

# University College Cork – Open Research Position Statement

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## 1. Our Commitment to Open Research

Open Research is a key enabler supporting the development of a positive research culture and delivering tangible impacts for society<sup>1</sup>.

Accordingly, University College Cork (UCC) is committed to fostering a culture of Open Research that enables our research community to create, share, and use knowledge openly and responsibly for the enrichment of society. Our approach is grounded in the University's values of integrity, equity, discovery, and sustainability, and reflects our strategic ambition to deliver impactful research aligned with global challenges.

UCC's Strategic Plan 2023–2028 ('*Securing Our Future*')<sup>2</sup> sets out the institution's intention to transform the research culture of the University through the implementation of Engaged and Open Research, underpinned by academic integrity, ethical practice, and the principles of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This transformation is a key element of Goal One of the Strategic Plan - Research and Innovation - and is a key enabler of the UCC Futures framework.

UCC recognizes that this transformation must overcome real challenges, including awareness, relevant skills, infrastructure needs, and disciplinary differences in how Open Research is practiced.

To address these challenges, our approach to Open Research in UCC forms part of a wider Research Culture initiative, *Research Roots*, which seeks to foster Research Integrity, Ethics, Open Research & Trust for an Inclusive Research Culture in UCC.

## 2. What we mean by Open Research

Open Research<sup>3</sup> refers to the principles and practices that make research processes and outputs transparent, reproducible, accessible, and reusable by others. It encompasses:

- Open Access to publications and research outputs.
- FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) research data and software.
- Research integrity.
- Research ethics.

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<sup>1</sup> Nosek, B. (2019). [Strategy for Culture Change](#). Center for Open Science

<sup>2</sup> Securing Our Future, <https://www.ucc.ie/en/president/strategy2028/>

<sup>3</sup> Definition is guided by UNESCO: Understanding open science. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000383323>

- Responsible Research Assessment (RRA).
- Pre-registration, reproducibility and verifiability (as appropriate and subject to disciplinary norms).
- Citizen science and public engagement.
- Open methods, protocols, and educational resources.
- Inclusive and collaborative research practices.
- Supporting infrastructure.

At UCC, Open Research is recognized as essential to excellence, integrity, equity and impact in research. It enables knowledge dissemination beyond academic boundaries and supports innovation, public accountability, and societal benefit.

UCC's approach to Open Research aligns with Ireland's National Action Plan for Open Research (2022–2030), developed by the National Open Research Forum (NORF)<sup>4</sup>, which sets out a coordinated national roadmap for embedding open practices across the research system.

### 3. Our Strategic Objectives

To embed Open Research across the research lifecycle, UCC will:

- Continue to implement the institution's first Research Charter, which will articulate our values and expectations for open, responsible and ethical research practices<sup>5</sup>.
- Identify and align with relevant research culture initiatives to ensure an effective, streamlined and consolidated approach to realizing Research Priority 1.4 of UCC's institutional Strategic Plan (2023-2028) - *Transform UCC's research culture through the implementation of Engaged Research and Open Research, underpinned by academic integrity, ethical and responsible practice.*
- Identify and align with relevant external and internal policies and frameworks.
- Further develop policies, supports and infrastructures to enable effective dissemination of research, including infrastructure for Open Access.
- Support FAIR data practices including data stewardship, training, guidance, and platforms for data sharing and curation.
- Encourage a broad range of rigorous methodologies, including collaborative research with and for society, such as citizen science and public-patient involvement.
- Promote Open Access, with a target of making at least 65% of all UCC research output openly available by 2028<sup>6</sup>, while acknowledging that there may be exceptional circumstances whereby an output being made openly available may need to be postponed (for example, the protection of commercially sensitive information).

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<sup>4</sup> National Action Plan for Open Research 2022-2030, <https://norf.ie/national-action-plan/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ucc.ie/en/research/charter/>

<sup>6</sup> Securing Our Future, p. 14

- Align research assessment practices with principles such as CoARA<sup>7</sup>, focusing on the quality and impact of research rather than journal metrics.
- Embed Open Research training into postgraduate and researcher development programmes.
- Continue to focus on raising institutional-wide awareness of Open Research and its importance to the delivery of high quality and impactful research.

These objectives will be supported by the Office of the Vice President for Research & Innovation, UCC Library, IT Services, and relevant governance and ethics bodies across the University.

The development and adoption of Open Research practices will be monitored by the University via the UCC Open Research Coordination Group. Monitoring includes, but is not limited to, the use of internal and external systems and software that support Open Research, for example, the University's institutional repository (CORA) and Research Information System (Pure), other approved repositories, the use of open access funding, the incorporation of Open Research practices into funding applications, and the implementation of RRA measures aligned with the CoARA principles.

#### 4. Our Supports

UCC recognizes that enabling Open Research requires shared commitment from researchers, professional services, funders, and collaborators.

As a University community, we will:

- Provide the infrastructure (and associated supports), skills, and incentives necessary to practice Open Research.
- Ensure that staff and students are equipped to engage in open and reproducible research practices.
- Work with partners nationally and internationally to align policies and promote best practice in Open Research.
- Foster a research environment that values transparency, collaboration, and social responsibility.

#### 5. Looking Ahead

Through the embedding of Open Research practices, UCC will advance its mission to “*enable transformative research and learning for the enrichment of society and stewardship of our planet*”<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> UCC is a signatory to the CoARA [Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment](https://coara.eu/coalition/membership/) and is a member of the CoARA coalition: <https://coara.eu/coalition/membership/>

<sup>8</sup> Securing Our Future, Our Mission, p.10.

Open Research is a cornerstone of responsible research and innovation, and a driver of the University's reputation for excellence, integrity and impact, both locally and globally.

UCC is committed to turning this vision into action.

This statement marks the beginning of a sustained programme of implementation, support, and engagement. Going forward, UCC's approach to Open Research will be guided by evolving best practices, emerging policies, and continued engagement with our research community.