Dear Colleague,

I hope that you are well.

I am writing to provide you with some information on how our research, scholarship and innovation are continuing through these very difficult circumstances.

I know of the very significant work going on across the community to progress our research, scholarship and innovation. This includes the extraordinary work of many of our researchers who are directly involved in applying their expertise to support national efforts to address the pandemic, for which we are extremely grateful.

I am also aware of the challenges confronting many of you in maintaining your research in the face of significant disruption, and at a time when enormous effort is going into delivering online teaching and learning and into meeting personal caring responsibilities during the crisis.

The University is continuing to provide normal supports for research and scholarship where these can be delivered remotely. In particular, the supports offered by UCD Research and Innovation are available to you as normal through remote working, and you can find details on the UCD Research and Innovation Services Portal. You will also find there a list of FAQs, which will be monitored and kept up to date in response to the developing situation. If you have any questions on our services that not answered there you can direct them to ucdresearch@ucd.ie.

Most research is being conducted from home during this period, but essential research and research support activities are continuing on campus. Details of the latter are contained in the FAQs.

Supervision of research students and postdoctoral researchers is a particular priority at this time, and information on all aspects of this is contained in the FAQs prepared by Graduate Studies and available here.

Funding calls are now available for research related to COVID19, with more to follow. These are broad in their focus, recognising the breadth of the impacts of the pandemic, and will reach into all Colleges and the four strategic themes. Details are contained in the Research Bulletin, which is now sent out by email on a weekly basis and is also available here. Discussion is also underway on the many forms of research that will be needed as we emerge from the current crisis and seek to learn from it, and to inform this we are seeking to establish the scope of relevant expertise and research within UCD. I would be grateful if you could take the time to complete this short form so that we can contribute to an emerging national picture of expertise and understand UCD’s capacity to respond to calls to action.

I know that a number of you are concerned about meeting deliverables on your research grants at this time. Funders such as HRB, IRC and SFI have indicated that they will take the current circumstances into account, but they have yet to map out their approach in detail. We are working through the Irish
Universities Association to represent your interests at a sectoral level. We will also be pragmatic and reasonable in our response to deadlines associated with internal research funding.

Finally, I am seeing many examples of how we support one another as a research community at this time, and I urge you to continue these efforts. Please bear in mind the needs of those who may benefit from particular support, including research students and postdoctoral researchers, retired colleagues, and those separated from their families.

Best wishes,
Orla

Prof. Orla Feely,
Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact