, UCC President; Maria McKnight, Senior Manager, Bank of Ireland; and Sean O'Driscoll, Chair, UCC Governing Authority.

Launched in March 2025, the UCC Innovation Impact Report 2024 showcases how UCC researchers are translating their expertise and creativity into real-world impact across campus. National recognition was achieved as UCC Innovation's IGNITE programme received €1 million under the HEA Impact Assessment Case Study programme, underscoring the excellence and high impact of UCC's entrepreneurial activities.

IGNITE Programme Director, UCC Innovation, Eamon Curtin and Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science, James Lawless, TD.



ProVascTec, the UCC spin-out company founded by Professor Noel Caplice, was awarded a €2.5 million Disruptive Technology Innovation Fund award in September 2025, along with collaborators from the School of Medicine and Arrotek Medical. Anestronic (Tyndall National Institute) and FemmeBiome (APC Microbiome Ireland) placed second and third respectively in this year's IDEATE Ireland entrepreneurship competition.

## Research Funding

This year a record breaking €131.8 million in research funding was secured at UCC, primarily through Horizon Europe and other funding programmes. UCC was the No. 1 Irish University for research income secured from industry in the KTI Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey 2024. As of September 2025, UCC researchers have secured 179 Horizon Europe awards worth over €132 million. Awards secured to date equate to 102% of UCC's institutional target for the Horizon Europe programme - €130 million over the seven years of the programme.

Since its establishment in 2007, success in European Research Council (ERC) funding programmes is recognised as a global benchmark of research excellence. UCC has reinforced its ambition to successfully compete for these prestigious awards, with 14 high-quality submissions to the recently closed 2025 ERC Advanced Grant Call and one ERC Proof of Concept Call submission aimed at translating cutting-edge research into tangible societal and economic impact. This lays the foundations for a continuous pipeline to success.

Consolidating its position as a European leader in securing highly competitive ERC funding, Dr Gillian Murphy, UCC Collective Social Futures and Applied Psychology, was awarded €1.5 million in the ERC Starting Grant to lead a project on false memories. Meanwhile, Professor Ali Khashan from Futures Children and the INFANT Research Centre and Dr Simon Woodworth as the Management Information System (MIS) project lead, secured €5 million from Horizon Europe to transform maternal and child health in East Africa. Four new European Research Council Awards were secured this year, bringing the total number of ERCs secured at UCC under the Horizon Europe Programme to 16.

## Researchers of Excellence

UCC researchers produced 17,835 research publications between 2020 and 2025. In May 2025, five UCC academics were elected to the Royal Irish Academy for their exceptional contributions to research and their public service. This is the highest academic honour in Ireland, and 28 new members were elected this year. The UCC academics elected to the RIA were Professor Holger Claussen, Professor Mary Donnelly, Professor Nuala Finnegan, Professor Paul McSweeney and Professor Denis O'Mahony, and their elections bring the total number of UCC academics in the RIA to 55.

UCC researchers collaborate with 6,586 institutions globally across 146 countries since 2021. Nine UCC researchers were named among the Worlds' top 1% of the most cited academics by Clarivate Analytics 2024. This year 295 new PhDs enrolled at UCC.

16  
European Research  
Council grants

€132.8m  
Horizon Europe  
financial drawdown

#1  
Irish university  
for research income  
from industry

€131.8m  
In new external  
research funding<sup>1</sup>

295

New PhD students enrolled

17,835

Research publications from 2020 - 2025

6,586

Institutional collaborations across

146

countries



Professor Paul McSweeney, Professor Nuala Finnegan, Professor Holger Claussen, Professor Mary Donnelly and Professor Denis O'Mahony with President of the RIA, Professor Pat Guiry.

### Quality Enhancement

A thematic review of the doctoral learning experience university-wide and at the Tyndall National Institute was completed this year. The review examined: how the skills and outcomes expressed in national IUA Doctoral Skills statement and the EUA Doctoral Skills Statement are embedded; the impact of supervision on the quality and equity of the students' learning experience and the academic and administrative interfaces required to most effectively support the doctoral lifecycle from the learner's perspective.

It found that staff at all levels are deeply committed to providing quality doctoral education and the majority of students attested to their positive experience. A principal outcome was endorsement of the development of a Doctoral College structure which has become commonplace globally in universities with a strong research and innovation focus, to provide a research hub for postgraduate researchers, streamline governance and ensure an equitable learning experience. The outcomes of the review are being progressed by the Dean of Doctoral Studies.

### Research and Innovation Awards 2025

The UCC Research and Innovation Awards, which took place in May 2025, embrace excellence in research, innovation, and entrepreneurial activity, across the entire university research community, spanning all disciplines. This year, awards were made across twenty-two categories, five of which recognise specific achievements in entrepreneurship and innovation.

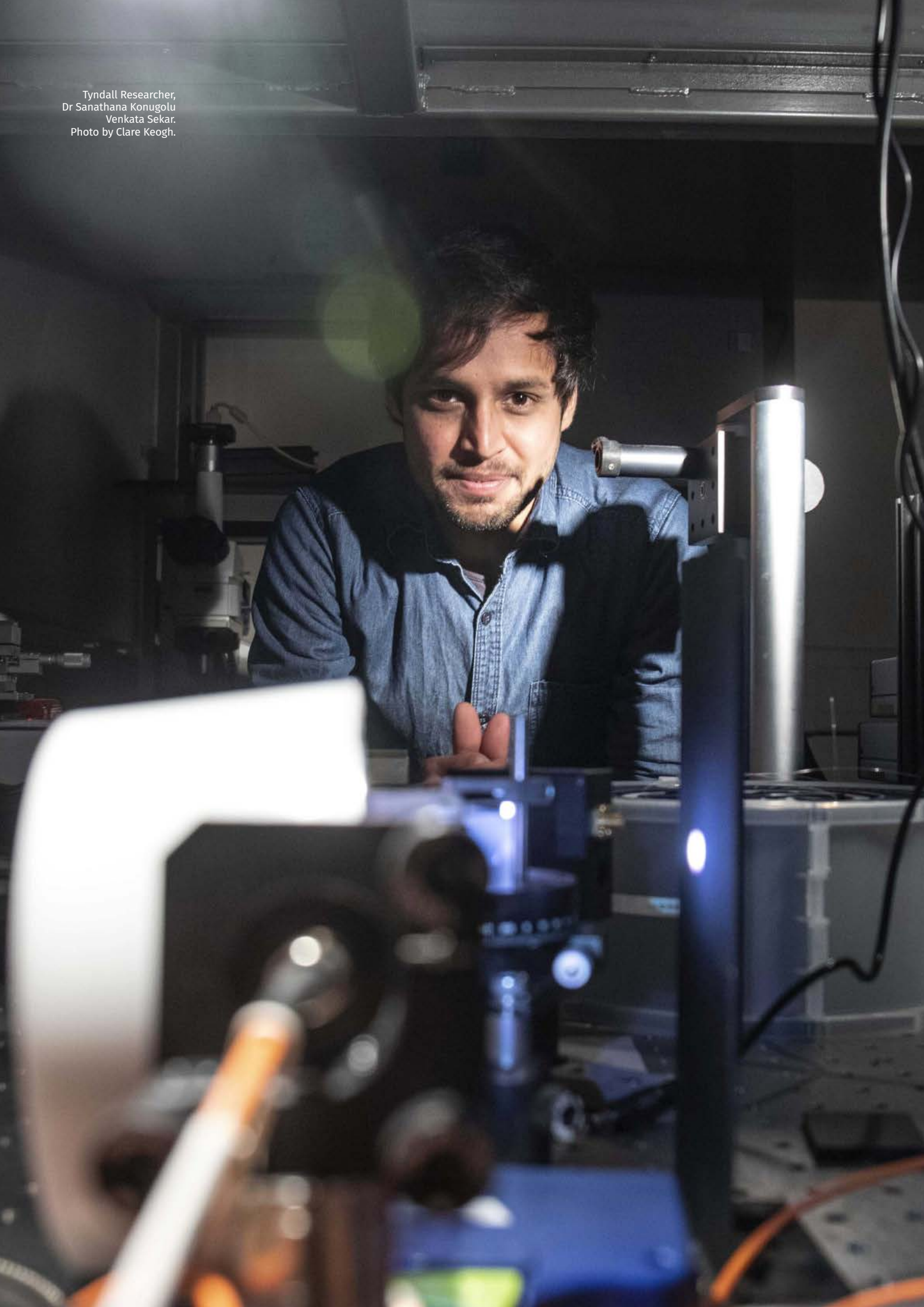
Researcher of the Year, Professor Tom Birkett, School of English & Digital Humanities; Spin-out Company of the Year, Dr Mark O'Sullivan, CEO of NeuroBell; Research Career Achievement Awardee, Professor Caitriona O'Driscoll, School of Pharmacy.



