



UCD Gender Equality and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Accelerator Fund

1. Introduction

A UCD Gender Equality and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Accelerator Fund has been established to support UCD Schools which have successfully achieved an Athena SWAN accreditation to pilot innovative actions from their respective gender equality action plans in partnership with other UCD Schools. In addition to gender equality, an EDI dimension is now included in the new Athena SWAN Ireland Charter Framework launched in November 2021.

UCD Schools are implementing ambitious action plans, progressing to renewing their bronze level award, demonstrating progress, and applying for a silver accreditation which requires schools to demonstrate the impact of implementing gender equality action plans.

This central UCD Gender Equality and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Accelerator Fund recognises and supports Athena SWAN accredited Schools in UCD which have demonstrated considerable commitment to the Athena SWAN process, resources, and leadership in producing, and implementing an evidence-based gender equality action plan.

Funding innovative projects that evaluate impact will accelerate gender equality and diversity and inclusion best practice, more broadly, in Schools and Colleges and both support the implementation of University level initiatives and facilitate the adoption of successful School level initiatives University-wide where appropriate. This will support the University's ambition to obtain Athena SWAN Silver accreditation in 2024 and foster greater alignment with the UCD Gender Equality Action Plan 2020 – 2024 and EDI Strategy 2021 – 2024.

2. Background

UCD Athena SWAN Schools programme has matured and expanded since its launch in November 2017. 25 UCD Schools are accredited and implementing gender equality action plans. A key recommendation from a recent strategic review of the UCD Athena SWAN Schools programme was to establish an accelerator fund to meet the requirements of objective four of the review and demonstrate the University's ongoing commitment to supporting Schools achieve gender equality and inclusion in their environments.

This fund complements the Higher Education Authority (HEA) sectoral approach to promote the attainment of equality of opportunity via the *Gender Equality Enhancement Fund*¹ which recognises that, in addition to the organisational and culture change initiatives, the incentivisation of progress on gender equality targets through funding mechanisms is needed. The Fund also complements the existing *UCD Research Seed Funding, Diversity Strand*² which focuses on funding research related to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

¹ Further information available on the HEA's Gender Equality Enhancement Fund webpage.

² Further information available on UCD Research's webpage:



3. Objectives

The primary objectives of the UCD Gender Equality EDI Accelerator Fund are to:

- Encourage innovative approaches to addressing gender inequality;
- Facilitate gender equality initiatives and innovative solutions that respond to the challenges and barriers identified to achieving gender equality which emerged during School/College Athena SWAN submissions;
- Encourage cross-school collaboration as a means to achieve University-wide transformation in gender equality and inclusion;
- Support alignment with the UCD Gender Equality Action Plan 2020 – 2024 and EDI Strategy 2021 - 2024
- Facilitate the funding of broader EDI activities aligned to both the UCD EDI policy and strategy and gender equality action plans and the EDI dimension that is now included in the new Athena SWAN Ireland Charter launched in November 2021;
- Support the achievement of future Athena SWAN applications - 1) renewals, 2) silver and 3) gold level applications which require schools/units to demonstrate 1) progress 2) impact 3) beacon and flagship initiatives.

4. Details

This Fund is for innovative actions from School/College Gender Equality Action Plans. This fund would make awards across the areas:

- Gender Equality and Diversity and Inclusion capacity-building activities.
- Seed projects for development of proposals for the HEA's Gender Equality Enhancement Funds.
- Transforming gender and EDI research outputs into practice.

Applications for funding under the UCD Gender Equality and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Accelerator Fund can be made in three areas. A total fund of €15,000 is available and up to €5,000 funding is available for each area is indicated in brackets:

1. Gender Equality, and Diversity and Inclusion capacity-building activities
2. UCD Seed projects for development with a view to achieving HEA's Gender Equality Enhancement Funding.
3. Athena SWAN capacity-building activities

Colleges are encouraged to match successful fund applications of up to a maximum of €5,000 for any one College.



5. Requirements

- Proposals must be collaborative and involve at least **two** UCD schools.
- The lead school must hold an Athena Swan accreditation.
- Schools may make one submission as lead.
- Schools/Units which have not yet achieved an Athena Swan accreditation may be named as a partner in the proposals in addition to the leads.
- All proposals must nominate a lead school for administrative and financial purposes.
- Relevant non-HEI organisations such as representative bodies or community partners may be included in proposals in addition at least two eligible schools.
- Proposals must include information on matching funding made available at College-level to support the project.
- Application must be signed by the College Principal and all collaborating Heads of Schools, indicating acceptance of any award and a commitment to provide the necessary support for the programme of activity.

6. UCD Process

The lead Schools chair/co-chairs of the School/College EDI/Gender Equality Implementation Committee must submit the application and cc' relevant stakeholders.

All applications should be submitted to edi@ucd.ie to include the following:

Funding decisions will be made based on the following criteria by a panel chaired by Professor Colin Scott, Vice-President for EDI, co-chair of the GEAG, Professor Emma Sokell, Marcellina Fogarty, Strategic EDI Manager, Eimear O'Reilly, EDI Project Officer and a nominee.

Assessment Criterion	Score	Min Required
1. Alignment with School/College level Gender Equality Action Plan	10 marks	5 marks
2. Alignment with the UCD Gender Equality Action Plan 2020 – 2024 and EDI Strategy 2021 - 2024	10 marks	5 marks
3. Innovation in specified area of funding (advancing gender equality initiatives in UCD/ Athena SWAN capacity-building activities/ transforming gender and EDI research outputs into practice)	25marks	10 marks
4. Benefits to UCD	25 marks	10 marks
5. Funding - value for money and impact of programme	10 marks	5 marks
6. Quality of the Proposal	20 marks	15 marks

Successful candidates will be invited to present the outputs of their pilot twelve months from the outcome announced by UCD EDI at the annual UCD Athena SWAN Schools event scheduled in November and to present to the Gender Equality Action Group on progress and outputs of the project.

