UCC SOCIETIES

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2027

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WHO WE ARE

UCC Societies aims to enhance the cultural, creative, social, political, and intellectual experience of all our students through our representation of societies - democratic groups that coordinate activities, opportunities, and campaigns for students, by students. Founded in 1850, we help students find their community and reach their potential by developing both personally and professionally.

Mission and Vision

"UCC Societies shall be a self-governing, autonomous body whose aim is to enhance the cultural, creative, social, political and intellectual student experience by facilitating, representing and regulating UCC Societies."
- UCC Societies Constitution

Values

- Democratic
- Inclusive and Accessible
- Student Engagement and Empowerment
- Creative and Innovative.
- Outreach and Advocacy

STRATEGIC PILLARS

This section outlines our strategic pillars for the next four years. These pillars were developed following extensive discussion and review with key stakeholders of UCC Societies, the student committee members and ordinary members, and the staff and community that we work alongside and with. These pillars aim to support Societies' development and growth and aim to give students a framework for planning and action.

1

Sustainability
Connection to the natural world, sustainable sponsorship, infrastructure and resources, utilising our societies space, student health and wellbeing, training, digital fluency, sustainability checklist

2

Student Success and Wellbeing
Looking at how Societies impact students, personal and professional development, training and where societies can take you

3

Civic, External and Global Engagement
Community outreach, democratic function, communicators of knowledge, effective global citizens, aiding academic success.

4

Societies and the UCC Community
Increasing accessibility, reaching Postgraduates, mature and part-time students impact on campus life

5

PR and Marketing
How can we best amplify the work of societies and all that they offer? How can we show our best selves + ensure our branding and ethos are recognisable?

OBJECTIVE 1
SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is a key priority for UCC Societies. Drawing upon Kate Raworth's theory of Doughnut Economics, we aim to support social and environmental sustainability in the Societies community.

No	Aim	Action
1(i)	**Green Spaces: Increasing the exposure of our students to encourage pro-environmental behaviours and increase wellbeing.**	**a) Petition to have green spaces 'bookable' as events spaces** **b) 50 Society Events per year to be held in green spaces by 2024** **c) Encourage each society to hold at least one event per year in a green space by 2025**
1(ii)	**Connection with stakeholders / Networking for Sustainability.**	**a) Examine feasibility of having a Green Officer position on each committee by 2026** **b) Societies Officer and Societies President to sit on Green Forum committee by 2024** **c) Greenshoots Campus Coordinator to be invited to speak to Societies on a yearly basis by 2024**
1(iii)	**Working group for sustainable sponsorship.**	**a) A sustainable sponsorship working group to be put in place by 2023** **b) A sustainable sponsorship policy to be completed and brought to by Senate in 2024** **c) A list of criteria to be drawn up by 2024 in collaboration with campus Greenshoots coordinator as a guideline on what does and doesn't make a company sustainable**

No	Aim	Action
		d) A yearly report on our societies sponsorship streams to be produced with a reduction of 50% on sponsorship accepted from non-sustainable companies and organisations

1(iv)	Events	a) Introduction of a 'Sustainability Checklist' for society events by 2024
		
		b) 80% of societies engaging with Sustainability checklist by 2025
		   i) Year 1: 40%
		   ii) Year 2: 50%
		   iii) Year 3: 75%
		   iv) Year 4: 90%+
		
		c) 40% reduction in printing by our 100+ societies by 2025
		
		d) 5% of events to be held online per year by 2026
		
		e) Sustainable ticketing policy to be brought to Senate in 2024

1(v)	Clubs and Socs Spaces = Green Spaces.	a) Introduction of Composting to Societies & Clubs Space and events by 2024 b) Plastic Free in all our Spaces by 2023
5(vi)	Environmental Training	a) Mandatory Sustainability Training showing how to 'green' their events 2025 b) 50% of society committee members having completed the University's Carbon Literacy training by 2027 c) Climate Justice education - placing a focus on intersectional environmentalism
1(vii)	Encouraging society sustainability and growth	a) A mandatory 'crossover document' to be compiled by each committee member 2026 b) 'Society Development Training' to be provided at the start of each year to guide committees on strategy & continuity beyond the given year within their society / meetings at the end of term for continuity.

OBJECTIVE 2
STUDENT SUCCESS AND WELLBEING

UCC Societies aims to create an environment that supports and enhances student success and wellbeing, equipping students with skills to aid them in their personal and professional growth and development. We aim to further help students in realising their potential and demonstrate a high quality and flexible student experience.

No	Aim	Action
2(i)	Engagement and belonging	a) 15% increase in membership figures by 2027 b) Increase in cases of student retention as a result of socs involvement c) Landing page set up on website 'why get involved' Page to be regularly updated and promoted locally and nationally especially surrounding recruitment events. d) 20% Increase in 'Give it a Go' events by 2027 e) 20% increase of attendance at 'Give it a Go' events by 2026.
2(ii)	Societies; Transferable Skills & Graduate Attributes	a) 10% increase per year in Societies committee members applying for employagility award b) General Linkedin/CV/ interview workshops to be provided each semester with a focus on how to showcase your work with socs (2024) c) Promote in-house innovation award- increase application by 10% per year until 2027 d) We will introduce at least 5 engaging and interactive workshops at Societies Day, Failte Fest and Open Days rather than focusing solely on info stands

No	Aim	Action
		e) We will explore and promote the talents of students within societies by implementing 5 x semester 'spotlights'
2(iii)	Safe Spaces	a) 60% of society committee members signed up to Bystander intervention programme by Sep 2027 b) 50% socs attendance at Accessibility training per year by 2025 c) 50% of societies signed up to 'First Contact' initiative by 2026 d) Active consent training and trans-allyship training introduced by 2024 e) 'Quiet hours' to be introduced at day long events and 'quiet spaces' to be arranged at balls/ larger events by 2027

OBJECTIVE 3
CIVIC, EXTERNAL, AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Civic, external, and global engagement is at the heart of UCC Societies. We aim to foster active participation and citizen engagement through our structures and by facilitating the democratic processes of our individual societies.

No	Aim	Action
3i)	To foster and facilitate healthy democratic processes within individual societies	a) To review the feasibility of integrating an appropriate voting system into the Societies Portal that can be utilised in individual society elections as well as the Executive elections at the end of term b) To carry out individual society constitutional reviews and make subsequent amendments to ensure that all constitutions are in line with UCC Societies policy c) Streamline AGM and EGM process with a booking system for reps and trainings for committee members. d) Ensure training on Senate through the format of a Mock Senate to provide student with practical experience in our democratic processes e) To promote the structure of what a Society committee is, the roles and its workings for those yet to become involved
3(ii)	To strengthen our own democratic structures	a) To conduct an in-depth review, maintain and update the UCC Societies Constitution, Policy Booklet and Mandate Booklet ensuring that it accurately reflects the work of the Executive and the democratic processes of the guild b) To promote active participation in Senate by further developing our standing orders in conjunction with the Ex-Officio c) Create a Senate feedback form that looks at engagement and awareness of Senate's function

OBJECTIVE 3 CIVIC, EXTERNAL, AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

No	Aim	Action
3(iii)	**To be at the forefront of student leadership on campus and to support student leaders**	a) To continue developing our relationship with the UCC Students' Union and UCC Sport as student representative bodies, and to actively collaborate with these bodies to promote student participation and democracy b) To play an active role in the organisation of student-centred events throughout student weeks such as the opening weeks of college and RAG Week, in conjunction with the relevant student bodies c) To continue relationships with UCC Student Media and their support of Society run or Society related shows.
3(iv)	To become active global citizens	a) To foster international connections and collaborations b) To promote the Irish-language and further our involvement in on-campus initiatives such as Seachtain na Gaeilge c) To further the Digital Fáinne initiative by reaching out on a yearly basis to societies who may be interested d) To develop informational videos about UCC Societies in different languages spoken by UCC students e) To support students in their participation in programmes like Bystander Intervention and Carbon Literacy Training f) Promote interdisciplinary perspectives through collaborations g) To explore the possibility of gathering Society related quantifiable data through GA My Compass and PGR Platform

OBJECTIVE 3 CIVIC, EXTERNAL, AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

No	Aim	Action
3(v)	To provide appropriate infrastructure and platform for the students to reach out, inform, interact, assess, conceive and discover	a) Facilitate networking and collaboration among members and external organisations, including events, conferences and online platforms that provide opportunities for members to connect, exchange ideas, and collaborate on projects or initiatives b) Provide opportunity for society committee members to socialise and build community c) More accessible socials - non-alcoholic events, daytime events and events inclusive of all committee members d) To develop and grow the peer-to-peer learning sessions for societies.
3(vi)	To be leaders / communicators of knowledge	a) Produce and update outreach manuals b)Events that showcase the expertise of members by hosting events, talks, or workshops where members can share their knowledge and skills with others. c) Promote learning opportunities by sharing information about training sessions, courses, or educational resources that members can access, and to provide support for members who want to develop new skills or pursue new interests outside of UCC.
3(vii)	Provide an infrastructure and platform for the students to reach out, inform, interact, assess, conceive and discover	a) Maintain at least 90% attendance at Senate b) 2 informal feedback sessions per semester (2024) c) Examine the feasibility of integrating trainings into the Socs Portal (eg. finance before submitting expenditure request) d) Mandatory & 'Goal setting' exercise to be completed by each society at start of each year and assessed mid-way throughout the year and at end of year (2026)