## Research and Innovation Award Winners 2025

Award Category	Winner
Research Career Achievement Award	Professor Caitriona O'Driscoll Professor Alan Dobson
Researcher of the Year	Professor Tom Birkett Dr Kian Mintz-Woo
Early-Stage Researcher of the Year	Dr Sanathana Konugolu Venkata Sekar
Research Team of the Year	Atlas of the Irish Civil War Research Team: Dr Helene O'Keeffe, Dr John Crowley, Dr Donal Ó Drisceoil, Dr John Borgonovo, Mike Murphy, Dr Andy Bielenberg, John Dorney, Charlie Roche
UCC 180 Professor Adrian Dixon PhD Student of the Year	Niamh Guiry Prakriti Dasgupta
Dean of Graduate Studies PhD Student of the Year	Cathal O'Connor
UCC 180 Professor Adrian Dixon Postdoctoral Researcher of the Year	Dr Valentina Rossi
Research Supervisor of the Year	Professor Guangbo Hao Brian Corbett
Research Communicator of the Year	Dr Michelle McKeown
Research Image of the Year	<i>Brain Pipelines</i> – Dr Jatin Nagpal, Dr María Aburto, Koushika Chandrasekaran, Lorena Morales García, Alexandre Jean Claude Cergneux <i>Panorama Europa</i> - Dr Luigi Lonardo, Professor Fiona Kearney, Claire Halpin
Research Support Person of the Year	Niamh Mundow Jerry Deasy
Vice President for Research & Innovation Award for Interdisciplinary Research	Dr Mohamad Saab
Best Publication of the Year - Undergraduate Author	Ava McCoy
Research Award for Open Science	Dr Lijuan Qian
Creating a Culture for Responsible Conduct of Research	Dr Irene Kavanagh, Dr Aoife Coffey, Professor Orla Lynch, Dr Barry Monaghan, Professor Eric Moore, Professor Ronan Carbery, Professor Yvonne Nolan
The President's Award for Research Impacting the Sustainable Development Goals	CAPACITY Project Team in the Energy, Policy & Modelling Group at MaREI: Professor Brian Ó Gallachóir, Professor Hannah Daly, Dr Fionn Rogan, Dr Paul Deane, Dr Vahid Aryanpur, Dr Tomas Mac Uidhir, Aisling Murphy, Bakytzhan Suleimenov
Engaged Research of the Year	Hidden Grief Research Project: Dr Sharon Lambert, Dr Daniel O'Callaghan, Aaron Bolger, Mark Wright
Invention of the Year	Raman for Lactate: Ray Burke, Dr Simon Toft Sorenson, Dr Jason Yang, Dr Rekha Gautam, Dr Huihui Lu – Tyndall; Professor Fergus McCarthy – Medicine/INFANT
Licence of the Year	BarraLake: Professor Mark Hutchinson, Professor Philip O'Reilly, Dr John O'Brien, Dr Panos Kyziropoulos
Spin-out of the Year	Neurobell – Dr Mark O'Sullivan, Dr Alison O'Shea, Colm Murphy
Consultancy of the Year	Professor Hannah Daly
Start-up of the Year	PrimaHealth - Danny McEnergy

Tyndall Researcher,  
Dr Sanathana Konugolu  
Venkata Sekar.  
Photo by Clare Keogh.



# 10. Global Engagement



## Global Engagement Plan

UCC's first *Global Engagement Plan* was launched in April 2025 to fulfil the strategic ambition to strengthen the university's global profile and amplify our global impact. Setting out actions under four priority goals: Global Excellence; Impact; Partnerships; and Citizenship, the Plan charts a path for relationships, partnerships and reputation management. The Plan has been translated into multiple languages, and a University Leadership Team Global Engagement Committee established to oversee its implementation.

Autumn Conferings  
Photo by Debbie Hickey.

The Office of the Vice President for Global Engagement has evolved to transform UCC's communications, marketing, reputation management and student recruitment activity in line with the UCC Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028 and the Global Engagement Plan. The Language Centre moved to this Office in October 2024 and Student Recruitment moved in April 2025.

A number of strategic overseas visits took place this year. Professor Sarah Culloty, Head of the College of Science, Engineering & Food Science attended the Cork-Shanghai city twinning event in Shanghai. Professor Ursula Kilkelly, Vice President for Global Engagement, visited Canada with the HEA for a trip focussed on strategic collaboration between Canada and Ireland, coinciding with Canada's full admission into Horizon Europe. Professor Ursula Kilkelly visited Cork's sister city San Francisco, participating with the Cork City

Global  
Engagement  
Plan launched



Professor Ursula Kilkelly,  
Vice President for  
Global Engagement,  
welcoming international  
students to UCC  
Photo by Daragh  
McSweeney

delegation in meetings with the Irish consulate the IDA and meeting with alumni, philanthropic and academic partners. A delegation led by the President joined the Cork County Mayor's delegation to Chicago in honour of our twinning with Cook County Illinois. Networking events with alumni, business leaders and philanthropy partners took place, along with a visit to Northwestern University, with whom a strategic alliance was announced on AI and Geopolitics.

### European Universities Alliance

Six Summer Schools / Blended Intensive Programmes were delivered in collaboration with UNIC partner universities including the UNIC International Sustainability Autumn School, a new programme developing leadership competences among students and researchers.

The Erasmus Mundus funded UNIC joint Master's programme, RePIC (Redesigning the Post-Industrial City MSc) won Best Master's Programme – Science, Technology and Built Environment at the Education Awards 2025 and the first cohort of graduates was conferred in October 2025. This year, 76 individual trips took place to UNIC partners featuring approximately 25% Professional Services staff.

### University of Sanctuary

In 2025, a Head of Sanctuary was appointed and a Sanctuary Subcommittee established to ready UCC for reaccreditation as a University of Sanctuary. Five undergraduate Sanctuary Scholarships were awarded, supporting access to higher education for students from refugee backgrounds.

UCC continued its national leadership on Ireland's Education Pathways Programme in strategic partnership with the Department of Children, Disability & Equality, UNHCR Ireland, and Nasc. This year we welcomed four Palestinian researchers (scholars at risk) as part

of a programme of funded research in the School of Law. UCC is active in advancing national policy with the Head of Sanctuary appointed as Co-Chair of the University of Sanctuary Ireland Committee.

## Language Centre

This year 22 students enrolled on the Language Centre's pre-sessional English courses. The majority (95%) came from China. These students joined 16 different degree programmes across arts and sciences. Four full academic year Sanctuary Scholars and three Sanctuary Scholars joined our four-week Business and Professional English course this year.

## Student Recruitment

UCC's Undergraduate Open Day in October 2024 saw another record-breaking number of visitors in one day, with almost 10,000 attendees participating in 220 talks and workshops and visiting more than 100 stands. Our student recruitment staff visited more than 200 secondary schools, participated in over 100 national and international recruitment fairs promoting undergraduate and postgraduate offerings. The annual Postgrad Expo, focused on Master's and PhD offerings, in January 2025, attracted participants from UCC's undergraduate cohorts and other Irish HEIs. UCC also launched a new peer-to-peer platform, to support incoming international and postgraduate cohorts to build connections and become familiar with UCC before arriving on campus.

A significant project of data-led enrolment planning was undertaken to identify multi-annual targets for programme intake. These will be delivered through aggregated recruitment and regional plans in an ambitious new strategic approach to student recruitment.

Student Recruitment  
Open Day. Photo by  
Debbie Hickey.



