

University College Dublin

# Global Engagement Strategy 2021-2024



**RISING  
TO THE  
FUTURE**  
UCD Strategy 2020-2024

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# FOREWORD



## Dear Colleagues and Partners of UCD,

**Global engagement is one of UCD's defining characteristics and most successful stories. It permeates every aspect of University life, shaping the experience of our students, faculty and staff, and advancing the global outlook of our UCD community.**

Significant advances were made in the lifetime of our inaugural Global Engagement Strategy 2016-2020. Through these developments we have enabled our increasingly diverse UCD community to realise their global engagement ambitions.

COVID-19 has impacted our global engagement activities, but we have risen to the challenges and successfully overcome some of the impediments it posed. We have devised innovative solutions to connect with our overseas partners, students and alumni and created opportunities for our community to experience global activities in a travel-free world.

The second iteration of the Strategy will continue to build on our collective achievements. It will focus on delivering two key objectives, aspiring firstly to achieve *A Global Experience for All* and secondly to showcase *UCD's Global Impact*, drawing on our strong national heritage of Storytelling.

With the continued passionate commitment of you, our colleagues, and our partners, we will work together to realise the aspirations of the entire UCD community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Dolores O'Riordan'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Professor Dolores O'Riordan**  
**Vice-President for Global Engagement**

# INTRODUCTION

# 01



**A key objective of UCD's strategy 'Rising to the Future' is 'to be globally engaged'. As Ireland's Global University, UCD's commitment is to 'bring the best of the world to Ireland and bring the best of Ireland, including its distinct cultures, to the world'. The Global Engagement Strategy sets out the key objectives and enablers to deliver on this vision.**

The Strategy is grounded in the core University values of excellence, diversity, integrity, collegiality, engagement and creativity. These values provide the direction for global engagement and our aspirations for the entire UCD community to operate within an integrated multicultural environment.

Academic freedom and innovation will be embedded as guiding principles for the Strategy and new technology will be embraced to execute delivery. We will instil a grassroots institutional culture that actively values the contribution of our community to global issues and recognises efforts to advance global engagement by students, alumni, faculty and staff.

The Strategy sets out the ambition to provide opportunities for a truly global experience for all at UCD. The development of global skills and competences within our entire community will be a key goal. Committed to fostering a multicultural environment, we will enable students, faculty and staff to gain a deeper understanding of the world, through study, or through experiences in Ireland and abroad.

Recognising that for many within the UCD community, international experience through travel is not possible for financial or other reasons, we will strive to remove these impediments. Innovative practices will be introduced to design virtual alternatives to experiences abroad, increasing accessibility and reducing the environmental impact of travel. Through curriculum innovation and introducing best practice in global education, our students will have an opportunity to acquire the skills required to operate in an increasingly globalised world.



UCD has a rich and multifaceted heritage, contributing significantly to the formation of the modern Irish State; arguably UCD's story is the story of modern Ireland. A key tenet of this Strategy is to 'tell our story', crystallising UCD's institutional character and legacy, our current status as 'Ireland's Global University' and future aspirations for global impact. UCD inhabits a unique space where Ireland and the world come together, simultaneously 'looking out and looking in' on each other.

The Strategy builds on this foundation, a University steeped in Irish culture, with more international students than any other higher education institution in Ireland and aspirations to become significantly more multicultural and diverse. Our Strategy, with values at its heart, will draw on our Irish heritage of Storytelling to create a comprehensive narrative of UCD's global story, past, present and future.

This narrative will be designed to increase the global impact of UCD's education, research and innovation to empower humanity and tackle societal issues. We will augment our position as Ireland's Global University, communicating and celebrating our global achievement.

In bringing the best of the world to Ireland and the best of Ireland to the world, UCD will seek to draw on Ireland's distinctive culture in the implementation of all aspects of the Global Engagement Strategy 2021-2024.

# OBJECTIVES

# 02



## OBJECTIVE 1: A GLOBAL EXPERIENCE FOR ALL

UCD aspires to the development of global skills and competences within its entire community. We are committed to fostering an inclusive, integrated multicultural environment, and enabling students, faculty and staff to gain a deeper understanding of the world, whether through study, or through experiences in Ireland and abroad.