OBJECTIVE 4
WE ARE UCC / UCC COMMUNITY

UCC Societies are an established, historical aspect of student life in UCC. We will support Societies in creating and growing communities and contributing to student experience in the University. Reaching out to non socs students.
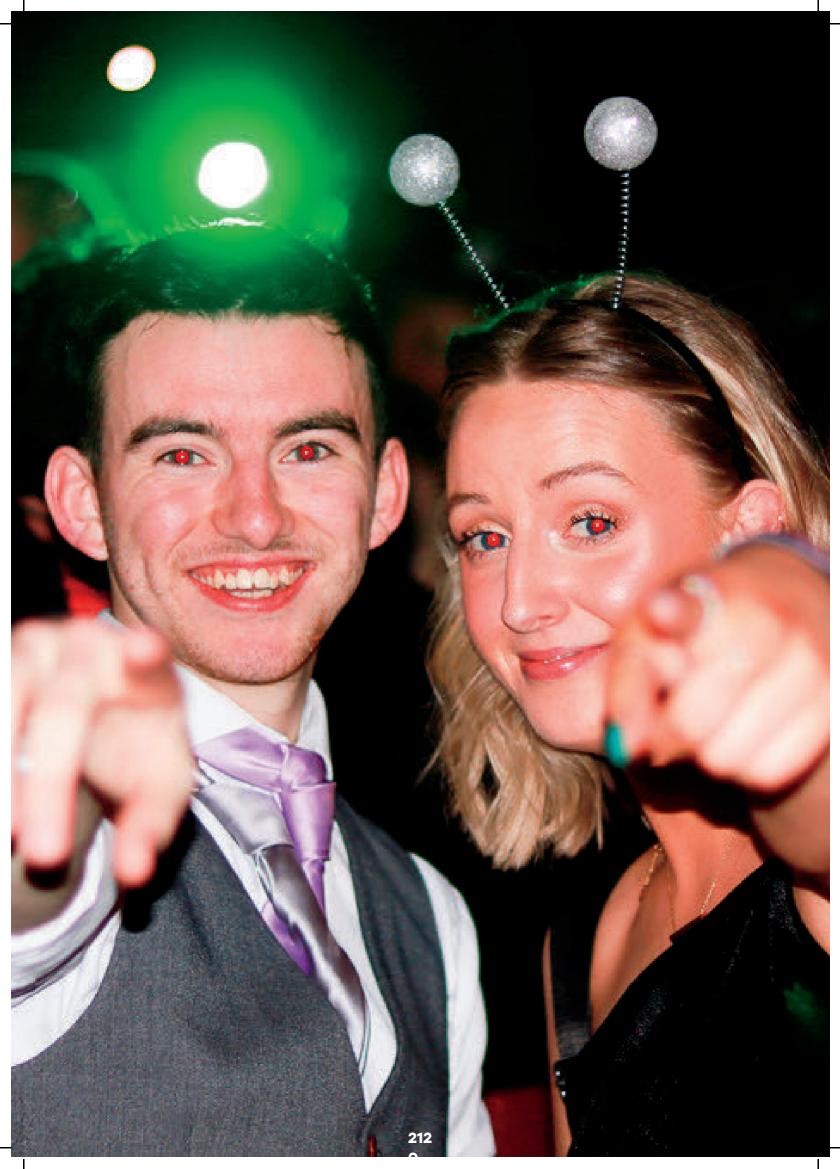
No	Aim	Action
4(i)	To actively contribute to the student life experience on campus	a) Continue to be the biggest facilitator of student-run on-campus events
4(ii)	Advocate for an accessible and inclusive campus	a) Societies advocate for improved accessibility and inclusivity b) Launch of accessibility checklist: i) Year 1: 40% usage ii) Year 2: 50% iii) Year 3: 75% iv) Year 4: 90%+ c) Support Societies in prioritising accessibility when choosing rooms for events. d) Expand the Accessibility Checklist to include Satellite campuses by end of term 2024 e) 50% of societies signed up to 'First Contact' initiative by 2026 f) Encourage Societies to engage with the Schools Outreach Programme with a focus on DEIS schools