# 220

Open day talks  
& workshops



Almost  
**10,000**

Open day attendees

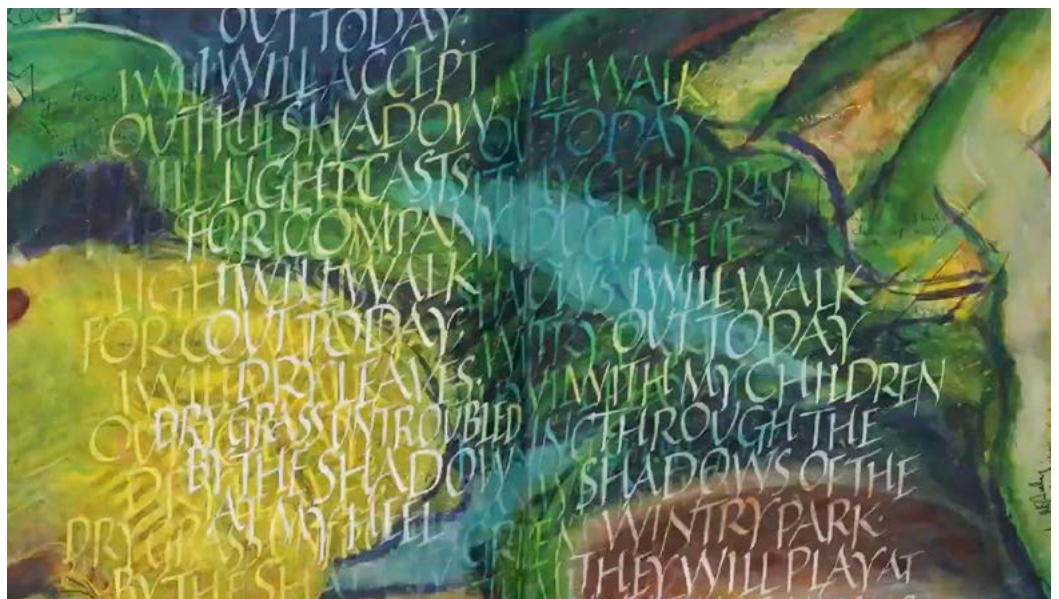


## Media and Communications

This year, UCC partnered with the Irish Examiner to produce six podcasts on the Irish general election, recorded at UCC's 98.3FM studio, featuring Irish Examiner journalists, UCC academics and students. In collaboration with the Library, UCC partnered with the Hunt Museum for a public exhibition of the Richard Harris Archives in Limerick.

## Arts and Culture

Our refreshed Arts & Culture Plan was finalised in June 2025. Two new committees on Arts & Heritage Assets and Arts & Culture, were established to promote greater coherence and oversight in this area. In summer 2025, with the Library, we presented a three-month long exhibition of The Great Book of Ireland, which was integrated into the campus tour by Visitor Services.



A page spreads from  
The Great Book of Ireland.

UCC was at the heart of many cultural celebrations during the year, through partnerships and collaborations. These saw us present a literary strand of events at Cork Midsummer Festival featuring Claudia Rankine, Pat McCabe and others, while Dorothy Cross's poetic documentary, Kinship had its first-ever public viewing at UCC as part of Sounds from a Safe Harbour. In September 2025, we presented our most comprehensive ever Culture Night with offerings right across campus and beyond.

## Marketing and Brand Impact

A major project to refresh the University visual identity came to fruition this year, with the presentation of a new one university approach to our brand replacing our previous, highly fragmented approach. A new online ticket platform for tour sales has been launched and has significantly increased ticket sales revenue since its launch.

In 2024, work began to reduce the footprint of our website and other digital spaces. A pilot project examined the sustainability of the UCC website (www.ucc.ie), our primary communication channel with over 35,000 webpages and 5 million visits annually. The pilot assessed how sustainable the web pages were, developed and applied practices to

improve website sustainability, and measured the impact of these interventions. This work led to reduced data usage, improved Digital Carbon Ratings across some of the sites and an improvement to page readability. A total data usage reduction of 19% was achieved for sites included in the pilot study, and the estimated reduction in carbon emissions was approximately 65%.

## Conferrings

UCC celebrated the conferrings of 7,676 students this year. We proudly awarded Honorary Doctorates to ten distinguished changemakers this year.



The recipients were businessman Leslie Buckley; Dominic Casey, Olympic rowing coach; Lily Collison, Cerebral Palsy campaigner; Jeremy Irons, Actor; Richard P Lehane, business leader and engineer; Tomás McCarthy, musician; Michael O’Flynn, property developer; Anne O’Leary, businesswoman; Lord David Puttnam, film maker; and Adi Roche, Humanitarian.

David Puttnam, Jeremy Irons, Adi Roche and Dominic Casey were presented with Honorary Doctorates.

7,676

Student  
Conferrings

10

Honorary  
Conferrings

# 11. Our Staff, Our Culture



2024 Annual UCC  
Staff Recognition and  
Campus Companies Staff  
Recognition Awards.

This year has been transformative for People & Culture at UCC, marked by the ongoing development of the 2025-2028 *People & Culture Plan* and the rollout of a range of initiatives that collectively strengthen how we attract, develop, support and retain our people. Underpinned by UCC's *Strategic Plan 2023-2028*, a more integrated and future-focused approach now connects our activity as a progressive People & Culture Department. Taken together, these initiatives reflect a cohesive and disciplined people strategy that prioritises inclusion, capability, resilience and a culture where our staff can thrive and contribute to UCC's long-term success. In tandem the People & Culture Department is evolving its own operating model through its 'People Plus Project' to position itself for enhanced strategic impact.

## People and Culture Plan 2025-2028

This year marked a significant milestone for UCC's People & Culture journey with the continued development of our *People & Culture Plan 2025-2028*. Shaped through extensive consultation and cross-campus engagement, the plan sets out a bold vision to enhance attract and retain; foster an inclusive and thriving culture; inspire leadership; strengthen performance and growth; and drive organisational efficiency. Alongside this, significant progress was made in modernising our People & Culture concept operating model, launching new leadership development initiatives, enhancing

wellbeing supports, and embedding strategic workforce planning approaches – all aligned to delivering on *UCC's Strategic Plan 2023-2028* and empowering our people to thrive.

The Culture Evolution Project represents a cornerstone initiative in delivering our *People & Culture Plan 2025-2028* and advancing the University's strategic ambition to be a values-led, inclusive and future-focused institution. Through deep engagement with staff and students, the project aligns our culture with the CAIRDEAS values (Compassion, Agility, Integrity, Respect, Discovery, Equity, Accountability, and Sustainability) and enables the behaviours that drive collaboration, innovation and wellbeing. As we invest in leadership, empower Culture Champions, and embed our values across everyday practices, we are building the cultural foundations necessary to support strategic priorities - from workforce sustainability to inclusive excellence - and ensuring our people remain central to UCC's continued success.

## **Resource – Succession – Talent Planning**

This year, we embedded a refreshed and integrated approach to strategic workforce planning that connects resourcing, succession planning and talent development into a single institutional framework. This marks a move away from reactive resourcing towards an evidence-informed, future-focused model that anticipates critical roles, builds resilience and develops internal capability.

Succession planning is now aligned with the annual resource planning cycle, supported by critical role analysis, leadership development pathways, mobility through internal secondment, and a developing talent pipeline across academic and professional services areas. This integrated approach will reduce reliance on short-term staffing solutions, ensuring continuity of leadership and expertise, and strengthening institutional resilience by linking people planning directly to strategic priorities, capability building and long-term sustainability.

## **Strengthening Leadership**

To strengthen leadership capability across the university and support *UCC's Strategic Plan 2023-2028*, we have enhanced our leadership development offering through the rollout of the new LEAD@UCC initiative. This strategic programme provides accessible, bite-sized development opportunities designed to build consistent, empowered leadership practices at every level of the institution. Aimed at managers, heads of units, and all staff with line management responsibilities, LEAD@UCC delivers practical, online sessions focused on core leadership competencies. By investing in the growth of our current and emerging leaders, we are actively fostering a culture of leadership excellence, collaboration and accountability that will enable UCC to attract, develop and retain talent in a highly competitive environment.

## **Promotional Pathways**

This year marked a significant step forward in enhancing career development and recognition pathways across both academic and professional staff groups. The revised Interim Administrative Promotions Scheme was launched following a comprehensive review of existing processes, providing clearer and more accessible

progression opportunities for administrative staff while longer-term reforms continue. In parallel, substantial progress has been made on the *Job, Families & Competency Framework* project, which will underpin a future promotions model that is transparent, equitable, and fit for purpose.

In collaboration with the Office of the Deputy President & Registrar, we have advanced a suite of revised promotional pathways, including the recently approved Promotion to Full Professor. This builds on a revised Progression Across the Merit Bar Policy, Promotion to Senior Lecturer and Promotion to Professor Scale 2 Regulation which has led to a regular cycle of promotions.

A new pathway to Full Professor has been formally established to support academic career progression to the highest promotional academic level. Additionally, the launch of honorary academic titles, including Clinical Professor, further strengthens the university's ability to recognise external and practice-based excellence. Together, these developments across academic and administrative domains reflect UCC's strong commitment to recognising excellence, supporting professional and academic growth, and embedding a sustainable, transparent and inclusive framework for progression. They enhance our ability to attract, retain and reward those who make a meaningful contribution to our institution, our strategy, and the success of our students and stakeholders.

## Work-Life Balance and Wellbeing Policies

This year also saw notable progress in advancing a supportive and inclusive working environment through the development and implementation of new Work-Life Balance and Wellbeing policies. Two new statutory-aligned policies were launched - *the Right to Request Remote Working* and *the Right to Request Flexible Working for Caring Purposes*. These came into effect on 1 September 2025. These policies provide staff with the right to request remote working and support those with caring responsibilities through tailored flexible arrangements such as part-time work, job-sharing, compressed hours or blended working.

In a nationally significant milestone, UCC also became the first institution in Ireland to launch a *Pregnancy Loss Support Policy*.