## PRIORITIES

### 1. Foster an integrated multicultural environment and global citizenship

UCD's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy supports UCD's mission to continue to be an equitable, diverse and inclusive community. We will complement the activities of the EDI strategy and the 'University for All' framework, developing initiatives to foster an integrated, inclusive multi-cultural environment at UCD. We will be respectful of difference and nurture diversity among students, faculty and staff in a spirit of global citizenship.

### 2. Strengthen competences in global civilisations, languages and addressing societal challenges

As a community we aspire to strengthening our 'global competency', enhancing UCD's capacity to respond to global events. This requires an understanding of one's own and other civilisations including their cultural identities,

## Research Collaborations

The relationship between UCD and the University of California at Davis is a great example of a partnership developing organically through many connections, going back to Professor John E. Kinsella a graduate of UCD Agriculture and Dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at UC Davis. I myself was a postdoctoral researcher in UC Davis from 2010 to 2012, and am fortunate to have been supported in maintaining the relationship with my colleagues through a variety of collaborations. These include co-authored publications, teaching at UC Davis through an Erasmus+ teaching exchange grant, and developing a student internship programme where three to four UCD Human Nutrition students undertake their professional work experience at UC Davis each year. We will continue to advance our institutional cooperation, and create new opportunities for UCD students to work and grow at UC Davis.

**Dr Aifric O'Sullivan, School of Agriculture and Food Science**





histories, social, economic and political systems. It also requires the competence to speak, understand and think in foreign languages. Importantly, 'global competence' underlines the need to advance critical thought on global challenges, including climate change, planetary sustainability, health and wellness, urban living etc. UCD has the scholarly and research activity to underpin the development of these competences. Aligned to UCD's 4 key strategic themes, the regional focus identified through the Global Engagement Strategy, and the National Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026, UCD will facilitate the development of the required global competences for its community.

### **3. Enable and encourage students, faculty and staff to gain a global experience in Ireland and abroad**

UCD will define the different ways in which students, faculty and staff can gain a global experience on campus, overseas or virtually. The opportunities for these experiences will be available through relevant academic and administrative

frameworks and promoted effectively within the university. UCD will encourage participation in overseas experiences and intensify the development of virtual and other campus-based experiences for students, faculty and staff who are unable or do not wish to travel. We will continue to support students who face extra challenges in studying abroad. UCD is committed to promoting responsible, ethical volunteering through UCD Volunteers Overseas.

### **4. Champion global education and scholarship**

We will champion global education and scholarship for our students providing them with opportunities to equip themselves to live, work or study in another country and make a rich contribution to a globalised world. Building on best practice in internationalising the curriculum, opportunities for curriculum innovation will be promoted and implemented including on-line collaborative learning with partner universities.

## **Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility**

In 2017, Professors Kathleen James Chakraborty and Parul Mukerjee established an Erasmus+ ICM mobility partnership between UCD's School of Art History and Cultural Policy and Jawaharlal Nehru University's School of Arts and Aesthetics. This quickly became one of our School's most exciting collaborations, with a visit by Professor Naman Ahuja inspiring the idea for a conference on decolonising museum artefacts. I travelled to New Delhi in February 2020 for teaching and to take part in this conference, and to discuss exchange opportunities on our MA in Collections and Curating. We were delighted to welcome two JNU students before the onset of the COVID 19 Pandemic and we will continue our staff and student exchanges as soon as possible. The experience and connections we have gained from this rewarding partnership have opened up possibilities for further collaboration with Thapar University in Patiala, which we look forward to revisiting in the near future.

**Professor Lynda Mulvin, School of Art History and Cultural Policy**



# OBJECTIVES

# 02



## OBJECTIVE 2: GLOBAL IMPACT

UCD will effectively showcase its global reach and impact in teaching, research and innovation. Finding new ways to tell our global story, the university will build its international visibility, impact and reputation. UCD will continue to nurture its extensive global network and alumni community, seeking support for global engagement activities. Working through our partnerships and collaborations we will identify targeted opportunities to enhance our global impact.

### PRIORITIES

#### 1. Tell our global story by showcasing UCD's international reach and impact

UCD will collate information, data and stories that showcase its global successes and present them effectively for different

audiences. Testimonials will be sought from partners and collaborators abroad, and UCD will train faculty and staff in the art of storytelling to ensure maximum impact.

