

# Evaluation and Evidence Gathering

# id+futures

## Key Team Members

Co-Researchers: Brian Cull, Brid Broderick, Claire McCarthy, William O'Donovan  
Post-doctoral Researcher: Dr Rachael Wanjagua  
Principal Investigators: Dr Nicola Maxwell; Dr Claire Edwards

id+futures is funded under the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH 4)

## Our Story

The id+ project (2022 - 2024) and subsequently the id+futures project (2024 - 2026), funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Impact Case Study Award and PATH 4: Phase 2 funding have both required evaluation.

### Round 1:

HEA Case Study Impact evaluation was undertaken by academic and research staff in 2023/24 and comprised qualitative data collection.

### Round 2:

#### HEA PATH 4: Phase 2 funding.

By 2025/26, as a rights-based project, it was time to consider who should be involved in this round of evaluation and evidence gathering and to consider this key question:

*"How to design an academically rigorous evaluation in a way that is coherent with the id+futures' project values' base?"*

### Who is involved?

By 2025/26, the Certificate in Disability Inclusive Practice (CDIP) had produced two cohorts of graduates with intellectual disabilities skilled in reviewing, auditing, engaging with public policy debates and presenting. Five graduates agreed to engage in research training and four have subsequently been employed as co-researchers: Claire McCarthy, Bríd Broderick, William O'Donovan, Brian Cull.

### This work is based on a 5-stage research plan:

1. Making Decision Making Explicit and CRPD Proofed (April - May 2025) Facilitators: Dr Luke Noonan (School of Law, UCC), Kaithlyn Frazier (Learning Support, UCC)  
Objectives: (a) how people with intellectual disabilities (ID) can make decisions as researchers and what it means to be decision-makers when doing research.  
(b) how to support people with intellectual disabilities (ID) to make decisions about taking part in research.
2. Reflecting on telling the story of co-learning (May 2025) Facilitators: Catherine McVicker, Ruby Walsh  
Objective: Reflect on experiences of and tell the story of co-learning.
3. Research Project and Research Training (May - July 2025) Facilitators: Gráinne Mulcahy, Ruby Walsh, Iesa Mortell  
Objectives: Co-create a comprehensible roadmap to understanding the research process.
4. Simultaneous Reiteration of Training and Data Collection and Analysis (Sept 2025 - ongoing) Facilitator: Dr Rachael Wanjagua Post-doctoral Researcher
5. Dissemination of Findings (Jan - Sept 2026)



## Key Impacts

(current and envisaged)

### September 2025 - January 2026:

Ethical Approval Granted including co-researchers Twenty-five semi-structured interviews completed with:

- Certificate in Social Citizenship students
- Teaching Fellows
- Learning Support Staff
- Peer Buddies

### Dissemination Activities:

- Data analysis is ongoing
- Journal articles are in the planning stages
- Evaluation Report will be submitted to HEA September 2026

### Conference Presentations:

Maxwell, N., Mulcahy, G., and McCarthy, C. (2025) *"Co-Learning, Co-Research and people with intellectual disability."* Mental Health and Capacity Law Conference, Centre for Criminal Justice and Human Rights, School of Law, UCC. 5 September 2025.

McCarthy, C. *"You have to have somebody there who has experience in both co-learning and research because they'd have a better understanding than somebody who didn't –the 'experts by experience'."*

Cull, B., Broderick, B., McCarthy, C., O'Donovan, W. with Wanjagua, R., Maxwell, N. and Edwards, C. (2026)

*"People with intellectual disabilities changing the landscape of disability studies."* Leeds Disability Studies Conference, 13-15 April 2026.

Maxwell, N., Edwards, C., Wanjagua, R., Mulcahy, G., Noonan, L., McVicker, G. (2026) *"Navigating the politics and practices of co-research with people with intellectual disabilities in the higher education space."* Leeds Disability Studies Conference, 15 April 2026.

### Forthcoming:

IASSID Conference, July 2026, Munich. Presentation: *"Including people with intellectual disabilities as co-researchers in research and evaluation in an Irish university: balancing research process and requirements."* Maxwell, N., Edwards, C. and Wanjagua, R.

### Poster:

*"Access to higher education as people with intellectual disability in an Irish university."* Cull, B., Broderick, B., McCarthy, C., and O'Donovan, W.