Launching UCC's Pregnancy Loss Policy are Tara Woulfe, Parent Advocate, Pregnancy Loss Research Group at the UCC INFANT Research Centre, Dr Avril Hutch, Director of EDI, Professor John O'Halloran, UCC President, Dr Marita Hennessy, Postdoctoral Researcher, Pregnancy Loss Research Group and Professor Keelin O'Donoghue, INFANT Principal Investigator, Consultant Obstetrician/Senior Lecturer at Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH). Photo by Provision



## Supporting Staff Digital Skills and Competency Development

UCC is committed to fostering a digitally confident and future-ready workforce as a core enabler of *UCC's Strategic Plan 2023-2028*. Through initiatives in collaboration with IT Services, such as the Staff Digital Skills Hub, we are taking a university-wide, strategic approach to digital capability, aligning all training and resources with the EU Digital Competence Framework (DigComp).

This cohesive approach ensures staff are equipped to adapt to emerging technologies, use data effectively, and innovate in their roles. Continued investment in digital upskilling supports a culture of lifelong learning, enhances staff wellbeing and performance, and strengthens UCC's capacity to deliver a high-quality, digitally progressive academic and professional environment.

## Staff Recognition Awards

The 2024 annual UCC Staff Recognition and Campus Companies Staff Recognition Awards took place in October 2024. This is an annual joint award ceremony, which recognises the valuable contribution the staff of the University and of subsidiary companies operating on campus make to the UCC community.

Award Category	Winner
<b>Cross Campus Engagement Award</b>	MCC Paws @CC Team
<b>Enhancing the Student Experience</b>	Access Team
<b>Enhancing the Student Experience</b>	Ms Sinéad Hackett
<b>Enhancing the Student Experience</b>	UCC TV Team
<b>Exceptional Citizen Award</b>	ACE Cork Prison Addiction Studies Team
<b>The Frank McGrath Perpetual Award for Wellbeing and Welfare</b>	UCC Coaching Panel
<b>Impact Award</b>	Dr Ger McGlacken
<b>Impact Award</b>	Mr James Northridge
<b>Impact Award</b>	Dr Emanuel Mihai Popovici
<b>Leadership Award</b>	Professor George Shorten
<b>Outstanding Colleague Award</b>	Ms Caitríona Doyle
<b>Outstanding Colleague Award</b>	Ms Catriona O'Sullivan
<b>Outstanding Colleague Award</b>	Mr Tomás Tyner

# 12. Our Place, Our Footprint



## 12.1 Digitally Connected Campus

### Digital Transformation of Research

In June 2025, a high-performance computing cluster was launched to support *UCC Futures*, complementing the Research Box storage solution introduced in June 2024. The Research Information System (RIS) *Pure* was selected as UCC's Research Information System. This platform is used to manage and showcase research activities, and replaces the *IRIS* platform previously employed at UCC. It will serve as a centralised hub for collecting and managing research-related information across the university. Throughout 2025, IT Services and UCC Research teams developed and tested the *Pure* platform, which will go live in December 2025.

### Digitally Enabling Student Success

During the summer 2025, 44 teaching rooms across campus were upgraded as part of UCC's commitment to an inclusive and accessible learning environment. IT Services led the upgrades with funding provided by Access UCC.

A Student IT Survey in March 2025 found that 90% of UCC students are satisfied with the IT services provided to them. The UCC Services

90%

Of students satisfied  
with IT support

18%

Preference for  
UCC Portal

Portal is the first port of call for student IT queries or issues. The survey found that the Portal preference had risen to 18% – a 5% increase on last year - highlighting the shift to digital. Of the student respondents, 46% had logged tickets with the UCC Portal and 98% rated the knowledge base positively. Of these respondents, 53% use PCs in labs and 27% bring laptops.

## Supporting Global Engagement

This year, IT Services collaborated with the Office of Marketing & Brand Impact to deliver digital assets for UCC’s brand refresh, aligning systems, creating templates and building a staff SharePoint site to support a digital-first UCC brand. Since May 2025 the Global Engagement and Student Recruitment teams are leveraging Data as a Service. This service empowers the team to make real time data driven decisions about international student recruitment and enrolment planning.

## Staff Digital Literacy

The Digital Advisory Centre (DAC) continues to focus on enhancing the digital capabilities of our staff, and this year ran 27 Learn Live training sessions for staff. The DAC and Focus Team hosted two “Can Generative AI Help?” workshops for staff. People & Culture and IT developed a digital skills training hub to assist staff to develop their digital skills.

This year the UCC Digital Tidy Towns Committee was convened, and UCC’s first ever Digital Cleanup Day on 19 April 2025 engaged 120 colleagues and delivered more than 700 staff pledges for more than 1,200 hours of digital decluttering. This initiative, organised through the UCC Continuous Improvement Action Network in collaboration with the Students’ Union, focused on digital sustainability and wellbeing. It was crucial in raising awareness of the environmental impact of digital clutter and the importance of sustainable digital habits.

UCC Digital Clean Up Day  
Organising Committee:  
Maurice Ryder, Sandra  
Barry, Chris McElligott,  
Michelle Nelson, Deirdre  
Keane, Katie Sandham  
and Cian Power



# 98%

Positive rating for  
knowledge base



# 53%

Of students use  
PCs in labs



# >1,200

Hours pledged to  
digital decluttering





Professor Alan Kelly, Head of School of Food & Nutritional Sciences, presenting at student orientations in the newly revamped Boole 4 Lecture Theatre.

100

Daily users of UCC Student Factbook

180m

Network security events monthly

>1,300

Staff and students joined cyber security awareness events

UCC's Finance System is being migrated to the Cloud, and this year the first two phases of a technical upgrade were completed on the database, in preparation for a full migration to a cloud SaaS solution in 2026.

IT Services and Academic Services launched the *UCC Student Factbook* in May 2025 and, with People & Culture, the *UCC Staff Factbook* in September 2025. These self-service dashboards provide staff with access to reliable, validated student enrolment and staff datasets for enhanced reporting and decision making.

UCC Services Portal processed 28,178 tickets, with 16,767 self-service tickets. In May 2025, Building & Estates joined the portal, enabling UCC staff to log and track tickets for any building-related issues.

### Our Digital Campus

Network security events at UCC average at 180 million monthly, an increase of 22% compared with the previous year. The number of cyber security events collected for analysis continues to grow in volume, and is currently at over 2 million events per hour. Cyber Security Awareness Month in October 2024, engaged over 1,300 staff and students in events and training to strengthen cyber security resilience across campus.

In January 2025, Tyndall National Institute's IT integrated with UCC's IT Services, supporting the digital enablement of the Tyndall National Institute's Strategic Plan *Tyndall 2025*.

## 12.2 Capital Developments

This year, some urgent Capital Development projects have been progressed and significant progress has been made in establishing a long-term financial capital plan to underpin further significant new projects. Tenders have been sought for the new Tyndall National Institute development on UCC's North Mall Campus, and it is hoped that this project will commence next year, subject to government support under the National Development Plan.

The refurbishment of the Dental School & Hospital commenced

during summer 2025, with significant investment in enhanced dental simulation equipment, improved ventilation and the installation of new dental chairs. Further works are planned for the coming years to 2028.

Student accommodation is an ongoing priority and we continue to explore opportunities to expand our stock of student accommodation with an objective of adding 500 beds in the medium term.

The Mardyke running track, which was closed for Health & Safety reasons, was replaced in summer 2025 with final markings planned, subject to weather conditions, in spring 2026. A further significant investment in the Mardyke Arena is nearing completion with the replacement of the pool Air Handling Unit, roof membrane and Photovoltaic panels. UCC has adopted a vision for our outdoor sports facilities, and the first phase of a new investment programme funded through student capitation will be submitted for planning in 2026.



Newly resurfaced running track at the Mardyke Arena with new PV Panels visible on the roof of the main building.

## Refurbishments, Maintenance and Climate Action Plan Works

The Buildings Office team was busy this year with essential refurbishments, renovations, backlog maintenance and Climate Action Plan Roadmap works. Many of these projects were supported by the annual devolved grant funding from the HEA. These include lift replacements; laboratory upgrades; the new Student Common Room in the Western Gateway Building; and lecture theatre upgrades. Building Management System (BMS) control upgrades, metering upgrades, lighting upgrades (external and internal), heat pumps, boiler upgrades and HVAC upgrades were carried out to ensure progress towards achieving our Climate Action Plan mandated targets of 51% Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction and energy efficiency improvement of 50% by 2030.