#### 2. Progress our global communication and outreach strategy to advance UCD's visibility, highlighting the culture of Ireland and building international reputation

UCD is active on every continent and increasingly engaged in its outreach with communities far removed from Dublin and Ireland. Recognising that UCD's visibility relies in part on an awareness of Ireland, its unique culture and the modern Irish State, UCD will advance its global communication strategy in line with UCD's key geographical regions of strategic focus. The culture of Ireland will be highlighted as a unique differentiator. We will communicate UCD's contribution to Irish culture and provide opportunities to experience the richness of Ireland's music, literature, language and dance. The impact of our teaching, research and innovation at global level will be communicated.

### Partnerships

BJUT and UCD are long-term partners with a shared vision that focuses on global engagement, world-class research and high quality education. Our collaboration has extended from largely undergraduate education into a more comprehensive collaboration that features mutual faculty exchanges, joint research activities and co-supervision of PhD students. With the great support and strong leadership from both sides, I believe that our strategic partnership will continue to deepen!

**Professor Guo Fu, Vice President, Beijing University of Technology**





### 3. Identify and enable mutually beneficial opportunities to advance teaching, research and innovation through UCD's global partners and collaborators

Through its Global Engagement Strategy 2016-2020, UCD has developed a clear approach to global partnerships, and it will seek to engage these partners to support teaching, research and innovation over the coming period. Opportunities to collaborate on global problem-solving will be sought, through university networks and with support from funded initiatives.

### 4. Foster UCD's global network and alumni community in support of its global engagement

UCD will work with alumni and supporters around the world in pursuit of its global goals in teaching, research and innovation. It will develop a deeper relationship with the Irish Government and other national bodies in support of global engagement, and liaise closely with the embassies and agencies of other countries, as well as with business and industry, to secure new opportunities for students, faculty and staff.

## Erasmus+ Student Mobility

My Erasmus+ exchange was to the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne in 2019/20. I was motivated by the cultural experience that French-speaking Switzerland offered, but also by the opportunity to improve my language skills. Adapting to living in another city and studying in a different university seemed like great opportunities to get to know new people. Being able to talk with previous exchange students at UCD was helpful, as I knew there would be good academic and relocation support structures, at both UCD and my host institution.

The linguistic component of going on exchange was important to me, and I found my French language skills benefited greatly from daily practice. Exchange is a great opportunity to immerse yourself in another language, not only in your day-to-day life but also through your coursework. This is especially relevant for professional development, as expanding your grasp of technical vocabulary related to your field of study in another language opens up future study and career opportunities.

Getting to know other exchange students from around the world also helped me to develop my intercultural competences. My roommates were from China, France, Japan, and Luxembourg, immersing me in several dynamic cultures. I came home feeling far more confident in my ability to engage with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, and would recommend this as an important reason to consider exchange.

**Eoin Faust, BSc Engineering**





# ENABLERS 03



## **1. Attract and develop, increasing numbers of international students to enhance the diversity and excellence of the UCD community.**

Consistent with UCD's aim to increase total student numbers by 25% over the next 10 years, there will be a concerted effort to recruit international students into programmes of high demand by students and employers. UCD is committed to enhancing the cultural diversity of our student population and attracting high quality students.



## **2. Deepen and expand UCD's global partnerships and enhance the mechanisms to support this activity**

UCD has developed a robust global partnership framework to identify, develop and manage partnerships in the lifetime of the 2016-2020 strategy. We will build on and refine these partnerships, identifying synergies with partners to deliver our Strategy, and seek to broaden our partnerships as the need or opportunity arises. Working with our partners we will further develop transnational education to support and expand our global community of learners and demonstrate the impact of our research activities. There will be a continued focus on Erasmus+ funding to sustain long term partner engagement, building on our excellent track record in attracting funding.





### 3. Further develop the infrastructure, systems and processes to support global engagement

We will continue to build and finetune an enabling environment for UCD's global activities which defines international best practice. Enhancing processes through digitalisation will be a priority, particularly to support mobility initiatives. Further investment will be required to accommodate and support the increasing number of international students and associated support staff. Delivery of the Global Engagement Strategy requires the support and co-operation of a multitude of UCD portfolios. A key enabler will be to motivate, incentivise and secure the co-operation of the entire UCD community on global engagement.