OBJECTIVE 4 WE ARE UCC / UCC COMMUNITY

No	Aim	Action
		g) Quiet/sensory/reflection spaces at events over 75 people. All Societies by end of 2024 h) Use of pronouns normalised online and in- person through email signatures, Zoom accounts i) Pronoun and name badges in office by end of 2024 j) Mindfulness in ensuring that non-binary people are not automatically always placed into all-female spaces
4(iii)	Reach further Across all course levels, postgrads and mature students, part-time, research students	a) Encourage Societies to hold cohort-specific events to encourage involvement b) Increase post grad membership by 5% by 2025 and 10% by 2027 c) Support integration into UCC life, through informal social opportunities in collaboration with the likes of UCCSU Postgraduate rep and Mature Student Rep d) Ensure Societies have a presence at undergraduate orientations and explore involvement in postgraduate and international ones e) Explore possibility of involvement with the RAP project in UCC f) Accessibility in relation to event timing and location is essential to achieve this
4(iv)	Promoting our contribution to campus life	a) Reintroducing similar concept to "Socs on Tour". Stands and Societies visit satellite campuses i) Minimum 1 visit per year per campus b) Explore establishing a Societies Newsletter that is sent out to both students and staff c) Explore the possibility of holding an exhibition that highlights people in Societies and their contribution to student life

No	Aim	Action
		d) Improved communication and publicity of the Societies success at the STARS Awards as well as external ones like BICS and SAAI. i) Highlighting the events/actions and the Societies behind them
4(v)	Communicators of knowledge - Peer to Peer learning approach	a) Support Societies in the development of their trainings, workshops and campaigns b) Draw upon Society knowledge in the organisation of trainings and highlight trainings on offer internally as well as externally c) Continue the development of Peer-To-Peer workshops and opportunities for committee members to learn from one another d) Support Societies in developing intervarsities/relationships with similar societies in other Universities or Colleges
4(vi)	Strengthen collaboration with UCC Departments	a) Continue strong relationship with UCC Access and ensure Societies support the integration of students into UCC b) Continue support of UCC+ orientations c) Work on bringing back social activities held as part of Access orientations d) Continue to support UCC Gaisce Project e) Work to promote the educational opportunities Societies can provide

OBJECTIVE 5
PR AND MARKETING

We will utilise PR and Marketing to amplify the work of Societies to ensure value, visibility and opportunities.

No	Aim	Action
5(i)	**Increasing Brand Awareness**	**a) Measure the number of people who follow the instagram/Tik tok and Twitter pages. Aim for an 20% increase year on year** **b) Collabs between UCC Socs and a society), Spotlights and video content** **c) Meet the Executive content so people know their representatives** **d) Awards promotion up immediately following awards** **e) To support and upskill the Public Relations Officer by providing external training at the beginning of their term**
5(ii)	**Bridging gap between Societies and wider student body**	**a) Survey on UCC Instagram page for Societies to gauge engagement trends.**
5(iii)	**Website update and development**	**a) Publish Society related testimonies** **b) Publish promotional videos of society events, including an introductory video with UCC Societies Executive** **c) Promote the benefits of being in a society via online content: graphics, videos, etc.**

OBJECTIVE 5 PR AND MARKETING

No	Aim	Action
5(iv)	Utilise digital publicity	a) Increase awareness on Satellite campuses using screens and other forms of digital media
5(v)	Promoting and publicising the achievements of our societies	a) Publicising the amount raised for charity through the year, supporting our entrepreneurial societies in their businesses. b) Sponsorship and mentorship through Awards for Societies c) Supporting green initiatives and try to obtain sponsorship from green land ethical companies to support this.
5(vi)	Create and develop a strong marketing and publication plan.	a) Promote student life - Target certain times of the year. b) Measuring the interactions in posts, recording what posts get most interaction, at what time of year. c) PR and Marketing Working Group: Chaired by President with Societies Officer, PRO, Events Officer and Office Staff to discuss action plans and how to target our audience. Meeting biweekly by end of 2024.
5(vii)	Accessible and inclusive UCC Societies	a) All social media is in line with accessibility checklist b) All UCC Societies social media post include closed captions c) Societies social media incorporates a wider variety of languages, including a particular focus on the Irish language
v(iii)	Upskilling and education	a) Support societies learning and skills development in media through trainings and access to equipment