## 12.3 Securing a Sustainable Future

UCC's Sustainability & Climate Action Plan 2023-2028 sets out targets to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and achieve net zero total GHG emissions by 2040. As of the end of 2024, we have achieved a 31.7% reduction in GHG emissions and a 50% improvement in our energy efficiency. A number of key projects were completed in the period, including the installation of heat pump systems in the Tyndall National Institute, Pharmacy Building and Brookfield, eliminating the need for natural gas and paving the way for full decarbonisation. UCC continues to examine all opportunities for funding the works required to achieve our 2030 targets.



# 31.7%

Reduction in  
GHG emissions



# 50%

Improvement in our  
energy efficiency





Professor Marguerite Nyhan, Professor of Engineering for Sustainability, and Professor John O'Halloran MRIA, President of UCC, with Sustainable Futures Forum speakers Niall Hatch, Head of Communications and Development, BirdWatch Ireland; Éanna Ní Lamhna, Writer and Broadcaster; and Seán Ronayne, Ornithologist, Wildlife Sound Recordist, Author and Environmental Activist.

Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Ireland continues to build strong relationships nationally and internationally and has now grown to 16 members across Ireland. Network manager Dr John Barimo supported the consultation on Ireland's next SDG implementation plan in collaboration with the Department of Climate, Energy & the Environment. Two new thematic working groups have been established, "Research Policy Interface" and "Arts and Sustainability", and the network has been awarded Erasmus cooperation funding to develop a project on decarbonisation in higher education.

The 2025 Sustainable Futures Forum, hosted by the Sustainable Futures Project, was held at UCC in February 2025 convened international leaders from conservation, business, research and the media to discuss climate and nature-related challenges and opportunities. This forum provided strategic direction on the role of universities in climate action and nature preservation, opportunities to catalyse collaborative climate action, and positions UCC at the forefront of sustainability and climate action conversations.

In November 2024, a delegation of four students and researchers attended the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's Conference of the Parties (COP) when the 29th edition of the summit took place in Baku, Azerbaijan. COP 29 brought together nations to assess global efforts to limit the levels climate change against targets set by the UN Framework Convention on

UCC Delegation to UN COP 29 Meeting: Dr Barry Hayes, Sumaya Mohammed, Cian Walsh and Dr Fionn Rogan.



Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement and other international accords.

In December 2024, the University was ranked 4th globally (out of 1,477 universities) in the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings. This is the eighth consecutive year in which UCC was ranked in the top ten.

In June 2025, UCC marked a significant milestone in its ongoing commitment to a sustainable future with the launch of the Sustainability Institute, a key *UCC Futures* initiative.



Formerly known as the Environmental Research Institute, this new identity reflects an expanded and integrated vision for sustainability research that aligns with the university's core values and ambitions. The establishment of the UCC Sustainability Academy in the summer of 2025 was an active response to the unprecedented need for training and upskilling for sustainability action in our workforce and society. This is the first university sustainability training and education unit of its kind in Ireland and draws on the deep expertise of over 100 sustainability academics in UCC's Sustainability Institute combined with a core team of sustainability trainers and industry practitioners who contribute to programmes.

Professor John Cryan, Vice President for Research & Innovation; Professor Brian Ó Gallachóir, Director of the Sustainability Institute; Professor John O'Halloran MRIA, President of UCC; Kevin O' Sullivan, Environment & Science Editor with The Irish Times; Marie Donnelly, Climate Change Advisory Council; Dr. Gillian Bruton, Chief Commercial Officer of the Sustainability Institute.

4<sup>th</sup>  
In the world for  
sustainability

# 13. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion



Professor Ciara Heavin, Dr Laura Lee, Olive Byrne, Mary Horgan, James Bilson, Prof. Nuala Finnegan, Dr Tanya Watson and Aileen Waterman at the launch of the ENGAGE Reverse Mentoring Programme.

In November 2024, UCC marked a landmark year for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) with the launch of its inaugural *Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Framework and Action Plan, Belonging at UCC 2025–2028*. Rooted in staff and student consultations, the framework outlines clear objectives to advance equality, diversity and inclusion, aligning with UCC's *Strategic Plan 2023-2028* and fulfilling its Public Sector Duty commitments. A new EDIB Governance Structure was introduced in 2025, establishing the People & Culture Forum and an Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Sub-Committee.



President John O'Halloran and Dr Avril Hutch with speakers from the launch of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Framework and Action Plan.



A major milestone was achieved in March 2025, when UCC received its first Institutional Silver Athena Swan Award from Advance HE, recognising significant progress in gender equality and inclusive practices. Several individual Schools also earned awards: the School of Applied Social Studies and the Dental School & Hospital achieved bronze, while the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences received the university's first school-level silver award.

UCC joined Accenture's "Women on Walls" campaign, celebrating influential women through portraiture. From over 600 public nominations, eleven inspiring figures were chosen, including Edna O'Brien, Joanne O'Riordan and Nano Nagle, along with eight female community leaders to feature in a group portrait. The commissioned artists, Vera Klute, Vanessa Jones, Gerry Davis, and Julianne Guine, will unveil their works in November 2025.

Ms Ann King, Professor Stephen Byrne, Dr Avril Hutch, Ms Angela O'Donovan, Ms Katarzyna (Kasia) Pyrz, at the recent Athena Swan Awards ceremony.

Professor John O'Halloran, UCC President, welcomes the Women on Walls artists to UCC.



Demonstrating care and inclusion, UCC introduced Ireland's first *Pregnancy Loss Support Policy* for staff in September 2025. Developed collaboratively by the Pregnancy Loss Research Group, the EDI Unit and People & Culture, the policy complements UCC's suite of family-friendly supports, including fertility, surrogacy, menopause and domestic violence leave.



UCC awarded  
**Silver  
Athena  
Swan  
Award**



**18**

Departmental Athena  
Swan Awards



In September 2025, UCC, as the lead institution with the University of Limerick and the University of Galway, launched Ireland's first EDI Micro-credential, funded by the HEA EDI Enhancement Fund. This short course aims to promote understanding of inequality, foster inclusive workplace practices, and strengthen professional competencies in EDI leadership.

The ENGAGE Reverse Mentoring Programme continued to expand this year, pairing early-career women and access students with senior university staff across partner institutions to promote inclusion and leadership development. ENGAGE Digital (2025/26) received HEA funding to further build capacity in gender equality and digital mentoring.



Professor Nuala Finnegan, Chloe Boland, Dr Caroline West, Elshaddai Mahuda, Celine Griffin and Professor Stephen Byrne at the exhibition held to mark one year of the Safe and Sound Project

UCC's Safe and Sound project, which is now one year old, works with the UCC community and external collaborators to foster awareness of issues around sexual violence and harassment. Under the Safe and Sound initiative, UCC launched its first Sound Squad with My Canine Companion, enhancing campus safety and inclusion. The project also hosted events such as the Staff Soapbox to highlight community-driven wellbeing efforts, and a display of work in the Hub as part of the wrap up of the initial stage of the project.

This year, UCC further strengthened community connection through staff networks including the launch of the Disability and Neurodivergence network, which joins the LGBT+, Mná, Race Equality and Carer's networks. Consultation also commenced for new Race Equality and LGBT+ Action Plans.

Pride 2025 was marked by the President's Pride Lunch and the creation of a Living Pride Quilt, commemorating ten years since the Marriage Equality referendum and Gender Recognition Act.



UCC student, Maeve Barrett, MCC Co-founder and operations manager, Cliona O'Rourke, UCC President John O'Halloran with MCC dogs Jackie, Hazel and Polly



A murmuration quilt block being made for the Living Pride Quilt at the President's Pride Lunch.

# 14. Advancement

## Fundraising Campaign

A fundraising feasibility study was completed this year which concluded that UCC could be ready to launch a fundraising campaign in under two years if it commits to investing time and resources to develop its story, its donor pipeline, its Advancement function, an endowment policy and if it fully embeds philanthropy across the University.



€8.2m

New cash and pledges



€5.4m

Cash from commitments



## Philanthropic Income

Launch of Philanthropy Impact Report 2023-24.

Cork University Foundation received €5.4 million relating to pledges from previous years, and a further €8.2 million in new cash and commitments. The largest gifts include over €2 million from donor advised funds for microbiome research; PhD funding for INFANT from Féileacáin; and PhD funding from Walker Hearing. Access UCC received two notable gifts - €400k from Ulster Bank and €278k from the JP Morgan Foundation. €597k was received towards a professorship from Qualcomm, and €324k for a new lectureship from EirGrid Plc.

The Department of Justice/IIP approved the Granary Theatre Refurbishment project in February 2025 and by year/end over €2.4 million had been received from donors. A new Senior Advancement post, funded through private philanthropy, commenced in December to develop new alumni programmes tailored to Gen Z.