### 4. Focus on specific global regions of strategic importance

UCD has developed activities and engagement in teaching, research and outreach with countries and regions worldwide. We will continue activities to ensure a diverse multicultural community. In support of significant concentrations of activity and engagement with key world regions, UCD has established in-country Global Centres in five regions of strategic importance to its global engagement - the UCD Global Centres serve as hubs of UCD activity in North America, China, South Asia, Asia-Pacific and the Middle East. Beyond these regions, UCD is deeply engaged with Europe, and has a growing presence in Africa and Latin America. Although increasing diversity is core to this Strategy, we will seek to focus specific activities in distinct geographical areas. We will evaluate the scale of UCD's engagement across regions to enable a clear focus on priority regions and activities with opportunities for significant societal impact. UCD is committed to a greater focus on Europe during the life of this Strategy.





# STRATEGY OVERVIEW

# 04

## AMBITIONS

We aspire to....

### A Global Experience for All

## ACTIONS

We will ....

- Foster an inclusive and integrated multicultural environment and global citizenship
- Strengthen competences in global civilisations, languages and addressing societal challenges
- Enable and encourage students, faculty and staff to gain a global experience in Ireland and abroad with particular focus on mobility
- Champion global education and scholarship

## ACHIEVEMENTS

By 2024 we will have...

- Implemented and operate best practice in internationalising our curricula
- Attracted and developed increasing numbers of international students, enhancing the diversity and excellence of the UCD community
- Established an integrated multicultural community where faculty, staff and students will feel fully integrated in an inclusive environment
- Afforded faculty, staff and students opportunities to develop the skills to study & work in and contribute to a global society

### Global Impact

- Tell our global story by showcasing UCD's international reach and impact
- Progress our global communication and outreach strategy to advance UCD's visibility and build international reputation
- Identify and enable mutually beneficial opportunities to advance teaching, research and innovation through UCD's global partners and collaborators
- Foster UCD's global network and alumni community in support of its global engagement
- Provided faculty and staff with the evidence base and training in storytelling to maximise UCD's reach and impact in selected regions
- Developed and implemented a strategy to enhance UCD's global reputation and highlighting its contribution to Irish culture
- Co-created, with selected partners, solutions for major societal challenges and have advanced innovation in global education.

# IMPLEMENTATION 05



To realise our Strategy, an implementation plan will be drawn up annually in line with UCD's planning process. The annual plan will identify a number of priorities to be executed in that year, with actions described in greater detail than in the present Strategy, and timelines and persons responsible identified. Progress will be closely monitored and communicated throughout the year.

This Strategy is being launched in a very dynamic period in the immediate wake of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union and as the world endeavours to cope with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. UCD responded flexibly and with agility to execute its Global Engagement activities in response to COVID-19. We will build on these initiatives, further embracing digital technologies to implement our strategy.

Particular attention will be given to realising opportunities and mitigating risks in a post-Brexit world. We will continue to monitor our internal and external environment and if necessary, we will adapt our strategy as required..

In setting out the future implementation plans, we will build on the successes of UCD's Global Engagement Strategy for 2016-2020 which are highlighted below.



# ACHIEVEMENTS

# 06

## GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2016-2024

### Global Culture encompassing all UCD Life

**29%**

international  
students on our  
Dublin campuses



**€5.25m**

Erasmus Mobility  
Funding



**300**

events annually  
in revamped UCD  
Global Lounge



**136**

countries  
of student  
origin



**19%**

increase  
in outward  
student mobility



**506**

volunteering  
overseas



**30%**

international  
staff



**Established**  
a Global  
Experience Team



**8,224**

taking electives  
in 14 languages-  
ALC



### Global Reputation and Partnerships



No 1 Global  
University  
In Ireland  
according to  
US World News  
Best Global  
Universities  
Ranking



Increased  
Alumni  
Engagement

30% alumni  
overseas  
169 countries  
42 Chapters



3 Joint  
International  
Colleges in  
China with 2,091  
students enrolled

5 Global Centres



560 active  
partners  
61 countries

ROWAN  
Partnerships  
database  
created



CAESAR U21  
UNICA WUN  
members





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