## Donor Relations and Stewardship

This year's events included the annual UCC Teagasc Agricultural Science Post Graduation Awards Ceremony. In November 2024, a



Philanthropy Impact Showcase Evening was held for donors and grateful patients to Cancer Research@UCC and to celebrate five years of advancements in cancer research driven by funding from Breakthrough Cancer Research. UCC's major donors attended the Benefactors' Lunch in April 2025 where the *Philanthropy Impact Report 2023-24* was launched.

## Stakeholder Engagement

Informed by a review, consultations and an e-survey, the University's inaugural *Stakeholder Engagement Plan* was launched this year. The Plan underpins the fundraising campaign through a focus on four-affinity KPIs (two-way alumni engagement; events/experiences; alumni/community philanthropy; and volunteering).

Launch of UCC's  
Stakeholder Engagement  
Plan, January 2025.



The Advancement Office launched a new user-friendly platform for online giving, events/reunions and e-communications. The quarterly alumni e-newsletter was revamped and rebranded as [The Bridge](#) and circulated to over 72,000 alumni. The new *Reunion Giving Plan* was tested at class reunions with donations made to UCC Alumni Fund, Cancer Research and Access UCC. Cork University Foundation partnered with the Chapel & York US Foundation to accept donations from the US.

A new International Alumni Advisory Board has been established to oversee the *Stakeholder Engagement Plan*. The honorary conferring ceremony for Lord David Puttnam, Jeremy Irons, Adi Roche and Dominic Casey, was an opportunity to thank volunteers for their ongoing support, and the celebration was shared with the wider alumni community through a [special edition e-news](#). UCC Women's Graduates' Association (the Cork branch of the International Federation of University Women) was re-established this year to mark their 100th anniversary. The Young Alumni Officer held a successful event in partnership with Career Services for alumni interested in mentoring; and a number of alumni volunteered at conferrings.

At the first event of 2025 new graduates were awarded the *Graduate of the Year* and *Peel Memorial* prizes. Alumni networking events were held in Paris, Berlin, Brussels, Canada, Mexico, Sydney, San Francisco and Jakarta. The themes of the Global Speaker Series events, sponsored by Deloitte, were 'Trump's World', *How will Ireland and Europe react?* and *AI: The Unstoppable Force Defining the Future of Business*. In addition to a Golden Jubilee, there were 30 class reunions and Barden sponsored a Christmas Homecoming.

The Alumni Achievement Awards recognised nine exceptional alumni: David Merriman, Ruairi O'Mahony, Dr Len Harty, Dr Noel O'Mahony, Siobhán McSweeney, Michael Guinee, Dr Linda Doyle, Dr Pamela Byrne and Dr Naomi Masheti.



Dr Linda Doyle, Ruairi O'Mahony, Michael Guinee, Siobhán McSweeney, Dr Naomi Masheti, David Merriman, Dr Pamela Byrne, Professor John O'Halloran MRIA, UCC President, Dr Noel O'Mahony, Dr Len Harty and Kerry Bryson.

Cork University Foundation received €96,000 to support Cancer Research Clinical Trials Network following a fundraising Valentine's Ball and a Sponsored Walk, in gratitude for the care and treatment received by Catherine Spillane from Professor Derek Power.

Carrigaline AFC organised a Club Celebration Day in tribute to teammate Edwin Delaney (RIP), with funds donated for Cancer Research.

Grateful patient Mick Cuddihy hosted the third successful Annual Golf Classic Fundraiser at Rathaspeck Golf Course, Wexford to support research into colorectal cancer.

The Fermoy Parkinson's Fundraising Group donated proceeds from their workplace community events to support the Parkinson's Disease Research Cluster.

Cork University Foundation was honoured to support an in-memorial giving in celebration of the lives of aspiring students, staff members and alumni: Ella Dalton (RIP), Dr Ashleigh Byrne O'Brien (RIP), Dr Meg Haugh (RIP), Dr Catherine Molloy (RIP), Dr Sinéad Kinsella (RIP) and Karen Horgan (RIP).

Other examples of community giving included class reunion giving in support of the UCC Alumni Fund, INFANT and Cancer Research. A new prize in Access UCC was established by the friends and colleagues of Cal Healy to mark his retirement and years of service.

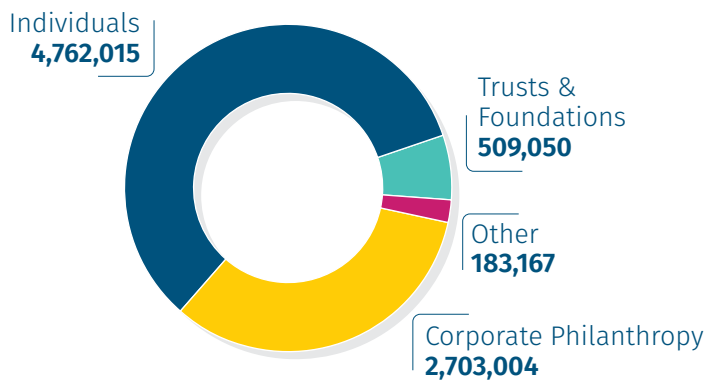
#GivingTuesday secured 160 donors supporting the UCC Alumni Fund, and 12 student experience enhancement projects were subsequently supported. Over 700 alumni were engaged to inform the new Legacy Brochure which was launched on International Legacy Giving Day in September 2025.

New gifts/commitments, the split by donor type and area of support are shown on the following page.

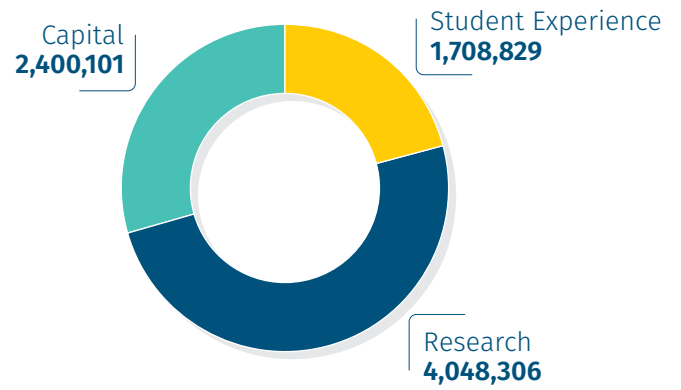
12

Student projects  
funded by UCC  
Alumni Fund

## Donor Type



## Area supported



Fermoy Parkinson's Fundraising Group community fundraiser.

Students and staff receive UCC Alumni Fund certificates recognising projects to enhance the student experience.



# 15. Finance and Resources

## Statement of Comprehensive Income - Consolidated View

	30/09/2025
	€'000
State Grants	110,127
Academic Fees	181,966
Research grants and contracts	131,789
Amortisation of state capital grants	10,631
Other operating income	64,850
Interest income	2,703
Investment income	520
Deferred funding for pensions	62,834
Donations and endowments	6,987
<b>Total income</b>	<b>572,407</b>
Staff and pension service costs	347,677
Other operating expenses	129,512
Pension and other interest expense	62,040
Depreciation	23,966
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>563,195</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) before other gains/losses</b>	<b>9,212</b>
Profit on disposal of fixed assets	-
Profit on disposal of Assets/Liabilities of Subsidiary	2,539
Gain/(loss) on investments	
<b>Surplus before taxation</b>	<b>11,751</b>

[added 23/02/26]  
[updated 25/03/26]

## Review of Financial Year to 30 September 2025

2025 was a successful year financially with the UCC group recording a surplus of €11.8 million, which compares to a surplus of €6.8 million in 2023/24.

The overall result includes a number of one-off transactions, including the following:

- A post year-end settlement was agreed with the insurers in relation to a Covid Business Interruption (BCI) insurance claim.
- An exercise was completed in 2025 to review the Research Overhead Accounting. The review resulted in an overall credit of €4.9 million.
- On 15 May 2025 certain assets and liabilities of the IMI were disposed of to a third party. The profit on this disposal was €2.5 million.
- UCC retains ownership of the IMI's Sandyford campus. The accounting reclassification to an Investment Property resulted in a fair value write down adjustment of €2.3 million.
- There was an impairment charge of €4.1 million on assets under construction. The review concluded that the recoverable value of the costs incurred to date is lower than that included in assets in the course of construction.

The other key reasons for the UCC Group surplus were the impacts of:

- Strong State Grants income growth of €8.8 million (8.7%) driven by an increase in the recurrent grant allocation.
- Strong Academic Fee income growth of €11.5 million (6.8%) driven by price and student mix.
- UCC increased its combined EU and Non-EU student base by 3% to 26,067 (from 25,254 in 2023/2024).
- Research activity delivered €131.8 million of income in the year, an increase €10.9 million, up 17.7% from 2023/24. This included the one-off research overhead accounting adjustment of €4.9 million.

# Statement of Financial Position

## Statement of Financial Position Year ended 30 September 2025

	Consolidated	
	2025	2024
	€'000	€'000
<b>Non-current Assets</b>		
Fixed Assets	632,979	673,792
Intangible Assets	7,202	8,231
Heritage Assets	3,286	3,219
Investment Property	21,000	-
Investments	31,367	30,810
	<b>695,834</b>	<b>716,052</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Inventory	689	701
Receivables	64,489	70,172
Investments	95,967	50,728
Cash at Bank	94,074	122,604
	<b>255,219</b>	<b>244,205</b>
<b>Payables: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>(323,700)</b>	<b>(329,136)</b>
<b>Net current liabilities</b>	<b>(68,481)</b>	<b>(84,931)</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>627,353</b>	<b>631,121</b>
<b>Payables: Amounts falling due after one year</b>	<b>367,331</b>	<b>382,850</b>
Retirement benefit liability	1,516,039	1,619,723
Retirement benefit receivable	<u>1,509,652</u>	<u>1,613,336</u>
Total net assets	<b>253,635</b>	<b>241,884</b>
<b>Restricted reserve</b>		
Income and expenditure - restricted reserve	32,202	28,972
<b>Restricted reserve</b>		
Income and expenditure - unrestricted reserve	<u>221,433</u>	<u>212,912</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>253,635</b>	<b>241,884</b>

- **Net assets of €253.6 million**
- **Cash position (including investments) €190.04 million at year-end 2025** – is inclusive of student fees paid in advance and payment in advance for Research and Capital Funding.
- **Bank borrowings of €154.2 million reduced** by €9.2 million over the financial year.
- **Year on year receivables:** At €64.5 million have fallen from €70 million in the prior year due to amounts receivable in respect of research projects.
- **Payables falling due within one year:** Decreased from €329.1 million to €323.7 million due to a reduction in research balances that are classified as current liabilities.



# 16. Subsidiary Companies



Student Facilities  
& Services employs

**70**

students in  
part-time roles



## UCC Academy

UCC Academy supports key strategic priorities, including the *UCC Global Engagement Plan*, *UCC Group Brand Refresh*, and the *University Strategic Space Utilisation Group*. A new service line was launched, in collaboration with IT Services, to deliver Data and Business Intelligence capabilities to the University, enhancing decision-making and strategic planning. UCC Academy developed a new Strategic Plan, shaped through consultation with stakeholders, clients and staff, to articulate its service offerings and clarify its role in supporting the University's strategic objectives.

## Student Facilities and Services

Student Facilities and Services had a successful year with increased activity and higher turnover, allowing for greater financial support to the University. The Centre maintained staffing levels and continued to employ around 70 UCC students in part-time roles. Minor refurbishments improved the Upstairs Café and An Siopa, student use of meeting rooms and new chill-out areas increased, in support of the Centre's role as a community hub. Partnerships enabled art camps for international and younger students, enhancing campus cultural offerings.



## Campus Accommodation UCC

Campus Accommodation UCC now has 1,536 beds of affordable housing for Irish and international students close to campus, aligned with UCC's commitment to accessibility and sustainability. UCC Summer Beds offers additional short-term accommodation, supporting summer programmes and enhancing revenue. UCC Summer Beds welcomed 66,500 visitors from 59 countries during summer 2025.

## The Glucksman

The Glucksman welcomed more than 100,000 visitors this year to view pioneering exhibitions linking research directions in UCC with contemporary art practice. Student and staff initiatives included University of Sanctuary projects, and art and wellbeing workshops. Offsite partnerships were presented with Cork Midsummer and West Cork Literary Festival. Critical acclaim for the curatorial programme in national and international media included recognition of the gallery's groundbreaking access and outreach programmes that enable marginalised communities to express themselves through art.

## The Mardyke Arena UCC

The Mardyke Arena UCC delivered a strong year of growth and engagement, achieving 9% year-on-year revenue growth and reinvesting €2.5 million in capital projects to support decarbonisation and sustainability. The Arena achieved a 13% reduction in energy use and was honoured at the UCC Campus Companies Staff Recognition Awards for its contribution to the University's sustainability goals.

Student engagement with the Mardyke Arena was at 67%, with two-thirds of the current student body activating access to facilities, alongside delivery of high-performance services to over 350 athletes and extensive support and facilities for 21 indoor sports clubs.

The Arena welcomed 89 primary schools this year providing visibility of UCC facilities and inspiration to younger generations. Collaboration with UCC's People & Culture enhanced staff wellbeing initiatives. Digital engagement grew substantially this year, with 1.5 million video views, more than 65% reach, with UCC students as the most engaged audience.



# 1,536

Beds provided  
by Campus  
Accommodation UCC



The Glucksman  
has had

# >100,000

visitors annually



The Mardyke Arena  
UCC supports

# 350

high-performance  
athletes



# 17. Governance



The Office of Corporate & Legal Affairs (OCLA) supports the Governing Authority (GA), ensuring effective governance across the university and subsidiary companies. A revision of committee Terms of Reference was undertaken to ensure that committees are appropriately focused and equipped to fulfil their remit.

Financial thresholds were implemented, delegated from GA to its committees, enabling more efficient and timely decision-making. An effectiveness review of the GA was undertaken and recommendations implemented to strengthen governance practices. Strategic agenda planning for GA meetings was introduced, to ensure focus on institutional priorities and long-term initiatives.

OCLA also supports the governance of UCC's subsidiary companies, managing the onboarding of new directors across all entities. Appointments were made with a focus on aligning individual skills with board requirements, thereby enhancing oversight and operational effectiveness. Statutory compliance was maintained through timely CRO and RBO registrations.

UCC's journey to develop a Digital Archive is well underway. In conjunction with IT Services, OCLA has completed the initial phase of a pilot e-vault in the President's Office. The Office also supported the Tyndall National Institute in preparing agreements for joining two Chips JU Pilot Lines, a joint undertaking between the EU, member states and the private sector to boost Europe's semiconductor industry.

We enhanced our information compliance training offerings with two University Leadership Team sessions on FoI Decision Makers and GDPR Data Breaches. Two sessions on Managing GDPR Data Breaches for Managers were hosted. Bespoke training videos for clinical and social researchers on understanding Data Controllers, Joint Data Controllers, Data Processors and completing Data Privacy Impact Assessments were delivered.

In Enterprise Risk management, a new drone management system was launched, registering key UCC entities with the Irish Aviation Authority and establishing an Oversight Committee. The Indoor Radon Measurement Project commenced in September 2025, addressing key radiation safety regulatory requirements. In chemical management, implementation has commenced on a comprehensive chemical strategy, including large-scale chemical disposals, improved storage, IT solutions and staff training.

UCC published its updated Health & Safety Policy in June 2025, introducing revised definitions for key roles to further its commitment to providing a safe working environment. As part of a suite of risk management reforms, all university level risks have undergone bowtie risk assessment and been added to the UCC Risk Register.

## 17.1 Membership of Governing Authority

01 October 2024 - 30 September 2025	
Chairperson	Mr Sean O'Driscoll
Internal	Professor John O'Halloran MRIA
Internal Elected	Professor Josephine Hegarty Dr Edward Lahiff Mr Brian Bugler
Internal Selected	Professor Geraldine Boylan MRIA Professor Stephen Byrne
Students' Union*	Ms Katie Halpin-Hill, President to May 2025 Mr Alex Angland, Commercial and Fundraising Officer to May 2025, President from June 2025 Mr Shah Kamal, Postgraduate Representative Ms Niamh Domoney, Commercial & Fundraising Officer from June 2025
External Selected	Ms Barbara Creagh Mr John Fitzgibbons Ms Sylvia Fouhy Ms Margaret Lane Dr Francis O'Sullivan
Ministerial Selected	Ms Rose McHugh Professor Maeve Conrick Professor Brendan O'Leary

\*Term of office of student representatives shall not exceed one year.



## 17.2 Official Languages Act

Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh (COC) is committed to meeting its obligations under Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (2003) and Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla (Leasú) 2021 (ATO). Professor Pádraig Ó Macháin, Stiúrthóir, Ionad na Gaeilge Labhartha & Professor of Modern Irish, has been appointed under Section 4B ATO 2021 to oversee performance and to report on COC's obligations, replacing Ms Nora Geary, Corporate Secretary. No complaints were received this year.

The following compliance actions were taken by COC during 2024/25:

- a. Fourteen Gaeilge Champions, drawn from the academic, administrative and service communities across UCC, were appointed, their function being to promote awareness and monitor compliance with the ATO within their areas.
- b. A bespoke Irish-language campaign coordinated by the central Marketing team in December 2024, featuring placements on TG4 and RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta, ensured that COC is compliant with the 5% media spend requirement.
- c. Marketing also produced a COC Brand Book, which promotes a single COC logo with the Irish language positioned in accordance with the legislation. Stationery and email signatures are being updated accordingly, and the new ATO-compliant logo is now being used in all University



BOOLE

# 18. Select Media Coverage

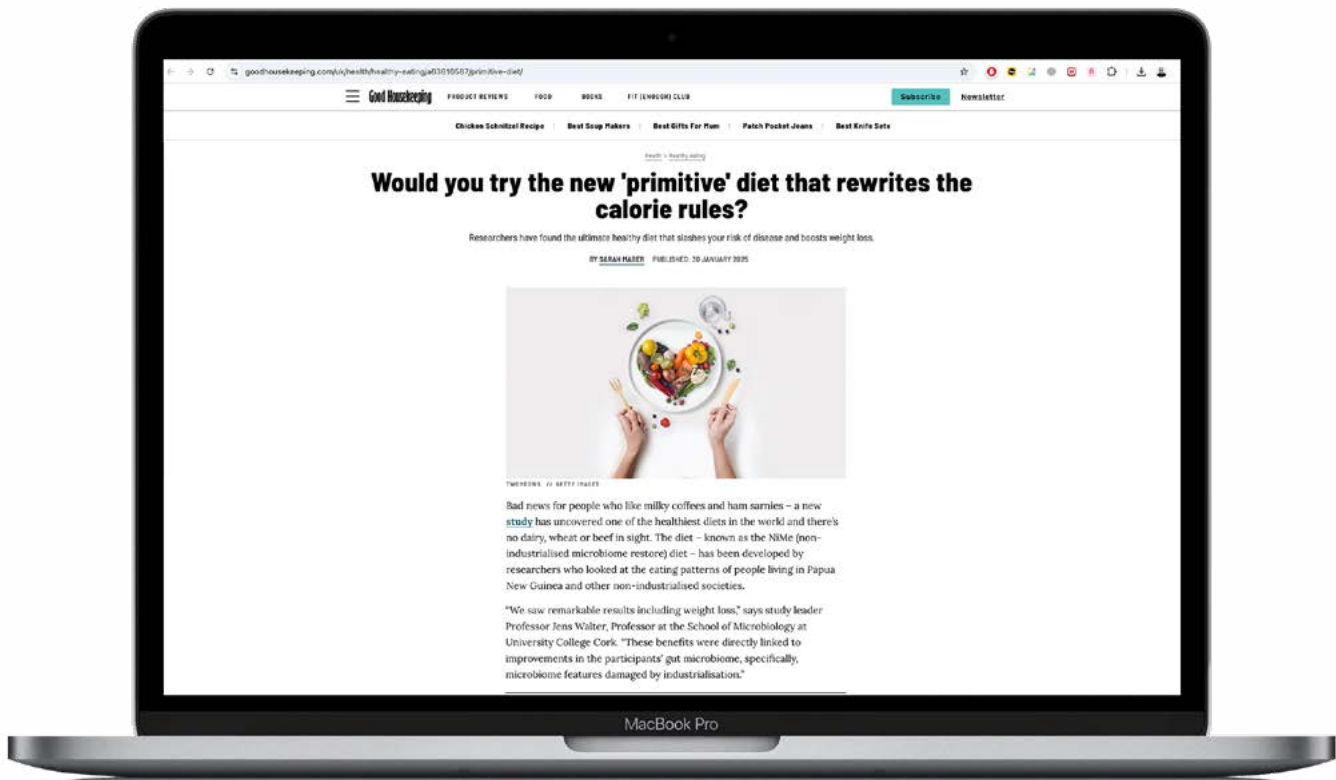


Professor John O'Halloran MRIA, UCC President; Kerry Bryson, director of Business Development & Advancement; Orla Dolan CEO Breakthrough Cancer Research; and Roisin Connolly, chair Cancer Research @UCC; pictured at the UCC Philanthropy Impact Showcase. Featured in the Irish Examiner and The Echo. Photo by Ger McCarthy

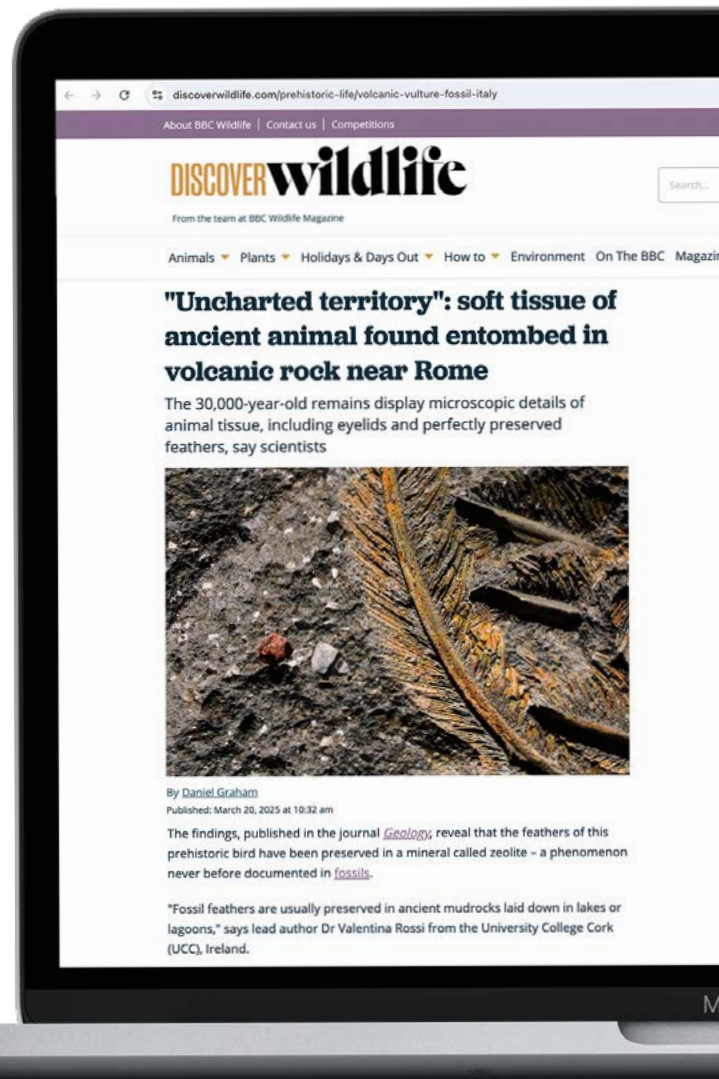
According to media monitoring outlet Vuelio, University College Cork and its affiliates received approximately 19,000 mentions across online, broadcast, and print media during this year.

## Selected media highlights include:

- A study led by Professor Jens Walter, which found that a newly developed diet inspired by the eating habits of non-industrialised societies can significantly reduce the risk of a number of chronic diseases made international headlines, including [MailOnline](#), [Times of India](#), [Science Daily](#), the [New York Post](#), [the UK Independent](#), [the Telegraph](#), [the Mirror UK](#), [The Conversation](#), [Good Housekeeping](#) and [ABC News in Australia](#).
- UCC again sent a delegation to COP29, and this led to [regular COP29 diary pieces with the Irish Examiner](#) from our delegates, as well as appearances across a number of media outlets. Cian Walsh, a Second Year Government and Political Science Student, was interviewed by George Lee for [RTÉ Six One News](#).
- Sumaya Mohammed, a first year Law student, featured on Today with [Claire Byrne on RTÉ Radio 1](#). Her appearance on the programme prompted inquiries from the Irish Times, and led to Ms Mohammed featuring on their 'Ones to Watch' list for 2025.



- Research by Dr Valentina Rossi on a 30,000-year-old fossil vulture from Central Italy revealed for the first time that volcanic rock can preserve microscopic details in feathers. This was covered by the [BBC](#), [Science Daily](#), [The Conversation](#), [The Irish Independent](#), [the Irish Examiner](#), [The Jerusalem Post](#) and others.
- Governing Authority Chair, Sean O'Driscoll, led the university's business engagement drive this year, including an opinion piece in the [Irish Examiner](#) on the need for Irish universities to improve engagement with businesses.
- Professor Barry O'Sullivan, School of Computer Science, made numerous media appearances discussing AI, including a piece for the Examiner on [ChatGPT is not your friend](#).
- An INFANT study highlighting iodine deficiency in pregnant women was covered by national media including the [Irish Independent](#) and [The Irish Times](#).
- The Mooney Goes Wild programme on RTÉ Radio 1 dedicated an entire episode to [The UCC Sustainable Futures Forum](#) in February 2025. Among the contributors are UCC students working across science, policy and the arts for a sustainable future.
- The UCC Philanthropy Impact Showcase hosted by Cork University Foundation and Cancer Research @UCC to celebrate five years of philanthropic support from Breakthrough Cancer Research, featured in the print editions of the Irish Examiner and the Evening Echo.





## President's Office

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